

Mr. Hollowell's speech rather than to Mr. Rogers'. The reports tell us the members, *not* according to custom, kept their seats to the last. The explanation of the unwonted patience lay in the expectation of a word battle. A letter had reached Dr. Hannay from an unnamed correspondent (though the name would not be hard to guess), urging a resolution on the Conservative bill affecting Irish crimes then passing the House of Commons. The Committee of Reference were divided as to the wisdom of the proposal, but the pressure evidently was great, and the secretary in open session asked the members should it be dealt with? In Parliament, Union meetings, general assemblies or conferences, there is no sublunary thing so loved as a good debate on a living theme, enlivened with the least taste of an Irish row. Even in our brethren there is a good deal of human nature, and the voices were for war. Dr. Joseph Parker, of City Temple fame, was the chosen standard-bearer, and he moved a resolution on the policy of coercion with perfect grace and tact—indeed, what is it the Doctor does not do well, from a great sermon to an after-dinner speech? The spirit of his reference to political opponents was becoming a Christian speaker, with the single exception of the reference to John Bright. The day was when no orator, however popular, dared have slighted that name; but just now moderate Liberalism is under a cloud. Boldly putting the strain of his contention on the qualities of the character of William Ewart Gladstone, the Doctor awoke rapturous applause. We would travel far to hear Hannay follow in reply, if he differed and was unfettered. If the thing was to be done at all, no one could have led with greater dignity. Merely touching the fringe of the contest, as we in Canada do, it is dangerous to dissent from these in the thick of the fight. We frankly admit this, even while expressing a judgment that our brethren failed in wisdom in establishing such a precedent. Of one thing we feel certain; only a very special hour in the nation's history could warrant our leaders in risking the lowering of our lofty enterprise for God to the level of partisan politics. One point in the speaking will be pleasant to note. The most striking and eloquent speech on the question was made by our loved friend, Dr. Stevenson, late of Montreal. That meed of praise we cheerfully give. Truth compels us to say, however, we read as in a dream his marvellous story of

the Canadian-Irish, and the French Catholic Church. As he gloried in saying he was convinced of the patriotism and innocence of Parnell and his parliamentary following without reading the counter evidence in the *Times*, so here the gentle nature may have resolutely closed its ears and eyes to all passing before it of implacable hate and organized opposition. May this voice, which so often charmed our smaller meetings, be often heard in the larger gatherings beyond the seas! Thus ended a session important enough, but with nothing in it to mark the calendar with red.

The diet of Friday next claims our attention. The day was cold without and within; a strong, keen, north-east wind made the attendance scanty, and the political excitement of Tuesday made the spiritual subjects set for discussion feel tame. To a fervid Gladstonian, breathing slaughter to Harrington and Chamberlain, it was evidently dreary work listening to the Rev. W. F. Adeney on the formation of "Congregational Guilds," or to Dr. Macfadyen, of Manchester, on "Pastoral Visitation." Yet the addresses of both merit careful study by our Congregational Churches. In the States Dr. Macfadyen is greatly esteemed, and has been, we believe, three times invited by important churches in New York and Brooklyn to become their pastor. In our Dominion he is almost unknown. To a perfect genius for church organization and administration, he adds considerable capability as a preacher. Possessing a cast-iron frame, built up among the heather, he never knows sickness or weariness. His Sunday announcements of week engagements read like the catalogue of a public library, and backed in his good work by Manchester's wealth and energy, he has built up one of the most effective churches in England. He is a "man to all the country dear." As a friend, true as steel; he incarnates St. Paul's charity, he suffereth long, and is kind, vaunteth not himself, thinketh no evil, and his love never faileth. Some other day we hope to introduce to our readers two of the younger brethren who helped to enliven this rather dreary sitting, the Rev. G. S. Reaney, the mercurial Stepney pastor, and the Rev. R. F. Morton, a young Oxford man of singular promise. Nor can we stay to sketch the tall thin presence and aristocratic face of loved Arnold Thomas—worthy son of a great father—as he discourses on Christian fellowship, for we want to come nearer home.