

## VARIETY IN CLASS-MEETING EXERCISES.

VARIETY is the soul of life. God loves variety. Turn where we may, we see it as His thought and plan.

In methods of work it is often the inspiration and the key to success. Fossilization either in forms or experiences indicates danger. The law of sameness is the law of death.

We would not uphold variety for mere variety's sake. A passion for new methods, regardless of reason, betokens weakness rather than strength. Exalting the manner above the matter, the plan above the purpose, the how above the why, is both unwise and unwarrantable.

Variety, however, is good. All things are set to its music. It is the poetry of nature, and may we not add, the poetry of grace. We are built on the law of change. We look for it. We need it. We profit by it. It is the law of compensation. It seems to balance the wants, and give an equipoise to our being, whether physical, intellectual or spiritual.

The design of the class-meeting renders very appropriate, we might almost say indispensable, this law of variety. The class-meeting is to build up Christian character, to instruct, to comfort, guard, cheer, quicken, counsel, according to the need and condition of its members. Variety therefore naturally and necessarily enters largely into it as an element of progress and power.

The class that is merely formal, going through its round of exercises with drill-like precision—strictly orthodox, of the "straightest sect," "A Hebrew of the Hebrews"—may be like Saul of Tarsus, a "persecutor of the saints," rather than a helper.

The class that smells of age, that has nothing fresh, nothing lively, nothing buoyant and bright and new, that is made up of experiences musty with time—experiences that were "*mummied*" years ago—should have had its funeral and been laid away in its grave long ere this. Our God is not a "God of the dead, but of the living."

In outlining "variety in class-meeting exercises," it is difficult to state any formula or indicate any definite course. To