

is not known that there is any other form of religion in the world which has no priests. In our religion there are now only pastors of the flock, ministers of God to them for good. There is no room for the charge of priestcraft against the Ministers of the Gospel of Christ, for the difference between the priest and the pastor is so radical that they cannot be honestly confounded. A priest offers sacrifice—a pastor preaches a sacrifice already offered, one which is complete and abiding. A priest assumes to be a mediator—a pastor relies both for himself and his people, upon the sole and sovereign mediation of Christ; a priest derives his power over conscience from his supposed knowledge of occult mysteries, from which the people are excluded—a pastor's power over conscience is in direct proportion to the truth which he enforces and reveals; a priest retains the key of knowledge in his own hand, and doles out the treasure to those who propitiate or pay—a pastor snaps the chain which fetters the Bible in the sacristy, and bids all the world to search the Scriptures that they may live. In fine, a priest performs religious duties in the people's stead. It is a pastor's duty to hold up the Divine Pattern, and urge, and admonish, and entreat until "that mind" be in his people "which was also in Christ Jesus." Now there is some danger that the churches which have renounced theory should in practice subside into the comfortable heresy of priesthood, by leaving the pastor unimpeded, often discouraged, to do all the work of the church.

Brethren,—here is the peril against which I wish to warn you. Hold up your minister's hands by generous construction of his conduct, by ungrudging liberality in his support, by willing cooperation with his efforts, by the maintenance of the true brotherhood among yourselves, and by impetuous and earnest prayer. In other words, help your ministers to do their work by fidelity in the doing of your own. In the exhortation of the Psalmist, there is a beautiful illustration of this mutual encouragement and blessing. It consists but of three verses, the first two of which are a benediction invoked upon a band of watchers, the last of which is the response of the company to the blessing of the friendly singer. You will understand the tenderness of the salutation. Those who are thus commended in blessing are the Levites who are the guardians of the temple in the night, who watch over its treasures with eyes that do not slumber, and who are careful that the lamps be not extinguished, nor the fire upon the altar of burnt offering be suffered to die. The singer is the officer who closes the gates of the temple. As he takes his leave he warbles this song in the night (verses 1 and 2.) Soothed and strengthened by the melody as they address themselves to their patient night watch, they fling back the responsive music.—"The Lord that made heaven and earth bless thee out of Zion." The same theory of mutual blessing has a recognition in an interchange of loving greetings which goes on, Sabbath after Sabbath, in the liturgy of the Episcopal Church: "The Lord be with you,"—such is the minister's utterance. "And with thy spirit,"—so do the people respond.

Now it is this, thus illustrated by inspired and liturgical example, that I wish to be exhibited to-day, not in the lips merely, but in the daily outflow of the life. It is by this interpenetration between the pulpit and the pew, that churches live and prosper. If you do not recognize your obligations in this matter, your estimate will be unworthy, both of the ministerial office, and of your own calling as witnesses for Christ. Unless you are faithful, and sympathizing and diligent, the zeal and power of the minister will be of scanty avail. There will be fulness in the sanctuary, and brightness in the souls of men. Eloquent like that of apostles may pour from living lips, but it will be as music played among the tombs; the temple may be crowded, but it will be with the careless ones to whom the Word is as a very lovely song, for they hear the preacher's words and do them not, and in respect of all the higher purposes of the ministry there will be a catacomb of iniquity and death. It is my solemn conviction that you, as representing the laity of the Methodist Church, have its prosperity largely in your own hands, and therefore it is that I am the more earnest in my summons that you be "co-workers" at once with your ministers and their "God."

