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## THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY.

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Within a few months past I have read in several religious papers belonging to different Christian denominations, articles which speak of the prospective supply of ministers for the future wants of the Church. The religious young men of our day, it is affirmed, manifest an increasing tendency away from the Christian ministry and toward the more popular and exciting business vocations.

By most of these writers this fact is attributed to the engrossing spirit of worldliness which has been so rapidly increasing among all classes of society. One writer, however, charges the evil chiefly upon the ministry itself. He affirms, and I think with truth, that ministers are so frequently writing and speaking of their trials and parading before the people the sacrifices of their vocation, dwelling upon the smallness and uncertainty of their salaries, the unreasonable exactions of the people upon their time, strength, patience, and charity, complaining of the lack of sympathy manifested to themselves and their families, and so setting in array the general opinion of the world, that one who should form his opinion of the ministerial vocation from these representations would be almost sure to regard that calling as little less than a protracted crucifixion, a veritable martyrdom—save only the glory of it.

Ministers probably write more for the weekly press than men of any other calling; and the fact that it is natural for man to be more deeply and permanently impressed by the ills than by the blessings which fall to his lot, makes it no wonder that the dark side of the minister's life would be more frequently exhibited than the bright side. There seems also to be a prevailing opinion that if the people can be impressed with the idea that the minister's life is one of unusual sacrifice, their sympathies will lead them to give a more welcome and thoughtful reception to the religious appeals from the pulpit than they otherwise would. Whatever may be the reasons for these frequent allusions to the trials experienced by the ministry, there can be no doubt as to their influence upon the pious young men when pondering the question of their life calling.

Now, I have been led to enquire: Are these representations of life in the ministry truthful and fair? And to find an answer my mind has gone back through the experience and observations of my own life for thirty years during which I have been in the ministerial ministry of the M. E. Church. These reflections have resulted in some very decided conclusions in my own mind; and I am not without impressions that it is my duty to lay these conclusions before the public. Possibly they may assist some young man in deciding a question which may be moving his own soul to its profound centre.

A little more than half these thirty-one years have been spent in the regular pastoral work; a little less than half in the work of teaching in the literary institutions of the Church, subject annually to the appointment by the bishop as a regular itinerant minister. I cannot speak of experience as pastor of large, popular and wealthy city churches, nor as pioneer in the rough, hard work on the frontiers of civilization. The churches I have served have not ranked much above, and perhaps not much below, the medium grade of country village churches. My salary has never been estimated above a very moderate figure; and in quite a majority of instances that moderate figure has not been reached by the payments. The whole amount which I have in this way "sacrificed" or "contributed to the church" I have never figured up, and probably never shall. It might be a sum which would materially lighten the burdens of a worn-out itinerant's declining years.

My "itinerant removals" have been about half as many as the years I have been an itinerant minister. With a few of these removals and deficits of pay there have been connected unpleasant circumstances; and in one or two instances I have thought I had reason to feel afflicted and injured. But whenever a feeling of murmuring and censure has begun to arise, some silent voice has spoken in the inward ear: "Haven't you deserved all this? Consider your services here. The question with you is not, Can the officers of the Church do as they are doing with a good conscience? That question is for them; with you it is: Have I served the Master in this charge so faithfully, so perfectly, so successfully, so that I deserve at His hand more and better than I am receiving?" This home question is not a pleasant one, but it does turn the edge of censure; and the itinerant who listens to it will, pretty certainly, put the curses he was tempted to scatter into his own pocket and carry them all away from his charge he is leaving. I have allowed to these items, not for the purpose of displaying personal matters, but to show that my experience would not be likely to prejudice me greatly in favor of the ministry as a profession.

In my review I have thought of the men with whom I have become acquainted in the other professions and occupations of life, and have compared the circumstances and professional experiences of those men, so far as they have come to my knowledge.

