

endure straitness as instruments of righteousness in the hands of the Lord Jesus.

SINCE the above lines were penned on the Toronto religious census, an editorial of the *Toronto Mail*, which we condense, has appeared and presents some very pertinent reflections: "The people of Toronto have lately been called upon to indulge in self-gratulation on their outward respect for religious worship. It is not necessary to appraise the actual value of the figures, nor to attribute formalism to any considerable number of those who attend church. Individually to his own Master every man must stand or fall. At the same time, speaking of church-goers in the mass, it is not at all unfair to question how far the outward show of devotion carries with it evidence of the religious spirit. And yet how fallacious it seems to count heads when one cannot search hearts. Perhaps the naked enumeration of the attendants may flatter the pride or arouse the jealousy of particular denominations; but as a gauge of a people's spiritual condition, it is utterly futile. When the Church was purified by the fires of persecution, the faithful worshippers could have been counted with some approach to accuracy. Yet there were formalists and false disciples from the first; and the zeal of many had waxed cold before the canon of the New Testament had been completed. When the Emperor Constantine professed Christianity it became fashionable, and there no longer remained a test to discriminate between the faithful and the hypocritical worshippers. That much of the outward show was a pretence appeared clearly enough when his nephew Julian, for a brief season, gave the ascendancy to expiring heathenism. When the fires went out upon the altars of the old gods, to be nominally a Christian became a social, and usually a political, necessity. Perhaps the surest proof of a decline in spirituality is the transformation undergone by our public services. The assembling of thousands together is still called by men 'Divine worship;' whereas, nowadays, the great *pièce de résistance*, if the phrase be permissible, is a rousing and exciting sermon—not one to disturb the conscience, but to tickle the ear. The services proper of the sanctuary are often looked upon as tedious

preliminaries to the intellectual feast, except where the music is attractive. One can note the relief experienced by the expectant cough which passes through the congregation when the real business of the time—an oratorical display—is just at hand. Finally, although it is no doubt inevitable under the conditions of modern life, the conservation of only a part of Sunday to public worship tends to isolate religion from human life. It comes to be regarded as something apart from the concerns of the workaday world. Hence it does not shed its hallowing influence over the rest of the week, during which too many church-goers forget its obligations upon them in every thought, word, and action. A sense of Christian duty does not follow them into the family, the shop, the counting-house, or the legislature. It does not inspire men with a more delicate perception of what is due to relations, still less to dependents or those with whom they have business dealings. The result is that the Christian religion is evil-spoken of because of the inconsistencies, not to say the backslidings and positive wrongs, which may be traced in its professors. Before we boast of our church-going, let it appear not only by the words upon our lips, but in the entire tenor of our lives.

A FRIEND writes to know whether any member in the Church has a right of access to the account in detail of the Fellowship Fund. Of course we have no power to speak *ex cathedra*, but we submit in reply a few principles for consideration. In general, every church member has a right to know how funds to which he is supposed to contribute are disposed of. It may be laid down as a principle that moneys in a measure received from the public should be fully accounted for to that public; and a proper disposition of such funds, even an honest misadventure in such disposition, has nothing to fear but much to gain from the giving of regular and systematic account. The Fellowship Fund is a public fund—that is, it is contributed to by the Church public—and therefore is open to their inspection. At the same time it should be remembered that the New Testament rule of giving is, not to proclaim from the house-tops the charity bestowed, which makes the donor a patron and the receiver a pauper. The abstract right of knowing each item in