

Superintendent, in the absence of the President, Col. Ray.

These were replied to by the President of the Convention, by Thane Miller, and by Geo. H. Stuart. And the meeting concluded with a general shaking of hands, and making and renewing of acquaintanceships.

To return to the afternoon.

Some Associations were found to have declined; and the reasons were heard. May we not learn something here? Churches languish as well as Associations; and how can we better learn how to prevent and rectify this, than by taking heed to the experience of others? We may thus have the causes of our own evils suggested to us, and may, at the same time, hear of a cure. Except God's Word, no teacher is equal to experience, and indeed experience helps us to understand and apply God's Word.

The first answer given will, I am sure, strike one of the causes:—"Too many honorary, and not enough active, working members." Yes: that is at least one of the great causes of the poor "dead-and-alive" state of some of our churches.—Professing Christians seem to think that, so long as they get to heaven themselves, they need have no concern. They leave it to the minister to attend to all others. Possibly they may make some effort for the conversion of their children; but their love for souls seems about exhausted when it gets so far. Oh! that our churches were purged of these dead members: that only genuine lovers of Christ, and of souls, were admitted to full membership; that every one would realise the awful and glorious truths of eternity, and remember that the commission has been given, "*Let him that heareth, say, Come.*"

Another answer was: "*Want of good leadership.*" This also evidently hits the nail on its head. A good crew is most important, yet their efforts are half lost if they are not led by good officers.—Among the indispensable qualifications of a good leader were given:—Self-forgetfulness, untiring service, and a Christlike independence that enables a man to adopt the motto of Harlan Page: "*Resolved, by Divine Grace, that I will act as though I were the only one to act, waiting no longer for others.*" Add to these, a loving, sym-

pathetic heart; deep realization of the preciousness of Christ, and the value of souls; and a readiness to take advantage of every means which may be found useful and owned of God. And may God give us such ministers, and such elders. And let churches keep this in mind when choosing their leaders.

*Surplus Machinery* was given as another evil. City or town churches may fall into this; country congregations are not likely to.

Another was, "*Lack of unity among Christian churches.*" Some of our country congregations will, I have no doubt, endorse that sentiment.

The importance of giving *every member some particular work*, and of *keeping the truth prominent*, were also insisted on.

Another source of failure was pointed out, which, after all, is not so much another, as the true cause underlying all others: "*Lack of fire,*" not the fire of mere earthly enthusiasm and excitement, but the holy fire which comes from above, and with which Christ baptizes His people. "*Lack of spiritual life.*" Yes, this is the cause of languishing and death, in associations and in churches. This is why the land mourns. But can it be helped? Yes, thanks be to God, it can; for, says Christ, "*If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?*"

The second question discussed was: "*WHAT BRANCH OF ASSOCIATION WORK HAS AFFORDED MOST ENCOURAGEMENT DURING THE YEAR?*"

In answer, the means most spoken of were *open-air meetings*. In particular: Hall, of Washington, told of the great success which had attended them there. During the year, 300 persons were believed to have given themselves to the Saviour, through their instrumentality. He mentioned two chief elements of success: the entire consecration of a number of young men, and the experimental nature of the addresses given. The open-air meetings were followed by prayer meetings in the Rooms, lasting from ten to fifteen minutes, and to which every member was expected to bring some unconverted young man. Another successful means was said to be a Sunday evening meeting in a Hall, into which