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Miscellaneous Articles.

THOUGHTS ON SOCIAL PRAYER-MEETINGS.

In every Christian congregation, where there is a faithful, zealous minister, who watches for souls as having to give account to God, and a pious Eldership such as should be, a variety of means will be used for maintaining and increasing religion among the people, as well as extending it abroad. It will not be considered enough that the congregation assembles together on Sabbath-days, and that the minister preaches to them, and offers up prayers in his name and theirs, in which they ought devoutly to join. There will be steps taken during the week-days to keep up and deepen the impressions produced on the Sabbath. There will be religious intercourse with the people in their houses; and according as opportunities allow, occasions will be afforded them for cherishing and strengthening in their hearts an active interest in real, practical Christianity.

Among other proper measures for gaining these desirable ends, social meetings for religious exercises and improvement will be specially encouraged. Every minister, who would be counted faithful, will be particularly concerned to hold at least one week-day meeting of a devotional character; and happy is that minister who, in this important matter, is well supported by the people, pleased and cheered by their numerous attendance, and by seeing in them evidences of the grace of God. Like Barnabas, he will be glad, oh, how glad! But it should not be thought sufficient that there is a minister's prayer-meeting; the people, also, should have their meetings for prayer and fellowship. Such meetings distinguished the best times of godliness and of goodness in our fatherland. Would that they were imported into this land! Would that the Divine Spirit were shed down from on high, to produce such an effect! As a humble modicum of effort in their favor, and a word of advocacy to introduce them, the following remarks are addressed to serious Christians in our congregations, with all affection and earnestness:—

Now, Christian friends, whether we look to ourselves, or to others both near and afar off, we may see plentiful reason for abounding both in private and social supplication, that the light and the power of Christianity may be sent forth more and more. If we look to ourselves, we may perceive, alas! that we have not yet attained, neither are already perfect; that we are greatly deficient in acquaintance with the system of Divine truth; and need to improve much in the cultivation of personal and family religion. If we look around us, is it not most evident that spiritual deadness and ignorance, sin, ungodliness, and carelessness about eternity, prevail to a most lamentable extent? And if we cast our eyes, guided by good information, farther than our immediate neighbour-