There is an opinion prevailing to a considerable extent, in the M. E. Church at least, and shared in somewhat by many preachers as well as others, that the pecuniary support which ministers receive is a sort of semi-charity. The payment of their salaries is regarded as an entirely voluntary matter, and in no way of legal obligation; and the private and public donations which they receive are, in name and in fact, gratuities. What is "given," whether called "pay" or "donation," is very naturally classed with what is "given" as veritable charity. I know the striking which from this cause, though not a word may be spoken to suggest the humiliation, a minister of independent and sensitive spirit will often feel, but must not manifest. He may know that among all the most worthy members of his congregation the payment of his salary is regarded as a sacred obligation, as well as a real privilege; and that the donations he receives are bestowed, not as charities, but as cordial testimonials

of good will to the minister and his family and to the cause he represents; still the humiliation of living on the "gifts" of the people will sometimes provoke the inward utterance, "If my means of support were, like the fees of the physician and the lawyer, a legal demand, I should not feel that I was an object of charity upon the people; I could then take my pay and hold up my head."

Now I have made some observations in regard to this matter of collecting fees. It is no very unusual thing, I think, when the doctor or lawyer presents his bill for services rendered to his patient or client, that he is met by an expression of countenance, if not by words, which says, "What an enormous charge! full twice as much as it ought to be!" Now the lawyer has a "case" to argue, not against authorities and precedents, but against parsimony, against stubbornness, against poverty, and the physician has need of all his counter irritants in a case not found in the books. And when, finally, under threats of compulsion, the money is handed out, it is probably accompanied by the remark, "There; it cost me as many weeks of hard work to earn that money as you have spent hours in attending to my business." If the case was not managed to a successful issue, the payment of the fee is most likely supplemented by the pleasant remark, "So much goes to pay for a dead horse." On the whole, I think I would rather be a minister and receive salary and donations, than to be a doctor or lawyer and collect fees.

The itinerant's removals are not agreeable. To see your house periodically desolated with boxes, barrels, torn-up carpets, and general litter—no place to sit, to eat, to sleep—does not minister to ease of body, or cheerfulness of spirit. But there is some consolation, even there, in the reflection that there is a worse world than this! If the minister's relations with his people have been pleasant, if the friendships formed may be long continued, if those relations have not been pleasant, who does not feel a relief in the prospect of getting away from a place which has not proved a very satisfactory paradise? Then a Christian can always find comfort in the path of duty; and the work of "moving" is, to the itinerant, just as truly religious work as preparing and preaching sermons, and there is much less of the burdening sense of responsibility attending it than there may be weariness of body. I have not had experience in leaving charges which I had been serving, with no prospect before me but that of indefinite "candidating" for a future home and field of labor. Our itinerant system always, at the close of our pastoral term in one place, sets before us a new harvest field to which we may take our direct departure with fresh helpfulness of success.

The influence of the clergyman's calling upon his own mind and character is an important item for consideration in this discussion. It is necessarily brought into association with the best classes of people; his most intimate relations are with those whose society is the most beneficial. The objects which bring him and them together are the most important and the most ennobling of all objects. The books he reads are the product of the best minds the world has produced; the subjects he studies are the most exalted and sacred and inspiring that can engage the human mind. It is scarcely possible that all these should be without great influence to improve the mind and character of the minister himself. Every observing person of fifty or more years of age must be acquainted with many instances which illustrate this influence. In our Church papers I often see the names of ministers whom I knew as young men twenty five and thirty years ago, in New York and New England. Some of them were my pupils in school; with others I became acquainted when they came into the conference to commence their great life work. I witnessed their examinations before the conference committees, and heard from the presiding elders reports of their labors and of the prospects of usefulness as ministers of the Gospel. They were from the common laboring classes of society; they were common but respectable young men. Many of them had very limited educational advantages. If they had gone into the ordinary business pursuits they would have been but ordinary business men, as multitudes of other young men, their early associates, and their equals in character and advantages, have been.

Now, when I notice the present standing of those ministers, as indicated by the appointments they receive from the conference, the articles they write for the press, and the positions they occupy in religious conventions and other public occasions I can but wonder if these honored and influential ministers are the same men who bore those names a quarter of a century ago. Then they had just entered the sphere of influence which belong to the sacred calling, were just beginning to take hold of the great philosophical and religious questions which have agitated and energized the Church in all ages, just commencing an acquaintance with the world's great master minds—made master minds by the same influences which upon those young men.

