

place and revealed suddenly, in the glitter of half drawn swords, the fact that brethren were not quite unprepared to meet again on certain fields of warmly contested interests. But from the beginning, of this Assembly it was apparent that conflict was no longer anticipated, or desired, and rash words were received with disfavour and disapproval. In the divisions of the house the rates did not follow the old cleavage, and one became assured that the Church could not be broken asunder. Along the lines which bounded the original constituents of the union they are blended into one. The happy solution of the College question was at once a result and an evidence of this.

Another noticeable thing was the result of the action of past years in the effort to have a larger number of delegates take an active part in the work of the Assembly. The desire especially to have more of the elders actively interested in the work has become very strong and is producing good results, and it will be a day of blessing to the Church when she can avail herself fully of the great resources for counsel and work which she possesses in her eldership and which, apart from rare exceptions, she has hitherto almost failed to employ. It is impossible for a person to work to advantage until he feels his responsibility; and the Church is moving in the right direction when she lays large responsibility on the stalwart shoulders of her elders and takes full advantage of their sound judgment and practical ability in the direction and management of her affairs. The amount of business was very great, and the Assembly was in no mood to expend its energies in wordy dissertations. Men were listened to patiently and with close attention if they had anything to say which promised to throw light on the matter before the house, but in every case the attention of the court was intently directed towards the solution of the question in hand, and with such effect that at times items were disposed of one after another with a kind of rhythmic regularity, giving one pleasure in dealing with questions which otherwise would have been rather uninteresting, and kept the mind in a state of interested and efficient activity. The chief thing, however, was the earnestness which pervaded the Assembly and which seemed to grow deeper day by day. It is very easy for such a court, under the pressure and routine of business, to be intensely and almost exclusively occupied with the mechanical, to be so occupied in the perfecting and managing of the machine as to have little time to think of what the machine is doing, and in truth many a time have members gone home feeling that they had learned but little of the spiritual condition of the Church. We have even been prone to give more attention to the ploughing than to the reaping. We rejoice to know that, as a Church, we have not expected a harvest without labour. We have believed that the word spoken to the first toiler in the field, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread," is true no less of spiritual things. But it has sometimes seemed that we were in danger of forgetting that there would be a harvest. We have so busied ourselves in the excellencies of furrow and fence, of subsoil and drain, that we have sometimes allowed men zealous but not always wise to come behind us into golden fields which we should have reaped. In this respect the Church has been undergoing a change; we might call it an awakening. Formerly the annual reports, the stories of the harvests of the past year, were read, and passed almost as a matter of form. Even the report on the State of Religion, which if wisely and correctly given, should become the source of instruction, reproof or encouragement, had a hard struggle for its existence. This year it was noticeable that such reports—I might say in a peculiar degree that on French Evangelization, which was presented by Mr. Warden—were full of the warmth and tenderness of the Gospel. Figures may be hard and dry as a waggon load of stones gathered from a fallow field, but by the Spirit of God they can be turned into fountains—springs of water—and when water does spring from the rock it is pure and delightfully refreshing. To my mind some of these reports were as full of living power as any sermon I ever listened to. In connection with one of them the Moderator summed up in these words, uttered in his impressive style, "You can't get money out of dead souls."

The earnestness of the Assembly was much increased by the occurrence of one or two incidents which touched the sympathies of members very deeply, cases of severe affliction of brethren on whose be-

half statements were made or prayers offered. The stillness which pervaded the Assembly at such times was of that character which testifies to the heart of the deep sympathy of the audience and the presence of the Spirit. The Church has been engaged in a great work, but she is only on the threshold of her labour and her possession. Is it too much to believe that God is baptizing her anew, and specially, for her work? She needs to be girded with strength, and it will be the prayer of thousands that God would fulfil His own promise towards our beloved Church. "As thy day is so shall thy strength be."

The most powerful impression was made by the address of Dr. McKay, who spoke in connection with the Foreign Mission report. Although evidently suffering, especially towards the close of his address, which was delivered to a house densely packed, he spoke with even more than his usual fire and earnestness, and many eyes were filled with tears, especially as he bade them farewell, and one could not doubt but many went away with the prayer that God would help them to be more worthy of the cause of Christ, and by His grace to truly

"On stepping stones
Rise to higher things
Of their dead selves."

St Catharines, June 29th, 1887.

G. BRUCE.

AN ORIGINAL ANECDOTE FOR STUDENTS.

My father, whose name is Donald Fraser, and his neighbour William Fraser were very intimate, and as much together as was consistent with their occupation, they both being industrious farmers. My father was nearly seventy years of age, and his friend William was several years his senior. Both were Highland Scotchmen from Inverness-shire, and, as is the case with so many of their countrymen, both were devotees of the pipe and the tobacco-quid from their youth up. A quarter of a century before, they had both, from conscientious motives, given up their dram, as they called it, my father leading in that movement and persuading his friend to follow. They never were what would be called intemperate, but from that time forth they were total abstinents from all intoxicants. They were both godly men, and most of their conversation was on topics of religious experience.

