

religion—no man can be religious without them. But religion, I repeat, is, mainly and chiefly the glorifying God amid the duties and trials of the world,—the guiding our course amid the adverse winds and currents of temptation, by the starlight of duty and the compass of divine truth,—the bearing us manfully, wisely, courageously, for the honour of Christ, our great Leader, in the conflict of life. Away then with the notion that ministers and devotees may be religious, but that a religious and holy life is impracticable in the rough and busy world! Nay rather, believe me, *that* is the proper scene, the peculiar and appropriate field for religion,—the place in which to prove that piety is not a dream of Sundays and solitary hours; that it can bear the light of day; that it can wear well amid the rough jostlings, the hard struggles, the coarse contacts of common life,—the place, in one word, to prove how possible it is for a man to be at once, ‘not slothful in business, and fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.’”

RELIGIOUS INDIFFERENCE.

We agree with the excellent editor of the *Baptist Almanac*, that it is indeed a solemn and sublime thought “that our churches yield an annual revenue of *eleven thousand* redeemed souls to heaven.” But there is another thought suggested by his statement, equally solemn, but fearfully painful. It is that our churches yield an annual revenue of about 22,000 *deceived souls* to the world and to perdition. It is, that in all probability, of the vast multitude who join our churches, only *one-third* go to heaven, while two thirds are lost. Look at the figures: 13,000 are dismissed by letter, who never join the church again. What becomes of them? A few may join other denominations, and a few may go to other lands, but the proportion of this class must be very small indeed. The great mass of those who have not love enough for Christ and his cause to use their letters of dismissal by uniting with other Baptist churches, undoubtedly neglect all their religious duties, break all their baptismal engagements, and mingle again with an ungodly world. There are thousands of such “lost Baptists” all over the land. 8,500 are annually *excluded*, and never restored to church fellowship. They are excluded for conduct utterly inconsistent with the Christian character, and must therefore be considered as hypocrites or self-deceivers. They also sink back again into the world—“like the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.”

We find, on examining more minutely the statistical tables, that the proportion of exclusions to the whole number of members varies greatly in different States. In some, as in Maine, Massachusetts, and one or two others, it is very small, not more than one per cent.; while in two or three others it is from *two to three* per cent. We know that, in the first named States, the churches generally are very careful in the reception of members. Why should not all be so? Would it not have been infinitely better last year to have made our nett gain of 30,000 by baptizing only 41,000 *true converts*, without any exclusions, than by baptizing as we did, 63,000, and losing 22,000 by exclusion and excess of dismissal?

Let the insane desire for *numbers*, rather than *piety*, cease; let great care be taken not to receive any who do not give *good evidence* of conversion; let pastors and older members keep an earnest watch upon the younger members of the flock, and thoroughly instruct them in Christian doctrines and duties; let every church, as far as possible, require a strict account from all who are received on letters of admission.—*True Union.*

To this may be added the following, by a Correspondent of the *Independent*:—

“I observed in a late *Independent* a statement of the progress, or rather *depreciation* of the Congregational churches in New Hampshire and Vermont the past twelve years. Maine *might have been* placed in the same category. We have numerous organizations and appliances of a religious nature, Missionary, Bible, Tract, Education Societies. Also sermons, Sabbath-schools and Prayer meetings, and various additional moral machinery, operating almost at every fire-side. And yet *no millennium comes!* And yet, *in regard to numbers*, the churches retrograde! Now, *something* about this is wrong. I may not be able to designate the wrong, but this I know, *something is wrong.* Indeed it is but too obvious that the absence of the Holy Ghost is our *precise difficulty.* This (as well as in other ways) is indi-