

sion is not cramping to the soul, or belittling to the character; on the contrary, you will never know true freedom until you drop your fetters outside the doorway and feel your soul expand into the liberty and joy and power of a true child of God. Nobody who has once entered that gate of mercy with a penitent believing heart, has ever wanted to retrace his steps and go back into the broad flowery road to hell.

Strive to enter that strait gate, my friend. It is no holiday play to become a Christian, and there are scores of enticements to hold you back. If you even look back your mind is divided, and you never can go in with half your heart. All or none. No man having put his hand to the plough and looking back is fit (i. e., is well put) for the kingdom of God. The whole question of your eternal welfare is to be settled right at that narrow door. Inside is salvation, outside is perdition! The night cometh soon, and at nightfall the gate is locked against you! Hasten your steps. When the Master hath shut to the door, no human hand can open it. Knock earnestly, enter quickly, enter gladly! The first step brings you into Christ, and the last step will land you in Glory.

ABSENTEEISM.

What shall we do with our absentee members? This question every church asks over and over. It is discussed in elder's meetings, in classes, in Synods, in formal and informal gatherings of pastors.

The Church is one and it ought to be enough to belong to any section of it. If in the providence of God a Christian removes from his church, it is far more loyal to the cause of Christ to transfer his connection to the church where he resides and go to work there. And there should be no difficulty in doing this. Denominational lines are so loosely drawn that one can readily find a place where he can do his Master's work and strengthen his brethren by nominal as well as actual fellowship. In very many, perhaps most cases, if this is not done interest is lost and the brother or sister becomes careless, lukewarm or back-sliding. It is a constant source of surprise to me that I find so many who have been members of churches, sometimes very active members, who are now seldom found in a church. And generally their indifference may be traced to their failure to identify themselves with some church near which they live. They are

thus largely without personal responsibility. And they fall away.

But this is not the only cause. All this must be admitted. But this is not all that must be admitted. Another cause is the inattention of pastors. We are too lenient in the matter. We allow ourselves to be flattered by the professed attachment of our absentee members, and we say "Well, when you find a church-home send for your letter;" whereas, we should insist upon their finding a church-home near their places of abode. And we should do more than this. We should learn the address of some pastor whose church is near them and ask him to call upon them. If we know some church which our absentees attend more frequently than any other, or habitually, write to the minister and express your desire that Brother A. or Sister B. should become a member of his church. We know of one pastor whose habit it is to write to all his absentees at least once a year and request them to send for their letters. And we know that this same pastor has more than once requested pastors to visit people who move into their neighborhoods and get them into their churches.

If we would systematically follow up this plan there would be more active and fewer dead church members; more helping forward the chariot and fewer riding; more carrying the load and fewer to be carried as so much dead weight; more truly attached members and fewer church tramps.—*Christian Intelligencer*.

THE TWO KEYS.

During the excitement of the Washingtonian movement, Dr. Chambers, of Philadelphia, delivered a temperance address at Mount Holly, N. J. The house was packed to its utmost capacity. Church people, drinkers, and saloon keepers were all there together. In the course of his address Dr. Chambers said that while walking along one of the streets of the town that day he had seen a sign over a saloon that had greatly impressed him. The sign was two great iron keys crossing each other at right angles, and that he had read the sign thus: "One key is to be used by the saloon-keeper to unlock the pockets of his customers so that he can get all their money; the other is to open the door of the bottomless pit, into which he can hurl his victims after he has robbed them." The saloon-keeper of "1" Keys, who was in the audience, was so enraged that he took down his sign, changed the name of his saloon, and sent the keys to Dr. Chambers.