

and perhaps the most efficient of all by congregations maintaining district missions. The clamant demands of densely-crowded populations have far outgrown the resources of these institutions. They have neither been multiplied nor sustained in a state of efficiency to cope with the work on all sides of them.

When noted evangelists arise and go from place to place vast crowds gather round them. Many of them are gifted men. The people, a large proportion of them belonging to the churches already, hear these unconventional speakers with gladness, and many are savingly benefited by the truths they proclaim. The interest awakened by these visits subsides, and the great outlying mass remains comparatively untouched. It is often enough debated at conventions, What are the best means of conserving the results of revival services? The adequate answer to the inquiry is yet waited for. According to all accounts Chicago was moved by the direct and earnest address of Moody, Sam Jones and Sam Small; but of the thousands who attended the number who have since found their way into the fellowship of the churches is commented upon as disproportionately small. Sporadic effort is generally very striking, but, unless followed up by systematic and steady work, from the nature of the case, it is evanescent.

Over a year ago Messrs. Moody and Sankey held a convention in Pittsburgh. The Churches there felt that something was needed to conserve and deepen the religious interest awakened in the community, and to take steps with direct reference to the aggressive work so greatly needed in the way of city evangelization. Thereupon the various congregations appointed a representative committee. This committee matured a plan for a year's special evangelistic work, and a series of union meetings was held in Pittsburgh and Alleghany. During the summer months open-air services, largely attended, were convened in various districts. The cities were portioned into convenient districts, and Christian workers visited the people, and invitations specifying the various churches within these districts were widely distributed.

The experiment has been found encouraging and satisfactory. There was cordial co-operation on the part of the different churches engaged in the work. Numbers willingly undertook to visit the districts. Direct results have not been wanting. The year's increase in all the churches is above the average of former years. Many who were outside the churches have been induced to come in. The indirect results have also been valuable. A spirit of greater cordiality among the members of different branches of the Protestant Church has been visibly promoted, and not less important, a deeper sense of responsibility as to the claims of the multitude on the Church of Christ. In the beginning of the present year it became apparent that for direct and lasting work it seemed preferable, without any diminution of ecclesiastical feeling, that each denomination should undertake its share of the work and devote special attention to the districts adjoining individual churches. This seems to be in the right direction. A congregation's resources can thus be better concentrated, its organization more fully utilized, and the working capacity of its members made more available. From these beginnings great things may be expected. It is God's work for man's highest welfare; the divine Spirit's power is promised, and the Saviour's blessing is vouchsafed—"Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these little ones ye have done it unto Me."

HEART RELIGION.

INTO the recesses of personal spiritual life it is difficult to enter. The chamber of the heart is a sacred enclosure. The deeper joys and sorrows of spiritual experience are sacred things. Christians feel that they are not matters for free and familiar converse. In every human soul there are depths that no father confessor can sound. Only by quiet meditation and secret prayer, by a devotional use of the Word of God, can the divine life be maintained in the pious soul. Mere registering of evanescent feeling and changing emotions on the pages of a diary, not of course meant for publication, cannot be a safe guide. Earnest daily communion with God without human intervention is to true spiritual health and progress a felt necessity.

Is this direct and immediate endeavour after a

higher, fuller and larger Christian life as general among professing Christians as it ought to be? Are existing conditions favourable or unfavourable to its promotion? Our age is one of boundless activity in every direction. Ordinary pursuits are more relentlessly engrossing than ever before. The value of time for worldly business was never so fully recognized as it is to-day. Steam communication even is chided for being too slow; science and engineering are eagerly seeking appliances by which speed in travelling by land and sea may be accelerated. In religious, social and philanthropic movements there is restless activity and ever new organization, in many cases admirable in design and result; in all most admirable in intention. The time left for calm retirement, meditation and self-examination has been greatly abridged. With fading opportunities has there been a corresponding desire to strengthen those that remain? This is a matter that does not admit of statistical tabulation. It cannot be represented in periodical returns, yet it is of transcendent personal importance.

Between earnest, direct and immediate personal communion of the soul with God and the dreamy vagaries of a luxurious mysticism there is a wide difference. In the one case you breathe the pure, healthful, bracing air of heaven; in the other spiritual tone and vigour are enervated by the sickly and heated vapours of a lazy sentimentalism. The claims of duty are too urgent in these days to afford opportunities for such purposeless trifling; all the more reason, therefore, for the diligent and conscientious use of the means at disposal for the continued and regular maintenance of a living, personal piety.

Secret prayer has in every age been commended as a necessary part of religious life. Not merely the spiritual heroes and heroines of past times, but countless thousands of busy but obscure men and women, engaged in the commonplace duties and drudgeries of daily life, have found it an unfailing solace and source of strength, bringing courage and hope to the heart in troubled moments, and filling their serene hours with a rare joy. The most impressive of all teaching is the teaching of example. He who continually went about doing good, who was always about His Father's business, spent many solitary hours in fervent prayer on the lone mountain side.

