

SPECIAL
ARTICLES

Our Contributors

BOOK
REVIEWS

(For Dominion Presbyterian.)

WHY MEN DO NOT ENTER THE
MINISTRY.

By N. A. O.

Let me say first I have no patience with the unfaithful outcry that the Lord is going to find Himself shorthanded.

But why should there be so much beating about the bush in answering the question in its oft discussion? Neither congregations nor synods consider the fact that the necessaries of life cost 20 per cent more in one town than in another 15 miles away; or that items of daily expense are as much as a third dearer in one part of the country than in another less than 60 miles away.

The scale of wages among workmen varies with the cost of living. Ministers' stipends (the minimum of necessity to start with in the great majority of cases) do not advance with the cost of living. A minister is held to debase his calling if he names the fact to a congregation that the conditions are thus and so, and that, consequently, the salary they pay him is too small. Workingmen consider the situation, make a demand, receive acknowledgment of their just claims, or go out on strike till the justice of their case asserts itself. Otherwise, they, individually, take up some other kind of work ready to hand. Let a minister follow this latter course and he is branded a failure. He is the head and shoulders above the rank and file of both the people generally and the ministry as well.

On the other hand, let the underpaid minister squeeze and stint, and be guilty of slow suicide in larder and library, in order that his clothes may not stamp him "rusty parson," and he is soon worse branded than in the other case. Can it be reasonably supposed that young men do not see this? Failing to understand the situation they are at the least subconscious of its meaning.

Remember, you worldly wise, four things: (1) The best, the every-day best, are needed for the ministry, and ought to be encouraged to enter it, not frightened away by the nightmare of a situation financially insupportable. (2) Remember that just as the English guinea drops from par to 16 to 18 shillings in value when you carry it in your pocket over into Holland, so go back only a few years and your \$ of today had much greater purchasing power to say nothing about what your grandfather did with an income of \$400. Time was when men were "fussing rich" on 20 pounds a year. (3) Remember that population is cosmopolitan now and no longer is made up of settlements where par-

son and pedagogue and artisan and farmer dressed much alike, cheaply, and the corner grocer and dealer in hides alone waxed rich and built him a house better than his neighbor's and wore clothing of a better grade. Almost any congregation the country over is the miniature of the cosmopolitan city. The minister is marked off the list who does not score up to the popular idea of what he ought to be to outward seeming—and that idea is, on the occasion of his appearance as a stranger, largely proportionate to his sleekness and affability, two things that savor more of acting than of honesty if he be a man whose nose is on the grindstone. (4) Remember that the man who has the sensibility and refinement and adaptability that is needed to qualify him for the work of the ministry quails in the presence of the resulting impossibilities. He is like a good enough saw with a file applied to the points of the teeth.

It is asked sometimes, callously, why ministers do not marry wives who have pin money. If they were men of the stamp to act upon the Yorkshire farmer's advice to his son Sam, "Don't marry fur money, but gan wheer money is," and were by so much less fitted for the work that calls them, they would dub themselves fools for not doing so. For of all young men the theological student, in his college days, has the grand opportunity of personal acquaintance with the "catches," the blondes, the brunettes and the "specially suited" from end to end of the country. The possession of the pin money does not disqualify the mistress of the manse, the parsonage, or the rectory. But for the prospective occupant of said rectory, parsonage, or manse to be actuated by the mercenary motive in making choice of her would be to discover his own unfitness.

Good men, having that good quality of heart and mind that enables them to discern excellent opportunities of helping to build up the Kingdom of God among men without accepting ordination, opportunities that are accompanied by greater freedom if less honor, many good men who otherwise would enter the ministry choose the less honored way of suver finance—not to say of larger independence.

The men whom the ministry needs are the very men who have it in them to make a swift success in any one of two or three other professions, had they chosen one of those. Men of that stamp do not like to be thought of as non-necessaries. There is a disposition in those mercenary times to regard ministers in that light. It calls the sensibilities. The churches are saving today in reaction. Take what we offer you and be thankful.

DR. HERRIDGE ON AUTONOMY
BILL.

In dealing with the educational provisions of the Autonomy bill, at present before the House of Commons, the minister of St. Andrew's church reasoned that as the country had not renounced Christianity some account should be made of it in the conduct of educational affairs. Education is not simply the imparting of knowledge, but the building up of character, the leading forth of all our highest faculties. * * * We should be blind to all the lessons of history if we failed to see that the future of Canada depends on nothing else so much as on the quality of Canadian citizenship. To the attainment of this end the teacher's ideals should be noble and his life honest and of good report. Anyone who is false to the fundamental ethics of Christianity would be an unsafe guide to the children of our land. I do not mean by this that any advantage or disadvantage should attach to the ecclesiastical relationships, whatever these may be. But I do hold that they should show some respect for Christian morals and Christian doctrine and that their example should be a wholesome one to the generation growing up around us, and which in a few years must become the makers of Canadian history. * * *

There is a better way of rendering separate schools superfluous than to take the ground that the state has nothing to do with religion and that is by trying to unite on a basis of our common Christianity. I agree with my Catholic friends that religion ought not to be excluded from our schools. I do not agree with them that it is the business of the State to support denominationalism. If the church wishes to do that, it is a different matter. Patriotism calls upon everyone of us to lay the stress in our educational affairs, not upon points of difference, but upon the much more important points of agreement. We all believe in God and in His Son, Jesus Christ, and in the work of the Divine Spirit throughout the course of human history. I imagine that the conscience of very few will be offended if our schools open with a reverent prayer to the Father of us all, and with some sentences from the page of that Divine revelation which is placed before us all. If, in some cases, objection is taken even to this, such objection should be regarded. But surely no one would dream of separating the honest remonstrants from their fellows, and putting them in a school by themselves. I know that prejudice often exaggerates the matters of divergence among those who are still united under the generic name of Christian. But is it imposable