

platitudes. They need the *gospel*, pure, unadorned, tenderly, earnestly, practically put. It is possible that you are neglecting pastoral work. I do not mean fashionable calling on your people, when you talk of secular or domestic matters only; but when you talk of *personal religion*. Possibly you are trusting to modes and appliances in church work, rather than to the Spirit of God.

Brother, if you are not awake, *wake up!* and then call to your people to wake with you.

But if the pastor is asleep, or *half-awake*, let some *deacon*, or some private member, who is *wide awake*, ring the call-bell. Be gentle, but be earnest. God has work for you. A thousand motives should make you move.

Perhaps some shrink from seeming to be more awake than others. Take the case to God. Enlist with you in prayer some friend. Others will kindle when they discover your soul aflame.

Love is contagious. So is zeal. The weak things of this world are often chosen to confound the mighty. Great conflagrations sometimes start in humble dwellings. If God has lighted up your soul, *shine forth*. If God has given you a message, *deliver it*. If you hear a call to serve, go, and fear not. Oh, that all our churches might *awake* and put on their strength—looking “forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners.”

THE INCUBUS OF THE KINGDOM.

BY W. C. CONANT, NEW YORK.

“LOVE not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, . . . the lust of the flesh [or sensuous enjoyments], the lust of the eyes [or pleasures of taste], and the pride of life [or the

emulous style of society]—is not of the Father, but is of the world.”

No one denies that the worldliness of professed Christians is the incubus that paralyzes the evangelistic efforts of the church. But the proposition in this accepted form is not accurate. It were more exact to say that it is the worldliness of the church, in its organic and didactic capacity, that paralyzes the efforts of a few devoted individual Christians in foreign and frontier missionary fields. Luxurious and worldly living is excused in our unwritten standards by three arguments: (1) You cannot draw the line; (2) it fosters a refined civilization; (3) it gives large employment to the laboring classes. I heard these very arguments only a few weeks ago from a very prominent pulpit and a still more prominent theologian, employed to show, in effect, that our Lord did not intend and could not afford to be taken at His word when He said that every disciple of His must forsake all that he hath.

The sophistry of each of these arguments is too thin to deserve a patient refutation. As if we could not act upon the *principle* of self-abnegation, directing it as intelligently as possible to the greatest good of the kingdom of God, on every occasion, but must have a straight Procrustean line or nothing. As if to denounce the poms and vanities of the world could mean nothing, if not a hard and fast sumptuary limit. As if religion itself were not the sole effectual power to create and conserve civilization and public prosperity ever known to mankind, Christian or pagan. As if there were not enough wealth for the interests of art and of labor, in the hands of worldly men, but the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, were in such a poor way in worldly society that the handful of Christians ought to devote (as they do) the most of their means to save those sanctities