

and townships during the year. It was now felt that "Conventions" had done their great work—that of arousing interest; and that now the Sunday school work needed *drill* and systematic study; and these were to be sought in "Institutes" and normal work.

Editorial Articles.

CLOSE OF THE YEAR.



DECEMBER, though by etymology the "tenth" month, is to us the twelfth and last month of the year. Its return provokes thought; just as its short days provoke activity in all out-door labors. We are not at the end of the century; but we are nearing it—we have nearly passed the first year of its last "decade." Nine years from now we shall be on the very verge of the Twentieth Century; a century doubtless destined to see Christ's glory over all the earth, and many of the most pressing problems of man's existence on earth solved. "Wait a little longer!"

To the Christian every *December* comes as a gentle hint from the skies, to be up and *doing*! for the day of life soon closes. And to Christians in their associated capacity, it is a good time for spiritual "stock-taking." "Have we had many converts this year? And if not, *why*?" "Have the pews helped the pulpit? or been only critical and unsympathizing?" "Has that dispute between those two brethren been so adjusted, that they have got back their old esteem again for one another?" "Has the minister been made to feel that we thank God for him?" "Has it become easier for us to give, and more delightful for us to pray, and more natural to us to speak well of everybody?" "Has the church grown in grace, because each one of us has individually so grown?"

Now, if we are happier than we were a year ago, it is not because God has grown kinder to us, but that we appreciate his love and kindness more! And as the love must still continue to increase, it gets to be after a time, that earth is

too small to hold it, and the love and the lover are transferred to Love's own Home, to Heaven itself!

THE WEAKER CHURCHES.

The fathers of Congregationalism in Scotland, in the early part of this century, deliberately planted *thrift* churches, where there were converts, and where such organization seemed good for the Lord's cause (and whatever is good for souls, is good for the Lord's cause), feeling assured that these churches would always need financial help. It is not "waste" to spend money; it is only waste where it is ill-spent!

We have some churches of the same kind; but not planted with the same foreseen future. They have been expected to stand alone; and have been neglected because they could not stand alone. Two or three of them have been supplied with preachers during the past month. Others are lingering; and where a church is not gathering in numbers, it is decreasing from the natural force of circumstances; removals and the like.

There are only two things that will help them: aid from neighboring churches—and help from among themselves. Both only efficacious by the bestowal of the Divine blessing.

Churches can help them, by sending out preachers to them. Take the unused talent in your churches, brethren, and make it a blessing to some poor dying church within reach! And *don't send one every Sunday!* or more than twice at furthest, till you make this condition, "Now, our church will send you a preacher every *two weeks*, provided you keep up your service the other Sunday!" Be firm on the *condition*, and they will do it.

They can help themselves! Wonderful, what an impetus they will get, when some brother, "compelled" to go to work a little, by such a *condition* as we have stated, is voted in a "lay preacher." Here, too, it needs a little firmness. If the brother seems to positively refuse, have a season of prayer over it, then and there; and ask the brother to lead! He won't venture to tell the Lord what he has told you!

When that is settled: when regular worship and services—and a Sunday school—are thus