

tagonists. These disciples of crude rationalism prefer to wrangle about minute points, presenting difficulties and apparent discrepancies in the Scriptures, rather than discuss the value, durability and essential spirituality of those broad principles of Christianity that should appeal to humanity with irresistible power. These advocates of heterodoxy are confident in their assertions and oft-times abusive in controversy.

Many of them, gladiatorial in spirit, advance to the fray with the determination to overthrow the student with a continuous onslaught of their favorite hobbies which have become stereotyped and moth-eaten through being oft repeated. The practised eye of the rustic freethinker thinks he descies an easy victim in the youth just arrived from the Theological Hall. Ah, he fails to catch sight of the heaps of apologetics which are lying latent in the patient theological man's cerebellum prepared to be moulded into incontrovertible syllogisms and unanswerable "argumenta ad hominem." Smiles irradiate the luminous physiognomy of the aggressor. He seems to say in his opening war-whoops, "What do you raw recruits know about theology?" Offer me some opposition! Put up a few men of straw that I may eliminate them! Then, no doubt, if the mild divinity man has intelligently digested the notes of the past session, batteries filled with destructive matter begin to play upon the enemy. The battle, no doubt, rages with considerable fury. As usual, no conviction takes possession of the heart of the sceptic. After the heat of controversy is over he nurses his pet theories with fond delight and polype-like stretches out in eager longing after fresh material. Now, although it may be proper on many occasions for our student to enter the arena of controversy with intense fervor against rationalism that is presuming and offensive in its attitude, yet it will be found that a comparative waiving of debate, the maintaining of a kindly demeanor and friendly converse towards those who entertain loose views in regard to the great problems of religion will be better calculated to tend towards the best results. For it cannot be denied that a gradually deepening consciousness of comparative isolation from his more orthodox surroundings tends to increase his determination to continue in his sceptical career. Then let the student be as gentle and genial as possible towards this erring son of Adam. He has within him the germ of endless being, an immortal spirit that may take its place amid the celestial throng that will raise the ever-swelling anthem of praise in the great unseen land. Lead him out to contemplate the sympathetic heart that beats with unceasing love, willing to welcome every erring child of doubt.

Closing Exercises.

WE are indebted for the greater part of the following report to the *Montreal Daily Witness*.

The closing exercises in connection with the Montreal Presbyterian College took place yesterday, and may well be called a gala day in connection with this, the foremost centre of Presbyterian learning, in the Dominion. The meeting of the Montreal Presbytery, in session for the previous two days, closed its work just in time to permit the members to aid in the exercises; and it being the first meeting for the conferring of degrees in the lately completed Morrice Hall, that, and other circumstances combined to add *clat* to an event at any and all times fraught with interest.

The annual banquet of the Alma Mater Society in connection with the College, at four o'clock in the afternoon, was decidedly the most largely attended since the organization of the Society. About 150 invitations had

been issued, the greater number of which were accepted. The *menu*, prepared and served by Mr. Mount, College steward, was excellent, and the floral decorations were in keeping with the occasion. In the absence of the President, the 1st Vice-President, Rev. C. Amaron, occupied the chair.

After the toast to "The Queen" had been honored, the National Anthem being sung by all present, the President proceeded to give "The College Alma Mater." He began by regretting the absence of Mr. David Morrice, to whose magnanimity they were indebted for the noble building in which they were assembled for the first time. He dwelt at length on the object of the Society, which was to further the work of the College.

The Rev. Principal MacVicar, LL.D., responded in brief, in telling remarks, and concluded by proposing the health of "Our Benefactors." He reminded the students and the Society as to who were their benefactors. They consisted of all who took an interest in their success, not only here but in the Old World, in England, Ireland and in the country of Presbyterianism, Scotland; all were looked upon as benefactors. But there were other benefactors, those more in the pecuniary sense—men such as Redpath, Mackay and Morrice—names that would be immortal in the history of the College. (Loud cheers).

Mr. Morrice, who had been set down in the programme to respond to the toast not being present, the Rev. A. B. Mackay did so. He had always felt a deep interest in the work of the College, and before coming to Montreal had heard of the work it was doing, and he felt it to be strengthening and assuring to him when coming to minister in the city to know that he was to live among such earnest men as those who had given of their means and substance to build up the institution. It was pleasing, too, to know that out of the College were ever going men fitted for the work before them. He responded to the toast in an eloquent speech, which was received with applause.

"The College Board," proposed by the Rev. J. S. Black, followed, and was replete with humor in the commencement, but ended with words of soundest, practical wisdom. When he first heard of "College Board" he was at a loss to know what it meant, and thought it had to do with what the students had to eat and drink in the College. Well, when he was a student in the Old Country he knew something of what college board of the latter kind was, and if the Society had had his experience they certainly never would have talked about "College Board" (laughter.) The Board now in question was of a different description. He then referred to the work of the College. It was no small matter to keep up the teaching of such an institution, and the way that teaching was kept up was past all commendation. This was shown by the numbers of young men that were going forth from its halls for usefulness. Mr. Black eulogized the generous donors of the College, and the Rev. Mr. Warden for his assiduous attentions and labors in connection with it.

The Rev. Mr. Muir (Huntingdon) in the absence of Rev. Mr. Warden, responded to the toast with humorous reference to "College Board." Though the last speaker had been rather hard on what was called "College Board" in the Old Country, he could say that so far as his experience of College life in Glasgow and elsewhere in Scotland was concerned, it was not altogether so bad (laughter.) In reference, seriously, to the present college and its work, he said its promoters were to be congratulated on what they had achieved. The great prosperity