

Editorial.

LESSONS FROM EVANGELISTS.

UNFAIR comparisons are apt to be made between the work of the evangelist and that of the settled pastor. The ingathering of scores or hundreds in a few weeks under the new voice and hand has been known to lead even pastors themselves to regard the stranger with the least bit of jealousy. It is forgotten that there is a radical difference between reaping and sowing. A great ingathering, by whomsoever accomplished, should be reckoned the strongest testimony to the faithfulness with which the sowing and the after-cultivation have been done. The evangelist has been merely the instrument of setting the seal of Divine approval to the pastor's labors.

And yet the regular ministry may perhaps take a leaf out of the evangelist's book with profit. Some of the points emphasized in the special evangelistic methods are of application to ordinary work. The evangelist, for example, follows a somewhat narrow line of teaching. The great vital truths concerning sin, guilt, redemption, immediate acceptance of Christ, present assurance, and full consecration are his principal themes. He gains power thereby. The great truths are seen more clearly because thus picked out and kept persistently in the foreground. They become realities to the hearers compelling acceptance or rejection. For the evangelist to discuss outlying points of lesser importance is to subtract from his effectiveness. The settled pastor should note this. His teaching must of course be wider in its sweep. But scattering shot is not to take the place of bullets. The half-hour sermon on Sabbath is the preacher's only opportunity with most of his hearers. It is sadly wasted if generally occupied with minor matters. Let these come in; but after the fundamentals. Preachers are afraid of becoming monotonous. A wholesome dread! but there is no monotony so dreary as the monotony of insignificant details. Clear, sharp definition of the cardinal truths of the Gospel, with bright, fresh illustration and withal urgent application of them to heart and conscience—and this the staple of pulpit ministration—is world-wide from monotony.

Few evangelists fear reiteration, which fear is the bug-bear of the ordinary pulpit. A chain of argument is wrought out or of illustration, perfect in each link and as a whole. But it is only a chain. It is run