Be generous in your construction of your ministers' conduct. Receive them in the name of a Prophet, that you may receive a Prophet's reward. Beware of regarding your teachers as if they were lifted by their office above human infirmity, or screened in some shattered nook of grace from the blasts of temptation, and from the diverse onsets of evil. They are not angels, but men of like passions with yourselves, with the same indwelling frailty, the same weariful impatience, the same traitorous hearts. They are in all respects as human as other men, as readily crushed by sorrow, as perversely troubled by unweariness, as urgently claiming, therefore to be charitably judged. Look into your own hearts my friends, and think of the conflicts of your Christian experience; how often your duties have tried you, so that you have forborne to discharge them: or your hindrances have tried you, so that your strength has fainting by the way; or your companionships have tried you, so that you have mourned over your cowardice of soul; and when these thoughts arise, and their memories are vivid, remember that all of difficulty which you feel presses upon your ministers in equal measure, and that there are discouragements in the nature of their work, of which you know nothing; but which makes their burden heavier to bear. They have resigned, so to speak, a portion of their liberty, that they may be the ministers of God to you for good. Their reputation, their life, are in the churches hands. Guard that treasure which they have in good faith entrusted to your keeping, and let no anxieties destroy their life, nor suffer any slander to whisper their good name away.

Be tender and loving in your judgment of all they say and do. If a sermon seems to you feeble, think how many others have been strong, and how even from the feeblest and faintest you can gather more teaching than you are prepared to carry out into the life. Remember how the aching head, or deranged digestion, or the bruised and paining nerves, can impart languor to the mind, and shear the spirit of its power. Ask yourselves whether it be not possible that when he entered the pulpit he was ready to preach with vigor and freedom, but he was thrown from his balance by the noisy intrusion of some late comer to the sanctuary, or by the vacant stare of the thoughtless, or the silly laughter of the trifling, or the impatient rustle of the wearied, or, it may be, by the equivocal approval of some slumberer's assenting head. Nay, my friends, do not hesitate to go further. If you are disposed to think that he was not experimental enough, or not clear enough, or not practical enough; if you complain that there was lack of fire, or lack of food, ask what was your own warmth or your own appetite. You thought him in a sickly condition to preach—are you sure you were in a healthy condition to hear? Had your spirit had rest from the week's fitful fever? Could you do more than wash the gold dust from your busy fingers, or your weary into the house of the Lord? My friends, there are properties of hearing as well as of preaching. If you were all subjected to the same ordeal as your ministers, the examination might not be

quite satisfactory; if you were to remain on probation until you had graduated into proper dispositions for heedful hearing of the word, it might be that there are some even here who would be kept a long time on trial. Brethren, give me a suspicious, censorious, exacting church,—hard, stern, keenly critical,—insisting upon the tale of requirements like an Egyptian taskmaster, and you have given me the secret of many an apparent failure. Give me a loving, prayerful people, generous in their judgment, considerate in their claims, tardy to censure, frank and hearty to commend, and for such a people any minister whose soul is in his service will "spend and be spent" without ceasing, nor grudge in their behalf, were it necessary, the costly offerings of the life and of the blood.

Be generous in the provision which you make for your minister. They have a right to expect this at your hands. They have foregone the chances and fortunes of the world, trusting to your faith and honor. The same ability which fits them for their high office, if exerted in other professions, might have made them wealthy, or perhaps wealthier, than yourselves. The care of the soul is certainly as important, and should be as well recompensed, as the care of the health or the care of the estate. The minister's claim to his stipend rests upon a law of heavenly justice, and it is the same law which regulates the salary of the statesman, the returns of the merchant, and the charity which is rendered to the poor. "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen?" asks the asserting apostle. "Yea, but doubtless for our sakes this was written," for as in all labor there is profit, it is the right of every man to live by sweat of hands or brain, and they who preach the gospel of the kingdom have a right to live.

Those who would obey Divine law in this matter will be liberal in the apportionment of the Minister's stipend, and honest and prompt in the payment of it, that he may not be called down from his great work by the comfortable pressure of financial cares; that the diligence which ought to be ceaseless in its study of the Word may not have to exercise itself in maintaining a dubious equality between the winner and the spender; that he may not be forced into an unworthy dependence, destructive of his self-respect, and making his reproofs, which ought to be bold as those of a prophet, languid as the harmless angers of a child.

