

LETTERS

ON THE

HOME MISSIONARY WORK

OF THE

Protestant Episcopal Church,

AND THE

REPORT OF THE LAY COMMITTEE

TO THE

House of Clerical and Lay Deputies,

ON THE SAME SUBJECT.



PHILADELPHIA :

J. S. McCALLA, PR., 237 DOCK STREET.

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PHILADELPHIA, *January 2d*, 1863.

MY DEAR MR. WELSH:—

I have been deeply interested in your letter. Its facts and its suggestions are of the most important kind, and reach down to the foundation principles on which Lay co-operation is based, and through which it can be supported and made efficient.

I feel more and more that we have not yet developed the full working power of the Church. It has resources and capacities, with principles of action involved in them, which have not yet been brought out and applied; and I rejoice in any movement which will awaken these dormant energies, and give direction to these hitherto neglected agencies of the Church.

It is my sincere desire that you should publish your letter, so that others who desire to work, but know not exactly how to do it, may be guided by your counsels, and those wise suggestions of our beloved Diocesan, whose views accord so much with yours, and in accordance with which I hope ever to labor, in fostering and giving vigorous action to the Lay element in the Protestant Episcopal Church.

I remain very sincerely yours,

WM. BACON STEVENS,

*Assistant Bishop of the Diocese of Pennsylvania.*

WM. WELSH, ESQ.

PHILADELPHIA, *January 1st, 1863.*

*To the Members of the COMMITTEE ON LAY CO-OPERATION appointed by the House of Clerical and Lay Deputies, at the session of the General Convention in 1859, and continued by Resolution at the session of 1862.*

As Secretary of the Committee, it becomes my duty to send you a copy of the Report, made at the late meeting of the General Convention in New York by such members as were then present. Their Report, with the Address issued by the Committee in the Spring of 1860, was ordered to be entered on the Journal of the House of Clerical and Lay Deputies, and it was resolved that the Committee should be continued. There is, therefore, still resting upon us the responsible duty "of devising and carrying out such means and measures as we may deem advisable, calculated to reach the hearts of the Laity," "and incite them to holy zeal in the cause of Christ," "that they may earnestly and actively employ their time and means to the best of their ability in supporting and invigorating the Christian efforts of the Church in all its departments." Each Bishop may still fill any vacancy in the Committee which may be created in his Diocese by death, removal, or otherwise; and it was early resolved by the Committee itself, that each member should be requested to act, in his own Diocese, in such manner and to such extent as he might, on conference with its Head, deem best calculated to promote the important ends which the House had in view when the Committee was created.

But, inasmuch as a free interchange of views and experiences among the members may contribute to develop important facts, and to correct errors, while it can hardly fail to deepen our interest in the subject, I hope we shall still continue by occasional meetings and by correspondence, to co-operate in the good work. As an earnest of my own readiness to do this, I take the liberty of laying before you some results of my experience for the last twenty-five years, as an humble, but not uninterested or inactive laborer in the Sunday School and Home Mission Departments of our Church work. The great problem which, during that period, has occupied much of my thoughts, as it has the thoughts of many of every grade in our Church, is *How by the use of the Church's system and instruments to draw men, and especially workmen and those living without Religion, to Christ?*

It has been felt by most of our Clergy and Laity, that our Church had not hitherto succeeded in enlisting the attention and interest of the great mass of our countrymen; while at the same time it was felt that, by her method of worship and of training for the young, she was pre-eminently fitted to edify them. By some, it was thought that all attempts to do this would be abortive, and that she must be content with ministering to a small fraction of the population. By others, who could not forget that when the Saviour sent His Church into the world, it was to preach glad tidings to "every creature," various expedients have been proposed. On the one hand, it has been proposed to drop, in good part, our liturgical worship and all distinctive teaching, when dealing with the young or the poor in Missionary Work. By others, the plan of free churches, of a richer and more decorated ritual, of larger almsgiving, has been relied on. It cannot be questioned that much

good has thus been done. In proportion as these measures have been united with kindly intercourse and with ministrations from house to house, they have been the more blessed. But of themselves they can effect little, and what they do accomplish is at the expense, on one or the other side, of what is distinctive of our Church.

We have erected, in our larger towns, many Mission Churches. When unendowed they have languished for want of adequate pecuniary means—when endowed, they have too often been entrusted to Ministers of impaired health, or to those who are disqualified for active Missionary Work, by general inefficiency or by paramount taste for study. Another difficulty in their way has been, that they were associated too exclusively with the poor in the minds of the independent and self-supporting; and have, in some cases, fostered a chronic pauperism by giving alms too freely and too indiscriminately. And yet another, and in some instances still greater, hindrance to their success, arises from the unwillingness of cultivated Christians to leave their old parish, with its pleasant associations and ministrations, and incorporate themselves permanently with the Mission. Unless they identify themselves with it, their services lose half their value to the enterprise, which at its outset needs earnest and enlightened Lay help at every step and in every part of its work.

