

feeling that Wesley's dying words might be appropriately adopted by the assembly:—"The best of all is God is with us," and without exclaiming in the language of the Psalmist:—"Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces." For my brethren and companions' sakes I will now say, "Peace be within thee."

The proceedings looked to far more than denominational extension. Action was taken with a view to coalescence with the Free-Will Baptists, and there is reason to believe this will ere long come about. Arrangements were made with a view to "ecclesiastical comity," so that the missionary societies might not invade ground already sufficiently occupied by sister denominations. A remarkable episode took place during the meetings of Council, at the Episcopalian Synod of the U. S., then in session. The House of deputies prepared a fraternal address to the Congregational Council which the House of Bishops refused to concur in, but adopted resolutions regarding Christian union, which in reality amounted to a bona-constrictor proposition to swallow up Congregationalists and all other dissenting sectaries. This Episcopal action was the butt of many allusions, pleasant and sarcastic, during the sittings of Council, and manifestly enough, until that arrogant body throws away the stilts of Apostolic Succession, and comes down to the level of other denominations, the idea of union, organic or otherwise, will be only a dream of Utopia.

MEETINGS OF OUR WESTERN ASSOCIATION.

MR. EDITOR.—Though the reporting duty you committed to my care is limited to our meetings on Wednesday, I begin this paper with a reference to Tuesday. Travelling from Woodstock to Stratford, when the forests are clad in the gorgeous beauty of their autumnal colouring, and on a morning that was loveliness itself, was a sermon about Canada, which, while it thrilled the whole nature with its unspoken eloquence, made one "wae" for the many in the old land battling for bread, and to whom the ownership of a bit of such land would be as the joy of Eden. Smiling plenty assuredly rippled over the land through which I was passing, and the terrible lines of Hood:

"Oh God, that bread should be so dear,
And flesh and blood so cheap,"

could come out of no despairing heart in this prosperous district. To one who had to preach in the evening such musings were not a bad preparation of the spirit. Our first experience on landing in Stratford was typical of the kindness we visitors were to experience throughout our stay. Mr. Smith was at the station to bid welcome, pastor and flock were one in their eager-

ness to make all comfortable, and some friends of mine told me of gracious hospitality enjoyed in the homes of Christian families not Congregational. Little did I dream of what awaited myself. Twice in my life I had used all the influence I could command to obtain a dinner ticket for the Lord Mayor's feast on November the 9th and failed; within an hour of touching this young city I was dining in "The Mansion House." Of the kindly landlord and his clean and cosy inn I have pleasant memories.

To me there was a speciality in this gathering. I met for the first time many of my brethren and very delightful the opportunity was. If the men who were gathered there to confer on the Master's work were representative of the brotherhood throughout the Dominion, then I see in our denomination the promise and potency of a blessed work in Canada.

A lovely morning greeted the Wednesday visitors and in the golden sunlight Stratford was seen at its best. The devotional service from 9 to 10 was a fitting introduction to the business of the day. Practically at 10 o'clock our chairman, the pastor of the church, (and a capital one he made,) called us to order. Our programme was full of promise as it stood, but in addition there had been presented to us on the preceding afternoon two most important subjects, and this in a form which made neglect impossible, and so it was resolved to add these to the ample list. These were: our college and our missionary society. The urgency of the latter question arose in part from the present absence of Mr. Hall in England. As the discussion proceeded, however, it became apparent that a thoroughly business system of evoking the missionary spirit of our churches and bringing each one into practical relation to the pathetic need of the hour, was imperatively demanded. Our general secretary had been asked to draft a temporary workable scheme for our consideration. On its production it was evident the evening hour had been too short for a thoughtful solution of the difficulty and unfortunately for us the brother had to be away on account of a marriage ceremony. Mr. McGregor, of Guelph, stoutly maintained that the general Union had provided for the contingency by putting the work and needed authority for the western district into the hands of Mr. Fuller, of Brantford, and our secretary. There we left it. An expressive comment on this is worth giving. Next morning riding homewards in company with our secretary, he assured me he had never heard one single word as to such responsibility having been laid on him, and strongly questioned its being constitutional if a reality. I emphasize this bit of procedure to point out where I believe a large part of the weakness of our Canadian denominationalism lies; a terrible lack of business method. An organization such as the