Now, after the lapse of what seems a very brief period, I see that they have become men of intellectual strength, of varied and rich intelligence of commanding influence—leading men among the hosts which are moulding the character and destiny of mankind. What magic—that miracle has touched those crude youths to transform them into these men of power? They have quietly and faithfully pursued the work of their ministry. That is the whole magic and miracle in the case.

Could those young men, when I knew them, have had a look into the future; could they have clearly foreseen and fully appreciated all that their profession was about to do for them in twenty five years, the thorough intellectual culture it would give them, the fellowship of noble minds to which it would introduce them, the honorable integrity of character it would secure them, the generous proprietorship in all of the world's purest and best which it would guarantee to them—would not their hearts have throbbled with unutterable gratitude to

Him who had just said to them, "Go work in my vineyard?"—a command which probably did fill them with trembling and sorrow! In comparison with those benefits of what account would they all have regarded if they could have foreseen them all, the toils and privations and hardships of their holy calling?

You are welcome to tell me that sacrifices and hardships are inseparable from the minister's vocation. I know it. But when I can have mentioned—and such cases are numerous in the ministry of all the churches—and many of those who write complainingly of their profession are among the number—I have a sufficient answer to all your complaints. On the whole, I must say that my own experiences and successes in the ministry have not been of the most flattering sort; yet, if I were back again in the days of youth with the great question of my life work demanding decision, and could look at the trials and enjoyments, the losses and profits the responsibilities and rewards of the various avocations of men, as the experiences and observations of more than thirty years enable me now to look at them, I would go into my closet and bow humbly before my Heavenly Father and beg Him, as an inestimable favor, to permit me to be a minister of the Gospel.—North Western Advocate.

## WE CANNOT LONGER AFFORD WAR.

The opinions of the solid men of Boston upon all questions of finance secure the highest regard. Not long since one of this class said to us in a tone and manner that gave great power to his words, "The endeavors of the Peace Society are worthy of all praise." Another gentleman of the same class said, "The alterations now presented to the nations, with perhaps the exception of a single nation are bankruptcy or dismemberment. Only one nation to-day can afford to stand upon a war footing."

It is then the judgment of far-seeing, practical men of business, that this business war does not pay. It is a "luxury" too costly. If any of our readers think these statements extravagant, we ask them simply to read the articles of Messrs. Stokes and Burritt in the last month's Advocate, and the article of Mr. Balfour in this number. The War debts of the world are twenty-five hundred millions of dollars. Twenty-six hundred millions of dollars are wrung out of the people of Christendom yearly in taxes as the cost of the war system. Great Britain spends \$5 per cent of her national income on debt and war. The French national debt, to which the late war has added sixteen hundred millions of dollars, is now the largest in the world. This one war has added one hundred and ten millions of dollars to the annual yearly to be taken from the scanty earnings of the French people. Our own Federal taxes the last year were four hundred millions of dollars. During the six years since the close of the war the people have paid in taxes to the General Government three thousand millions of dollars. A "tremendous total" indeed. And then to think it is wrung out of the people of Christendom, people named for the Prince of Peace!

The statement that stands at the head of this article is true, not in a single sense and application merely. Think of its significance in a great variety of relations and application.

## OUR MATERIAL INTERESTS CANNOT AFFORD WAR.

When we have in mind the material interests of Christendom, we say we cannot afford war. Commerce, trade, manufactures, the numerous industrial operations of Christendom ought not to be disturbed by this enormous taxation. Public and private enterprises for developing the agricultural and mineral resources of the nations, plans for improving the condition of the harbors and rivers of the world, for the construction of railroads, electric telegraphs, and increasing the facilities for communication among the different peoples of the earth, projects for taming the mighty forces and elements of nature, and harnessing them for the service of man—How are these enterprises and plans crippled and frustrated by war taxes! War unsettles, deranges, confuses all legitimate business operations, and substitutes in their place speculation, and gambling and extravagance.

