

line, choose their ministers by lot, deny the apostolic origin of infant baptism and the Roman Catholic, Lutheran and Zwinglian teaching respecting the Lord's Supper. Spiritualists are those who believe that communications or manifestations from the spirit world take place at "seances and are in the form of rappings, spirit-handwriting, etc."

From the above instances we conclude that the various religious bodies take their names from their human leaders and from some peculiarity in teaching or in practice. We also notice a desire for more liberty and freedom in worship.

From the New York *Independent* of Jan. 6, 1898, we find there are at least 150 different religious bodies in the United States alone. They are as follows: Adventists 6 bodies, Baptists 13 bodies, Brethren (River) 3 bodies, Brethren (Plymouth) 4 bodies, Catholic 7 bodies, Catholic Apostolic, Chinese Temples, Christadelphians, Christians (New Lights or New Connection) 2 bodies, Christian Catholics (Dowie) Christian Missionary Association, Christian Scientists, Christian Union, Church of God, Church Triumphant, Church of the New Jerusalem, Communistic Societies 6 bodies, Congregationalists, Disciples of Christ, Dunkers 4 bodies, Evangelical 2 bodies, Friends 4 bodies, Friends of the Temple, German Evangelical Protestant, German Evangelical Synod, Jews 2 bodies, Latter Day Saints 2 bodies, Lutherans 21 bodies, Mennonites 12 bodies, Methodists 17 bodies, Moravians, Presbyterians 12 bodies, Protestant Episcopal 2 bodies, Reformed 3 bodies, Salvationists 2 bodies, Schwenkfeldians, Social Brethren, Society for Ethical Culture, Spiritualists, Theosophical, United Brethren 2 bodies, Unitarians, Universalists, and Waldenstromians, 150 in all.

Is it right to have one hundred and fifty divisions, when Paul said "Now I beseech you brethren... that there be no divisions among you, but that ye be perfectly joined together, in the same mind, and in the same judgment." (I. Cor. i: 10.)

HOW SHALL WE MAKE PRAYER MEETING MORE EFFECTIVE?

R. E. STEVENS.

Among the many practical questions that oftentimes appeal to the weary, hard-working, discouraged minister of the Gospel, and to other Christian workers, for their solution, there seems to be none of greater practical importance than the one named above.

Someone has said "the prayer meeting is the pulse of the church." It is usually a very good test of its spirituality and readiness for active service.

The effectiveness of the prayer meeting may be greatly increased in almost any community by giving careful attention to three things in connection therewith, viz., attendance, talent and method.

It should be the aim of the leaders in prayer meeting work to secure the largest possible attendance at every meeting by frequent invitations and exhortations to attend the meetings, and by endeavoring to make the meeting so interesting to those who do attend that they will never want to miss another.

To have frequent reference to the prayer meeting from the pulpit, having the topic announced, and exhortations to duty in this respect will influence some.

Personal invitations and exhortations when necessary by those who are interested in and loyal to the prayer meeting will often prove more effective; and sometimes oft-repeated, pressing invitations to attend the prayer meeting—such as you give your friend to visit your home—will not be amiss.

There is nothing, however, that will increase and hold the attendance at prayer meeting like good, stirring, attractive meetings; and for this we must look toward the development of talent and methods of conducting our social or prayer meetings. Every community of people has in it more or less latent talent—talents for music, prayer, reading, exhorting; talents that are as yet wholly undeveloped and unused; in fact there are very few persons who have not one of the above-mentioned talents in some degree, while very many have them all, which, if developed and used, would make them effective.

How shall we enlist the latent talent of the church in prayer meeting work? Ah! that is the rub in many of our churches. How? Now, how can we do it? inquires many a one who is anxious to make the prayer meeting a success in their community. Here again it calls for individual work; make young Christians feel that duty and loyalty to Christ demands of them attendance at and participation in the prayer meeting, and most of them will begin to feel like going to work. How make them feel it? By public, and especially by private instruction and solicitation in regard to their duty, and by adopting right methods of work.

