

Depart from me, ye evil-doers : for I will keep the commandments
of my God.—Psalm cxix. 115.

BUILDING A HOUSE TO FIT A KEY.

WHAT folly! What could induce you to suggest such a foolish act? Well, I will tell you. Some time ago, one of our former members sent me a note, and with it a key formerly used to admit him to the room devoted to the gymnasium. The note read as follows:—

Dear Sir,—The enclosed key is one of your old gymnasium keys, and as it may be of use to the Association, I return it. . . Had you not better build a gymnasium to fit the key, rather than waste the latter. Yours, &c.

No doubt the letter was intended to be suggestive *re* gymnasium work. Certainly it suggested to me the thought, "Well, our friend has just about hit the nail on the head, for much of the amusement and (falsely so called) social work in which some Associations engage is carried out on the plea, "we may reach some one by it." Our firm belief is, that it is an expenditure, nay, we go further, and say a sinful waste, of much valuable time and energy, to secure very doubtful results. It is "Building a house to fit a key."

GOD'S WORD.

THE following is an extract from a letter from a lady in Galt, Ont. : "We have just heard of a very interesting case of a man who was attending Mr. Soltau's meetings in the Shaftesbury Hall and was set at liberty through reading one of the texts on the wall. He could not get his eyes or mind off the text until peace came."

The law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver.—Psalm cxix. 72.

OFF THE METALS.

A VERY common saying," say you. "Yes," says I, and it often means very serious consequences. If a railway train going thirty miles per hour should get off the metals, who shall even guess what would follow in the loss of life and limb? The Press would ring with the news, and many a heart would ache. Why, it was but last week that the street car I was riding in got off the metals, and rumbled, and shook, and slid about the street in quite a drunken manner. Everybody in it was alarmed, and some actually got out. Yet the car was only off the metals, and was soon put on again. It was there and then I got my title for this talk, and at once began to meditate thus: *Men* get off the metals, *ministers* get off the metals, *Christians* get off the metals, sometimes by a slip, and only a slip. Oh, the need of the old prayer! May the Lord engrave it on our very hearts—"Hold up my goings in Thy paths, that my footsteps slip not." (Ps. xvii. 5). But when a man slips, and in a thoughtless, prayerless moment does wrong, and so gets off the metals *morally*, he shall be restored to the old paths, and the Lord shall establish his goings. I do not in any degree excuse the slip, but I would have no heart despair. Some poor soul who has slipped morally, and so got off the metals of a pure, true life, may read these lines. If so, dear reader, let my heart speak to your heart. Perhaps we never saw each other, and we never may in this world. You are now I know not where, and I am here in quietude and solitude, praying as I write. Let me speak lovingly to you. Have you fallen? I don't mean gone back to open wickedness and sin, but just slipped enough for Satan to tease and taunt and mock you out of all prayer and holy fellowship. Does your poor heart ache as you remember the days that are dead? Do you hunger

Thou art a God ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness.—Nehemiah ix. 17.