

settled, or not already under any obligation of some sort to another church. And here let us advise, Never hold relation as candidate with more than one church at once. Dispose wholly in your own mind, and in formal response as well, of the claim on you of any church that may have expressed to you their wish to have you for pastor—dispose of this claim without reserve and without equivocation, before you permit yourself to go, even once, or promise to go, elsewhere in the capacity of candidate. Scorn to play off one opportunity of settlement against another, in such a way as to leave it possible for any human being to say of you that you are waiting, like self-seekers in general, for your best chance, and that you are worldly-wise enough to want to have several strings to your bow. Above all things else, be honorable.

It is an ineligible repute for any minister to have that of being a universal candidate. Beware of it for your own sake, but still more beware of it for the sake of the cause you represent. Imagine Paul visiting first Ephesus and then Colosse to see which church would *fête* him more in order to decide with which he would be a "servant of Jesus Christ"! You cannot be too jealous of your own honor in these respects. It is a good fault to be over-sensitive here. Accustom yourself to "feel a stain like a wound."

Provided, then, you are at the moment free from all committals elsewhere, either expressed or implied, it is we think, safe as a rule to consider a church's invitation to visit them the providential sign that you should go. "But what," you ask, "if the church be one of such rank, as to numbers, wealth, position, that I should not of my own motion, have thought of aspiring to it?" Still we say, Go. True humility consists in obeying God, and not in putting a low estimate on yourself. Much less does humility consist in obtruding your low estimate of yourself as a reason for not obeying God. It may be that God will use you for things that you would have thought beyond your strength—things that are, indeed, beyond *your* strength.

"But suppose, on the contrary, some church invites me that, according to *my* own best, sober judgment, could not afford me a sphere so wide or so high as to furnish fruitful play for the whole round of my gifts and accomplishments—what then?" Well, then, we still say, Go. That is, of course, if the invitation finds you at the moment providentially left without other external sign of what the will of your Master may be concerning your future. Go, in the spirit of expectancy and obedience. Perhaps your own sober judgment respecting your qualifications may be greatly mistaken. It is never well to be too sure of one's own judgment, whether high or low, where self is the subject. Hold your self-appraisal always wisely and modestly in doubt. Again, perhaps

your opinion of yourself, without being at all mistakenly *high*, may be quite mistakenly *proud*.—*Homiletic Review*.

TOUCHES OF NATURE.

BY W. C. PRIME, L.L.D.

Let me tell of one more little record which speaks of personal affections. If I have told of it before it will do no harm to repeat the story. I once opened an Egyptian coffin which contained the body of a woman who had lived somewhere about 1300 or 1400 B.C. The body was enveloped in the usual way, with linen bands. Wound around the head, and trailing down on the chest, was a wreath of leaves and flowers. It was simply made. Splinters of palm branch formed a continuous cord. The fresh green leaf of some Egyptian plant, a pointed leaf, was folded over this cord, point to stem, and pinned with a splinter through the folded leaf. Another leaf was folded and pinned, lapping a little over the first one. Then another and another; so that the cord, more than two yards long, was covered with a continuous row of folded leaves, the points hanging downward. At the place where each leaf lapped over the next one was pinned a flower, making thus a row of flowers all along the wreath. All this was dead now, and leaves and flowers alike were of a dark brown color. When I was a boy, in the up-country, I have a thousand times made baskets in which to gather raspberries and blackberries in just this way, by pinning leaves together with splinters, stiffening the rim by folding the points of the leaves over a flexible stem. In younger days I can remember making wreaths closely like the Egyptian wreath, on which dandelions were pinned like great buttons.

I handed some of the brown flowers of the Egyptian wreath to that eminent and lamented man, whom many readers of this remember with warm affection, Dr. John Torrey, not telling him where I obtained them. He examined them and found them to be the *immortelle*, the flower now in universal use for funeral wreaths in Europe and America. "They were the driest flowers I ever examined," he said; "where did they come from?"

Here was a flower which thirty centuries ago expressed, in the symbolism of flowers, the same thought which it still expresses, the thought of immortality. The wreath itself was eloquent of love, for none but loving hands had woven it for the forehead of the dead woman, sister, mother, which? For is it not likely it was a woman's gift to the woman dead?—*New York Journal of Commerce*.