

apart for the purpose, had no existence in the first and brightest days of the church, and far better that it have no place now than that it be regarded as the chief means for making known the truth and bringing sinners to Christ. But it answers well with the sects, why not with us? It does not answer well with the sects, and never did, and never will. In our October issue it appeared that the "Methodist New Connexion" reported as the result of the year's labor of 32,808 members, in connection with 563 chapels, an increase of only 328 members—a miserable result considering the number of good chapels and gifted preachers. It was also shewn that 65 Baptist churches, with 43 settled ministers and 5582 members, increased only 70 in the year. To these facts may be added the testimony of the Baptist organ, *The Freeman*—"It will, we think, be generally acknowledged that neither our Lord's day services nor such church meetings as are common among us, attain the end we seek." To this the Rev. Charles Vince, leading Baptist minister of Birmingham, last month added the following—"Instead of going beyond, we have not kept up with the ordinary increase in the number of the people. It is a fact that the church is smaller in relation to the world than ever it was since Birmingham was a town. This is also true of Liverpool, Manchester, and London—and by the church I mean all denominations of Christians." What does this prove? That the denominations cannot make inroads upon the world—that their tactics fail—that to imitate them is folly. They build splendid chapels, pay, and often over-pay, educated preachers, and yet in the great work for which preaching exists they are nearly powerless. Then that farseeing scribe, the Rev. John Cumming, D.D. from the Presbyterian ground has overlooked Babeldom and declared, that "All churches are about to be equally dissolved. Methodism is fast breaking up, Independency is to be scattered, the Baptists will not be spared. This great disorganization of existing institutions is the disintegration of the compound elements in order to form a new and glorious combination—a church where there shall be no more division—where there shall be neither Churchmen nor Dissenters, but Christ and Christians shall be all in all." Now we think not much of Dr. Cumming as a prophet, but he is in a position to know something of the denominations and their work, and he finds them hastening to their end, that a useful, new, and glorious combination may come in. "Let it come quickly," should be our response. For ourselves we will know "only Christ and Christians."

There is yet another fact in history bearing upon the matter in hand—the periods of life, vigor, and success have been those which have preceded the coming of fine buildings and scholastic orators. Their advent has been always followed by weakness and decay. Christianity as it was at the first is the first example. When all were preachers and road and river-side furnished listeners, the truth triumphed. When

temples became "churches," the clergy ministered and worldlings aped the Christian in forms and ceremonies, conversion became a rare work. When Methodism and Wesley made thousands of converts, stately chapels, colleges, and preachers of modern stamp were not within reach. When these came, then the old measure of success was no longer—the present generation can only find it in history. Mormonism came in upon us, (a dark and evil thing) and observing the conditions of successful propaganda it speedily claimed its tens and hundreds of thousands. It may, perhaps, be said that it has not, and never had, one decent chapel in the land—its preachers avowed their disbelief in dictionaries and, speaking by the Holy Spirit, they could not be trammelled by rules of grammar, yet they do a mighty work and their labors are crowned with success. Let true Christian Reformers profit by these facts. Let there be no leaning to modern flesh-pots. The more eloquent and educated proclaimers we can bring into the field the better. Let their be one or more in every town and good houses to invite the people to, but let these be held as not essential to success—not necessary to great success in converting sinners, but only as additional helps, to be lawfully desired and thankfully accepted.

Of the things we have written this is the sum—Let the saints gather for worship in the most suitable place they can provide. If they have speaking talent that will command an audience, let them invite the public at stated periods to listen to the gospel—if without such talent, let them meet for worship, not *once* a week merely, but *often*. Let praise and prayer breathe forth the longings of the soul, and let every man and every woman go to the outcast and perishing, crying, Come to Christ and then to us. Thus will results be realized, such as fine buildings, well-trained choirs, colleges, and finished pulpit orators never will produce. This Christian Methodism we want, and without it the Lord's work cannot be done.

**A BLACK CLOUD.**—A black cloud makes the traveler mend his pace, and mind his home: whereas a fair day and a pleasant way waste his time, and that stealeth away his affections in the prospect of the country. However others may think of it, yet I take it as a mercy, that now and then some clouds come between me and my sun, and many times some troubles do conceal my comforts; for I perceive, if I should find too much friendship in my inn, in my pilgrimage, I should forget my father's house and my heritage.—*Lucas.*

**OPINIONS.**—Opinions, says D'Aubigne, in his History of the Reformation, make their silent progress like the waters that trickle behind our rocks and loosen them from the mountains on which they rest; suddenly the hidden operation is revealed, and a single day suffices to lay bare the work of years, if not of centuries.