Greater cultivation of the devotional habit would lead to marvellous results. It would develop personal elevation of character and influence. Home life would be made sweeter and brighter by its presence. The bitterness and rancour so painfully apparent in the eager race of competition would be greatly lessened. Things seen and temporal would assume their relative proportions, and the unseen and eternal would increasingly become present realities. It is told of Sir Robert Peel that, no matter how late the sitting in the House of Commons, it was his regular habit on returning home to spend some time before retiring to rest in the perusal of works of devotion. No matter how exciting had been the debate in which he had previously been engaged, the devotional hour always had a tranquillizing effect on his moral and spiritual nature.

Books and Magazines.

DREW DRAKE AND HIS NETS. (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication; Toronto: James Bain & Son.)—A good, robust and healthy book, conveying to the reader's mind high-toned moral purpose and kindly feeling.

MAEKL'S SUMMER IN THE HIMALAYAS. By Mrs. Helen M. Holcomb, of Allahabad. (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication; Toronto: James Bain & Son.)—A simple, natural and well-written story of life in India.

GRIFFIN ALLEY FOLK. Or Pearls from the Slums. By Ernest Gilmore. (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication; Toronto: James Bain & Son.)—A thoroughly interesting story for young readers, written in a lively and natural style, showing the wretchedness and misery inseparable from wrong-doing and also showing the saving power of true religion.

GATHERED JEWELS. A collection of Sunday School Hymns and Tunes. Edited by W. A. Ogden. (Toledo, Ohio: W. W. Whitney.)—In addition to a large selection of Sunday school hymns with appropriate music,

this neat and moderately priced little work contains also a number of well-known hymns and tunes classified as Christian Heart Songs, and a good selection of Standard Hymns of the Church with their familiar tunes.

THE CULDEE CHURCH. By Rev. T. V. Moore, D.D. (Richmond, Va.: Presbyterian Committee of Publication.)—This is a neat little tractate in paper cover. There are seven chapters, written in a popular and pleasing style, under the following titles: Iona, Apostolic Succession, Planting of Christianity in Scotland, Culdee Presbyterianism, Reign of Popery in Scotland, the Reformation in Scotland, and Concluding Reflections.

FICKLE FORTUNE. By Robina F. Hardy. SUNDERED HEARTS. By Annie S. Swan. (Edinburgh: Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier.)—These two volumes, neatly printed and in paper covers, form Nos. 2 and 3 of an attractive popular shilling series issued by this well-known firm of Edinburgh publishers. Readers of Annie S. Swan's and Robina F. Hardy's works do not need to be told that they are charmingly written and elevating in tone.

THE OLD TESTAMENT STUDENT. William R. Harper, Ph.D., Editor. (Chicago: The American Publication Society of Hebrew.)—The design of this able monthly is to promote a profound and scholarly study of the Old Testament Scriptures. It is not the organ of any particular school of thought, and the editor intimates that each contributor has to be responsible for his own contribution. A number of scholarly divines of various shades of opinion contribute to its pages.

WOMANHOOD. By the Rev J. H. Worcester, Jun. (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication; Toronto: James Bain & Son.)—This is a neat little paper-covered publication under the name of the Westminster Cheap Series. Rev Mr. Worcester preached a series of sermons in Sixth Presbyterian Church, Chicago, on Ideal Womanhood, Purpose, Occupation, Adornment and Influence. They are good, sensible and Scriptural sermons, now reproduced in this cheap and handy form.

HINTS AND SUGGESTIONS ON SCHOOL ARCHITECTURE AND HYGIENE. With plans and illustrations. By J. George Hodgins, M.A., LL.D., Deputy-Minister of Education. (Toronto: Printed for the Education Department.)—This useful and convenient manual has been prepared under the direction of the Hon. Minister of Education for the benefit of school trustees throughout the Province. They will find that in brief compass most valuable information on all that pertains to the neatness, beauty, adaptation, comfort and healthfulness of school buildings and their accessories is presented. Dr. Hodgins has done his work admirably.

PLATFORM AND PULPIT AIDS. The Clerical Library. (New York: A. C. Armstrong & Son.)—This is a handsome and useful addition to the valuable series comprising the Clerical Library. It contains speeches by the most eminent Christian orators of the present and recent times, and a selection of fresh, pithy and occasionally humorous illustrations. It includes a varied series of striking extracts from addresses on Home Work, Foreign Missions, Bible Distribution, Temperance and miscellaneous subjects. The work gives an excellent idea of effective platform oratory, and is fruitful in suggestion to the public speaker on religious and moral themes.

JOHN BRIGHT, though now advanced in years and in indifferent health, has lost none of the clearness of his keen moral perception. This is shown by the estimate he places on the usefulness of Sabbath schools, as expressed on a recent public occasion. He says they contribute much toward the development of the moral feelings, and that the work performed by them was of more importance at the present moment than it had been at any previous period in English history. The powers of monarchs were lessening, and the influence of the aristocracy was fading away. The only power that was growing—a power that would never henceforth be limited—was the power of the people. He claimed, therefore, that the most pressing need at the present time was political education, by which there could be cultivated in the minds of the people a sense of their moral responsibility. They should be taught that labour would have its just reward, and that the wealthy should be permitted to enjoy their riches in security.