

## Membership and Responsibility.



FATHER said to his daughter about to be married, "It is a very serious matter to get married my child." "Yes, father," was the reply, "but it is a great deal more so not to get married." We often think to be a church member involves grave responsibilities. But to any one desirous of shirking the same, we feel like saying it is a great deal more serious not to be a church member, for Christ is the head of the body, which is the Church, Col. i. 24. Can I be a member of Christ and unwilling to share the responsibility involved in union and fellowship.

An important work for the Church is, how to utilize the members to the best advantage, in soul-saving. If all these souls were entirely sanctified, filled with all the fullness of God, and consecrated to the work of the Lord, it would not require many years to double our membership, pay all debts of the Church, quadruple her missionary contributions and missionary force.

A Christian should never be troubled because he is asked to give. If he cannot give, he may well be sorry, but if he does not wish to give, he ought to be more than sorry—he should be alarmed.

At a recent conference in London, Rev. A. J. Bird read a paper on "The Claims of the Church on Those seeking Fellowship therewith, and How to Enforce Them."

Mr. Bird argued that the greater the number of members the greater should be the strength and efficiency in all departments of their church life. This, however, he contended, was not the case, because the work of the churches was unequally divided, one portion of the church sitting quietly and wondering how the other portion does the work. If all members worked, there would not be that difficulty in filling the vacant places which often happened when one good worker died or removed. Mr. Bird, in continuation, set forth two claims of the church upon candidates for admission—financial aid, by earnest personal assistance in all the works of the church; and by general personal influence. It seemed to him that in some way these claims should be plainly and distinctly explained when candidates presented themselves, and some kind of pledge should be obtained from them, but in by no means an officious or dictatorial spirit. No harm could come from explaining the nature of the church's claim, and, anyhow, they might as well know, if by reasonable means they were able, what their candidates could not do, as well as what they could do. He ventured to think that, if some such method as that he had pointed to could be adopted, the church would obtain a hold upon its members which it scarcely had now; and when there were symptoms of declining interest, flagging zeal, and diminishing love, followed by the indifference and carelessness so painfully manifested in some cases, those whose duty it was to visit and remonstrate would have a distinct promise originally made to talk about, and not be compelled to fall back upon mere generalities.

## Kind Words. What others think of Buds and Blossoms.

The following is from *The Christian at Work*, a first-class religious weekly, published in New York:

"In the City of Halifax, Nova Scotia, is published a monthly magazine called BUDS AND BLOSSOMS, and edited by J. F. Avery. Each number contains forty pages, plentifully and handsomely illustrated, and at 75 cents a year is certainly one of the cheapest publications extant. But better still, it is one of the best. Its pages are full of the gospel spirit, excellent temperance sketches, missionary intelligence, short stories, household hints and suggestions, all entertaining clean and wholesome literature, suitable for the home and family circle, and calculated to promote purity and knowledge among its readers. We do not know what the circulation of this excellent publication may be, but of this we are sure, it ought to be double whatever it is, for it is just the right kind of reading to be put into the hands of young folks; bright, cheery, hopeful and strong, without cant or sickly sentimentality. We hold it as an indisputable truism that when an opportunity offers to promote the circulation of such literature among the young it becomes a religious duty to do so. Send to the publisher for a specimen copy, and you'll find that we have not said one-half the good things we might concerning it."

The first intimation of the above notice was several postals enquiring for specimen copies from the United States. We then sent for copy of *The Christian at Work*, and feel sure others will feel as we did, a thrill of delight at the kindness shown.

An old Christian worker, whose face we have never seen, writes from Boston, U. S.:—"After BUDS AND BLOSSOMS we are almost sure to get seed; may you live to see it spring up an abundant harvest into the treasury of our God."

In response I would say, brethren still pray for us, that grace and wisdom to direct may be given abundantly. The number of paying subscribers is not yet near enough to meet the outlay, but we are greatly encouraged by kind words and expect the list will yet fill up, and faith be honored. Believing in God, we this year doubled our contract and issue. So far we have give more than one half away. It is scattered seed, and our intention is to increase the issue as means and subscriptions come in. WILL YOU HELP? We will pay commission to canvassers.

We thank the following who have sent donations to BUDS AND BLOSSOMS for our free list:—Mr. Colin Covey, \$4.00; Mr. Enoch Mason, \$1.00; Miss Smith, U. S., 25cts.; Miss Lamont, 25cts.; Mrs. Greenough, 25cts.

When a religious paper has been read in the family it is a pity to throw it aside, or let it be used to light the fire. Let us send them in different directions to those who cannot afford to take them, and so they will go on doing good and giving pleasure.

Please prepare cards and plant flowers for the Flower Mission.