

present demoralization is to be stayed and the tide of ruin stemmed and turned back, the power and universal sweep of the moral imperative, the deathless grip of the "I ought," the tremorless moral trend of the omnipotence of God, must be brought into the foundation of our theory, and into the very texture of our character and conduct. When the foundations are laid anew in accordance with the theory of Essential Morality, and not until then, will truth, honesty, purity, righteousness, and moral integrity, in the full sense, shape human activity and society.

II.—MINISTERS' VACATIONS.

By JOHN HALL, D.D., LL.D., NEW YORK.

"GLAD you're back—did you enjoy your vacation?"

"O yes, thank you. I always get a little work to do on the other side, and it is pleasant; and I get a little reading for the benefit of my young people that it is not easy to manage during the winter."

"By the way, did you see that there were some criticisms on you ministers going off for vacations?"

"Yes: I saw one—a kindly suggestion—and quite proper, as to some substitute for needful duty, however, rather than criticism."

"And didn't you feel guilty?"

"Not at all, for two reasons. First, I had a substitute for evening duty, as good—to say the least—as the stated pastor; and, secondly, it is not my doing that I go away. In the 'call' given me, nineteen years ago, the congregation, without any hint from me, made the arrangement of two months in the year for vacation, and when, once or twice, I seemed in danger of loafing around New York, or going to Missouri for Sabbath-schools, and, they said, 'working one way or another,' they actually sent the money for my transportation across the sea. I don't feel guilty."

"And your people—don't they miss you?"

"Very many of them are away longer than I am, and the remainder get a chance—which they would not otherwise have with a good conscience—of being edified by other than the familiar voice. The working part of the year in our great cities is reduced to seven or eight months, and a minister cannot be away during those months. I have not been out of the pulpit in those working months, except three Sabbaths of illness, in nineteen years. What is the consequence? If I were removed next month by being carried to a professor's chair, or my grave, my people know but little of other ministers from whom they could make a selection of a successor. The only opportunity they have to learn their gifts is in the so-called vacation. And that recalls a circumstance worth noting. In Scotland, the city ministers,