

During the past year heavy afflictions have fallen on some of our number. Surely the Heavenly Husbandman wishes the vine to bring forth much fruit, when in His mysterious Providence, He thus uses the pruning knife. "Every branch that beareth fruit He purgeth it, *that it may bring forth more fruit.*" May this divine end be attained, for otherwise, even these afflictions will not profit.

As will be seen from the obituary notice, some of our most useful and active members are absent from the body and at home with the Lord. It will be hard to fill their vacant places. Surely then, we who remain should give all the more diligence to the work of the Lord, for speedily to every one of us, as to them, the night cometh when no man can work.

Specially is it our mournful duty again to record our solemn sense of the hand of the Lord being laid heavily on us, in the removal by death of one of our elders, the late Joseph Mackay. The session has already presented to every family of the congregation a copy of the sermon preached on the occasion of his death, therefore it is not necessary to add anything to what has been already said as to his high Christian character, and invaluable services to this congregation, from the very beginning of its existence. But while this is the case, we cannot too often repeat, or too earnestly lay to heart his last message, a message of which his own life was such a bright development, and which therefore comes with all the more power from his dying lips, "*Do good, as you have opportunity.*"

It is with deep gratitude to God that we see the good that has been done during the past year. Specially do we feel constrained to notice that measure of Christian liberality which He, the giver of every good gift, has granted to some of you. We can truly say to you as Paul said to the brethren at Philippi, "We desire fruit that may abound to your account." We do desire it, more and more, and we hope and pray that everything that you have given,