

their mutual duties and privileges. In order to condense the discussion, the following queries are presented:—

THE MINUTE BOOK.

Is the first principle of the writer correct, that "this might be called the day-book," because "it supplies the other books with information"? Some clerks use the minute book for recording minutes of business meetings only. When an addition or decrease of membership occurs, the record of such is made directly into the roll-book. Is such a practice right or commendable?

Next, is it correct to say that "reports, if in writing, need not be copied in the minute book"? An experienced pastor holds that every document, great and small, should be copied, otherwise the minutes are inaccurate. Should minutes be signed by pastor and clerk? Should any motion be recorded except the one which carries? Should any details of discussions be allowed to appear? Should a candidate's experience be recorded? If so, to what extent? One clerk was in the habit of recording all the minute details of the candidate's relation, and as some of these should never have appeared, the officers had to take the clerk in charge and revise his minutes before they were read to the church! On the other hand, these experiences, when properly condensed, are extremely interesting,—so much so that in the old country it is not an unusual thing to have church minutes published in book form, when churches grow old enough to have a history. If the clerk be inclined (as some are) to forego altogether the pleasure of writing experiences, let him think what a grand thing it would be to read, in after years, the experiences, recorded fresh from the lips of young, tremulous candidates who in after years became preachers like Spurgeon!

ROLL BOOK.

Is it necessary to rule off space for members united by restoration? They must be received upon experience; and their names should be re-entered, else difficulty will arise in the following way: In the plan given for the Roll Book, the actual membership is determined by the blank lines of the right hand page, which page records dismissions. Now, if a member be expelled, there will be an entry on the right-hand page of that expulsion, which will prevent that name being counted as a member, even though an entry appeared on the left-hand page of such restoration.

The plan given for entering names of unmarried female members who afterwards marry, has been proven by experience to be not only convenient, but to keep the roll intact and clean. The old plan of inserting names of female members first by their maiden name and afterwards by the husband's, is apt to mislead the clerk into counting the one member as two.

What is meant by "dropping" a member? Some clerks use the word when it is desired to mildly express the idea of "exclusion";—the strongest way of putting the idea being to call it "expulsion." There is another view, however, which is, that "dropping" simply means "suspension" for a time,—members not being returned in statistics to Associations, &c., while in this state of "suspension." The idea of a "suspension" is a novel one, to say the least. A suspended member

could not properly be disciplined; and is therefore no member at all. Suspension is supposed to be regarded as discipline, but is it regular? The term "dropped" has been pronounced absurd by one who has closely studied the question of church relations. On the other hand, it is contended that "dropping" is the only term to express the idea of dismission for simple indiscretion or inattention on the part of a member, as distinguished from criminal or immoral conduct.

The expression "received by experience and former baptism" has been used when a member relates experience and is received. The expression is both verbose and absurd, for a member cannot be received by both experience and baptism. Besides, does not "experience" imply baptism? If not, what does it imply?

KEEPING MEMBERSHIP STATISTICS.

The late Rev. H. Lloyd gave in the *Canadian Baptist*, in 1868, a very simple plan for keeping statistics of members as they come and go. The following table is a modification of Bro. Lloyd's idea—one of the best features of which is that the precise membership at any moment can be seen at a glance. This table might be copied into the blank leaves of each Clerk's Roll Book, and extended over any number of years, and commencing at any month;—that one being preferable in which the church year begins. Returns to Associations running, say from June of one year to June of the next, can be obtained by a simple calculation of the columns comprised between those dates.

	January.	February.	March.	April.	May.	June.	July.	August.	September.	October.	November.	December.	Totals.
INCREASE.													
Baptism....	10	9	9	8	6	3	6	1	7	8	42		142
Letter....	2	1	1	2	4	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	20
Exper'ce.	1	1	2	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	15
DECREASE.													
Letter....	2	3	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	18
Exclusion.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	4
Death.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	24

Total increase, 75; total decrease, 24; nett increase, 51; membership at last report, 200; to which add 51; making present membership 251.

THE WORK OF S. S. LIBRARIANS.

HOW THE GUELPH BAPTIST S. S. LIBRARY IS MANAGED.

Bro. W. R. Evans has an extremely simple and very efficient plan for carrying on his work as librarian in Guelph. His room is to the left of the entrance to the school room. Each scholar has a "box" in the Librarian's "post office," bearing his or her respective number. On entering, the scholar places in his box the book he has read, and inside of the book his catalogue-card on which he has noted at least six books, one of which he would like to have in exchange. He then goes to his class. During the session the librarian takes this book, credits it, oppo-

sites the scholar's name, where it has been charged, and puts it away, placing the card to one side. So on till all books have been replaced, and the cards alone are left.

The card bears the scholar's name and number, and also a printed catalogue of 100 books. Between the number and the name of each book there is a small space. In this space the scholar ticks with a pencil the books wanted. When a book has been read, the tick is extended into a stroke through the number; and thus there is no danger of a book being given out twice to the same scholar, unless the scholar forgets to make the erasive stroke—and he will not forget it more than once, lest he get the same book a second time.

The Librarian, taking up a card, selects one of the books which the scholar has "ticked," and, after charging it against the scholar, inserts the card and places the book in the "box,"—and so on through the list.

The work of a catalogue of 350 books can be got through in less than half an hour by this plan, which is simplicity itself. The work moves on smoothly and noiselessly. As the scholars pass out of school they step into the "post office" and take their books from their respective boxes. The Librarian keeps a record-book in which the scholar's names are arranged numerically, and columns are ruled off for the different dates when books are taken out. In charging a book, its number is simply entered opposite the members number and name, under the proper date. No notice is taken of the arrangement of scholars in classes, when numbering them in the Librarian's record-book.

The card-catalogues are cheap and convenient; and their division into hundreds allows a species of classification,—a very essential thing where the number of scholars and books is large. When a scholar has read through the first hundred books, he receives the catalogue for the second hundred, and thus takes a step in advance. There seems to be one disadvantage about these partial catalogues: the books must be purchased by the hundred, or kept till that number has accumulated, before being put into the school. Of course catalogues of less than a hundred books might be printed, but these would create endless confusion,—one idea of the division of the list into hundreds being that the scholars shall have a definite lot to choose from.—*Com.*

Communications.

The Editors do not necessarily endorse the views of contributors and correspondents.

SHOULD OUR MISSIONARY SOCIETIES BE CONSOLIDATED?

To the Editor of the "CHRISTIAN HELPER."

DEAR SIR:—There is an old Latin proverb which says, "He that tries to avoid Charybdis falls into Scylla." The question has occurred to me whether the Board of our Foreign Mission Society will not experience the truth of this proverb, if, in order to escape its present financial troubles, it advocates the consolidation scheme set forth in the "Canadian Baptist" of May 2nd.