## EDUCATION CANNOT AFFORD WAR.

When we have Education in mind, its institutions and appliances, we say we cannot afford war. This is an age of unprecedented mental activity. How are the words of Daniel fulfilled, "Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." Mind everywhere is snapping the fetters, and casting off the shackles of ignorance and barbarism. The masses are languishing and thirsting for knowledge. With what ardor Scientists are prosecuting their researches and investigations in all departments of the universe. Mark the progress of physical science during the last half century. Chemistry, Geology, Natural History, Physiology, what affluents has each added to the world's accumulating knowledge. That celestial science Astronomy. Think of its brilliant disclosures. The astronomer does not boast when he says,—

"Now with swift thought I range from pole to pole, View worlds around their flaming centers roll, I trace the blazing comet's fiery trail, And weigh the whirling planets in a scale!"

Scarcely have we recovered from the surprise excited by one magnificent discovery, before we are startled by another still more wonderful. We say truly, "there is scarcely a problem on earth, or in the sky which Science acknowledges to be beyond its reach." Now, this thirst for knowledge, and this scientific enthusiasm, the singular intellectual activity characteristic of the times, creates the demand for most generous outlay of money. They make it necessary for the colleges and universities already in existence greatly to enlarge and extend their facilities for culture. Yale College alone, asks for six, and she ought to receive, without delay, twelve hundred thousand dollars. It makes it necessary, also, that a great number of new seminaries of learning, of different grades, be founded and endowed, and provided with instructors and libraries, and all the appliances for their work. It creates, also, a demand for public libraries, laboratories, observatories, museums, and all the multitudinous and costly apparatus for the prosecution of scientific

researches, investigations and explorations. Let Education and its institutions receive only a fraction of the "tremendous total" that is swallowed up by war, how would the blessings they are conferring upon the world be increased a thousand fold! Education join in the cry, "It cannot afford war."

## OUR RELIGIOUS INTERESTS CANNOT AFFORD WAR.

When we think of our religious interests, we say we cannot afford war. Our missionary boards, our church building, and extension associations, our Sabbath School Societies find today opened for their beneficent operations, fields broad and rich exceedingly. In tones most touching and persuasive, they call for money and men. Oh! could but one millionth part of the wealth that now goes to swell the "river of blood" flow into the treasuries of these glorious associations! Oh! could but a small detachment of the five million picked and drilled soldiers of the United States, or of the armies of Christendom, respond to the call that now comes from all quarters for preachers and teachers of the gospel, how speedily would the wilderness and solitary places of the earth be glad, and deserts blossom as the rose. How soon would the Holy Scriptures be translated into every tongue, and a Christian civilization be extended all over the earth! How soon would disappear from the earth that scourge, that comes as destruction, clothed with terrors, that whose approach people's hands are taint, and their hearts melt, which causes them to be amazed at one another, and their faces to be as flames, and pangs and sorrows to take hold on them; which causes even the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof to appear to withhold their light, the Sun to be darkened in his going forth, and the Moon, "pale Empress of the night," to walk the heavens clad in the habiliments of mourning. How speedily, instead of the intelligences of battles that are with confusion and noise, and gurgling rilled in blood, would come to us joyful tidings of bloodless victories. How soon should we hear of the triumphs of Him, by the exploits of whose armies the luxuriance and bloom of nature are not replaced with unlightness and sterility, but rather the parched grounds become pools, and the thirsty lands springs of water, and deserts rejoice even with joy and singing.

How soon should we read of heroism by which men by thousands are not maimed, and lamed and killed, but by which the lame are made to leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb to sing, the eyes of the blind are opened, and the ears of the deaf are unstopped. Pagan nations have been aroused to deeper thoughts and higher aspirations than ever before mingled with their wild dreamings; they are stretching out their hands, to receive the blessings of Christianity. They lift up the voices and declare to Christian nations, "You cannot afford war." Give your money and your men so more to convert the world into a Pandemonium, but rather to change the dark places of earth that are full of the habitations of cruelty into the abodes of love and peace.

