

the Sabbath school and he applied to the trustees to have a few benches removed. They would not have it. Those benches had been so almost ever since they could remember, and so they had got to stay. Change the seats a little, if it is going to help you to break up stiffness, and get the meeting out of a rut. Have a praise meeting now and again. A man once said, "I lived on Grumble-street nearly all my life, but I moved over into Thank-giving-street, and I tell you it is a good deal pleasanter locality." I know a minister who has taken charge of a congregation in New England. He could not get the meeting out of the rut. They had been going on in the same old way for ever so long; got the ruts worn so deep, the people had lost sight of one another. He gave out on Sunday morning that there would not be the usual prayer meeting on Friday night, but that in its place they would have a praise meeting. One deacon asked another if the young pastor had consulted him about not having a prayer meeting, and they found he had not consulted any of them. They thought he was taking great liberties and they called upon him in his room. He told them they had been having prayer meetings for a long time, and he thought a praise meeting would be a good thing. They asked him what he meant by a praise meeting so long since they had had anything of that kind. You see, they had forgotten what it was. The meeting was held. The pastor read one of the Psalms of David and called upon any one who had anything to praise God for to let their feelings be known. One by one they began to rise, all stiffness was gone, and after the meeting was over, instead of each one going away as quickly as he could, the people stayed, and shook hands with one another, and said what a grand meeting they had had, and said they believed the Lord would revive His work. He had revived it already, for He had revived them. Our meeting in Chicago got into the rut, and I gave it out that we would have a promise meeting, and I told the people to bring me promises out of the Bible, giving to each person a book, and so we had the whole Bible gone over in a week. It was one of the most extraordinary meetings I ever attended. I tell you, it waked me up. I had no idea before there were so many promises in the Bible. We heard from the patriarchs, the psalmist, the apostles. It was a most extraordinary meeting. The prayer meeting can be made the most interesting of the whole work. It is my privilege to belong to a church in which the prayer meeting is larger than the church, and has been for twenty years. Every Friday night the church officers used to meet before prayer meeting, take tea together, and have prayer and go to the prayer meeting together. We were all agreed, and we used to keep back and let the young people take part, or strangers, and if there was a pause we were ready. There was no need to urge the people to rise. There were often three or four trying for the floor at once, saying, "Now, brethren, lose no time, let not a moment be wasted," and that sort of nudging at the people. I would suggest as a good idea, that the ministers and the church officers should have tea together. It keeps the church united and prevents the forming of any little cliques. You keep fifteen or twenty of the good men united and you have a good church. A minister has a successful meeting in Boston. If any of his people are absent from prayer meeting, he sends postal cards asking them to meet him half an hour before the next meeting. He meets them and speaks about their absence and they go into the meeting together, and in that way he keeps the whole church at the prayer meeting. That strikes me as a good idea, and I do not

see why it cannot be carried out everywhere. Another thing we want to guard against, is long prayers. All Christ's prayers are short, the longest one is in the 17th of John, and it only takes about four minutes to read it carefully and prayerfully. I do not know where the church got this idea of long prayers, not from the Bible, unless from the prayer at the dedication of the Temple. You might have a great prayer at the dedication of a great church like this, but to have long prayers every Sabbath is a mistake. Few people can follow a man in prayer for more than ten or fifteen minutes. Minister and all, you know your mind will wander and you cannot help it. You long to have him stop, and when half the congregation is that way, the minister is not doing much good. If a man wants, let him rise and pray two or three times, but let him not pray too long. If you have a man who makes fifteen minute prayers, you should go and speak to him in the spirit of Christ, and tell him he should be brief. You say you will offend him. Better offend him than spoil the meeting. If there is only an hour, it is not right that one man should take a quarter of the time. You cannot have a profitable meeting if three or four men take all the time. If a man gets offended because he is talked to in the spirit of Christ about the mistake he is making, better let him go. If he will not stand that, it is a good sign that his heart is not in the right place. Short prayers in Scripture have brought their answer. "Lord help me," that was what the Syro-Phoenician woman said. Three words. "Lord remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom" That was what the penitent thief said. If he had known the Lord was in His kingdom he might have shortened it to "Lord remember me." The publican said, "Lord be merciful to me a sinner," and that brought the answer right there. Peter said, "Lord save me or I perish." Somebody says that if Peter had had a long preamble to his prayer as some, he would have been forty feet under water before he could have the Lord know what he wanted. My experience is, those who pray longest in public are those who pray least at home. If a man has not a good record in the community, do not let him take part. Young people find it out if such men take part and the thing does harm. It seems to me we have to be loyal to Christ, and we will not be loyal to Him if we do not go to such a man as that and persuade him to give up whatever it may be that gives offence, and if he will not, then it is our duty to insist that he shall not take part in the prayer meeting.

After Mr. Moody had given replies to a number of questions put by people in the audience,

MR. J. K. MACDONALD said: I look upon the prayer meeting of the congregation as one of the most important means of grace connected with the church. It is the garden in which individual members of the congregation come down from being as it were recipients of bouquets into the garden itself, and become gardeners there. It is a fact that we need a baptism in connection with our prayer meetings. In a church with a membership of three hundred there will not be at the outside seventy-five persons present at prayer meeting. That is surely not as it should be. The question is: How is the prayer meeting to be made more attractive? I quite concur in the view that the prayers and addresses should be short and interesting. The business man has a wonderful interest in the prayer meeting. Sitting in church on Sabbath his mind is very apt to drift away into business channels, and he draws himself up quickly, astonished that he should be so careless. If business men will attend prayer meetings they will obtain much that will be of