

crease in membership and adherents, as well as the increasing gifts cast into the Lord's treasury bear witness; yet we fear amidst the glare of our success we do not distinctly see our failures, and that in summing up our gains we lose sight of our losses; that in looking at what we have done, we do not take in account what we have left undone, or performed very imperfectly.

In reading the Missionary Report for the present year, we were forcibly struck with some returns made by Missionaries. One reports only half the number of members returned last year. Another states that he received upwards of 100 members, mostly, if not altogether, the fruits of protracted meetings, and yet the year closes with a decrease of 37 as compared with the previous year. This certainly is a painful state of things.

The highest number returned was 289. The "backslidings" in the case, making allowances for deaths and removals, was more than fifty per cent. And still we have no cause to believe that the Minister was less faithful than his brethren. Other instances may be produced, not equally striking, but these furnish a pretty fair index to the working of our system as at present adopted and pursued by us; or rather, to an unwise departure from old Wesleyan practices and modes of ministerial labors. We also fear that our Circuit work is not in a more healthy state than the Mission, and that what is applicable to the one will apply to the other. The views we take in writing on this subject are far from being popular, and the expressions of opinion we are about to give are sure to be looked upon as indications of the want of revival and progressive spirit on our part, or any writer who may chance to dissent from practices so common and so lauded.

1st. We say *Protracted Meetings* are a fruitful source of backslidings, as at present generally conducted in regard to times, places, and modes of operation. When there is a spirit of hearing among a people with symptoms of serious thought and religious reflection, and they are thus brought into a state for further advance into the Kingdom of Christ—when the spirit of prayer and supplication is poured upon the church, and of faith, that God will revive his work—when the members are earnestly seeking for full redemption,—by all means meet regularly and continuously for preaching, prayer, and praise, if need be for weeks or months, until every sinner in the congregation is converted, and every believer is sanctified.

But, unhappily, such a prepared field for sowing the word of truth, much less for gathering in spiritual fruit is seldom found. One cause of which is the competition of sects. One rushes in regardless of the necessary preparations or results, lest another should have the field before him. Foreign elements and artificial heat are brought to bear upon the cold.