For the voluntary and unpaid labors of Christian men and women in carrying the Gospel to the destitute, there seems to be no substitute. We have tried Deacons of limited education; expecting, but thus far in vain, that they would be willing to "use that office" through life. In England, they have tried paid and licensed Scripture readers; and there is no

doubt that, with the established habits and homogeneous population of that country, they have done much good, especially when laboring under the auspices of the National Church. In this country we have used largely the *colporteur* system; but the visits are only occasional and brief, and if made in connection with no church organization, do not lay the foundation for that *parochial* life which seems to be essential to the permanence and growth of Religion among men. Preaching in the open air, in Theatres and Academies of Music, has been tried, but with only transient effects. Our Clergy have been, in many cases, models of Missionary zeal, visiting the poor and afflicted with untiring assiduity; but unless sustained by a band of earnest, persevering Lay workers, they have not accomplished results proportioned to their efforts. The full and sympathizing intercourse, the ready assistance in time of pecuniary or domestic difficulty, the nameless acts of good will which ought to obtain between established Christians and the weak and wandering members of Christ's fold, cannot be performed by Ministers alone. In many cases the Laity are better fitted to perform them; in all cases, by assisting in the work, they gain inestimable blessings to themselves, while they render great service to their Pastors and to the objects of their beneficence.

We have many signs of increased zeal and activity. Our Hospitals, Orphan Houses, Church Homes, and other like Asylums, attest the growth of a large hearted charity. But do we not need effort to make the *homes* of our people more neat, and comfortable, and Christian? Are we not too apt, in providing for the sick and destitute, to withdraw them from family associations and family influence? Do we not need that the wives and mothers of working men, in our cities and

towns, should be inspired with higher hope and ambition, should strive to make their meals and evenings at home attractive, and by books and other innocent and exhilarating means, be able to counteract the attractions of the beer saloon and the dram-shop? Do we not need to demonstrate, by our personal labors in the houses of the poor and in drawing them to our churches, that our Religion is the copious fountain of good to body, and mind, and soul, and that it is under the shadow of our churches that they can be most truly men. Here is work, I venture to think, to which every follower of Christ is, or may become, equal. It is work for which there is "ample room and verge enough." It is work which, if neglected, must entail upon us untold loss and shame.

Many of the best minds in our Church are now deeply exercised with the consideration of a fundamental principle, that underlies much of the Missionary Work, that we are attempting in our large cities. It has become a very grave question, whether there is much permanent value in any effort to reach persons who reside within a reasonable distance of a church, unless they can be grafted into it. That some good is effected by the mere contact of zealous Christians with neglecters of their souls, cannot be questioned; but persons with evil surroundings, who have for a long time yielded to sensual appetites, or even to indifference, need the constant Christian watchfulness, counsel and sympathy, that can only permanently emanate from Christ's organized family. It is believed by many of our city Clergy that the Church cannot perform its true functions until one or more free services on each Sunday are provided in every parish for the poor and the indifferent, that they may be thus drawn into the Fold of Christ.

The following extract from the address of the Bishop of this Diocese to the Convention, shows the importance, in his judgment, of Christian Churches taking hold of Missionary Work in their organized capacity :

“The collateral and subsidiary agencies, which are being employed in some parishes to reach those who are alienated from proper religious influence, multiply and are very useful. Cottage meetings, Bible classes for adults of both sexes, mothers’ meetings, and other assemblages, in which intellectual, and, perhaps, industrial improvement is combined with Christian instruction, and with kindly social intercourse, are fountains of blessing to many a weary and sin-sick soul. In this way the influence of the Clergy and zealous Laity interpenetrates masses of people who, before, were not reached at all, or were reached but feebly and fitfully.

“I am persuaded that it is by such means alone that we can deal successfully with the great problems of pauperism and crime, which have so long vexed the Christian and the Statesman. If by friendly intercourse and generous offices we can bridge over the chasm which too much separates the educated and godly members of Christ’s body from the reckless, or dogged, or ignorant; if we can cheer the desponding by words and deeds of hearty, cordial sympathy; stay the declining steps of the unstable and the tempted, through better associations; lend a helping hand to the struggling poor, not so much by alms as by teaching them self-help; multiply prayers and acts of friendly assiduity round the most hardened and the most depraved; we need not despair. Love—expansive, never resting, universal—is God’s grand instrument for redeeming a world. Its saving power can be known only by those to whom it is carried through his people—and it is

more by deeds than by words, more by a constant flow of kindness and faithfulness, than by money, that it is to be done.

“Experience teaches the insufficiency of all measures to relieve the poor which are compulsory—where the givers are moved merely by the exactions of law, and receivers think themselves entitled to even more than they get; where there is no interchange of kindly and gracious affections between the parties, and the assistance is doled out by hired officials, rather than by warm-hearted brethren and sisters in Christ. Hasty and indiscriminate alms-giving by individuals is hardly more satisfactory or more useful. And mixed associations for relieving the poor, where Christians of different names cooperate, are attended by serious difficulties.

“The principle on which they act necessitates the suppression of distinctive religious teaching, and the ignoring, to a considerable extent, of the parochial relation. Many think that they entitle themselves to more consideration, by disclaiming all church connections, and the almost inevitable tendency is to divorce charity and Christianity—not certainly in the minds of those who give, but practically in the hearts and lives of those who receive.

