

Several important suggestions have been made, and, lest they should drop out of sight, some of them have been embodied in the form of recommendations at the close of this report.

They are such as these: "The more general utilization of the lay element in the work of the Church;" "A more thorough search for the gifts of the Spirit in the rank and file of the members by the office-bearers."

The necessity of congregations holding five or six weeks' special evangelistic services every year, in view of the increasing spirit of indifference and worldliness.

The importance of having a number of men set apart by the Church to do the work of an evangelist. "Let a communion season be occasionally taken up with a series of evangelistic meetings, quietly conducted and presided over by the pastor." "Let there be Sabbath services held sometimes for the young—even for the children." "Let there be pastoral visitation and dealing personally with the young people and the unconverted at their own homes, along with plain, earnest, pungent preaching of the old Gospel under the three R's—Ruin by the fall, Redemption by Christ, Regeneration by the Spirit."

"Organization is what we need. We have improved our machinery this year by appointing committees to look after different departments of work, such as tract distribution, reception of strangers, mission school and cottage prayer meetings. These committees report monthly at a meeting of the General Christian Workers' Association." "More energy displayed by a greater number." "The importance of urging members in changing residence to take at once and present the letter from the Church left." "Every congregation ought to print an annual statement of receipts, expenditure and work." "The missionary and educational work of the Church ought to be much more prominently brought before congregations than in many cases it has been brought, and ought to bulk far more largely in the estimation especially of the wealthier members than it manifestly does."

VIII. Have you followed the recommendations of the last General Assembly; and with what results?

Many reply: "Yes." Some say: "In part." Others confess to neglect, while a few give no answer.

In conclusion, the following recommendations are submitted for your consideration:

1. That the Church should seek to utilize more and more the lay element in her work, believing it to be an important factor in the effort to increase her usefulness.

2. That the Presbytery take steps to prepare for itself a scheme of special services adapted to reach all congregations within the bounds, the members of Presbytery and of the various Sessions to assist as well as others in conducting such services.

3. That, inasmuch as it appears that family worship is not uniformly observed throughout the bounds of the Presbytery, Sessions be instructed to give careful attention to the matter.

4. That it be an instruction to Sessions and managing boards to print an annual statement of receipts, expenditure and work.

5. That the missionary and educational work of the Church be kept more prominently before congregations than it manifestly is.

6. That the Presbytery's Convener on the State of Religion be appointed annually, at the March meeting, with instructions to visit, either personally or by deputation of Presbytery, when thought advisable, vacant congregations and mission stations, with the view of acquiring full and accurate information on the State of Religion, and giving such words of counsel as may be helpful in the circumstances.

It may be added that this has been done on a small scale this winter. The Presbytery's Convener on Sabbath Schools, along with your Convener on the State of Religion, drafted a plan in the fall, with a view to sending a deputation of Presbytery to all the weak, vacant congregations and mission stations within the bounds. This has been carried through to a certain extent, and with encouraging results. From personal observation and knowledge your Convener is led to pray that this point may not be overlooked. Standing face to face with a large amount of work to be done in our individual congregations, we are in danger of running into Congregationalism of the worst kind, viz., "Looking too much on our own things and too little on the things of others." Every member of Presbytery should seek to be a foster-father to every weak congregation and mission station within the bounds.

All of which is respectfully submitted,
W. FRIZZELL, Convener.
Toronto, March, 1887.

DEATH is not death if it brings us nearer to Christ. No, death is not death, for Christ has conquered death for Himself and for those who trust Him.—*Kingsley.*

By no way so certainly as by the way of suffering shall you learn that appreciativeness which alone can anticipate, and it may be avert, the stroke that threatens your neighbours.

Our Young Folks.

THE LITTLE MAID'S SERMON.

A little maid, in a pale blue hood,
In front of a large brick building stood.
As she passed along her quick eye spied
Some words on a little box inscribed:
'Twas a box that hung in the vestibule,
Outside the door of the Charity School.

"Remember the Poor!" were words she spelled,
Then looked at the dime her small hand held,
For chocolate creams were fresh that day,
In the store just only across the way.
But gleams of victory shone o'er her face,
As she raised her eyes to "the money place."

But her arm was short and the box so high,
That a gentleman heard, who was passing by:
"Please, sir, will you lift me just so much?"
(For the tiny fingers could almost touch.)
The stranger stopped, and he quickly stood
By the sweet-faced child in the pale blue hood.

As he lifted her, she gently said:
"Would mind it, sir, if you turned your head?
For, you know, I do not want to be
Like a proud, stuck-up old Pharisee!"
He humoured the little maid, but a smile
Played o'er his face as he stood there the while.

"Excuse me, child, but what did you say?"
The gentleman asked in a courteous way,
As he took in his the wee, white hand.
"I believe I didn't quite understand."
"O, sir, don't you know? I have you never read,
Said the child amazed, "what our Saviour said?"

"We shouldn't give like those hypocrite men,
Who stood in the market-places then,
And gave their alms, just for folks to tell,
Because they loved to be praised so well;
But give, for Christ's sake, from our little store,
What only He sees, and nobody more."