One night, at my father's house, during their chatting they commenced filling their pipes, and William Fraser, turning thoughtfully to my father and tapping the bowl of his pipe with the handle of his tobacco-knife, exclaimed, "Donald, what do you think of this smoking and chewing business?"

My father shrewdly answered by asking another question, and said, "What do you think of it yourself, William?"

William replied, "Donald, we say we are Christians; and if we are Christians, we are 'free men in Christ Jesus.' Now, Donald, when we are doing this thing, and canna' quit it, are we free?"

"Do you think yourself we are?" replied my father. "I am no sure o' it," said William, who retained much more of the Scotch dialect than my father.

"And see here," said my father, "what we spit around and burn into smoke, of this nasty stuff, costs us nearly as much money as we give to the Master's cause. Is this right?"

"Do you think, Donald," says William, "that if we should quit it we could do more for Christ?"

Both then with one impulse, suiting the action to the words, said, "Let us put the things up then;" and both, rising to their feet, laid the pipes and the tobacco on the mantelpiece, where they lay for many a long day.

These two men of God never smoked nor chewed again. William Fraser has gone to his rest; my father still lives, in his eighty-sixth year, a free man.

MAN too easily cheats himself with taking repentance for reformation, resolutions for actions, blossoms for fruits, as on the naked twig of the fig tree fruits sprout forth which are only the fleshy rinds of the blossom.—Richter.

SCIENCE tells us there has been a survival of the fittest. Doubtless this is so. So in the future there will be a survival of the fittest. What is it? Wisdom, gentleness, meekness, brotherly kindness, and charity. Over those who have these traits, death hath no permanent power.—H. W. Warren, D.D.

PASTOR AND PEOPLE.

THE KING OF ZION.

We have already noticed the little work by the Rev. J. Elliott, entitled, "Walks about Zion." We now give the following as a specimen chapter:

In our walks about Zion, we have considered how good it is for her children to dwell together in unity, and that in connection with their relation to Zion's King they are lifted up from the high place they occupy as creatures in the scale of creation to a position higher still—to be "as the angels" "for ever and ever."

We have considered the moral strength they need on their way to glory everlasting, and the prayerful spirit they should cherish towards Him "whose fire is in Zion."

In the history of Peter and Paul we have found instances of fulfilment of the promise "of Zion it shall be said, this and that man was born in her; and the Highest Himself shall establish her."

We touched upon the self-inspection needed by her children: and, "going round about her," have pointed to the appalling position of somnambulists in the dangerous distance—walking about in their dreams in the deep sleep of an unregenerate state, unmoved by the words, "O God, Thou art terrible out of Thy holy places."

In connection with references to autumn and winter, we have noticed truths that should be regarded by Zion's children at successive periods in human life; and have considered the resting place in Zion under the shadow of Him who "is known in her palaces for a refuge."

And now let us give our minds definitely to the consideration of Zion's King. The writer of these lines well remembers walking about Windsor Castle and Buckingham Palace, and how much there was to lead to the thought of our beloved sovereign, Queen Victoria. But who shall attempt to say how much there is in, and in association with Zion, that tends to lead our thoughts to Zion's King? The sublime Isaiah was led by the Spirit to proclaim, "Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder; and His name shall be called wonderful, counsellor, the mighty God." We may His name be called "wonderful;" for, whilst partaker of our nature as the Man Christ Jesus, He is "Immanuel, God with us."

We have often mused on the insuperable difficulties with which they have intellectually to struggle who, amid the teachings of Scripture, deny the divinity of Christ. Let us look at some of their difficulties.

1. He is represented as possessed of divine attributes. He must be present in different places at the same time who could truthfully say, "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them." "No man hath ascended up to heaven, but He that came down from heaven, even the Son of man who is in heaven." He must be more than man who could truly say, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty."

2. In Scripture He is expressly called "God." "Whose are the fathers, and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever."—Rom. ix. 5. See also Titus ii. 13, Heb. i. 8.

3. He is represented in Scripture as the Creator of all creature existence. "All things were made by Him; and without Him was not made anything that was made."—John i. 3.

4. He is the upholder of all things. "He is before all things, and by Him all things consist"—Col. i. 17. "Upholding all things by the word of His power."—Heb. i. 3.

5. Works were performed on earth by Christ indicating divine power; a power that He Himself possessed, for "there went virtue out of Him, and He healed them all."

6. He approvingly accepted worship. "Thomas said to Him, My Lord and my God. Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen Me thou hast believed; blessed are they that have not seen and yet believed."

A most interesting instance has come to the knowledge of the writer, of a very thoughtful man who was brought to accept the doctrine of the divinity of Christ under the influence of these words of Scripture over