I would pray the churches, as they value the manliness and spiritual power of their teachers, to lift them above the anxieties of embarrassment; for Hunger is a sharp thorn, and when Want looms upon the soul it is the deadliest and surest of human tempters to evil. If they are sincere men, and chosen of Christ to be his witnesses, they will have trampled out of their hearts the love of money; but they have a rightful claim that a just and liberal reward shall be made to them, not with niggard hand, nor with patronizing manner, by the people of their charge; and He, the Great Master, whose servants they are, joined in a wedlock which no man shall dare to annul, the liberality of earth and the boundlessness of heaven. "Being ye all the tithe into the store house, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of Hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it." Malachi, iii. 10.

Be warm and willing in your readiness to work for Christ, and so hold up your minister's hands. We cannot too often remind ourselves that spiritual prosperity results not from unaided ministerial or lay endeavor, but from the intelligent and hearty work of the whole church of Christ. It is a fatal error to imagine that all the work is to be done by the minister. If the leader has no followers what avails his generalship in the battle. If an architect cannot find workmen, what hope for the completion of the building. Though I yield to no man under heaven in my estimate of the office of the ministry, though I would rather have the seal of its baptism on my brow than wield the sceptre of the Caesars, I fail in one of its most glorious obligations when I summon every believing spirit to personal service to Christ. That relic of stern and hoary priestcraft, which absorbs the all in the pulpit, and refuses to admit the partnership of the faithful in the work of saving souls, has no place in the sympathies of the true minister, nor in the heart of the living church. There is for each of you a field of Christian toil, and an awaiting recompense of honour. There is room for the meaneast for the mightiest—for church or royal blood in the warfare for the world, and its victories enable both. The child with a linen coat, in whom though he knows it not, the prophet's spirit slumbers, and to whom in the startled night the summoning voices come; the maid in the Syrian palace whose charity shone through her bondage, like a star in the thunderous sky; the men of Cyprus and Cyrene, swarthy and honest heralds who had never met at the feet of Gamaliel; the fugitives hunted from their homes, driven into exile on the blast of a nation's fear, but who carries the gospel in their souls, and "went everywhere preaching the word;" all these show that each of you who had a heart to work, has the heaven-sanctioned ordination which will warrant you in doing good.

My friends, how is it with you to-day? Have your pastors a valiant army at their back, ready in all dangers to enterprize to dare and to do? Perhaps if I could touch you, as with the spear of Ithuriel, I should not discover the energy which befit the soldier. Your fathers did noble things: has the burial ground become richer than the church? You were active and zealous in God's cause, the pastors most willing helpers, but perhaps that activity and zeal are matters of history now. You have retired from the service, you hardly know why, on the plea it may be, of business engagements, or fancied infirmities, or advancing years; or in times of abandonment and peril you grew saddened and out of heart—you indulged in the murmuring of the "old man" you had put off, rather than in the trusting of the "new man" you had just put on; your effort relaxed just when it should have been strenuous, your prayer became feeble just when it should have been princely; if there were few who assembled to plead for God's blessing, your absence always made them fewer, if the standard bearers have been ready to faint, you were not by to shout their courage back again, to lift the banner from their drooping and stream its glad folds to the wind. If you have embodied the Revelation angel at all, you flew forth with the gospel in fine weather, your timorous wings were furled in the season of the storm; or perhaps that is not your case; perhaps

"You stood the storm when winds were rough, But in some sunny hour fell off, Like ship that have gone down at sea When heaven was all tranquillity."

You brooded over some real or fancied injury; your motives were impugned, your efforts thwarted, and angry at your fellows, and fretted from your own calmness, you wandered into the wilderness, and you are useless and solitary now. Brethren, come back and do your first works, and feel your first love. The Lord hath need of you, for the harvest droops for want of reapers to gather it in. The world hath need of you, for it is sick at heart, and longs to be told of Jesus. Your pastors have need of you, that

they may house the sheaves into the garner. Don't dwell any longer in that unsightly land of Cabul; come into the bright Beulah—it is pleasant to labor there—where airs from the other side of the river fan the wearied brow, and where a thrilling sound of music, as of harpers harping with their harps, reminds you constantly of heaven.

