

pastor, and with the prosperity of Christ's cause. The dance-house and dancing parties during the autumn and winter, and the American Circus in summer present an alluring charm to some young people which destroys seriousness and the fear of God.

INTEMPERANCE

still has its victims, and is destroying its thousands. Professing Christians, and others of whose useful lives great hopes were entertained by their religious friends are in the enchanted ground, and succumbing to the seductive influence, and only the Almighty Spirit of God can save them from the drunkard's destruction, and from exerting his evil influence on society.

Some pastors have to lament the prevalence of Sabbath desecration. The people do not openly engage in their worldly avocations on the Lord's day, but they devote it to pleasure and to worldly conversation. To drive away drowsiness they visit their neighbours' houses and spend the day in idleness and foolish gossip. This evil is more frequently practised in rural districts, where there is no settled pastor, or where the pastor is settled, but because of the scattered condition of his congregation the services of the sanctuary are only occasionally enjoyed.

Some of our ministers have to scatter their labours over such an extensive field that they cannot concentrate their energies in any one locality. They travel over an area of twenty, thirty, and even fifty miles. They labour earnestly, prayerfully, constantly, but because of the scattering of their labour they do not see the fruit of their toil as they would wish. They have a diversity of hardships to contend with, and they are required to exercise much self-denial; but God will bless their labour of love, and they shall obtain a glorious rest by and by. In a few years two or three ministers will be settled within the bounds of some of these extensive congregations, and reap the fruit of what our good brethren now sow; and in the heavenly garner the "sower and reaper shall rejoice together."

VACANT CONGREGATIONS.

In not a few of our congregations there is no settled pastor. Often they may have services from a preacher who may come among them on Saturday night, and who will leave them Monday morning; but they have no minister whom they call their own, who will visit them in their homes, and speak to them of their spiritual interests, and to whom they can go for encouragement in the hour of spiritual darkness. There are some devoted Christians in these vacant congregations that have not defiled their garments, and who retain their Chris-

tian warmth; but many for the want of ministerial oversight become as lukewarm as the Laodiceans.

In some congregations religion has been marred by political partizanship. Members of the Church, when an election contest takes place will seemingly trample religion under their feet, and encourage deception, falsehood, drunkenness, bribery, and ill-will, that they may secure their own political ends. They seem to think that Jesus should cease to reign when their party wish to retain or regain power.

The cause of Christ is hindered by professing Christians who have no right conception of their obligation to act the Christian life, or to let their Christian light shine before men. Young people and anxious sinners are apt to imagine, that there can be no living reality where there is so much religious apathy. In their religious anxieties they find little or no sympathy from professors of religion, and they are discouraged.

True religion has been hindered in some of our congregations by the evil effects of

SPURIOUS REVIVALS

by which people's feelings were aroused without receiving saving knowledge. The religion of such is spasmodic and not of regular growth. It is like Jonah's gourd. It rises to apparent perfection in a night and perishes in a day.

Some pastors have to lament that there are families to whom they minister in which religious family instruction is sadly neglected. Family worship is almost unknown. The Catechism is not taught. The Word of God is not read. There is a sacredness about the Sabbath. From such houses seldom a warm-hearted Christian comes, and their influence is usually against Christ.

ENCOURAGEMENT.

Though we find among us much which saddens the hearts of God's people, and should humble us in the sight of God, and make us plead earnestly for the pouring of God's Spirit to convince sinners, and to stimulate saints; yet there is much to cheer and gladden our hearts, and to draw out gratitude to Almighty God. His wonderful work in quickening sinners, and reviving sleeping Christians.

Last year we were pleased to have reported that the Lord had graciously visited the congregations of the Presbytery of Prince Edward Island. This year we have devout gratitude to God, we have to report that the heavenly showers descended copiously on the Presbyteries of Pictou, Truro, Tatamagouche and Halifax.

Because many of our Kirk Sessions do not answer our questions, or because