

barren field, and plants of hot-bed production are the result. Can it be otherwise than that such transplanted in the Church, which soon returns to the old freezing point, and additionally exposed to the cold nipping blasts of the world, should be of a pale, sickly, stunted growth. Hundreds of them perish every year in this seasoning process, and other hundreds of them live, but with very little productive capacity.

Almost every innovation and plan of modern times proposed for the spread of truth and the conversion of souls in these lands, strange as it may appear, has been to relieve the Church of regular and systematic duties as enjoined in the word of God, and as enforced by our discipline. As well as to relieve the new convert of tedious oppression and painful obligations, teaching him to compress the work of years into a few hours or days at most. His conviction, repentance, justification, nay, even his entire sanctification, may be so compressed as to be effected in as short a time as the salvation of the penitent thief upon the cross. This spiritual quackery has filled the Church with idlers and fanatics, and the world with backsliders and sceptics.

Religious truth distinctly teaches that the salvation of the soul, in its commencement and completion, has for its efficient cause the Spirit of God working through the instrumentality of the word of God—the entrance of that word giving light,—the mirror in which his image is reflected; thus seeing himself and his vileness producing a painful, loathing sensation; then brought through that light to see his Saviour, and whom having seen he loves, and rejoices with a joy unspeakable and full of glory. But look at our converts at protracted meetings, they have not time to be taught. They are only excited and impressed; the excitement and impression are far from being always such as truth and the spirit of God gives. The human mind appears incapable of receiving truths of importance very readily, so especially in regard to religious truth to which there is much resistance and dislike.

We are, however, free to admit that many of the members of our Church have been brought to God through the instrumentality of protracted meetings, and that there is to be found among them those who ornament their profession, and glorify Him with their bodies and spirits, which are His. There is not only the sad state of depression and coldness which is almost sure to succeed great excitement, but, what is fully as much to be deplored, the lack of faith in what are called the ordinary means of grace. A sad idea, ordinary and common!! and like most ordinary and common things, they are treated with as little consideration. Calm, solemn truth, or truth gushing forth from the warm heart of the preacher has scarcely, so much an element of power, to persuade or comfort; born in a whirl-