

once impressive and memorable. Regret could not but often mingle with our reverence, and our silence amid the mounting clouds of incense was no evidence of sympathy with what we heard or saw; nevertheless, through those sensible signs, the thoughts and aspirations of many were doubtless lifted heavenward.

THE LATE FATHER GAVAZZI.

There are hundreds of Canadians who will learn with pleasure that the memory of Gavazzi is cherished very affectionately in the land of his birth. The last time I saw the grand old man he was addressing impassioned words to an audience that thronged the seats and passage-way of Exeter Hall in London. The lines of care and protracted years had made furrows on his brow, and his long thick locks had become a heavy mass of silver; but the lion heart had lost none of its boldness, and the clear thrilling tones were resonant as ever. Only a few months later and the gates of Death had closed silently behind him! Several times while here I have passed the modest Italian Free Church, just across the Tiber from St. Peter's, and where Gavazzi often ministered. How startling the contrast between the two structures, emphasizing afresh the intrepid hero's courage! It is fitting, then, though in some respects surprising, that the city has just accepted as a gift a handsome marble bust of the preacher, and has consented that it shall be placed permanently in the Villa of the Janiculum.

OTHER SUGGESTIVE CONTRASTS.

Only twenty years ago the Pope was King in Rome, to-day he is almost never seen, and that peculiar reverence with which his Holiness used in public to be alluded to is also notably absent. Twenty years ago Rome's chief glory was centred in her antiquities: to-day a modern city is springing into existence which promises to be one of the most charming capitals in Europe. The crooked Tiber is gradually being enclosed between magnificent embankments; superb villas are rapidly being constructed; wide streets and generous boulevards are being opened up as rapidly as circumstances require it. Twenty years ago even the principal thoroughfares were only indifferently lighted; to-day the needful electric plant is all but completed, and before many months the beautiful cascades at Tivoli will be driving dynamos by which the distant metropolis will be brilliantly illuminated. Electric tramways are already running daily between the city and its suburbs. Twenty years ago another Light, the light of a pure knowledge of God's love as revealed to us in Christ Jesus, burned but dimly in this ancient city; to-day all Italy is open to evangelistic effort, and the knowledge of the Light of Life is being everywhere diffused by countless diverse agencies. Gospels are now offered for sale publicly at many of the railway stations, where they are bought in annually growing numbers. Twenty years ago Giordano Bruno was commonly regarded as a heretic who had met his righteous reward at the stake; to-day a bronze statue is upreared to him in one of the public squares of the city. Thus the things that are old, in Rome quite as much as elsewhere, are gradually passing away. May it not be hoped that, as in former centuries, it was the religion of Jesus Christ which raised Rome out of disaster and degradation and caused her to become the religious capital of the world, so in these latter days her divine Regenerator may be about to visit her again. The spirit of progress, which her citizens so largely exhibit, can achieve much; much likewise will be gained when the rights of the individual conscience have come to be universally recognized; but Italy shall have been truly emancipated only when she has embraced and professed the precepts of the Gospel. For those only are free whom the truth makes free—and these are free indeed!

THE FUTURE PALACE OF THE POPES.

Reference has been made to the change of sentiment with which the occupant of the Vatican is now properly regarded. Those judge rashly, however, who conclude that some day he may change his place of residence. The Pope will never leave Rome, unless he has to leave it under compulsion. The vast sums of money that the Roman Catholics are annually expending in this city, in the erection and adorning of churches and in providing other equipment needful for the strengthening and enlarging of their influence, leave us in no doubt as to their hopes and purposes touching the future. The Popes are cunning craftsmen. They are now busily entrenching themselves in Rome, for it is there they mean to stay.

REMINISCENCES OF SHELLEY.

During this year many will recall the name and fame of Shelley. A few weeks ago I stood beside his grave in the crowded foreign cemetery, which the municipality has very properly provided. Not far off lie the remains of Keats, a kindred spirit of like brief and troubled life. Each was a master of expression, and each has written words that can scarcely be suffered to die. When we go northward to Leghorn we shall certainly be on the watch for those familiar spots—in forest, and sky, and sea—of which Shelley has spoken in his delightful recollections.

POPULAR PROMENADE LECTURES.

