

the country are invited to deliver addresses, and these are generally masterpieces of logical treatment and earnest eloquence.

For many years the May meetings of New York were equally distinguished by their thronging listeners, their powerful speakers, and the vivid impressions they left as to the extent and influence of Christian work. But for a considerable period, until recently, they languished and were almost ready to die. The audiences became small and insignificant. The speeches, as the phrase is with stock brokers, were well watered. The services on the whole were dull and common-place. Then came the practical question that must be put sooner or later: Shall we give up the meetings? It was alleged that they were no longer successful, because of the religious and secular papers devoting so much attention to the subjects proper to such occasions. It was soon felt that that must be a flimsy reason, or else why had not the press rendered the pulpit equally abortive? Why had newspapers not done away with all kinds of oral teaching? In the presence of such questions it was felt that the "May meeting" could be revived. And so the New Yorkers resorted to the English method of inviting the best speakers, and of thus kindling the enthusiasm of the people in this direction. The meetings are now a pronounced success. Immense church buildings such as the Broadway Tabernacle are filled to the door from morning to evening. There is no cessation during the May week. And this year seems to promise better things than ever. Our exchanges will soon be teeming with the reports of innumerable Christian societies, with able and earnest addresses of influential ministers and laymen, and with resolutions, the practical effect of which is the Christianizing of the world.

It is satisfactory to notice that Toronto is this year not to be behind other metropolitan centres in respect of May meetings. These are to be convened during the ensuing week. They will be held in the interests of a large number of Christian societies. The Tract Society, the Bible Society, the Young Men's Association, and others have each their day and meeting. Speakers, both native and foreign, of high talent and commanding influence are announced to take part in these gatherings. And we doubt not we shall have a week of intellectual entertainment and of much spiritual enjoyment.

There can be only one opinion regarding the value and importance of these May meetings. They bring people together for the time who otherwise are separated by distances, by differences of occupation, by denominational lines. They learn to feel they are brethren in presence of the vast undertakings in which in common they are engaged. They call out from obscurity much talent that but for them would like many a flower be destined to bloom in the "lone land." They gather together the men and women who stand in the front of every philanthropic enterprise. They focus the Christian influences of the world upon a few centres, and from these in turn there emanates a powerful influence for good. They give a bird's eye

view of the large-hearted benevolence that is year by year increasing in volume and force. In all respects they are therefore to be commended for the good they accomplish and for the influence they are calculated to exert.

MONTREAL COLLEGE.

WE have been requested to state that though the ecclesiastical year ends on the 30th of April, the books of the Treasurer of the Montreal College will be kept open till the 14th of May to receive the contributions of those congregations that have not thus far reported. The constituency of this college embraces all the congregations and mission stations of the Church in the Province of Quebec and all in Ontario East of the St. Lawrence and Ottawa Railway.

This territory having been set off by the General Assembly, all the contributions of these churches for college purposes should go towards the support of the College in Montreal. In view of the fact that the union occurred so recently, it was most gratifying to observe from last year's reports of this Institution that old party lines had been obliterated, and that the congregations of both sections of the Church in the Montreal constituency so generally contributed to the maintenance of the College.

If in these years of commercial depression it is found difficult to wipe out old arrearages, it is of the utmost importance that at least the expenditure of the year should be met by the revenue.

To accomplish this most desirable end, we hope that no congregation or mission station in the constituency will fail to contribute this year to the Montreal College Fund. In the days of grace allowed by the Board, there is time for those that have not yet contributed to do so; and we trust that the Sessions of such congregations will at once give their people an opportunity to contribute, and see that the amount is remitted to the Treasurer before the 14th instant.

ONE FEATURE OF REVIVALISM.

WE approve of revivals when they grow up spontaneously, and not when they are gotten up artificially. In the former case, results promise to be permanently good; in the latter, a number of persons are suddenly precipitated upon the religious life with no security of permanence. This must certainly be accounted an evil. In the Methodist system, the minister is bound to hold revival services once a year on his circuit, and he does it as a matter of routine, without any reference to whether the conditions are such as to render the work permanently useful. Thus, annually, special services are held, and numbers of people under excitement are precipitated upon the religious life, the great majority of which sink back in a little while into their old ways. We do not favour revivals by almanac dates; but wherever there seems a prospect of permanent good being done, we would be only too glad to see the attempt made.

But there is one feature in the revivalism

of the present to which we take exception, and we think on good grounds. A revivalist visits a place, and either before he begins his work he stipulates for absolute control of the arrangements, or without any stipulation he assumes all control, and next to ignores the pastor and church officials altogether. Everybody is to give way for the visitor; all other plans are to be subordinated to his. And the coolness with which this is frequently done goes to show that this is considered the right thing.

Now, we do not account it either right or prudent that the regular servants of a church should be bowed out, or left to the minor task of "pronouncing the benediction," that a man who is here to-day and gone to-morrow, and who is responsible to nobody, may follow his sweet will. And this view is not based upon any fear that church officers will suffer from loss of dignity. For we do not care about hurting dignity, as it is only a very artificial thing at best. But we base it on prudence, on a desire that the good done may be permanently done. From this standpoint we judge that instead of a revivalist assuming to control a church, he should help the church, being more of a servant than a dictator. Sometimes a church may be warranted in handing over the management to men of much experience, and much honoured by God in the work; but such cases must be deemed exceptional. Generally, the minister of the church should be at the head of revival efforts, backed up by the more earnest and godly members of his flock. Then the many unpleasantnesses and dissensions which revivals sometimes leave in churches might be avoided. And, also, the revival itself would not be so likely to depart with the revivalist as it so frequently does.

Dr. Blaikie tells of a minister who had a recipe against the dangers of special services in what he called his "three S's." They were these, "Substitute," "Suggest," "Supplement." If any one wished a hymn of a somewhat ranting kind to be sung, he would invite the people to unite in singing, quietly substituting a more unexceptional hymn. If any one proposed an additional meeting at a late hour of the night, he would suggest that a meeting should be held next evening. If any one would give a one-sided address, he would supplement it himself by presenting the other side of the question. Thus avoiding collision with the rushing stream, he contrived to guide it in a useful direction; and when the waters subsided, a valuable deposit was left, and ever after richer clusters hung on the branches of his church's vine. This anecdote deserves more than a passing recital, it is worth earnest consideration.

MR. CHARLTON, M. P., has been appointed by the Manitoba Presbytery delegate to the meeting of the General Assembly, in Ottawa, in June next.

OUR American exchanges are just now advocating brevity in the pulpit, prayer-meeting, Sunday school, or committee of any kind. The "Christian at Work" offers this suggestion: "The only way for a man to do who 'hasn't time to be brief' is to begin in the middle and stop before he 'gets there.' Then he can 'be short' without taking the indispensable time to consideration." And the "Congregationalist" exclaims: "There's a deal more of talk in this world than it needs."