Have, if possible, a good, live, enthusiastic leader; sometimes it may be well to have different persons take turns in leading, etc. This is, of course, the way to develop leaders, but generally, when effectiveness in work is the aim, the best leader among us should be in the lead. Have a subject selected and announced at least a week before the meeting, and encourage all to give the subject or some phase of it their careful consideration, and to come to the meeting with passages of scripture, select readings, or better still, a good, earnest heart talk upon it. Let the songs and prayers, too, harmonize with the subject so far as possible. This gives to the prayer meeting work definiteness, and tends to keep it out of the common-place ruts.

On the other hand, do not be too exacting in your adherence to the subject. There be those who are not prepared on it who could make very interesting general remarks, or some whom it would do good just to speak a word for Jesus. Let them. Encourage them. There may be some who do not take part in the meeting, but would read a passage if one was suggested to them. For this purpose select a dozen appropriate readings and scripture passages, and just before the meeting slip them quietly into the hands of some whom you think should be taking part, requesting them to read it. If they fail to do so this week do not get discouraged over it, but give them another next week, and after awhile you may be surprised at the result. Then there may be some who attend the prayer meeting and appear to take great interest in it, but who are not Christians. Give them a reading, pass them a scripture text, get them interested yet more, and you will win them all the more quickly; and when they do take their place in the church it will be easy for them to take their place in the prayer meeting; while if they never do become Christians, the fact of their having read a few passages from God's Word in public will not make them or you any worse because of it.

Commence promptly! Close promptly! If

the hour is eight o'clock do not wait till eight fifteen, but commence exactly at eight if there are only two present. This is the best way to bring them to time. And then if the allotted time for the meeting is one hour, close in exactly one hour. There may be exceptions to this rule, but generally the most effective work is done in the regular prayer meetings that begin and end their work promptly on time.

ADDRESS TO H. MURRAY.

DEAR BROTHER, PASTOR, FRIEND,—We, for so many years the children of your care, cannot allow the connection to be severed without trying to convey to you, in some way, an expression of our heart-felt sorrow that you feel it necessary to make this change.

Of a nature warm to your own, kindly to all, cheerful, fond of amusement—when fed from pure fountains—a character so founded upon the "Rock of Ages," so humbly and yet so persistently serviceable, in power and grace, wakes in all this community the response of happy appreciation and leave the charm of memory.

You have done your duty by us, as naturally as if it required neither resolve nor effort, nor thought of any kind for the morrow. You have never failed, seemingly, in act or word of sympathy, in little or great things, and when to this we added the clear *ether* of intellectual and spiritual life, in your sweet and wholesome home, presided over by your beloved wife, with all the cloud and sunshine drooping over its roof-tree, we can with difficulty find words to express our regret at your leaving us.

We shall miss the sympathetic tears, and the words of solace and comfort, by the bedside of the sick and the dying—we shall miss the friendly grasp and congratulations when sunshine graced our home. We can heartily say with the poet Burns in a somewhat similar case—

"I readily and freely grant
He donna' see a poor man want;
What's no his own he winna take it;
What once he says he winna break it;
Aught he can lend he'll no refuse it,
Till oft his goodness is abused.
As pastor, preacher, husband, father,
He does not fail his part in either."

That the special blessing of Him you have served so long and faithfully may follow you and yours wherever your lot may be cast, and that health and prosperity may brighten your pathway in life, is the sincere wish of

Yours faithfully,

Y. P. S. CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR AND OTHERS.

REPLY.

DEAR FELLOW-WORKERS,—On occasions like this words utterly fail to express our feelings. Never has our unfitness and unworthiness been so manifest to our own heart than by this token of kindness and these words of appreciation. While we have in our feeble, humble way contributed, no doubt, some pleasure and profit to you by our associations these many years, yet we feel that we are the one, not yourselves, who are under deep and lasting obligation to you, who have contributed so much to our happiness and prosperity. Be assured that we, in