Visitors to Rome soon become acquainted with the names of Dr. Russell Forbes and Signor Spadoni. Both of these gentlemen, during the height of the season, devote their mornings and afternoons to conducting those who may wish it over the Forum, the Colosseum, the Palatine Hill, the Baths of Caracalla, and other extensive ruins, where the explanations of a guide book are often involved and even confusing. On several occasions we availed ourselves with much profit of the

help thus afforded, and found that it added greatly to the enjoyment of visits paid subsequently to each of these interesting localities.

FLEETING FAMILIAR FACES.

Mark Twain, whom we sometimes met last winter in Berlin, seemed thoroughly to relish his renewed sojourn in the capital. Rev. J. B. Sier, until lately of New Brunswick, crossed our pathway one day in the Piazza di Spagna; he had just completed a successful tour of Palestine. I regret that it was not my good fortune to see either Principal Caven or Rev. Mr. Hamilton whilst those travellers were passing through the city. As soon as I knew they were here I called at their hotel, but there I learned that they had gone the previous day to Florence. Yet it turned out that we had been living, I know not for how long, under roofs that were distant from each other scarcely fifty yards!

Rome, May, 1892.

A LAYMAN'S IMPRESSIONS.

MR. EDITOR,—If not considered intrusive, I would like to mention in your paper some few things which I feel impressed the Assembly should endeavour to do at its coming meeting. First in point of importance I think is to take measures to have the Assembly for the future on the best possible basis, and thus be a likely means in doing most good in accomplishing the end for which it exists. I would therefore suggest the appointing of a committee of seven, eminent for wisdom and experience, to consider the following matter and any other that might be suggested to their minds and report to next Assembly, with recommendations for future action:—

First. What is the most correct system or principle of representation for Church courts to adopt, and the main purpose for which they exist viewed in the light of the New Testament as revealed to us by precept and example and the teaching of the Spirit, and the best suited for the present needs of a sinful world?

Second. Could the number of schemes and standing committees be reduced or modified, so as to be equally advantageous to those most interested, and beneficial to the whole Church?

Third. Would it tend to facilitate business at the Assembly, and upon the whole be wise to have the *Record*—good as it is—enlarged and its scope extended, so as to give more minute details of congregational work and progress in general, and also be a means of communication between the members under the eye or guidance of the Moderator?

If seven such men considered these matters each in his quiet home, and committed his views to writing, and send them to the Convener who would have them printed and a copy sent to each member of committee for perusal, the Convener after having perused them might commit to writing what he considered the report and recommendation should be. This would be a reasonable business-like way of doing the thing. One meeting of the committee would be all that was needed, and perhaps not even that. I feel satisfied if this were done it might prevent many overtures in the near future, the granting of desires and satisfying aspiration after more efficient work through the multiplying of more machinery. Have we not already too much Church machinery, and much work laid out for the Assembly to do which could and perhaps should be done by the individual, if each member would only be more conscientious and careful in doing his daily and hourly duties as they come to hand? For example, why should there be a standing committee on Temperance, the chief end of which is to prevent drunkenness and what leads to it, and not have one on Covetousness and other glaring sins and what leads to them. Drunkenness is not a very common sin amongst our members nowadays, but who will say that covetousness is not, so much so that many are not only covetous apparently in heart, but as a consequence their votes and actions are for injustice to be exalted and legalized robbery practised daily to such an extent that our people are being demoralized, their consciences seared and blunted and the moral turpitude so great that we are a byword among the nations, as well as a disgrace to every right-thinking man amongst ourselves. Let us be thankful we have a standing committee not on covetousness alone; let us see that we keep it efficient. We have committees on the State of Religion and Mission Work, all the others are aids or thought to be, to one or other, but whether all the means are adapted to that end is open to question. Another example. Is it really necessary to have the Widows and Orphans of ministers and the Aged and Infirm. Ministers' Funds continued as they are? Could the end not be gained better by seeing that each minister take advantage of some life assurance or insurance society having at least one policy payable at death and another at a certain age, or an annuity after a certain given time—if the salaries are not sufficient to allow paying the premiums, let them be increased—and until that can be done satisfactorily, let the funds be devoted to paying the premiums. I don't see why this could not be accomplished and good results expected.