“I must renew here the expression of my opinion that the wants of the poor and neglected will never be adequately met by spiritual or temporal relief, till the Christian churches take hold of the matter in their organic capacity, and devote themselves to it, with all the agencies, Clerical and Lay, Parochial and Missionary, that they possess. That such agencies must be animated with a spirit of fervent and indomitable love, and be conducted with prudence as well as zeal, need hardly be said. Nor need it be added that multitudes who work

according to other methods, are impelled by the loftiest motives, and are great benefactors of mankind."

The two following are among the collateral and subsidiary agencies referred to by the Bishop as efficient aids in Parish Missionary Work. As they are rather novel and can be availed of very generally, without any increase in the expenditure of a church, or of the strength of its Minister, I will refer to them somewhat in detail. A large number of little vagrant girls are, on each Saturday morning, gathered into some room in the church, to receive instruction from ladies in sewing and other handy work. Personal neatness is part of the instruction, with as much religious teaching as the peculiarities of their condition and creed will allow. As their parents are grateful for the evident improvement in the manners and industry of their children, visits of teachers to their homes become agreeable and profitable. Christianity then, perhaps, for the first time, seems to these godless parents to have a practical value.

The Mothers' meeting, referred to by the Bishop, gives promise of being the most valuable Lay agency that the Church has availed of since the introduction of Sunday Schools. Indeed it is the complement of that system—for the Sunday School reaches the homes of the scholars very imperfectly, whilst these meetings and the visits of Christian women to the mothers of scholars, change the character of their homes.

Meetings of mothers on one evening of each week are held in many parishes. Sometimes the meeting is commenced on a large scale, with a regular organization of officers, &c.; then it usually decreases until a true basis is reached. The most successful meetings are commenced on a small scale; the Rector

quietly selecting a Christian lady of good practical common sense and ready sympathy to begin the work, and afterwards to guide and control it, under his direction. She commences, by seeking out and drawing, into some room in the church, women who are not frequenters of God's House; first visiting mothers who either have children in the Sunday School, or the Saturday sewing school, or whose names are recorded on the Baptismal Register of the parish. Several friendly visits, neither condescending nor patronizing, are often necessary to overcome the reluctance of some women to move out of their well beaten path of daily drudgery. But when the visitor wins their confidence and affection by little acts of kindness, the cords of love draw them away from home cares, into a little circle of kindred spirits, where they spend a social evening with mutual profit. The women bring their sewing or knitting, or the matron provides them with work, as the social character of the meeting is thus increased.

Instruction is given in cutting and mending, and advice in home duties; the ideal is that practical Christian sympathy will elevate and ennoble them so as to induce thrift and lessen the alms-giving of the parish. This ideal has been fully realized in a large parish—even to dispensing with an active Dorcas Society where the children of the improvident and the intemperate had been regularly clothed every Autumn.

The matron also receives their savings, and when any calamity causes an unusual demand for money, she is able to relieve them from their own savings. She often buys material for clothing, advantageously, and allows the women to take it instead of their deposits of money. In extreme cases, materials for clothing are furnished in advance, and the women repay by work or money in small instalments.

As the matron knows the weaknesses and trials of these neglected women, she adapts her Bible readings, religious instruction and prayers to their known requirements, or she furnishes the Rector, at his visits, with such information as will enable him to teach them intelligently.

Whilst the meeting is small, some book or essay of a sprightly and pointed character is read aloud, as the women are sewing; but much reading is not profitable after the number in attendance is large.

Visiting the absentees is necessary. Therefore when twenty or thirty women are collected, one or more assistants are sought out by the matron and appointed by the Rector. Instruction in reading and writing is also given with much interest and profit.

Some of the women are very soon prepared to act as under assistants; those who have learned mantua making, millinery, making boys' clothing, caps, &c., are quite willing to impart their knowledge to others. Intemperate and dissolute women are frequently drawn in, though there is often found the same disposition to shun their society that our Saviour experienced when on earth. Some of the women however manifest deep Christian sympathy, in raising up a fallen sister and restoring her to the assembly of mothers. Interesting and instructive books are loaned at these meetings, and it is gratifying to see the deep interest some women take in selecting agreeable reading for their husbands or sons.

When mothers' meetings were first brought to my notice, I classed them with the many ephemeral projects that had passed away with the waning zeal of their projectors. Their steady growth and extension from parish to parish led me to examine their principles and operation closely, resulting in

the firm conviction that this is a most valuable Missionary movement, and one that is specially adapted to our Church's system.

In August last I was asked to be present at the second anniversary of a mothers' meeting in a parish where its efficiency has been fully proven. I found one hundred and fifty women there, with many infants and small children, brought, as is customary when there is no care-taker at home, and again on the evening of Thanksgiving Day, there were one hundred and forty-one women and fifty of their children. Of these women very few had been reached by the ordinary means of grace, and scarcely any ever attended the regular Wednesday evening lecture. In this parish, the matron or principal has four assistants, who visit in a defined district, and aid in the great work of extending kindness to and watchfulness over these mothers.

Seventy-five of them have become communicants of the church since they were brought there by sympathizing Christian hearts, and others are now preparing for confirmation.

