

both deep and difficult—the Gospel of John; but it was most beneficial to our souls, even if we did pass the depths rather lightly. Bunyan kept us engaged for some delightful months with his “Pilgrim’s Progress” and “Holy War.” No subject ever commanded such interest and attention as the “Pilgrim,” and I would give almost anything for another such book. We also tried our hand at Jonathan Edwards’ “History of Redemption” with great benefit. And at present we are engaged on a study of the “Life of Jesus” as recorded in Matthew. At times we turn aside to consider what the church is doing among the heathen, on the Continent, in the Colonies, or for the Lord’s ancient people the Jews. And at other times we have made attempts to deal with work among the young, so that Sabbath-school teachers may feel an interest in our week-night meeting.

Arrangements by which the choir has its weekly practice of sacred music on the same night, and business connected with the Sabbath school also, have induced the young folks connected with these departments to take an interest in the meeting. Long ago we concluded that it was unwise to have a multitude of meetings during the week in congregations outside the city, at any rate when the meetings are such as to attract the same people night after night. Even cottage meetings tend to distract, although they are in themselves valuable aids to congregational life and work, and as a means of bringing in the non-churchgoing are probably unparalleled. Many find it to be impossible to spare more than one night a week from home, and it is not always wise or safe to urge them to do so. Surely all our meetings are intended ultimately to make the home more Christian, and to enable the worshippers at them to

fulfil their home relations more effectively. It is no small test of the genuineness of her profession of Christ, when a mother or daughter stays at home from lively and interesting meetings to attend to the humbler and quieter work of the home. My experience has been, however, that there are comparatively few who found it impossible to give one night when they had made up their minds to try it.

Having been urged by some to throw open our prayer meeting, and make it more of a conference, I yielded, and we gave it a trial. I am bound to say that it was not successful. For a time, it is true, a new interest sprang up, but very soon the speaking was left to two or three, who made very little preparation, and had rarely anything fresh to say. We also tried this plan in a somewhat modified form, by allowing a quarter of an hour for remarks after or before the minister’s address, with equally unsuccessful results. Our final plan is something like this, and it has proved itself on the whole the least objectionable: the first half-hour is wholly given over to praise and prayer; it is the prayer meeting pure and simple. After the opening hymn, the minister leads in prayer; then another hymn, followed by two short prayers, and so on until the time is up. The second half hour is occupied with exposition or exhortation, followed by a closing hymn and the benediction. After some lengthened trial this plan approves itself above all others. People seem to enjoy it. They have been working hard all day, and come together not to talk but to rest and think and pray; and if we could but give them such food as their soul desireth, we think there would be no lack of people at the mid-week meeting.

(Concluded.)