

in the Lord. The numerical increase of our societies has exceeded that of many former years. The returns show a nett gain of 1689 persons, who have been brought into church-fellowship with us. Yet there is no cause in this for boasting, but rather would we humble ourselves before God. When we consider how great a number of ministers, local preachers, leaders and other official persons are united together for the professed purpose of bringing the world to Christ, it would seem that the results of our conjoint labours should be greater than they are. For ourselves, we resolve before God to consecrate ourselves anew and with apostolic courage, amidst abounding iniquity, and insidious error, to preach with more fervency and simplicity the glorious gospel of the blessed God.

Suffer us, dear brethren, to remind you of what may be considered the chief hindrances to spiritual growth in the Church, and progressive power over the world. It is much to be feared that many who nominally hold fellowship with us, are embarrassed and impeded in everything that tends to Christian vitality and activity, by the worldly spirit which they cherish, and by yielding unduly to the secular tendencies of the times. These destroy all relish for private devotion, and the thoughtful reading of the word of God. Family worship is neglected, and those who should have daily presented to them a living example of the divine life, are led to infer that religion is a mere profession, and the service of God a secondary matter—not the *one thing needful*.

The secularity against which we affectionately warn you, has many and fearful collateral evils: most prominent is the inattention paid to the children and young persons who constitute the household, in all that relates to their conversion and religious culture. While the Saviour is heard in the gentle breathings of his Divine love saying, "Suffer the little children to come unto me," multitudes of these little ones are, by the care-