Think of the multitudes of parents that war has bereft of their children; of wives it has made desolate widows; of children it has made homeless orphans; think of the enormous amount of crime, of poverty, of wretchedness of the manifold and astounding horrors of war. Is it not the day of Christendom cannot afford war? Is it not the day come for Christian nations to combine in a grand endeavor to put an end to this gigantic evil.—The Advocate of Peace.

## TO CHRISTIAN YOUNG MEN.

In almost all our cities and larger towns, the young men of our country are drawn off very much, to act by themselves, outside of the particular church to which they belong. There are Christian Associations and the like. We are continually told in the papers how much they are doing, what interesting meetings they have, how lively their prayer-meetings are, and what thrilling things are said and done. One would think by their reports, that all the good that is done, all the Christian activity in the land, is confined to their efforts.

Now I am not going to say a single word against these Christian Associations, nor a word to disparage them. I give them my hearty God-speed. But there is one devilment to point out, and that is, that they spend their time and strength by themselves, and withdraw so much from the church to which they belong. The Church of God's the pillar and the ground of truth. It is the only body organized and appointed by Christ to act and do His work. Are the children to be instructed in religion? The Church must gather around and foster the Sunday school. Are ministers to be raised up? They must come from the bosom of the Church. Are foreign and home missionaries to be sent out and sustained? The Church must see to it, and uphold them by its prayer and money. Are missionary boxes to be put up for the struggling laborer? The Church must supply them. Are the poor to be visited and the hungry fed, the naked clothed, and the sick comforted? We look to the Church to do it. Is the communion table to be made honorable in the eyes of the world? The Church must do it. Is the weekly prayer meeting to be sustained and made a gathering where Christ will meet His disciples—to be sustained, rain or shine, year in and year out, from generation to generation? The Church only can do that. The mission schools, the libraries, the home evangelization, the sustaining, honoring, and shielding of the ministry, must all be done by the Church. Here, surely, is a field wide enough for all, and in it a place for every worker to the utmost of his strength.

Now I have noticed, and with pain, that our young men are withdrawing from the stated prayer-meetings of the Church, and are having their meetings by themselves; and the idea is, that their meetings are more cheerful, lively, wide awake, and interesting than the church meeting. In that, the people seem odd, numb, formal, cold and dead. The prayers are, and formal! the singing so lifeless! The worshiper who only sings don't sing. "And make the heavenly arches ring," as they would.

Just remember, my dear good fellow, that

the room of prayer is the Church's closet. In it gather the old, weary pilgrims who have faced and combated storms and temptations long before you were born—these can't feel you once loved most, or cut loose from what long before you were born—these can't feel you once loved most, and fastened your soul's grip on Jesus Christ. If you were to die this very night, probably your pastor would write down beside your name, "Awakened, but not converted."

One more urgent direction was given to Lot, and his family by the messenger of God: "Stay not in all the plain!" Never was a vale more verdant in that whole Orient than the vale of Jordan beside the walls of Sodom. The fields were purple with flowers, and perfumed with the spices. But Lot was not to halt long enough to pluck an ear of barley, or a purple cluster from the vines. The whole plain was under the coming curse of God: "Stay not in the plain!"

I have seen a man shed tears under a plain sermon, and stop and tell his pastor afterwards how anxious he was to be a Christian. But nothing came of it. He lingered in the plain. I have stood by the bedside of a sick man, who fervently promised that if God would restore him, he would give to him the added days. He got well—but only to linger in the plain. Poor A—! How often has he promised me that he would give attention to his soul. But he is secretly bound by an evil habit which he will not renounce. He wants to get to heaven, but he will not "pluck out the right eye" of a favorite sin. Often awakened, he is not yet saved!

Still lingering in the plain, is many a one who reads this article. Let me lay hold upon you as the messenger did upon the household of Lot, and shout into your ears, "Escape for thy life! look not behind thee; neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to Calvary lest thou be consumed! Quit the first sin that comes to hand! You are only safe when you reach Christ.—T. E. Cuyler.

