

pulpit especially to the young. A wise minister will give a corner to the children in his sermons. He will shoot low in order to strike all his hearers. He will not be satisfied unless he has spoken some word that will strike young ears. Such is the tendency of our times.

But with all this a children's day commends itself to our judgment. It is a day on which a pastor will be expected to address himself specially to the young baptised members of his flock. It will be a day for the special consideration of the wants of children. It will emphasize the importance of the young as the saplings in the nursery of the Church. It will teach them that they are judged to be a valuable section of the congregation. The children will be led to feel that they are part of the congregation and that such provision being made for them, much is expected from them in the future.

We hope to see the children's day becoming soon an annual day with our churches in Canada. Why should there be an observance of this kind in the United States and not with ourselves? Why should the staid Churches of Scotland have such a day and their representatives in Canada be without it? In no country in the world would it be more thoroughly appreciated than in ours. Let our Churches consider the matter. Let our General Assembly legislate upon it, and we guarantee that no day in our Church calendar will be hailed with more enthusiasm.

A NEW ASPECT OF HYMNS.

OUR attention has been called to a movement amongst our brethren of the Methodist persuasion in the United States to have a set of hymns composed descriptive of denominational distinctions and suited to their own particular sect. It puzzles us to know how a poet will run such words as bishop, or presbyter, or baptist, or independents into decent rhyme. But we presume there is nothing impossible to the inspirations of poetic genius. We doubt not it will be rather an amusing result if failure do not overtake the attempt.

Seriously, this is the hymn question run mad. The muse cannot be bent in such a direction. The moment the poets of the churches give themselves up to singing of their sectional differences, there is an end, we conceive, to all true poetry and all ennobling song. No, there is one theme for the Christian poet, and that is Christ and Him crucified. We say, perish all hymns wherever they are to be made the means of preserving and praising denominational differences. They can never be other than milk and water productions. With such themes as the love of God, the cross and passion of Christ, and the duties which Christians owe to their Lord, to one another and the Church at large, as the benefits and privileges of believers, and their hopes and expectations that go beyond the grave, there is a noble field for the creation of hymns and Spiritual songs. The attempt to get up a denominational hymnology would be the death of Sacred music, and of poetic song.

WEAK CHURCHES.

THE weakness of many of our Churches is often the fault of the governing powers. If the pastor and the other officers of a congrega-

tion hold priestly notions, if men are fed with the husks of an effete traditionalism, instead of the pure Word of God, the membership will soon decrease, and the minister be left to preach to empty pews. Sacerdotalism is not in favour with the people of our age and country. They want something real, enduring and satisfying; and that priestism cannot give them. And if some of our sacerdotalists still manage to have a hold on the members of their congregations, it is because they know how to conceal their priestly doctrines and pretensions, or the people are ignorant and do not understand them. The fact is that an avowed sacerdotalist drives away from his Church all thinking and sober-minded members. We may thank the priestly and priest-ridden party that we as a Church are making such slow progress. Many, no doubt, would join us, if they could be assured that they should always have an earnest Evangelical clergyman as their pastor.

But there are other sources of weakness in our congregations. We have too many weak Christians, and they constitute weak Churches. There are too many honorary members, too many deadheads, too many dead weights. The members are idle, not working and co-operating with their zealous minister. They throw all the burden on his shoulders. No wonder that clergymen thus situated will gradually become imbued with High Church views and look upon themselves as priests acting for the people before the throne of God. The clergy are what the people make them. If the people neglect or refuse to work, they lay thereby the foundation of a solid sacerdotalism; for the clergyman will feel isolated, and this isolation tends to produce the formation of a priestly caste.

The Church is weak when the members are worldly-minded and have not the spirit of sacrifice. Such members will neither work in the Spiritual vineyard, nor contribute of their means towards the advancement of Christ's cause. Nothing good, nothing spiritual, nothing great can be done without making some sacrifice. Self-devotion for the good of others is the spirit of Christianity, and where this spirit is wanting, the Church languishes.

Well-meaning ministers are sometimes discouraged on account of the smallness of their congregation. The Sabbath is often a day of sadness, instead of joy to them when they see so few in the house of prayer, and when they hear the feeble responses of those who are present. But let them consider that a small Church is not necessarily weak. Christ and His few apostles were insignificant in the eyes of the world, but they represented the mightiest power ever revealed. Nor is a poor Church, of necessity, a feeble Church. Quality—not quantity—is the test. We must weigh, not count. A worldly Church is weak though its membership be large. A Church of seven is strong if fired with holy zeal. What we call weakness is not to be deplored. An infant is weak, but it has the capabilities of growth. If it is only healthful, well-fed and well-cared for, it will not long remain weak. If a Church is really alive in faith and works, it will not long remain small in numbers or mendicant in condition. Let the pastor find out who are the true and living members of his congregation.

He should consult with them and set them to work. And if every living member become a missionary of good things, the Church will soon increase in numbers and become powerful in good works.

But how shall the pecuniarily feeble Churches become strong? We answer, first, they should not be ambitious and run into debt by building a sanctuary for which they cannot pay, or by engaging "a great preacher" whom they cannot support. The Church must not imagine that there is essential power in mere crowds, for these always contain coarse elements that cannot be utilized in a Church. The preacher will soon run out those whose chief aim is to "fill up the house." Sensationalism should be avoided as demoralizing. Entertainments, threaticals, grab-bags, tableaux, suppers, and kindred methods of "drawing in the people" are nuisances, and leave behind a blight and mildew.

That Church grows strong that feels its personal responsibility before God for the salvation of souls, and devotes itself to the one object of perfecting men in Christ Jesus. Men are needed who are "living epistles" of honesty, purity, and Christian consistency. A missionary spirit is needed. Doing for others outside its own field, will help to invigorate the piety of a small church, and invite a blessing from God into its own bosom larger than it conceives. The subsidizing of individual aptitudes is another secret. Every man and woman should do something for the Lord. The poorest can do something, and the most unlettered.

But the all-embracing idea is the baptism of the Holy Spirit. In this baptism alone is strength found. Financial problems, and all other difficulties are solved when this gift is accepted. Weakness in numbers, in devotedness, and in influence, will disappear when this Divine Ally is allowed to enter a church. "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you."—*Evangelical Churchman*.

BRANTFORD LADIES' COLLEGE, DIVIDEND DECLARED.

At the annual meeting of the shareholders of the Brantford Ladies' College held last Tuesday, the balance sheet and educational report for the year were presented by the directors. The state of the finances must indeed have been highly gratifying to the stockholders and all concerned, showing as it did that after laying aside twelve and a half per cent. for depreciation on the furnishing account amounting to the sum of \$1,000, and retaining a balance of \$615, in the hands of the treasurer, the directors were able in addition, to declare a dividend of five per cent. on the paid up stock. The report was unanimously adopted, and cordial thanks tendered the directors for their wise and economical management of the institution during the year. There are few institutions of the kind, (if indeed any one), that can show such a favourable exhibit, at such an early stage in their history, as the Presbyterian Ladies' College in Brantford.

The appointments made by the directors for the educational work of the college during the ensuing year, also met with the unanimous approval of the shareholders, as indicating a determination on the part of the Board to secure teachers in every department thoroughly equipped for their work. The new Principal, Mr. McIntyre, has arrived, and entered upon the charge of the institution. Under his wise direction assisted as in the past by Dr. Cochrane, the directors are confident they will more than satisfy the expectations of parents and guardians, who send pupils to the College.

A CHURCH that does the Lord's business on business principles may safely trust God—and no other.—*Examiner and Chronicle*.