

The dramatic effect of the singing was gradually dispelled in the prayer and in a Scripture reading which followed. By the time the leader was about to begin his address, the people had almost relapsed into their normal mental and spiritual condition of benevolent neutrality. A second time a text was announced, when abruptly the door opened and up the aisle, with portentous impressiveness as of a stately ocean liner coming to berth, a man advanced whose presence seemed to fill the room and give it the feeling of being unpleasantly crowded. A huzz went through the seats. "The Rector! The Rector!" The evangelist gazed upon the approaching form and stood as if incapable of proceeding until this impressive personage should come to rest. Deliberately the Rector advanced to the side bench upon which Larry and his mother were seated, and slowly swinging into position, calmly viewed the man upon the platform, the woman at the organ, the audience filling the room and then definitely came to anchor upon the bench.

The preacher waited until this manoeuvre had been successfully accomplished, coughed nervously, made as if to move in the direction of the important personage on the side bench, hesitated, and finally with an air of embarrassment once more announced his text. At once the Rector was upon his feet.

"Will you pardon me, sir," he began with elaborate politeness. "Do I understand you're a clergyman?"

"Oh, no, sir," replied the evangelist, "just a plain preacher."

"You are not in any Holy Orders then?"

"Oh, no, sir."

"Are you an ordained or accredited minister of any of the—ah—dissenting bodies?"

"Not exactly, sir."

"Then, sir," demanded the Rector, "may I ask by what authority you presume to exercise the functions of the holy ministry and in my parish?"

"Well—really—sir, I do not know why I—"

"Then, sir, let me tell you this will not be permitted," said the Rector sternly. "There are regularly ordained and accredited ministers of the Church and of all religious