## THE MINIMUM CHRISTIAN.

The minimum Christian! And who is he? The Christian who is going to heaven at the cheapest rate possible. The Christian who intends to get all of the world he can, and not meet the worlding's doom. The Christian who aims to have as little religion as he can without lacking it altogether.

The minimum Christian goes to church in the morning, and in the afternoon also, unless it rains, or is too warm, or too cold, or he is sleepy, or has the headache from eating too much at dinner. He listens most respectfully to the preacher, and joins in prayer and praise. He applies the truth very sensibly sometimes to himself, often to his neighbors.

The minimum Christian is very friendly to all good works. He wishes them well, but it is not in his power to do much for them. The Sunday School he looks upon as a judicious institution, especially for the neglected and ignorant. It is not convenient however for him to take a class. His business engages are so pressing during the week that he needs Sabbath as a day of rest, nor does he think himself qualified to act as a teacher. There are so many persons better prepared for this important duty that he must be excused; still he would do it if he were. He is very friendly to home and foreign missions and colportage, and gives his mite. He thinks there are "too many" but he gives, if not enough to save his reputation, pretty near it. He attends all sorts of entertainments, and at all events he aims at it.

The minimum Christian is not clear on a number of points—the opera and dancing, perhaps the theater and card playing; large fashionable parties give him trouble. He cannot see the harm in this that the other people do. There is nothing in the Bible against it. He does not see but a man may be a Christian, and dance, and go to the opera. He knows several excellent persons who do. Why should not he?

He stands so close to the dividing line between the people of God and the people of the world that it is hard to say on which side of it he is actually to be found.

Ah, my brother, are you making this attempt? Beware, lest you find at last that in trying to get to heaven with a little religion you have missed it altogether; lest, without gaining the whole world you lose your own soul.

## "LOT LINGERED."

In that strangely lingering man I see a type of every unconverted reader who holds that sheet in his hand. The duty of the moment for you is to escape to Jesus as the one "mountain of refuge." It must be prompt; for the Bible has "no to-morrow" in its offers of eternal life. Every promise of acceptance to the sinner bears the date of "to-day."

Your escape to Jesus must not only be prompt, it must be decisive. "Look not behind thee!" The angels knew well that the fascinations of gay and giddy Sodom would have a strong grasp on the hearts of Lot's household. Therefore, there must be no backward longings, or backward lookings. So must it be with you. If you would escape hell, look not behind. Old indulgences and old habits will soon magnetize your heart as with a spell. If they do not stop you entirely, they will divide the mind; and a divided mind never wins a battle. Half a heart never carried a man to Jesus. You have to give the Savior all or none. "Ye shall seek for me, and find me when ye search for me with all the heart."

You claim that you are really on the road to Jesus, and are desirous to be saved. Lot's wife was on the road to safety, and yet she perished. She was warned of her danger; yet she looked behind her, and was turned into a monument of righteous retribution on the spot. Her fate is the more sorrowful and sickening because she perished in full view of Zeor, the mount of God, and while on the direct road to it. Every congregation has in it more or less persons who have been awakened in past revivals. Their fears were excited. Their consciences troubled them. They attended inquiry meetings. They shed tears, and perhaps "rose for prayer" amid the wonder and the joy of an assembly of God's people. Yet they were never converted. For "convert" means to turn into an opposite path, and

they never turned away from their sins to their Savior. Friend! here is your danger. You have not cut loose from sin, or cut loose from pride and self-dependence, or cut loose from what you once loved most, and fastened your soul's grip on Jesus Christ. If you were to die this very night, probably your pastor would write down beside your name, "Awakened, but not converted."

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## SPECIAL PROVIDENCE.