These results could not have been attained and this once estranged people cemented to the Church, if the Minister had refused their strong desire for a free service at 9 o'clock, A. M. This service has been held for two years, and I can testify to its increasing interest and efficiency; the gain in attendance much more than counterbalancing heavy losses by enlistment, and also by removals, since many cotton mills have ceased working.

Mothers are there who have never been absent since their infants were three weeks old; the doors of the Christian Church had been virtually barred against them for years

before, because they had no care-takers for their babes, and because with them they were not welcome visitors at the church.

Many wives now attend the early service, because they can reach home in time to provide a comfortable dinner for husbands and children who on other days are absent at their work. Servants are there, whose masters and mistresses desire to attend at the regular church services.

In some cases half of the family are at the early service and the others go at 10½ o'clock; one shawl and bonnet sufficing for both mother and daughter. As the Christians who attend these free services are willing to dress plainly, the working people and the poor go in such garments as they would not appear in, when a more fashionable congregation assembles.

I cannot refrain from referring to our *Sunday School System*, for although it is effectively worked in many of our parishes, and through its agency praise ascends from many lips that would otherwise be used in cursing, yet it is mournful to find that so few boys are by it induced openly and faithfully to assume their baptismal vows and witness a good confession. When it was ascertained that catechetical teaching was too formal or too cold to attract children to the church and attach them to the Minister, rushing to the opposite extreme was natural, and in too many cases the Sunday School has become partially divorced from the Church.

Our Bishop brought this subject before the last Diocesan Convention, and a committee of experienced clergymen and laymen was raised to consider it and to prepare a report. I make the following extract from that portion of the Bishop's address which was referred to this committee:

“The Sunday School system has much power and is in many ways doing much good. But its capacities are imperfectly developed, and its practical working often falls far short of the ideal to which we should aspire. Where the Minister does not identify himself with the school, and is not regarded by the teachers and the children as its proper head and animating spirit; where the instruction and discipline of the school are not conducted in connection with and in subordination to the general work of the parish; where more pains are taken to gather in large bodies of children, and to amuse them with stories, exhibitions and festivals, than to train them in the principles of the doctrine of Christ; where the teachers who are placed over them compare most unfavorably with those to whom they recite in the day school; and where they are not accustomed to attend the worship of the church, and have in it no recognized place, we cannot anticipate the permanent good effects to be desired.”

This suggestion is important and must result in good, for surely some plan can be devised by which the children can, before they are wearied with a Sunday School session, be instructed openly in the Church, according to the rubrics, and still retain all that is of value in the more modern Sunday School system. The Church can thus avail of the loving link that teachers form between her and her adopted children, and also cement the parental tie, by inducing parents and children in every condition of life to worship together in the House of God. This desirable result has been partially attained in several of our city parishes by convening the members of the Bible classes and Sunday Schools with their teachers, parents and friends openly, in the church on one Sunday afternoon in each month, to unite in our service, sing hymns that they have

thoroughly practised, and listen to a sermon or address prepared by their minister expressly for the young and the ignorant.

Few adults would like to be subjected to the test that is often successfully applied to these children; for many of them are able to repeat the text and the heads of the sermon delivered at the previous monthly meeting. The church is crowded at these free services. Instead of teachers driving or dragging children into a Sunday School gallery and there standing guard over them, making Sunday a weariness to all, they come to church as cheerfully as little ones go to their happy infant school. We may well ask, if children would have so loved and glorified Jesus when He was on earth if He had preached to them as we preach to grown people, and if He suited His instruction to children, why should not we strive to do likewise. Some children say, we love our teachers, for they speak lovingly to us and we can understand their teaching, but when we are tired and therefore restless in church during a sermon that we cannot understand, the Minister sometimes scolds us, and because we cannot sit still, calls us wicked children; how then can we learn to love him or the church, or even Sunday?

They say, "Teacher, does God's Spirit keep you from getting tired in church when you cannot understand the preacher, and do you then love to be at church after you have been in the Sunday School room and are tired?" Such questions are not often fairly answered, as the usual reply is that when converted they will be good children and then they will love Sunday and the Church and the Minister and through them their God and Heaven.

Most valuable results to the Missionary and Sunday School

work may with certainty be looked for, when all of our churches have one or more free services every Sunday, with simple Gospel instruction.

A monthly experiment of this kind has been fairly tried in several churches. In one parish a free service on each Sunday has been most successful for more than two years. Pew-renters still occupy their accustomed seats at the regular services, thus paying all the current expenses of the church, and uniting perfectly the pewed and the free system.

The enemies of our Church say that her Missionary Work is hindered by a cast-iron liturgy. In these days of doctrinal instability, this fixedness in our public worship may be most fortunate; and as the usual morning service was originally cast in three pieces, it may again be divided, as was the practice when it was originally framed, and as is now the usage in many congregations on holy days and communion seasons.—This division of services is also sanctioned by the House of Bishops; as it was virtually by the General Convention on the last day of its late session, when morning prayer was said at 9 o'clock and the litany and communion service at noon. Nearly all intelligent Christians admit that half of our morning service used at one time is more profitable than the whole, to three out of the four classes that compose our congregations. The young, the irreligious and illiterate Christians are more likely to be edified by the shorter than by the longer service, and if the service is divided, the help of the mature Christian is needed on both occasions.

