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Thursday, March 22nd, 1900.

There is a perceptible flutter among our Toronto contemporaries. The oldest of them has recently changed hands, and her new master has promised her a new home and a new dress. The younger sister is evidently considerably disturbed at this announcement, and plaintively asks, if, after all she had done she is not worthy of recognition. As the youngest member of the family we are quietly taking it all in.

A contemporary calls attention to the number of ministers who are leaving the pastorate, and entering upon some secular calling. The illustrations are drawn from our neighbors over the line, but it would not be difficult to find a sufficient number in our own land. The cause is not far to seek. The call to a pastorate, which used to be a most sacred matter, is fast becoming a commercial transaction. It is not entirely, or mainly, the fault of the minister, though the mercenary spirit is found among them. Congregations that become vacant deliberately look for a minister who will keep their church in the forefront, not necessarily in spiritual life, but in the world's eye. The hireling fills the bill, while the honest man turns sorrowfully away.

The financial year is almost closed, and some of the funds still show an alarming deficit. One would almost imagine that the contribution to the Schemes of the Church was a bad debt, collected only upon compulsion. There is little of the spirit of privilege in the response for means to carry on the Lord's work. It is a tax, and it is grudgingly paid. It is a question whether our money paid thus

under protest, brings to us any reward. It may be used to good advantage, but while it blesses him that takes, it leaves him that gives perceptibly poorer. Were it given in the right spirit, he who gives would receive immeasurably the greater reward. We are robbing ourselves by our mean-spiritedness.

The colleges are closed, and before another week the students will be on the way to their fields of labor. Little will be done till the month of May. Would it not be better to spend the month of April in the college, in a seven month's session, than to enter the field when it is practically impossible to do more than reach the preaching stations on Sabbath. The session is now too short to accomplish the work that ought to be done, while the month of enforced idleness with which the summer work begins is a poor preparation for a season of earnest Christian work. Would it not be possible for some Senate to move in the direction of lengthening the session. Let the movement be begun, at least, for it will require some years to secure the necessary momentum to carry it through an Assembly.

Presbyteries are about to consider the annual report of their Standing Committees. Some of these are really valuable, some are culled from former reports, except the statistical statement; some present the opinions of an individual upon the condition of our Sabbath Schools, or the life of our churches, or of our Young People's Societies. The evil of the latter does not lie in the fact that they give no information, it lies rather in this, that they dishearten and disgust faithful workers who expected bread and got a stone in the report submitted. It is worse than unfaithfulness when the man to whom the Presbytery entrusts the work of one of its important committees, gives it less real thought than he does to an ordinary prayer-meeting address. There ought to be inspiration in the report of the progress of work in any department. If there is none in this year's report, try another Convener next year, and keep on changing till you get a man who can make his report speak to you.

The Part of the Ordinary Member.

In the work of the congregation the part of the ordinary church member seems exceedingly small. The minister and session attend to the spiritual needs of the people, the managers look after all financial affairs, the Sabbath School has its quota of workers and the young people have a full staff of officers and committee men. What is left, except to pay your contribution regularly?

If the minister were asked what opening there were for active work, it is quite possible he would be considerably perplexed to find an answer. In theory

he ought to put this enquiring member to work, but a minister who would wait to be asked this question would have nothing for such an enterprising enquirer to do.

We are accustomed to say that the ideal church is one in which every member is an active member, knowing his place and filling it. There should be nothing ideal about such a church, it should be real. That it is not is largely the fault of those who are leaders in spiritual activity. When men first enter the church they are eager to do something. The minister who can wisely direct this enthusiasm to serve, is a workman needing not to be ashamed. If he has not the skill to rightly direct it, if he set them to useless labor, of allowing them to stand around idle during these first hours of feverish activity, he has not only failed to secure the accomplishment of work, but he has killed desire.

Many are filling the ranks of the ordinary member who are fitted to lead others in service. Once the opportunity was given to turn their activity into a profitable channel. It was allowed to pass unimproved, and they sank back into the condition of the ordinary member, who looks on while others work. We do not wish to be understood to say that he is not responsible for this present condition, but we do wish to say that he is not wholly responsible. It is the part of the servant of the Lord, not only to inspire to active service, but to direct in that service, so that no man's strength shall go unused, nor shall any spend his strength for naught.

Who Touched Me?

To the disciples it seemed an unreasonable question. Did not the multitude throng him? All about him were men who had touched him. The crowd pressed some against him; some sought to be near him; some, perhaps, to touch him out of curiosity. These touched his garments, but not himself. They came in contact with his person, but not with his soul. They did not perceive his divine nature and did not seek his divine grace. But there was one in that crowd who felt her need, and in her suffering crept up close to him and simply laid hold on the hem of his garment. She did not seek the man, but the healer; she did not come attracted by his winsome words, or out of curiosity, but in her great sense of need. She came in faith; this man was able to heal her, and she sought him. She came and touched his garment for a purpose. And she was healed. We may be in the church, we may be where men crowd about Jesus and listen to the popular preacher, and yet go away as we came. But when we come in humility and seek his salvation, virtue, life and strength come out of him and we are saved.