Above all be constant and earnest in your prayers. You are too well instructed in the things of God to have forgotten that there is no part of a Christian's life where he ceases from the cry of helplessness, from the invocation of Divine strength, from the expression of vehement desires. If you have thought otherwise you have some humbling secrets to discover by and bye. If you think that a cause can be built up by one man's labour in the pulpit, and by many men's labour in the church, you will find your mistake full soon. Confusion of tongues will be the token of heavenly displeasure, and in the ruin of your prostrate Babel the vault of your Atheism will be seen to be a discarded lie. No wrong can be redressed, nor fear dispelled, nor sin removed, nor sinner saved, without God the Spirit in the fulness of His divine working, and the plenitude of His services, the measure of his individual devotion. But is the prayer to be all on one side? Are you under no obligation too? Think you there is no difference felt when you come to the sanctuary with dull face and heavy heart, when you come straight from the Pishgah summit with its shinnings on your forehead and its fragrance on your breath, and your footsteps glad as when you have pleasant memories of a friend? I tell you here is just the difference between cure and blessing. Give me a praying church, and then will follow the mighty ministry, and startled sinners, and the gracious rain, and the opened and peopled heaven. If the ministers are to preach the truth and nothing but the truth—if they are to be saved from shallow conceits and questions which gender strife,—if the old gospel is to be well gradually from lips that are strong to speak it,—if, in fine, this longed world shall ever see a Babel reversed by a Pentecost, it will be when the feeblest intercessor shall be even as David, and David as an angel of the Lord, and from each heart and lips of the sacramental host shall swell the bold refrain, "For Zion's sake I will not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the salvation thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth."

Dear Brethren, suffer I pray you the word of exhortation in these matters which bear largely upon the welfare of the church. There is a remarkable passage in one of the Epistles of the beloved disciple to which I should like, in closing, to refer you—2 John, 8th verse. Is not the mysterious truth here indicated, that in some way or other—how and wherefore we know not—there is a connection between the spiritual progress of the people and the fulness of ministerial reward? It would seem to be the doctrine of the Bible that there are degrees of recompense, and official as well as individual approval. Hence we read of a "prophet's reward," and of a "righteous man's reward,"—of the starry lustre of the apostle's a crown. In this aspect there is something almost melancholy in the aged apostle, the best loved of the Master, condescending to an entreaty like this: "Paul on the verge of the dark river throbs with holy triumph, heastes with imperial indifference between longer life and heaven, and speaks exultingly of the fruits of his ministry as his 'hope and joy and crown of rejoicing.'" John, latest of the band to linger, still breathing the love he had caught on the Master's bosom, longing, one would think, for a renewal of that intercourse which had once made Galilee a heaven, seems to stop upon the threshold to make sure that the apathy or treason of his spiritual children, he may not be robbed of one jewel from his crown. Oh, if there be but a possibility of this, if the fulness of ministerial joy can be hazarded in any way by unfaithfulness of souls, or by declension, if there be such strange and subtle affinity between those who teach and those who are taught, that it stretches into the other world—you will not surely add to the multiplied burdens we have already to bear, the least we should suffer by our people's faith, and let your lukewarm or unworthy attachments should dim the lustre of your ministerial crown.

Brethren, dearly beloved and longed for, spare your Ministers, spare your church, spare the consciences of those of your own, and let it be our rejoicing hope, as it was that of our honored fathers in the gospel, that to the last course of the sun Methodism may rejoice in an earnest ministry, sustained by AN EARNEST CHURCH.

After this eloquent address the Rev. Geo. Douglas gave out the Doxology, and the audience was dismissed with the Benediction.

LITERARY NOTICES.
SABBATH CHIMES; OR, MEDITATIONS IN VERSE, FOR THE SUNDAYS OF A YEAR. By the Rev. W. Morley Pughson, M.A. New York: Carlton and Latham. Toronto: The Wesleyan Book Room. Pp. 223. Bevelled boards, toned paper, portrait, and numerous illustrations.