Many of the Bishops and Clergy long for the speedy advent of the time when our Church shall more completely fulfil her divine mission. They manifest a readiness for the proposed change, but I am deeply mortified to find that we

of the Laity are the chief hindrance. Do suffer me affectionately and earnestly to beg of you a prayerful examination of this proposed division of our morning service, so that the Gospel may be preached without money and without price to all sorts and conditions of men at least once on each Sunday in every parish.

The Home Missionary Work of our Church is considered by some otherwise excellent Laymen as of so little value, that they would rather sacrifice it than to allow a division of the service, even where not one word is omitted. Others, who ride daily in our street cars side by side with working men and women in their soiled clothes, object to the use of their pews on Sunday by the most cleanly of these people, although they are then neatly dressed. The visit of Jesus to his house brought from Zaccheus the dedication of half of his goods to feed the poor. Can we of the Laity claim that Christ is in his Church, if we refuse to his Ministers the use of our church buildings at such hours as we do not need them? No wonder that some of our spiritually minded people are unduly drawn towards the Romish Church, for she welcomes the poor and the estranged at all hours when the pew renters are not in actual possession.

Some Sunday School teachers think that their department has all of the vitality of our Church; therefore the proposal to have a church service for children, their teachers and parents, in lieu of the morning session of the school, awakens fears that if this concession to the Church is allowed, the Sunday School system will ultimately be abandoned.

A little examination would enable zealous teachers to see that the real danger to the present Sunday School system arises from its want of union with the Church, and its ten-

dency to separate children from their parents in public worship, unless little ones are forced to attend more services than are profitable for mature Christians.

A word of explanation may be needful to show, that these extra services will not unduly increase the labors of Clergymen. Even delicate Ministers say that they would rather give a talk of ten or fifteen minutes at the early service, in addition to their present duty, if the Morning Prayer is divided, than to read it all at one time.

In some cases the Rector superintends his Sunday Schools or teaches a Bible class, and he always feels that he cannot neglect the lambs of his flock. Therefore dispensing with the morning session of the school will afford additional relief.—Ministers regret that they are compelled to employ in their Sunday schools incompetent and inefficient teachers. This arrangement affords a relief here also, as the Pastor assumes a larger share of the religious teaching than he could otherwise do. Fears have been expressed that a higher quality of Lay help than can usually be found in most parishes would be requisite in collecting the poor, the indifferent and the vicious, and drawing them to Church; but where it has been tried it has worked successfully, with the assistance of only a few ladies who were too diffident of their own powers to offer their services, but whose peculiar fitness for the work became most apparent after they had been induced by their Minister to engage in it. It was also feared by some that an early free service would cause the congregation at the regular hour to decrease, and thus lessen the income of the church; but experience has shown that this fear was groundless, as there is an increased demand for pews and seats, enlarging the income of the church, as must always be the case where there is life in a parish.

The foregoing suggestions will, I hope, be received in the same spirit in which they are offered—merely as presenting for your consideration, thoughts that are passing through my own mind. I am far from presuming to fault either Clergy or Laity; my only desire is to aid, with the experience and observation of a Layman working in a very limited sphere, such Churchmen as are striving to promote the great mission of Christ's Church. I thank God that there are many now ready to work in this cause; and that our Church is better fitted than any other to avail of Lay help extensively, and to use it safely and effectively. A providential contact with the sick and wounded soldier has awakened my sympathies fully, and has drawn them out afresh towards a class of men our Church has not yet reached to any considerable extent. Think of more than half a million of families mainly depending on the small wages of the soldier, paid with almost criminal irregularity. What are they to do for spiritual food, when it can rarely be had, except in expensive clothing and with a further outlay for pew rent or class dues. It is true that our Sunday Schools draw many children by the superior education of our teachers, but frequently these children are weaned from mothers who have other Church connections, and they are not permanently grafted into our own Church. Boys especially, soon stray from the Christian fold.

What an unspeakable comfort it would be to the soldier who is hazarding his life for our defence, or who is suffering in some Hospital, to know that the Lord had taken up the cause of his mother, wife and child, by providing free Missionary services in a church where they can find Christian sympathy, and keep alive the love of Jesus in the heart of parent and child. Most of these men who seem to a casual observer to be

rude and rough, are found to have hearts as tender as those of children, when they are induced to speak freely of the mother that bore them, and that now yearns and prays for the soldier son: and they can often be restrained from excesses by the bare suggestion that their mothers would be grieved by the knowledge of such wrong doing. The fact that our sons of toil have such mothers is often witnessed to me by men with quivering lips and tearful eyes, and I have thanked God and taken courage for my country, and have resolved that what could be done by one man should be done to make our Church their home. That many warm hearts are ready to spring to the aid of the Ministry in this work is abundantly proved in this city, by the untiring devotion of men, and especially of holy women, in Hospitals, in temporary Asylums for the sick and wounded, in Soldiers' Reading Rooms, in Refreshment Saloons, and in Ambulances for conveying the sick gratuitously to Hospitals. Soldiers in large numbers attend daily Bible readings where the instruction is given by ladies, thus testifying to their teachableness, and assuring each Rector who has even one intelligent Christian woman in his parish, that he has a Lay helper who can under his direction draw in many that are now estranged. A letter was just shown to me, written by a poor cotton spinner, who by want of work was very reluctantly forced away from a parish where a Christian lady had drawn him from the dram shop into the Church. He writes from the village to which he removed, "I went to church as you bid me, and I gave your husband's card to the minister; but there is no early free service, no Bible class for men, and no mothers' meeting. The church *says* come, the minister *says* come, but there is no mother here like you to fetch them."