"Good-by, kind sir, this is my way home,
I'm sorry you'll have to walk alone."
The gentleman passed along, and thought
Of large sums given for fame it brought.
And he said, "I never will be,
In the market-places, a Pharisee!"
She preached me a sermon, true and good—
That dear little girl in the pale blue hood."

GOLDEN GRAIN BIBLE READINGS.

BY J. A. R. DICKSON, B.D., GALT.

WHAT GOD SAYS OF STRONG DRINK.

The violence it creates, Prov. xx. 1.
Its physical and moral blight, Prov. xxiii. 29-35.
Warnings against its use, Lev. x. 9; Prov. xxxi. 4-5; Hos. iv. 11; Eph. v. 18.
Warnings against companying with drinkers, Prov. xxiii. 20.

Woe to him who puts the bottle to his neighbour's lips. Hab. ii. 15.

Error comes through its use, Isa. xxviii. 7.
Woes pronounced on drinkers, Isa. v. 22.
Not to be looked on even, Prov. xxiii. 31.
Total abstinence for the good of others urged, Rom. xiv. 21.

God's approval of total abstinence, Num. vi. 2-8; Luke i. 15; Jer. xxxv. 2-10, see verse 19.

From all this we see that the Bible is a thorough temperance book. Its whole trend is in favour of total abstinence. Let us take our stand on its sure ground.

A PROTECTING PROVIDENCE.

It will not be difficult to mention cases in which eminent individuals have been preserved from danger and death by the manifest hand of Providence.

John Knox, the Scotch Reformer, had many enemies who sought to compass his destruction. He was in the habit of sitting in a particular chair in his own house, with his back to the window. One evening, however, when assembling his family, he would neither occupy his accustomed seat nor allow anybody else to do so. That very evening a bullet was sent through the window with a design to kill him. It grazed the chair which he usually occupied, and made a hole in the candlestick.

It was related of Augustine that he was going on one occasion to preach at a distant town, and took a guide to direct him on the way. By some means the guide mistook his way, and got into a by-path. It was afterward learned that a party of miscreants had designed to waylay and murder him, and that his life was saved through the guide's mistake.

Charles of Bala was once saved from death by what

some would call a foolish mistake. On one of his journeys to Liverpool his saddle-bag was put into the wrong boat. He had taken his seat when he discovered it, and had to change it at the last minute. At first he was vexed and disappointed, but he afterward learned that the boat in which he intended to go was lost, and all its passengers drowned.

Howard, the philanthropist, was once preserved from death by what some would call mere chance, but which was no other than a special Providence. He always set a high value on Sabbath privileges, and was exact and careful in his attendance on the means of grace. That he might neither increase the labour of his servants nor prevent their attendance on public worship, he was accustomed to walk to the chapel at Benford, where he attended. One day a man whom he had reproved for his idle and dissolute habits resolved to waylay and murder him. That morning, however, for some reason or other, he resolved to go on horseback, and by a different road. Thus his valuable life was preserved.

The Rev John Newton was in the habit of regarding the hand of God in everything, however trifling it might appear to others. "The way of man is not in himself," he would say. "I do not know what belongs to a single step. When I go to St. Mary Woolnoth, it seems the same whether I go down Lothbury, or go through the Old Jewry; but the going through one street and not another may produce an effect of lasting consequence. A man cut down my hammock in sport, but had he cut it down half an hour later I had not been here, as the exchange of the crew was then making. A man made a smoke on the seashore at the time a ship was passing, which was thereby brought to, and afterward brought me to England."

BOWED HEADS DURING PRAYER.

President Mark Hopkins used to teach his students that those who neglected the natural attitudes of prayer would soon lose also the spirit of prayer. In not a few of our Sabbath schools and congregations a large minority do not take any devotional attitude during prayer. But they cannot enter into the prayer and make it their own while their heads are held upright and their eyes wander about the room. They reverse the Legend of Prague, and the beleaguering army of demons, but the blessed angels of prayer

Fold their tents like the Arabs,
And as silently steal away.

How can the heart be praying while the eyes, like the fool's thoughts, are wandering over the earth? It is not a question of forms and no forms; for we cannot worship except in some attitude and through some forms; but is a question of the best forms. Ordinarily the best attitude for children during prayer is to close the eyes and bow the head. I have never been present in but three or four Sabbath schools where all took the position of devotion. Usually the school gives little appearance, as a whole, of taking part in the praying.

The cure lies almost entirely with the superintendent and teachers. If they set the example, and press the matter upon their scholars' attention, patiently, continuously, there will be no difficulty in accomplishing this reform. I have often asked children in the Sabbath school why it was not as easy to bow their heads on Sabbath as in the morning prayers at the day school. There every pupil is reverent at least in form. Why should the Sabbath school act more irreverently than the day school?

THE TEETOTALER.

My father said: "I became a temperance man in early life, because I noticed in the harvest-field that, though I was physically weaker than other workmen, I could hold out longer than they. They took stimulants, I took none."

A brickmaker in England gives his experience in regard to this matter among men in his employ. He says, after investigation: "The beer-drinker who made the fewest bricks made 659,000; the abstainer, who made the fewest bricks, 746,000. The difference in behalf of the abstainer over the indulger, 78,000."

There came a very exhaustive time in the British Parliament. The session was prolonged until nearly all the members got sick or worn out. Out of 652 members, only two went through undamaged. They were teetotalers.