Our beloved President is as eloquent in verse as he is in prose, than which we can give no higher praise to the admirable volume of sacred poems which now lies before us. They were the offspring, he tells us, of a year's enforced pause amid the activities of a busy ministry. Seldom, if ever, have hours of invalid leisure been so well employed. The poems are characterized by a delicate fancy, poetic fervor, and beautiful and appropriate imagery. Their rhythm lingers like pleasant music in the ear; while the inspiring, hallowing, and ennobling sentiments they convey, sink into the heart, to be treasured among the precious things of memory. Above all, they breathe throughout the spirit of devout and earnest piety. This book cannot fail, we feel assured, of the threshold successes which the author covets for it.—"that, if God wills, it may be a messenger of mercy to the wandering; that it may be a comfort to the troubled; and that it may be a memory of the writer to many friends." It will cultivate devotional feeling in its readers, and tend to attune their souls to the holy harmonies of heaven. Herein,—as in all true religious poetry, and especially in the poetry of Scripture,—we seem to hear the echoes of what Milton calls "the sevenfold chorus and harping symphonies" of the redeemed—of

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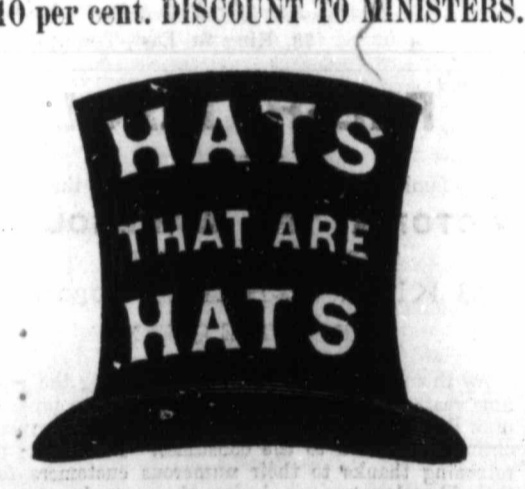
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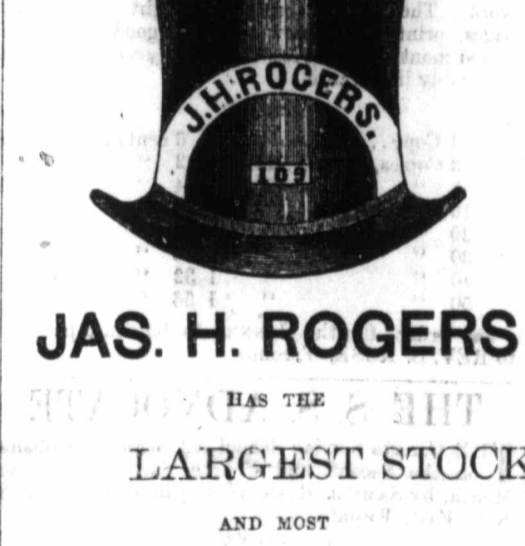
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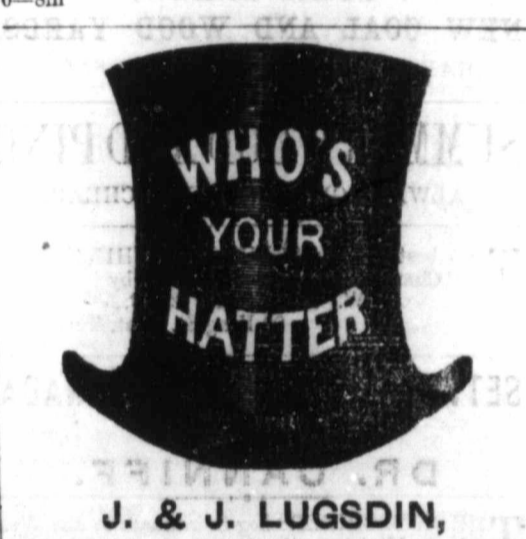
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