Is it not possible to have a free missionary service on Sunday in each church, conducted in a spirit as truly catholic as that in which we approach the heathen who live in other countries? In addition to the regular teaching at stated hours, surely we can afford to have one simple service that shall be wholly free from Church or party politics, and from anything that might wound a weak brother trained in the peculiarities of any other Christian body—Christ crucified being the only theme. Our Foreign Missionaries are careful to avoid exciting the prejudices of the Chinese and Africans, that they may reach their minds and hearts with the knowledge and love of a suffering Saviour, thus giving them power to break away from superstition and fleshly lusts; and should not we be quite as lenient towards our own brethren, who are often prejudiced against the Christian Church by parental harshness, by the dogmatic teaching of some Ministers, or by the inconsistency of many members? In conducting Foreign Missions we study the difference between the written and the spoken language, but in this country we are not so careful, therefore we often fail to reach the heart, and excuse ourselves by saying that the people should be educated up to a higher intellectual level.

Many working men have never felt any other tender emotions than those that were aroused by mother, wife or child, using the simplest Saxon words set in homely phrases. Our Saviour availed himself of these inlets to the heart, although the Jewish Rabbis scorned to use them; therefore the common people heard him gladly.

I have witnessed the effect of simple teaching at such free services as I have described, where half the Morning Service was used with the utmost regularity. Men have gone from

that parish to other cities, to England, and even to Australia, and yet they evince in their letters a yearning to return to the place where this simple teaching first touched their hearts, or drew them back from a state of indifference into which they had fallen. Soldiers who came back from the army, either sick or wounded, hobbled to the early service on their crutches the first Sunday after their return; and others who had but a day's sick leave from a neighboring Hospital, brought wife and children to the early service to unite with them in prayer and praise.

Our Church addresses all men who visit her courts as "dearly beloved brethren." Are we not bound, then, to welcome strangers cordially, and to aid in testifying that Christ's organized Body and Representative is still imbued with His own Spirit, still bears some resemblance to its Lord and Master?

Yours, truly and respectfully,

WM. WELSH.

*Extracts from the Journal of the House of Clerical and Lay Deputies, October, 1859.*

Mr. S. B. Ruggles presented the following resolution:

*Resolved*, That the present state of the Church, and of the world around it, emphatically appeals, not only to the Clergy, but to the Laity, earnestly and actively to employ their time and means, to the best of their ability, in supporting and invigorating the Christian efforts of the Church in all its departments.

Mr. Conrad proposed to append the following, which was adopted by Mr. Ruggles:

Therefore, *Resolved*, That a Committee, consisting of one Layman from each Diocese, of whom five shall be a quorum, be appointed, who shall, during the recess of this General Convention, devise and carry out such means and measures as they may deem advisable, calculated to reach the hearts of the Laity of this Church, and to impress upon them specially the imperative wants of the Church; of *Ministers*, who must be supplied from their body; of *money*, which is more needed than ever, to meet the increased expenditures of the Church; of earnest and holy zeal in the cause of Christ, which is needed most of all, and which, if aroused to its proper tone, will insure the supply of the other two needs referred to.

The resolutions were successively put to the House for their action, and both adopted.

On motion of Mr. J. N. Conyngham,

*Resolved*, That the great subject of the Christian education of the youth of our Church, as well in the family as in our own Church-schools and Colleges, be referred, as a special matter of interest, to the consideration of the Committee of the Laity appointed at the present Session of the Convention.

On motion of Mr. Wm. Welsh,

*Resolved*, That each Bishop be authorized to fill any vacancy that may occur in the Committee in his Diocese during the recess of the Convention, and that he be earnestly desired to aid this Committee by his advice and co-operation.

The President here announced the following as the Committee of Laymen:

Mr. S. B. Ruggles, *New York*, Mr. Alex. Duncan, *Rhode Island*, Mr. Samuel H. Huntington, *Connecticut*, Mr. Washington Hunt, *Western New York*, Mr. J. C. Garthwaite, *New Jersey*, Mr. Robert H. Gardner, *Maine*, Mr. Simeon Ide, *New Hampshire*, Mr. Edward A. Newton, *Massachusetts*, Mr. Isaac H. Redfield, *Vermont*, Mr. Wm. Welsh, *Pennsylvania*, Mr. S. F. Du Pout, U. S. N., *Delaware*, Mr. J. Mason Campbell, *Maryland*, Mr. D. H. Conrad, *Virginia*, Mr. Josiah Collins, *North Carolina*, Mr. R. F. W. Allston, *South Carolina*, Mr. James Potter, *Georgia*, Mr. George R. Fairbanks, *Florida*, Mr. Robert T. Bunker, *Alabama*, Mr. George S. Yergor, *Mississippi*, Mr. W. N. Mercer, M.D., *Louisiana*, Mr. E. B. Nichols, *Texas*, Mr. Francis B. Fogg, *Tennessee*, Mr. A. H. Churchill, *Kentucky*, Mr. Bellamy Storer, *Ohio*, Mr. Jas. Morrison, *Indiana*, Mr. Daniel Hough, *Missouri*, Major Martin, *Kansas*, Mr. H. P. Baldwin, *Michigan*, Mr. A. L. Pritchard, *Wisconsin*, Mr. B. B. Richards, *Iowa*, Mr. H. T. Wells, *Minnesota*, Mr. Edward Stanley, *California*, Mr. L. B. Otis, *Illinois*.

