

“ENTERTAINING STRANGERS.”

In this age of conventions of every kind, when the grace of hospitality is called into exercise so largely and so universally, a Christian duty that many of our readers will be glad of a few hints about, that they may perform it well, is the giving or receiving of entertainment to strangers. Rev. John Todd, D.D., of Pittsfield, Mass., who last year entertained the American Board, made a number of suggestions in the *Congregationalist* in reference to the late meeting of the same body in Buffalo. We abridge them for Canadian use. Addressing first the expectant guests, he says:

1. Don't write to ask for hospitality unless you are sure to go. I have known one family have thirty-five guests, another none, through failures to appear.

2. Don't take more than one lady. Some would exclude them. We want them, but in moderation.

3. Don't ask to be located “near the place of meeting.” Everybody wants that.

4. Don't worry the committee about railroads and fares. They will do their best, and publish.

5. Don't write to a friend to ask *confidentially* if the family you are appointed to is a pleasant one, &c. These things come round.

6. If the house is not “palatial,” accept its hospitalities cheerfully.

7. Don't make any conditions with the committee.

8. Don't take the opportunity to make a pleasure excursion, and the meeting a secondary thing.

9. When you receive a card appointing your temporary home, drop a note saying when you will arrive, and another on your return home. Be as little burdensome as possible, always the Christian gentleman or lady.

10. Don't go prepared to see any but the best side of everything. Make the cause for which you meet everything. No side meetings for other objects.

To the hosts the good Doctor says:—We who are coming to you are the best-natured people in the world. We are going to leave our cares and anxious faces at home. We will make you wonder where all these pleasant people come from. You will be compensated for your trouble by making many happy. You will feel a new glow of sympathy. You will find that you are receiving Christ in receiving His. Your friends will carry home gratitude, and there pray for you. What now seems a mountain will become a plain.

We cite two cases in point.—It does not matter to the rest of mankind in what place, or what body, the following circumstances occurred, but, as an illustration of the difficulties into which people “given to hospitality,” may fall, we may copy the following account of what occurred recently in connection with a great denominational gathering in a western city:—

“The Anniversaries have been and are still attended by immense throngs. Not less than four thousand strangers are in town. Ten days before the opening the Committee had received upwards of three thousand applications for entertainment. Of these, not a few exhibited human nature in amusing aspects. Thus one gentleman writes to say that he shall bring his wife, who is in delicate health, and his three daughters, none of whom are “strong.” He suggests, therefore, that provision be made for these five invalids, on the first floor of some quiet and very