It is well to note how often in their precarious outset precious lives have been preserved from imminent danger, and sometimes by what we deem a trivial circumstance. In the beginning of last century, in the house of a London tradesman, a babe was born, who looked so inanimate and insignificant that it was taken for granted he was dead, when afterwards gazing at the tiny form an attendant noticed a gentle movement in the chest, and her efforts were rewarded by fostering into the life the author of the "Rise and Progress." Contemporary with Philip Doddridge there was growing up in a parsonage, in Lincolnshire a boy of great promise who had already reached his sixth summer when the rectory took fire; all awoke in time and saved themselves, but the little boy was forgotten, or rather it was left to God Himself to save him, and the "brand plucked from the burning" grew up to be the founder of English Methodism. A poor woman in the town of Stirling sprang up from her spinning wheel with an impression on her mind that her child had fallen into a neighboring well. She was just in time to snatch hold of a lint-white head which had not yet disappeared, but which was no child of her own but the minister's son, Tommy Randall, afterwards abundantly known as the benevolent and noble-minded Dr. Davidson of Edinburgh.

We forget it as regards ourselves, but we see and feel it in our children. Surely a special Providence superintends them, and in their hands angels bear them up, lest at any time they dash their foot against a stone. Playing with the cockatrice, putting their hand on the lion's mane; making toys of edge-tools; scrambling up precipices, and falling out from open windows; swept at a helpless bundle down the swollen torrent, or picked up from beneath the carriage-wheels; restored from desperate sickness, or preserved amidst frightful accidents,—what mother is there who at some moment has not felt like the Alpine peasant when she saw the eagle sailing overhead with her infant in its talons? Who that has not once and again shrieked out in helpless agony, and then wildly laughed or wept at the marvellous preservation! Who is there that has a son grown up who does not acknowledge that he is the child of Providence? And who is there that has grown up himself, but says with Addison:—

"When in the slippery paths of youth With heedless train I ran, Thine arm, unseen, conveyed me safe, And led me up to man. Through hidden dangers, toils and deaths, I gently cleared my way, And through the pleasing snares of vice, More to be feared than they."

—Dr. James Hamilton.

## LACONIC SPEECH OF BISHOP MORRIS.

At the late session of the Cincinnati Conference, at the request of Bishop Scott, Bishop Morris addressed the class admitted into full connection. In substance his remarks were these: "Brethren, after trying the experiment, you have deliberately chosen to preach the Gospel for life. I have chosen to preach the Gospel—not to read commissions. To preach means to, with the voice, proclaim the Gospel to the people, face to face.

The more religion you have, the deeper you are experienced in the Scriptures, the better you can preach the Gospel. Now, to love God with all the heart, is the first and great commandment; and the second, to love your neighbor as yourself, is like unto it. Keep these, and it will be well with you. "In preparation for the pulpit, for no man can preach right without preparation, have reference to two things. The first is: When you speak, be sure to say something; and the second is, Quit when you are done."

## VALUE OF THE SABBATH.

A distinguished banker, charged with an immense amount of property during the great pecuniary pressure of 1836 and 1837, said: "I should have been a dead man had it not been for the Sabbath. Obligated to work from morning till night through the whole week, I felt on Saturday afternoon as if I must have rest. It was like going into a dense fog. Every thing

looked dark and gloomy, as if nothing could be saved. I dismissed all, and kept the Sabbath in the good old way. On Monday it was all bright sunshine. I could see through, and I got through. But had it not been for the Sabbath I have no doubt I should have been in the grave."

## BAPTISM OF MORE CHINESE CONVERTS.

On the 10th of May the large Wesleyan Methodist Church in Melbourne, Victoria, was filled with a deeply interested congregation, assembled for the purpose of witnessing the baptism of three Chinese men who had recently returned from the worship of "dumb idols" to the service of "the living God." Among those present were nearly twenty Chinese Christians. These sang the Chinese version of "Rock of Ages."

