

Editorial.

WORK FOR LAYMEN.

We do not much like the established distinction between "Lay" and "Clerical." Doubtless in common speech, it serves a useful purpose in designating classes of men. But, it is misapplied oftentimes, and grievously, with respect to those who are Christ's. It is very specially so, when used as a reason why any Christian man should not take an active part in the work of Christ on the earth. As if, because he belonged to the first class, that work was none of his; or, as if, by taking an active part in that work, he would be intruding on a line of things belonging exclusively to the other class. All who are really Christ's are members of a Royal priesthood: "Kings and priests unto God." And it is their part, their very highest work on earth, to be busy in that work appropriate to their office.

Some time ago a gentleman visited a Western city at a time when a Sabbath School Convention was in session. He was amazed that so many should be gathered together merely to speak about Sabbath School work. Led by curiosity, he found his way to a meeting of the Convention. He was interested in all he heard and saw; and during all the remaining sessions he continued an attentive hearer and observer. Returning home thereafter in company with a friend, he was for a time pre-occupied and silent. At last he said, in answer to a remark by his friend, "Men call my life successful. I am now forty-three years of age, and am worth a hundred thousand dollars. But I learned one thing at that Sabbath School Convention: I have done nothing for Christ." No sooner did he reach home than he called together his friends and acquaintances, and laid before them a plan of work for Christ; including specially, Sabbath Schools for the town and neighbourhood. A goodly number were persuaded to join him; and the result, in no long time,

was a marked revival of vital religion over a wide district. And why should not the faculty for business and organization, possessed by many Christian men, be more frequently applied to similar work? How could they use it to bring in every way a richer return, or serve a nobler purpose? Priceless gifts and energies are practically wasted oftentimes by Christian men; expended wholly in subordinate spheres, and on minor aims.

Once upon a time, at a great feast given by an Italian prince, the guests were struck with admiration at the beauty of one of the dishes on the table. It was in form of a lion, faultlessly modelled. The prince called up his chief cook to receive the praise he deserved. But he repudiated all merit for the work, saying it was the production of a youth, one of his subordinates in the kitchen. With awakened interest, the prince immediately called the boy before him. When he stood before the splendid company, a slender stripling, his mean array could not hide the stamp of genius on his ingenuous countenance. As they looked on him, they began to think it foul scorn that his excellent, God-given faculty, should be wasted merely to grace a feast, when it might be used to produce forms of beauty in enduring brass and marble. He was allowed nevermore to fill a scullion's place. From that hour the prince took him under his own special patronage, placed him under the best masters of art, and had thus the honour of being helpful to one whose name lives as a great sculptor.

Now there does seem to be a lamentable waste of power in the Church of Christ, and on the part of many intelligent, excellent Christian men. They will stay in the kitchen when they might rise to the studio. There is more required of business men, in these days, than at any former time. They need a wider reach of intellect, and a more