

CHURCH LIFE AND WORK.

These words may have two meanings. They may include everything in connection with the Church, her work of all kinds, at Home and abroad, all her schemes; or they may be used in a narrower sense, as including the Life and Work that does not fairly come under the head of any of the great schemes, e. g., such matters as, attendance at church and prayer meeting, family religion, the training of the young, Christian liberality, honesty and purity in commercial and political life, temperance, Sabbath observance, etc.

Even in this narrower sense, the report on Church Life and Work, covers a wider and more important field than any other presented to the Assembly, and it should have, if possible, a larger share of the time of the Assembly than any other matter.

Rev. P. Wright, of Portage la Prairie, Con- vener of the committee on this important sub- ject, has, during the past three years, present- ed admirable reports, collated and digested from the reports of Presbyteries; these again being made up from the reports of sessions; and thus the Life and Work of the whole Church is taken in at one glance.

With regard to attendance on Sabbath ser- vices the report from all over the Church is most cheering; and so long as this is the case it will be well for our country. As to prayer meetings the attendance is on the whole very fair.

In the home life, family worship seems in too great a measure to be dying out. Amid so much to be thankful for in the Christian activity of our times, this is one sad feature, for the home is in every sense the nursery of the nation.

In readiness to devote time and gifts to Christian work, there is more or less to cheer. As to the Christian example set by our Christian people, in social and commercial life, there is testimony in the reports of nearly all the sessions and Presbyteries that it is of a high order.

On the whole the tone of the testimony as to the Life and Work of the Church is full of encouragement, with enough of the opposite to keep the Church lowly in prayer that more of the Life from on High may be given and that the Church Life and Work may show more of the Holy Spirit's presence and pow- er.

"Some time ago I adopted the plan of de- voting from fifteen to thirty minutes in the early morning to Bible-reading and found it very much more profitable than the same time spent at night in that way. But since you have been urging upon us the importance of simply waiting before God and practising his presence, I have found a deeper meaning and a far greater helpfulness in my Quiet Hour than before."—Sel.

"I must have this Quiet Hour or I cannot live my busy life truly as a child of God."

GO WORK IN MY VINEYARD.

With regard to the readiness of our people to devote time and gifts to Christian work, to teach in Sabbath School, to visit the sick and strangers, or in efforts to reach the care- less and the criminal in the community, Rev. P. Wright says on his report on Church Life and work :—

Here there are alternations of light and shadow, though on the whole the light pre- dominates. No one can deny that the inquiry is reasonable and the test of Christianity a legitimate one. If it is more blessed to give than to receive, how much our people miss by withholding their hand from Christian work. Yet many are not only faithful but zealous; may their numbers be increased.

Sydney says that the typical reply to the question is, "members as a rule do not conse- crate their talents to the service of God, the work is left to the willing few." Lunenburg and Yarmouth reports that "the people evince a pleasing readiness to use their time and tal- ents in Christian work," though it is only a very few that "embark in aggressive work among the careless and criminal." Brock- ville has a wide range of experience in this respect, "but all bear testimony to the faith- fulness of S. S. workers," though visiting the sick and stranger is "not so common or so much delighted in as it should be." Montreal has much that is encouraging, but thinks "it is apparent that members, as a rule, do con- secrate their talents to the service of the Mas- ter." Ottawa, Lanark and Renfrew, King- ston, Toronto, Saugeen, and many others speak unreservedly of our people's zeal in most of the departments of work indicated.

The reply of Paris may be regarded as typ- ical of what four-fifths of our Presbyteries say: "The answers to this question are in the main creditable, and show an increasing readiness on the part of our people to be 'at least outwardly active Christian workers. Teachers for the Sabbath School are found in sufficient numbers; visiting the sick is well at- tended to; strangers are generally called up- on; the careless are sought out and effort made to bring them into better ways." With the exception of the last sentence, which indi- cates more zeal in that important direction than a majority of the Presbyteries have ex- hibited, this answer of Paris fairly indicates the condition of our Church with respect to this aspect of its Life and Work. There can be no doubt but a sincere desire to help on the cause that lies so near the heart that bled for us on Calvary, prevades the Church, and that a beautiful spirit of brotherhood is being wrought out in society as men yield them- selves up to the nobler impulses of Christian love.

"I have already found untold blessings in this, for only a few moments, shutting out all the things of this life and entering into the holy place alone with God."