

The prayer-meeting, at which the voices of the brethren are heard, and other week-night gatherings, where the attendants mingle more freely together, will do more in one month to make a stranger feel at home in a church, than twelve months of attendance on Sabbath services only. Again, the more the members of any congregation *work* together, the more social will they be. It has often been remarked, that even work for the externals and temporalities of the church draws the people together, as in a bazaar, a concert, or a collecting organization. Much more, any work directly for the good of souls. As a rule, the most active members are they who light upon most of fellowship; while the drones in the hive, merely coming to church on Sunday, and going home again, complain most loudly of the want of sociality.

Our first dependence, therefore, must be on attaining such a lively religious condition, as will instinctively draw us to one another, and the next, on providing such opportunities for coming together, and working together, as will give the largest exercise to the social features of our religion.

But even when this is done, we shall still fall short of the standard which some seem to set up,—viz., that everybody in the congregation shall know and visit everybody else! This is a simple impossibility.

There are many people who come to church, and get some good by coming, who are not of a social *nature*. They are like "a garden enclosed, a spring shut up, a fountain sealed." They seldom visit, they receive few visitors. They live within their own families—within their own selves. It would be torture to them, to force them to make a large circle of acquaintances. It is not in them. You may be sorry that it is so, but so it is. What can be done? It is of no use to scold—that will not change their nature. "Let them be happy in their own way." Some such, we know, serve God and their brethren unknown of men, better than some of your public characters.

Another class are very much absorbed in their own work. The father labours hard and long, at his business during the day, and at home "chores" or nursing the baby, when he comes home. The mother, poor body, is tied to the cooking-stove, the wash tub, the work basket and the cradle, from morning till night. These people cannot give much time to visiting, or to entertaining company. They have neither time, nor strength, nor means to do it.

Others have already a large circle of friends, who claim all the time they can spare for social purposes, and it is impossible for them to take a whole congregation into their visiting list beside. Sickness and other afflictions shut up many families from sociality.

Moreover, it must be confessed, that the mere fact of attending the same church, does not prove a sufficient reason for cultivating a personal intimacy. We throw open the doors of the Lord's house a great deal wider than we do our own. Every one is most welcome to come and hear the gospel, the vilest of the vile. So is every store in the city open to all purchasers of whatever