

The criticism of sleep may mean that

#### THE SERMON IS TOO LONG.

The *Globe* wrestles nearly every Saturday with the burning question, "How Long Should a Sermon Be?" The writer studiously avoids fixing the time, and shows his good sense by not coming down to particulars. All he insists on is that the sermon should not be too long. But what is "too long"? Some sermons are shorter at forty-five minutes than others are at ten. There are many things to be taken into consideration, such as the occasion, the subject, the atmosphere in the room, the wants of the people, the style of the preacher and other things. The fact that the clock-handle has come round is only one thing. If a preacher is in fine working trim, body, mind and voice at their best, he can go on much longer with edification than when he is in a poor working condition. People who attend church twice every Sabbath, and prayer meeting during the week, don't need to be preached to as long as people who seldom hear the Gospel. Who would think of putting off a Gospel-hungry crowd in a new settlement with a twenty-minute sermon? The thing for them is an old Royal George of fifty minutes' delivery, loaded to the muzzle with red-hot Gospel truth. Giving them an evening twenty-minute sermon would be like giving a man a cracker who had not eaten anything for a week. But still the fact remains that sleep in church is criticism, and sometimes means that the sermon is too long. If a hearer keeps awake as long as he can, and drops over about "thirdly" or "fourthly," the fault may not always be his.

The criticism of sleep often means that the sleeping hearer

#### HAS WORKED TOO LATE ON SATURDAY NIGHT.

For him to keep awake is a fight against nature, and in all such fights nature usually wins. There is no denying the fact that the practice of keeping stores open on Saturday night, until within a few minutes of Sabbath morning, is one of the greatest hindrances to the preaching of the Gospel that Churches in towns and villages have to contend against. Some over-worked in this way never come to church on Sabbath morning, and some come in a condition which makes it well-nigh impossible for them to worship. Here is a field for ladies to work in that, so far as we know, not one of them has ever touched in Ontario. Is it not a fact that a large number of ladies do their shopping on Saturday nights, and thus help to continue the practice which makes profitable worship impossible to many on Sabbath mornings?

The criticism of sleep often means that

#### THE CHURCH IS POORLY VENTILATED.

In many cases it is not ventilated at all. The wonder is not that a hearer cannot keep awake, and breathe

air a month old. The wonder is that he can *live* and do it. Those timid people who are so much afraid of an open window forget that foul air gives cold as fast as anything else.

This criticism means sometimes that

#### THE HEARER IS OUT OF HIS ENVIRONMENT.

Environment is a pretty big word, but we cannot think of any other that seems to suit as well. This hearer works all day in the open air without his coat, and on Sabbath he wears his Sabbath suit, closely buttoned, and breathes stuffy, soporific air. Don't be too hard on this man. Of course, he should not sleep in church, but if you were in his place perhaps you would sleep yourself.

The criticism of sleep in some cases means that

#### THE SLEEPER'S LIVER IS TORPID.

One of the best men we ever knew could not keep awake in church. He tried hard. He tried everything. He almost tortured himself to keep awake. The doctor knew the reason why. His digestive apparatus was no more use than a coffee mill. It would not even grind. There are such cases. They should have our sympathy. Still it is hardly fair for a man who can keep awake every other place to blame his liver. The liver has enough to answer for. The worst form of sleeping in church is that which comes from *habit*. Like every other bad habit, this one soon conquers.

#### MORE ANIMATION, ELIZA!

Once upon a time a managing mamma accompanied her daughter Eliza to a dancing party. The old lady was very anxious that her daughter should acquit herself well in company. Eliza was one of the limp, languid, lackadaisical kind. She went through the dances in a rather lifeless manner. When a convenient opportunity occurred, her mother went up to her, and audibly whispered: "*More animation, Eliza! More animation! More animation!*"

The advice was good, and timely given. Dancing is a poor enough kind of amusement under the best conditions, but dancing without animation must be a specially miserable kind of performance.

Animation is a good thing. Viewed from a national, ecclesiastical, social or personal standpoint it is a good thing.

If a young country like ours has no animation, it has nothing. Sam Jones told his hearers in Toronto that if the Methodists had no religion they had nothing to run their Church on. The Episcopalians, he said, had their ritual, the Presbyterians had their learning and orderly methods, the Baptists had their water; but if the Methodists had not their religion, they had not an earthly thing to run their Church with. It is exactly so with a young country like Canada. If we have no animation, we have nothing