

us. Whether it is best to show kindness to them in the way our Christmas story suggests, or in providing for them more necessary things, our readers must judge; only, "we would that they should remember the poor." We spoke last month of a text which it is said nobody believes. We are not sure but there is one more such, in Luke xiv. 13, 14, to which we invite attention.

One more word. Perhaps it is not needed by any reader of this Magazine, but it may not be altogether untimely. We trust that at this holiday season, which proves such a snare to so many men, and is the occasion of so much anxiety and sorrow to their wives and families, intoxicating liquors, of every kind, will be banished from the side-board. Let no fair hand proffer the wine-cup, or tempt any young gentleman to drink. It may be his ruin—it may be your own,—body and soul, for ever! Abstinence is the only safe rule in such things. May all our readers prove it so, and never have a Christmas or New Year darkened by the shadow of intemperance.

#### OUR STRUGGLING MISSIONARY CHURCHES—ARE THEY WORTH SUSTAINING?

Many will read this caption, who perhaps will not take time to read the article that follows it, and will be ready to answer, No! It is a foregone conclusion with them. Applying certain commercial rules, where such rules really have no bearing, they tell us that they don't pay. They have been beneficiaries of the Missionary Society so many years that they have become "pauperized,"

and have sunk into a condition of chronic dependence. And without a second thought they would strike them off the list, and let them die. They believe in "the survival of the fittest."

This view is often urged by our more wealthy and influential laymen, and does more, perhaps, than any other thing that can be named, to lead them to withhold their assistance from our Missionary Society.

There is, doubtless, something to be said in favour of such a policy. Churches do, undeniably, sometimes lean too heavily on outside help,—help, too, which is really more needed elsewhere. They are, in many cases, well able to support their pastors without a missionary grant, *if they only thought so*, and would work their finances a little more systematically. But we all know the old saying about what would happen were there no "ifs" in the way. As a matter of fact, however, much as we may deplore it, without such help one-half, perhaps three-fourths of our missionary churches would cease to exist. The question again comes back on us, therefore,—Are they worth sustaining?

There are exceptions to almost every rule, and there may be to this; but answering generally, we reply unhesitatingly, 'Yes!' and that for a number of reasons.

1. These churches represent and maintain certain great distinctive principles held by us, as a denomination, as of prime importance to the successful prosecution of the Lord's work. Not to refer to any others, our churches are a standing protest against a mixed communion,—the mingling of the godly and the un-