

floating garment at the top of the lodge is placed there to attract the lesser divinity as he is passing by, that it may lend aid."—*The Spirit of Missions*.

It would probably lead many of the laity into action if only they were to realise what, after all, must be regarded as the fearful condition, religiously considered, of Great Britain and Ireland. People go to church and see what is readily termed "a crowded congregation," and they come away with the impression that in their parish, at least, all is going on well. Most people greatly over-estimate numbers, and when making their calculations, the seven hundred persons within church are often taken as "a thousand at the least," and in this way very erroneous though favorable conclusions are reached. Now, it would really be a good, though very simple work, if every clergyman, and if many of the laity with him, would proceed to make a calculation for their own parish of the numbers who ought to attend church, and also of the numbers of absentees.

Let any one fairly estimate the conditions of things for the parish in which he dwells, be it London, or a fashionable town, or a quiet little market town, or a village of but even four or five hundred people. Let the calculations be made fairly, and after all the considerations have been thought out according to all the circumstances, let the conclusion be drawn. In this long, straggling, "squandered" parish it is impossible that the attendance can be very large. In this compact little village there is every reason why the congregations should be steady and considerable. In this town the church is not well situate; in the next there is no sort of excuse.

Well, every fact being considered, let the calculation be made what numbers ought to be at church on Sunday morning, afternoon and evening, and then let the conclusions be drawn. It is fore-known that in many places they will simply be frightful. In country villages the majority, and in some parts the large majority, never enter church; but in some places the great multitude consists of folk who content their consciences by going to church about seven or eight times in the year. Perhaps in some respects these are the least hopeful of all, and possibly are the result of having been invited to church, especially with the despairing concluding entreaty of a kind, well-intentioned visitor, "but you will come sometimes, now and then, won't you?"

While societies of all sorts are forming to prosecute and to defend sundry proceedings in church; while men look on in silence and in wonder to think what these Christians can mean; while carelessness, indifference and impiety are indirectly, but enormous and frightfully sustained by the divisions and quarrels amongst those who ought to be "one," it would be well if in every parish the clergy and some of the faithful laity

would carefully calculate what Sunday ought to make manifest in the way of church-going and what it reveals. This will certainly lead to practical action; and though long forbearance and much patience will be wanted, the results would probably be, in the course of one or two years, far better and more enduring than will be produced by any other effort.

Untiring, steady, prayerful parish work will not be found to be expended in vain, though it cost much patience, toil and faith, and, above all, makes no noise and wins no popularity outside the parish for the parson. But the end is not by-and-by.—*G. V. in Church Bells*.

THE week-day afternoon service at St. Paul's Cathedral is sometimes an impressive sight. Here, in the heart of London, a crowd of worshippers of all nationalities, and doubtless of all creeds, meet together and bow their heads in adoration, while just outside, the hunters of Mammon pursue their way. The barriers between races and creeds are thrown down, and the dusky visitor from the far East sits by the side of the traveller from the distant West, and mingle their prayers. Here all is calm and impressive, while outside the hurly-burly rages. It is surprising that on a working day, a congregation large enough to fill the large space under the dome can be gathered together, yet so it is. A few years ago it would have been impossible.

THIBET is the only known country on earth not open to missions. It has an area of 750,000 square miles, about as large as the United States east of the Mississippi river. The greatest length from east to west is 1,500 miles, and the population is estimated at 8,000,000. It is the stronghold of Buddhism. Lhasa, the capital, is the "Rome" of the Buddhists, and the Dalai Lami is the Buddhist Pope. He is supreme in both temporal and spiritual things. One monastery has about 5,000 Buddhist priests, and there are about 60,000 in the country. Thibet is virgin soil for missions. The country is tributary to China.

In several towns near Bombay offers have been made to the missionaries to open schools among the natives, no objection being raised to the assurance that the education would be on strictly Christian principles. A lack of money to occupy these centers was the only reason for refusal, as freedom to teach the Bible was fully granted by the Brahmins, who desired the thorough teachings and high moral influence of the missionaries. Several societies of Brahmins in Southern India have been formed for the sole purpose of studying the Bible. Questions are often sent to the missionaries for replies on certain points, and these are discussed, on being returned to the societies, in secret session. The Sanscrit Bible is anxiously studied by some of the high priests of Hinduism—a token of good to those who watch for signs of the times.