

## FRIENDLY SOCIETIES.

THE reports of the Chief Registrar of Friendly Societies, in England, together with those of the assistant registrars for Scotland and Ireland for the year 1883, show that the number of returns from societies under the Friendly Societies Acts received by the Chief Registrar during the year were 6,832, the number of members being 4,242,084, and the amount of funds \$42,700,000. Of industrial and provident societies there were 1,053, numbering 572,610, with funds amounting to \$41,000,000. The trade-unions numbered 195, with 253,088 members, possessing funds to the amount of \$2,100,000. The number of building societies under the Act of 1874 was 1,853, having 513,667 members, and funds to the amount of \$245,000,000. There were 451 loan societies, with 42,895 members, and funds amounting to \$1,700,000. In railway savings' banks, the number of which is not given, though it is stated that that five returns were sent in, the depositors numbered 7,875, and the funds amounted to \$2,800,000.

The story told by the above figures is one of the deepest interest and importance to all who desire to see the gradual elevation of the artisan classes into a state of social independence. There is no feature in the history of the last half century more gratifying than that exhibited by the growth of the Friendly Societies which are doing a most blessed work in cementing the bonds of our complex social organization. There is no danger to a State so constant, so irritating, so uncertain in its manifestations, so difficult to neutralise or repress, as the existence among its people of a large body of men who are pauperised in spirit. The bread and circus policy of the heathen governments in olden time cannot be followed to-day. Modern society assumes the personal independence of each individual. The man who cannot hold himself up without help is felt to be a nuisance, he is out of gear with his surroundings. Yet there must come to many men, whose wages are moderate, accidents which stop the earning of that income, such as failures of employers, hard times or sickness. Surely it would be a scandal to the community were such troubles to befall a man without exciting a kindly desire to lift up the fallen one and hold him firmly on his feet until the evil day passed. Happily that scandal is obviated so far as most artisans are concerned, not as a form of charity, which might lower their self-respect, but as a systematized form of self-help through a Friendly Society. To the funds of such a body each member pays a stated fee, and when the time of need comes, he claims as of right the return to him of funds so laid up, and with this pecuniary help he secures also the ready and warm sympathy of his associates, who, but for the Court or the Lodge, would have been ignorant of their brother's necessity. One evil consequence has ensued from these societies, they have done much to dissociate the class which mainly supports them from other classes, and necessarily the more this has been done, the greater has been their tendency

to acquire specialities of habits and ways which are characteristic of their class. It is a social law that, whenever men run together in their habits, they will certainly adopt not the highest standard, but the lowest set by those they follow. If, in a company which is breaking up one man says firmly, "I am going directly home," and another says, "Let us have a glass together before we part," the home-bird will wing his solitary way while the main body stop to drink. Now one of the class habits of those who mainly need, and who, on the whole, are done a great service by Friendly Societies, is that of non-attendance at Church. How to break down this class habit is indeed a great problem. There is already quite a literature on this topic. Essays and sermons and speeches without end, have been published on "How to win the masses," or some like subject. In the old land, a Society called the Church of England Working Men's Association, which is really managed and governed by workmen for workmen, has had extraordinary success. The Secretary, Mr. Powell, is a power in the Church; he is a forcible speaker, has organizing talent and indomitable perseverance. He purposes paying this continent a visit this year to see whether the same work can be accomplished in the States and Canada. When he comes, we trust that every effort will be made to further his mission. This is the days of Societies, men are impelled to show outward signs of brotherhood, there is a strong rebellion against cliquism and divisions, and we cannot but hope that those for whom this effort is made will come to see that the mother of all Friendly Societies is the Church of God, and that to the spirit which is the life of the Church, the spirit of love and sympathy and brotherhood, the working classes owe a debt for their class emancipation which demands at least grateful recognition.

## WHY SOME CLERGYMEN FAIL.

BY RICHARD FERGUSON.

## II

WHEN one man fails from not attempting to do enough, ten do so from trying to do too much. This is likewise true, more or less of all callings and occupations of life; but, preeminently so of the ministry, where too often the clergyman is expected to be a reverend Jack of all trades, and possess a special aptitude for at least half a dozen widely differing avocations. I might hit the nail still more squarely on the head by saying that clerical failure arises from trying to do too many things rather than too much. In fact a man who takes reasonable time at his meals and sleep can hardly find time to do too much. A clergyman's work is like a woman's work it is never done, and while he possesses this enormous advantage over clerks, merchants, and professional men, in not being tied down to fixed hours, or chained to a desk or an office and being able to do his work how or when he likes, he labors under this counterbalancing disadvantage of never being able to call any

portion of the day absolutely his own for purposes of rest and recreation. But this is beside the subject.

Now the number of able, zealous, spiritually minded men in the Church of England, in Canada, who fail, or at least stop short of success from being obliged to fritter away their energies in attending to petty details is without, doubt relatively larger than in any other religious body on the continent, with a few isolated exceptions, which prove the rule our people are profoundly incapable of self-organization, and in the faculty self government are as helpless as children, and instinctively look to the parish priest to be the head and shoulders of every parochial institution and undertaking, from "running" the Sunday School to the getting up of a tea meeting. There seems to be an idea abroad among the great bulk of churchmen in Canada that the clergymen should possess the divine attributes of omnipresence and omniscience, and that organized co-operation on their part would be a species of sacrilege which would bring down upon them the swift and sure wrath of heaven. Isn't he the clergyman of the parish, hasn't he been sent by the bishop to attend to their spiritual wants and run the spiritual machine, don't they pay him money and attend church and hear him Sunday by Sunday saying what he ought to say, aren't they always glad to see him when he drives up to their doors, doesn't "one of the men" respectfully take his horse from him and place him in the cosiest stall, and gladden his beast with the choicest provender, and doesn't the good wife receive him at the open door with hospitable smirk wreathed face, and conduct him with all due and fitting reverence to the little parlor of state, and after having installed him in the domestic throne, trip away to the preparation and concoction of a solemn high tea, and don't they all listen with folded hands and demurely downcast looks to the good man's farewell exhortations, and beg him not to be so long the next time in coming, and to be sure to bring Mrs. Parson along with him and stay all day, etc., etc.

Yes, our people are respectful and hospitable enough and all that sort of thing, but it is a tremendous task to pound into their heads and hearts, the fact that if the church is to grow and flourish they must put their own shoulders to a corner of the wheel, and help things along by their own individual efforts. And so we are continually finding able, zealous clergymen, eminently qualified for better things, all but hopelessly floundering in a sea of petty duties, and although labouring night and day with energy, system, patience, and perseverance, yet accomplishing nothing worth speaking of, and always behind their work, their sermons suffering, their pastoral visiting suffering, church finances demoralized, and the congregation grumbling, after the vague sleepy manner of Canadian congregations, who would like things in better shape, but I scarcely think the game of making a decided effort to mend matters worth the candle. And all this simply because from the force of circumstances the unfortu-