*The Committee of Laymen appointed by the House of Clerical and Lay Deputies at its last session, to whom certain resolutions were referred for consideration and action, beg leave to Report :*

That they have given to the matters referred to them such attention as the state of the country, their professional and personal engagements, and the remoteness of their residences have allowed. They have held two meetings in the city of Philadelphia. At the first were present Messrs. D. H. Conrad, of Virginia; S. H. Huntington, of Connecticut; S. F. Dupont, of Delaware, and Wm. Welsh, of Pennsylvania. At the second, the above, with the addition of Messrs. Wm. N. Mercer, of Louisiana; G. R. Fairbanks, of Florida; James Potter, of Georgia; R. F. W. Allston, of South Carolina; Josiah Collins, of North Carolina; J. W. Stevenson, of Kentucky; E. A. Newton, of Massachusetts, and S. B. Ruggles, of New York.

Mr. E. A. Newton, who represented the Diocese of Massachusetts, and Mr. James Potter, of Georgia, have since been taken to their rest; and from others with whom we took pleasant and profitable counsel, we are separated by the hard necessities of war. These meetings led to a full interchange of views, both personally and by correspondence, in respect to the position of the Laity in the Church, and the duties imposed by their baptismal vows, and by the condition of the world, and especially of our own land.

At the second meeting, the appeal, which has been printed and widely circulated, and which is herewith transmitted, was,

in its main features, agreed upon. The members present at this meeting also resolved that, God being their helper, they would rise to higher views of their duty as members of Christ's Body, and would endeavor to provoke others to greater zeal. How far they have succeeded, it is not for them to know; nor can they flatter themselves that any very important results have yet followed from their labors as a Committee.

They have, however, great satisfaction in knowing that, owing to God's blessing upon various means, the three years just closed have been marked by unusual activity on the part of our Laity in works of faith and labors of love. Their contributions to Church charities have hardly declined; their gifts to benevolent and patriotic objects have greatly increased. With great prostration and derangement of business, in the midst of frightful civil agitations and of wide-spread and wasting war, the heart of the people has not grown sordid or cold. Christians have lost neither their courage nor their devotion to Christ's great work. The sick and wounded have been cared for; the spiritual and temporal well-being of the poor and vicious has received increased consideration; those estranged from the Lord's House and Day have been sought, and in continually increasing numbers have been reclaimed. The God of nations is trying us as by fire. May we so receive the chastisement that a more and more entire consecration of our persons and of our substance shall be the result.

In all parts of the Church there seems to be awakened a deeper interest in Christianizing our home population. Laymen co-operate with the Clergy in carrying the influence of the Gospel to the lost sheep of the Christian Israel—ministering from house to house. Such efforts, steadily continued, conducted with judgment, and crowned with fervent prayer to God,

cannot but bless those who give, as well as those who receive. They strengthen and animate our faith; they enlarge our charities; they lift us above the vanities and the sordid cares of life. In whatever degree they become general among our people, in like proportion shall we prepare for the advent of a brighter day for the Church, and the introduction of Churchmen of a nobler and more purely Christian type.

In the pamphlet marked No. 2, which accompanies this Report, will be found some record of labors of this kind, conducted under the advice of a judicious and earnest Ministry. It has probably met the eye of many members of this House already. It rejoices the hearts of your Committee to know that in many places, and under the supervision of many parishes, similar efforts are being made, and that nothing but prayer and effort are wanting to make every Church and congregation the centre of a Missionary influence as active as it will be holy and benign.

Respectfully submitted by

ROBERT H. GARDINER, *Maine*,  
 SIMEON IDE, *New Hampshire*,  
 ISAAC H. REDFIELD, *Vermont*,  
 SAMUEL B. RUGGLES, *New York*,  
 WASHINGTON HUNT, *W. New York*,  
 H. P. BALDWIN, *Michigan*,  
 WM. WELSH, *Pennsylvania*.

The following Report of the member of the Committee from Pennsylvania having been read, it was unanimously *Resolved*, That it be appended to the Report of the Committee.

*New York, October 7, 1862.*

The members of the Committee of Laymen appointed by the House of Clerical and Lay Deputies, being too widely separated to act efficiently in a body, beyond the publication of an address, passed the following resolution: *Resolved*, That it be recommended to the members of this Committee, each in his respective Diocese, with the advice and consent of the Bishop of the same, to take the most active measures to organize associations, with the view of carrying out and advancing the spirit of the resolutions under which they act, and the recommendations set forth in this address.