There are two other small matters that should be improved upon, viz., First. By resolution cease wasting time by formally calling the roll. Second. Appoint, say, three good business men to devise some proper way of getting accommodation for members when doing the Church's work, without billeting the whole company or individuals who may

be willing enough, but find it inconvenient or unsuitable to entertain. Then there is the matter which I referred to in your issue of the 11th April, viz., to petition the various Parliaments to abolish all essentially unjust licenses, duties, tariffs or monopolies as being at variance with the Divine laws, and to frame the laws so as to allow us and others the privilege of paying what is needful for government purposes, without being compelled to pay to others that to which they have no just claim, and as a consequence doing the receivers no real good but moral harm, and the others much injury, and how much no one can tell. The other suggestion I made at the same time I do not repeat, believing that the Assembly would be unanimous in adopting it if put to a vote; wouldn't the 1st of July be an appropriate day?

Our country is evidently approaching a crisis. Surely the Churches could do much more than they have done to guide affairs into the right channel. We have a noble heritage in Canada when one thinks of her resources in field, forest, mine, fisheries, etc., of her political system of government so excellent, of her educational and religious institutions so good and numerous. With such a band of admirable teachers and Godly ministers of Jesus Christ, with such an army of worshippers of the true God, what could we not do in the world for the elevation of the race? We have a Free Church, we have a pretty Free State, but we have not Free Commerce. This one sin of slavery of commerce is apparently sufficient almost to ruin the country and degrade its inhabitants. Is not this ruin and degradation caused by our sending so many Godless men to Parliament, and as advisers of the Sovereign. To be in the high position of a Minister of the Crown and an adviser of Her Majesty's Representative is no place for a Godless man. A Godly man will do honour in the lowest sphere as well as in the highest, but the other is out of place anywhere on earth.

In conclusion allow me to thank you for making these impressions known to so many of our brothers and sisters, and to congratulate our brothers who will be present as representatives of Assembly at Montreal upon their position as members of a court of God's House. As one who is interested, although not present in body, in what will be said and done (would that they could devise some way of making better known to all who are and should be interested), and to express the hope that much good will result not only to the Church, but to our country as a whole, and that it may soon emerge and come safe through its present ordeal, purified and elevated and so made fit to be a worthy member among the nations of the earth, and that our beloved part of the Church may at least be incidentally roused from its slumber and quickened. Methinks we have heard the murmurings of distant thunder in one of our Synods, when describing certain actions as being done for a purpose and yet done as if by chain lightning. Chain lightning is no hap-hazard thing. Would that the full thunder was also heard. The sooner the better, if in God's own good time and way.

Let me conclude by repeating some jewels from our Royal Old Charter. "Thy commandment is exceeding broad," "Open Thou mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law," "Acknowledge the Lord in all thy ways and He will direct thy paths," "God be merciful unto us and bless us; and cause His face to shine upon us; that Thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations."

A LAY MEMBER OF 1891.

MISSIONARIES FOR INDIA WANTED.

MR. EDITOR,—I was directed by the Foreign Mission Committee (Western Division) to ask you to insert in THE PRESBYTERIAN the following statement. The requirements of our Mission in India are such that the Church will be under the necessity of sending out at an early day at least two additional labourers. The pressure upon the present staff is greater than we are justified in asking them to bear. Both male and female missionaries require additional help. The Committee will therefore be glad to receive applications from ministers of our Church who may contemplate foreign mission work. Preference will be given to such applicants as have had some experience of teaching. Applications to be addressed to Mr. H. Cassels, Toronto, Convener of Foreign Mission Committee. I am, etc.,

D. D. McLEOD,

Secretary F. M. C.

MITES.

There are some people who get weary of their life's work and become disheartened, because they are kept all the time doing little things. They see here and there a man or woman doing great things, and their lives seem very unimportant in comparison. They long to be doing great deeds. They think God does not care much for the little they do. To all such the blessed Master says, "He that is faithful in that which is least, is the faithful man. Whosoever does his lowly, humble work well and faithfully, day by day, and hour by hour, is pleasing God just as well as he who does great things. And nothing is small in God's sight which is done for love to Him.

Great men came from far with their wealthy offerings for the temple treasury. There were gifts of gold and gifts of silver. The very smallest offering that day was the gift of the poor widow, who came, sandal shod, wearing tattered garments, and bearing on her face the stamp of hard grinding poverty. Her gift was so small that it would hardly be counted among the great gold and silver coins that were poured into the treasury.

But Jesus sat by and watched how men cast in, and He said that she had done more than they all. Her gift pleased him most.—*Forward.*