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Ottawa, Wednesday, 1st May, 1901.

How would it strike the average farmer if he were asked to set apart every tenth land of his spring crop for the Lord's use? He would prepare the soil and sow it, he would care for it and harvest it, and he would put it by itself and market it and turn the proceeds into the Lord's treasury. When we consider the part that the Lord has in the success of the crop that is now being put in, it would not be a large acknowledgement. It is worth trying.

And now the men who can afford it, who are near the centre and have got good salaries, prepare to attend the Synod, that Court which of all others is said to be the representative Court of our Church. These meet and piously lament the meagre attendance, and the lack of spirituality on the part of their absent brethren. But when it is suggested that the prosperous brethren who can attend share the expense of attendance equally with their more distant brethren . . . the thing is impracticable!

What an amount of lying seems to be necessary to effect a satisfactory sale of goods of any description! The bargain counter is a huge lie. There is always a reservation on the part of the merchant, which the purchaser cannot know. In the exchange of seed it is thought good business to get more than is given. In describing any article for sale the man is thought to be a fool who tells all that he knows about the article he wants to sell. A straight sale, that is where both parties were honest in their descriptions and statements would be worth a journey across the continent to witness. Honesty and sincerity are the rarest qualities among men. Not a single action held up to the white light of absolute truth would allow the rays of that light to pass through it without hindrance. Some that we thought fairly honorable according to the standard that holds in our world cast a very dark shadow indeed when God's truth falls upon them. Yet by that standard are finally tried. It is worth while trying our acts by it now.

A DISHEARTENING OUTLOOK.

We had a long conversation with a minister who is preaching for a call, and learned something of the unpleasantness such men have to endure. Some of them are full of the richest humor. Thus at one change within a metropolitan Presbytery, the minister was entertained on Monday morning while waiting for his train, by the young lady of the house, a pert but well meaning school-marm, by a description of the kind of man whom they were looking for in M—. She ended her description by the naive remark—"Now Mr.—, you are not at all the kind of man we want here." The remark was refreshingly simple and frank.

But these are surface matters. Every man knows that he becomes the subject of talk, not always kindly, at the dinner-tables of those to whom he has been trying to deliver his message in the morning. Perhaps he has risen above his environment, and spoken for his Master instead of with his own interests in view. They listened eagerly, and he hopes for good results for Christ from his sermon. But the chance word he can scarcely help hearing makes him painfully aware that they are thinking only of the impression he has made, and are perhaps wondering how old he is.

"Put your best foot forward" seems to be the advice needed for the minister today. In other days, perhaps in these days the Yankee horse-trader was famed for his ability to make every horse that passed through his hands look as if he were in his prime. Something of the horse trader's skill seems necessary today. Most congregations seemed possessed of the desire to open a man's mouth and examine his teeth before they call him for their minister. He may preach well, he may have a good record, he may be most courteous and cultured, but how old is he? His hairs are grey and painfully scant, there are crow's feet about his eyes, his step has lost some of its springiness, it would not pay to call him. Yes, they like his preaching, and like him very much as a man, but, he is past his prime.

Perhaps he hasn't. He may be just out of College, or a graduate of not more than a year or two. "But he lacks push and animation." There are some things that certain natures cannot bring themselves to do. They are men who shrink from debasing the sacred calling of the holy ministry with anything sordid. When a plutocrat, and there is one in almost every congregation, who may be worth \$1000 or \$100,000, takes him under his wing, and patronizes him, and wants to run him for the benefit of the congregation incidentally and of himself primarily, these men have a way of quietly withdrawing themselves. They have not reached the point where they can look self-respect in their home study while they go pulpit hunting. And they are not called!

Sometimes they are practically called, that is to say, the people want to call them. But one of the people does not, and that one most industriously speaks in

praise of the choice of the people and "is very sorry he cannot see his way to support him. If he were not acquainted with one little circumstance of his life he would hold up both hands for him. He believes that not a trace of that unfortunate affair remains, and laments his own prejudice, but he cannot bring himself to support the man just yet." That is enough. He only needs to say this to two persons, and then he may withdraw from the contest and watch the result. There is but one ending, and it has been witnessed again and again.

Need we wonder that after hearing of a few of such experiences a self-respecting young man declines to enter the field where such experiences are met. In doing this he sins against his own conscience, and stifles the voice that is calling him away from a sordid worldly pursuit to take up spiritual service entirely. Irreparable injury is done to himself, and yet is he entirely to blame for it? So long as the members of a congregation make a mere business of choosing a minister, very little removed above the plane of the business of choosing a driving horse, so long will an atmosphere that is most destructive to spiritual life surround the life of the man called to the ministry. Into it will come men whose only ambition is self-gratification, and who see in the profession of the ministry an easy means to secure it.

Let the minister feel that he is looked upon as one called to the very highest service, it is possible to hold in this life; let him be honored because of the position he holds, and the call he has received; let the business of calling and settling and supporting a minister be recognized as one in which God has the leading part, and that man's part is but to learn clearly what is God's will in the matter, and the men who have received the Divine call will no longer refuse to listen to it, nor shall we find men occupying our pulpits to whom the Divine voice has never spoken, but who hear only the voice of the prudent man who seeks an easy and honorable living. There are not many of these, but here and there one creeps in. The responsibility for this desecration rests at the door of the people, who have dishonored the calling of the Lord.

Referring to the meeting of the Synod in Stratford, and the election of one of the city minister's to the Moderator's chair, the Beacon says:

The citizens of Stratford feel highly complimented by the elevation of Rev. E. W. Pantton to the high and useful office of Moderator of the Synod of Hamilton and London. Of the city's clergymen Mr. Pantton is probably the longest located here, and that he has worn well is the best evidence of his Christian character and manly worth. Presbyterianism in Stratford is a strong force for good. It has not only faithfully imparted the teachings of the Master and pointed the way to the higher spiritual life, but its fruits are to be seen in the making of a high order of citizenship which has contributed so much to the well being of the city.