The undersigned, in accordance with this recommendation of the Committee, acted in the Diocese of Pennsylvania under the advice of Bishop Potter, and with his most valuable and cordial co-operation.

His attention was given to the four following subjects, which were presented to the Committee for their earnest consideration:

*First.*—The Christian education of the youth of our Church in the family and in Church schools.

*Second.*—The best means of supplying the present imperative want of Ministers.

*Third.*—How the increasing demand for money in our growing Church can be most steadily supplied.

*Fourth.*—The infusion into the Laity of more earnest and holy zeal in the cause of Christ.

1st. In examining the extent of Christian education in the family, it was ascertained that very many of the parents of baptized children, of the working class, were not reached by any means of grace, and that in such cases, religious instruction at home was very much neglected. Several successful experiments have been tried, to test the power of the Church

to reach with her holy ministrations this hitherto neglected class of parents.

In some cases this work was commenced by assembling neglected children weekly, under the auspices of the Church for instruction in sewing and other useful employments. The Christian women who engage in this work can soon gain a ready access to the homes and the hearts of the parents.

Large numbers of mothers, who rarely entered the Church, are now drawn by the Christian sympathy of the ladies, to weekly meetings, where they unite in worship after they receive instruction in useful employments.

When the Christian Church thus increases the usefulness and promotes the happiness of children and their mothers, it is comparatively easy to induce the father and husband to join suitable Bible classes, and to accompany his family to free Sunday services in the Chapel or Church, at hours not usually selected by us for public worship. On these occasions it has been found profitable to divide the morning prayers between a service at 9 and that at 10½ o'clock, and, at the early service, to make the address or sermon, short, instructive and simple. Where parents are thus reached by the Church, there is a marked improvement in the Christian training of their children.

In some cases Rectors have found it profitable to select Lay people, who are skilled in training children for Christ, to give private instruction to parents of the working class, before they present their children for holy baptism, and to watch over the home-training of these lambs of Christ's flock. Our Church enjoins her Ministers, to give public catechetical instruction, and although this is very valuable in conveying the great principles of our faith to the mind of childhood, yet

in our larger parishes, the aid of the Sunday School teacher seems equally necessary to awaken Christian sympathy, to watch over the early developments of youthful piety, and to make the Christian Church a happy home for her little ones.

In examining our Sunday Schools, it was ascertained that the teachers were too often untrained and unskilful, whilst the teachers in our public schools were well trained and efficient—thus leading children to form a contrast very unfavorable to the extension of Christianity.

The Bishop of Pennsylvania endeavored last winter to provide a remedy for this defect, by arranging a course of partial lectures addressed to Sunday School teachers by Clergymen and Laymen. He hopes to follow the subject up by establishing in the larger parishes Normal, or Training Schools, in which Christians will be helped to acquire the art of imparting religious instruction, simply, clearly and efficiently. From such schools our Church can also draw a supply of efficient teachers for the parish schools.

2d. The imperative want of Ministers is very apparent, but their need of a more thorough training in the school of experience, has been made still more apparent by the ill success of many of the army Chaplains. If the Laity are trained to teach and are thoroughly practised in it by their Ministers in the large field now opening so widely in connection with our Church for this class of service, it may be reasonably expected that much latent talent will be thus developed, and dedicated to the work of the ministry.

The want of success of many Ministers has discouraged other Christian men from entering that holy office, when the fault may often be fairly chargeable to those who certified that the candidate was apt to teach, before his powers had been tested.

3d. The ease with which money has been freely poured out in our Church, by children and adults, to aid the suffering soldier, evinces a willingness to give bountifully when appropriate means are used to awaken an interest in the object.

Our military Hospitals afford some touching illustrations of the best mode of developing the Missionary spirit in the hearts of children. Little ones are constantly bringing offerings that cost them much, in time and money, and they seem perfectly delighted at the privilege of benefitting the body and soul of the soldier. If parents, pastors and teachers will interest children in some Missionary work, over which they can watch, a Missionary spirit will be cultivated that will in due time reach the most distant fields. Childhood must have something tangible to give reality to an appeal, and then the object awakens a ready sympathy, that will naturally flow out as from an open fountain.

4th. In the Diocese of Pennsylvania there has been an endeavor to awaken more earnest and holy zeal, by convening the Clergy and their prominent Laymen to confer together freely on this important subject.

A circular was issued by this meeting and it is believed that it has been very useful. As the Clergy are increasingly disposed to avail of Lay co-operation, intelligent Laymen are more willing than heretofore to give it.

The present war is opening a very wide door for this species of Christian duty, as the suffering and sorrowing ones should be sought out, comforted with Christian sympathy, and incorporated into the Church.

Many of our sisters in Christ have recently been tried so severely, that they are ready to bring forth abundant fruit if their pastors will develop and give a right direction to their

latent powers. The Hospital and even the battle-field testify to the readiness of Christian women to work most efficiently, and in proportion as the Church avails herself of their gentle but winning agency, she will be able to reach all sorts and conditions of men.

Respectfully reported to the General Lay Committee by

WILLIAM WELSH,  
*of the Diocese of Pennsylvania.*

*Philadelphia, September 30th, 1862.*



