

describe here, scenes that have been witnessed at such meetings. The persons who originate them—take the lead of them, and bring into combination at the dead hour of night, a mixed multitude of men, women and children—must surely be ignorant of the fact that 'evil communications corrupt good manners;' that out of the human heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false-witnesses, blasphemies, &c. They appear to be unconscious of the fact, that the pressing together, for several nights in succession, under such circumstances, hundreds of persons of both sexes, great facilities are presented to kindle unholy fires in the soul. This mode of crowding the sexes together at Camp-meetings appears to be contrary to the genius of Methodism. According to the rules for the government of 'Band Societies,' each Band must be composed of one sex only, 'all married or unmarried.' The mingling of the sexes is strictly prohibited.

7. I object to your Camp-meetings, because they lead multitudes to *undervalue the ordinary means of grace*. Many persons think they must wait for some extraordinary 'revival season,' in order to be converted; and it is not at all uncommon to hear them expressing a wish for the return of such scenes of excitement as they may have witnessed at Camp-meetings. Under the ordinary ministrations of the Word, they are not provoked. These are by far too tame, as they think, to do the work. Hence they wait for some extraordinary wave of excitement which may carry them on its bosom over all impediments into the Kingdom. The Word of God is seldom read; and as a necessary consequence, they entertain very erroneous and unscriptural views of what constitutes a work of grace in the soul. We seldom hear of conversions under the ordinary preaching of the Gospel—and why? Because they are hardly expected. The people are taught to look forward to the next camp or protracted meeting for the favoring breezes of the Divine Spirit. Hence, in the meantime, they are like persons on board ship, waiting for the rising of the wind that is to carry them out to sea. In consequence of this pernicious notion, the regular and stated means of grace are often lamentably neglected. Persons who can hardly be induced to go half a mile to attend preaching on the Sabbath, will cheerfully travel ten to be present at a Camp-meeting. Of course, these persons are seldom or never seen at weekly prayer-meetings.

Lastly, your Camp-meetings are regarded by not a few as an institution for making proselytes. This opinion appears to have been created by observing that these meetings have been, for the most part, got up in localities where the cause seemed evidently to be on the decline; and where the influence of other Denominations had begun to tell on the community: and it has not escaped observation, that the chief agitators and promoters of these large gatherings generally manifest, on such occasions, great anxiety to obtain the names of as many persons as possible, in order to swell the list of 'probationers.' They are told that by connecting themselves in this way with the body, they will accrue great good: at any rate, they are assured, if they should get no good, they can get no harm. Multitudes of unworthy persons are thus introduced into the society. The doors are thrown open, and the promiscuous crowd—'good, bad and indifferent'—are invited to enter, while the Christian liberality of the Body, in debarring none from its communion, is held up to admiration. "Thank God," said a preacher, "we don't belong to the narrow-minded, bigoted sect who throw a fence round their church, and say to those outside, 'Stand off, we are holier than thou; we want all to go to heaven!'" Of course, this liberal (?) sentiment was highly applauded, while other Denominations, which do not follow this practice, fell in the esteem of the brethren. A strong temptation, too, is offered to the preachers to try to swell the list of probationers. I have known cases where the resident preacher, for the time being, had become exceedingly unpopular with many of his people, but who, after a great revival effort, in which many had been added to the society, suddenly became famous—a man of mark and repute. I was much amused on one occasion, by overhearing a conversation at a religious meeting, of which a certain revival preacher was the subject: "Is not Mr. — a great man?" "Ah! brother, isn't he? it was under his preaching that Mr. — was converted. *Can't HE DO IT?*" Of course a preacher's ability and qualifications for his work are judged of by the number he is able to bring into the society. I knew a very worthy man, who gave great offence to the members of his church by preaching from the words, 'Always abounding in the work of the Lord.' He took occasion to shew, in the course of his address, that the true prosperity of the church was rather retarded than promoted by those spasmodic efforts (alluding to Camp-meetings, &c.), which were made from time to time. He insisted strongly on uniform, persistent and unceasing labor; not resting on their oars three-fourths of the day, and when the shadows of evening began to warn them of the approach of night, suddenly start up with a 'Hurrah! boys—let us go at it!' Though a very worthy man, and an excellent preacher, his anti-camp-meeting sentiments materially injured him in the estimation of the members of his own church. The preachers 'who can do it,' as it is phrased, are those who can produce the greatest excitement at their religious meetings—who can set the people a shouting, clapping their hands, or stamping with their feet. I have been present on occasions when the preacher's voice was