A copy of the New Testament in Chinese, suitably inscribed, was given to each of the baptized Christians, and a short but earnest and appropriate address was given to them by Rev. Mr. Bickford, Pastor of the Methodist Church in Melbourne, acting as interpreter. One of the Chinese converts was an old man of marked intelligence, and during the narration of his experience there were few dry eyes in the large audience. We submit the experience as we find it in the Melbourne Wesleyan Chronicle:—

Quon Fong, baptized God, said, I was born in Sen Fong district. I went to school when I was a big boy, but was not at school very long. After that I worked with my father on the farm, and at other businesses, for some years. I followed the example of my parents and worshipped gods made by men's hands out of wood and stone. We also worshipped large trees that grew on the mountains and in the fields, because we believed that great spirits lived in them. I believed in fortune-telling, and spent a great deal of time and money in worshipping at the graves of my ancestors, because we believed their spirits were able to help and guide us. I was more than forty years old when I heard of the good tidings in Australia. I came here seventeen years ago, and went to the diggings, and continued to worship idols. I often heard Chinese men speak about the religion of Jesus, and they spoke against it, but I did not think much about it, for I thought from what learned Chinese men told me that our nation was older than any other nation, and our religion was the oldest and the best, and that our gods were better than the gods of other people. I got on very badly on the gold fields, and about two years ago I came down to Melbourne to go back to China; for a friend of mine in Melbourne owed me a little money that would have been enough to pay my passage home; but when I came down he could not pay me, because he had done badly in business. So I stayed in Melbourne, and sold fish and gathered rags to get my living. James Ah Ling and other Christians came to the house where I lived, and asked me to go, and to get rid of my idols. I said, "O yes, I will come." But I did not go. But Daniel Si Fae, a friend of mine who came from my district in China, became a Christian, and was baptized in Wesley Church. He talked with me about the new religion he had found, and told me how happy it made him, and said that I must go to the service and see James Ah Ling. I did not go for some time, but Si Fae went to Ballarat and left a message for me that the next time Ah Ling asked me I must go to the service. Next Sunday I went. I heard things that I never heard before, and they were very interesting, and I have attended the services ever since. As I listened to the preaching I heard things that I had done spoken against, such as worshipping idols and ancestors, and smoking opium; but I did not feel that I was a sinner. But on Easter Sunday, twelve days ago, Ah Ling preached about Christ on the cross, and about our sins causing Christ's sufferings, and I felt very sorry. I could not help the tears from rolling down my cheeks, and I saw many others crying too. I went home, but all that night I could not sleep, thinking about what Christ had suffered, and I saw that I was a sinner and had sinned, and I said to myself, "I am so glad to see you; I want you to pray for me." He prayed with me, and told me that Christ would save me, for he had died for me. But I was still troubled, and was in trouble for some weeks. I could not sleep. My mind was not at rest.

One evening I went to a prayer-meeting at Ah Ling's house. I was in great trouble. I knelt down in prayer, and when the others got up to sing I could not sing, and I felt very sorry, and while they were praying, and Ah Ling was talking to me, a change came over my heart; I felt my sins were pardoned. Before that I feared God, but ever since that I have had joy when I think of God. I felt like a man brought out of a dark room into the open light. I saw how ignorant I had been. God had made me and kept me in life, and I had not known Him. I had sinned against Him and had worshipped idols of wood and stone instead of Him; and I thanked God that I had not gone back to China, for if I had gone home I might have worshipped idols all my life. Since that I have had great pleasure; I have attended all the services; I get more light and more happiness. Two or three months after this some of my relations came down from the country to go home to China, and offered to pay my passage if I would go with them; but I would not go, because I wanted to stay here to get more light, to get stronger, so that if ever I do go back I might be better able to stand myself, and do good to others. I had hard work to give up smoking opium, for I had smoked it for many years, and it seemed as if I could not live without it. I wanted to be baptized, but Ah Ling told me I must give up smoking opium altogether before I could be baptized. At last, through God's help, I gave it up, but giving it up nearly killed me. I was very ill, but thank God because through his help I have given it up altogether. And now I wish to be baptized. I am very weak, and old and poor, but I know that God's grace is sufficient for me, because, if while I was a sinner he sent his Son to die for me, now that I trust in him he will help and keep me. Christian friends pray for me, and God may keep me to the end."