

respect is paid, and the busy world sweeps on as before, unheeding the lesson.

Such should not be. The world's sorrows must not stop the world's work, but they should give wisdom in the doing of it. God has for men a lesson in all His Providences, and theirs is the loss if the lesson be not learned. In this sudden sad event He speaks very loudly.

He speaks to rulers and to all in authority, giving warning that soon, and perhaps suddenly, they may be called upon to give an account of their stewardship, not merely to the people whom they represent, but to the supreme ruler, whom they also represent, for "All power is of God, the powers that be are ordained of God." Of kings He is The King.

He speaks to those who may be climbing ambition's heights, with longing eyes upon its peaks, reminding them that those peaks are not their final destiny, that death too is there, and bidding them look higher, and make earthly power and glory tributary to Him from whom it comes.

He speaks to the lowly, bidding them envy not earthly greatness, for difference in position, is but difference in responsibility and service; and great and small alike must soon lay aside all trace of earthly distinction, and appear, "a plain and unvarnished company of men and women" before that God who looketh not at the outward appearance but at the heart.

He speaks to those in active life, charging them to "do with their might what their hands find to do, for the night cometh when no man can work."

He speaks to homes, showing dwellers there that home ties must soon, and perhaps suddenly, be broken, and pleading with them so to live that when the parting comes, it may not leave behind it in memory the sting of bitter, vain, regrets.

He speaks to workers for God and humanity, urging them be faithful, "redeeming the time," for opportunity for service will soon be ended.

He speaks to the careless, warning them of the uncertainty of life, telling them that "Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation"; while God waits, and the Saviour invites, and the Spirit strives; and bidding them "Prepare to meet thy God."

He speaks to all, reminding us that this is not our rest, that here we have no continuing city, that our life is but a vapor which appeareth for a little and then vanisheth away, that whatever is done in the way of working out a higher destiny for ourselves, or of fulfilling "the chief end of man," "to glorify God," must be done quickly.

Let the voice of God with the opening year, not pass unheeded. It may be that "This year thou shalt die."

TO THE MINISTERS OF OUR CHURCH.

BY REV. J. FRASER SMITH, OF HON/N.

DEAR BRETHREN,—

For the past seven months I have been laid aside from the active duties of the Master's service, and during that time I have had ample opportunity to think about my brethren in the work, and to pray very earnestly for the extension of the Saviour's Kingdom throughout the whole world.

At present I am not able to do very much in the way of visiting congregations, consequently it has been laid upon my heart and conscience to address this circular letter to all my brother ministers in connection with the Presbyterian Church in Canada. I trust this Christmas message may be received in the spirit in which it is sent, and my earnest prayer is that God will bless us more and more abundantly as the days go by.

God has greatly blessed us in the past in order that we in our turn should become a source of blessing to others, and only to the extent to which we allow ourselves to be so used, do we realize the main object for which the Church of God was established upon this earth.

If even one-half of the members in connection with our church at the present time were led to acknowledge their individual responsibility for their own share of the Master's work, and were willing, as in the sight of God, to accept their position, there would be no lack of men or means in any department of the Lord's work. Let us remember, however, that the work of the Lord is one both at home and abroad, and while our church, for the sake of convenience, has divided the work into different departments, there is no such distinction in God's word, and, no matter how interested we are in a particular scheme we should not on that account disparage or neglect the other divisions of the same great work.

A number of the ministers of our church consider that one-tenth of their income belongs to the Lord, and besides, they maintain that they are required to give "free will offerings" over and above the Lord's portion. Many, however, do not realize their responsibility to so great an extent, and therefore they do not urge their people to adopt this standard. Besides, in many of our congregations there is no systematic plan adopted for collecting funds for the schemes of the church, and, it is to be feared, that some ministers refrain from advocating too ardently the claims of missions, because they are afraid that the general contributions of the congregations may be lessened thereby.

As a natural result, those in charge of the different branches of the Lord's work are crying for more funds. The call is urgent. Doors are open on every hand; men and women are ready