

Fund is necessarily increased. In addition to all this a considerable number of new fields have been occupied since the beginning of the year. It is not easy in advance to form a strictly accurate estimate of the amount needed for Home Missions. Allowance ought always to be made for unexpected expenditure and for the extension of the work and this does not appear to have been unduly done in the estimates for the present year. If the \$80,000 asked by the committee is not got, they may be unable to pay the grants in full and to occupy the new fields that are constantly opening up. But for the Old Country grants last year the Fund would have been greatly behind. These cannot be relied upon for the future and, consequently, largely increased contributions are required from the congregations of our own Church.

#### PASTORAL EFFICIENCY.

The true test of a pastor's efficiency says the *New York Observer*, should, of course, be the spiritual impulse communicated under the divine blessing to the souls under his charge. But this is a highly organized and complex life of ours, and it is impossible for the church to escape the demand for business-like methods. Souls, of course, cannot be saved by organization or energy or that quality which men of business denominate "push," but as society stands and as the church is conducted, it is inevitable that business like capacity shall make itself felt just as truly in the church as in the world. And hereby hangs the delicate question, How far should mere clerical ambition or scholarly taste influence any young man in making his choice in favor of the Christian ministry?

Perhaps the most difficult question for human solution is apparently one of the simplest—whether the love of human souls is a dominant power in the breast. It is entirely safe to say that without such a feeling, intense and constant, the exercise of the ministerial office is a mockery. We cannot believe that such a postulate would be anywhere disputed; yet is it safe to apply that most crucial test to the rank and file of the ministry of to-day? We do not say that the commercial spirit—the desire to do as well as possible for one's self and one's family—is paramount with the ministry of this age. The charge of simony is too awful to be lightly bandied. But we do say that this is the greatest single temptation of the average Christian minister, especially as it comes in so innocent a garb—Satan transformed into a veritable angel of light. The minister who would be struggling with Hebrew roots and delving into intricate problems of theology while the ground was slipping under him in his congregation would be justly blamed. But the average worldly judgment goes a step further than this. It has a high estimate of the managerial quality in a minister. It admires a man who has a fair working knowledge of society, has some influence in the world of politics or sociology, knows how to turn a current event into an interesting pulpit or lecture discussion, can talk like a man of business with trustees, elders or vestrymen concerning proposed improvements to the church, figures occasionally, it may be, some leading magazine on ethical subjects, is invited now and then to deliver a baccalaureate address at some prosperous college, is known as a man of mark at synods, conferences or conventions—is, in short, a wide-awake, up-to-date man.

But there is a danger in this, and the point is, How great is the danger and how must it be met? It would be unsafe and revolutionary to make a minister's businesslike qualities a necessary reproach. Some men, fervent in prayer and earnest in doing the master's work, are yet gifted with the arts of popularity and practical usefulness. The mere anchoritic or ascetic spirit in the ministry cannot be too strongly

guarded against. The world needs practical men, and so does the church. But the power of the world over the church is something fearful. The tendency to pull away from supernatural and be matter-of-fact and ephemeral in aims, is the peculiar peril of our modern civilization. This, danger, too, must increase. The centres of churchly influence are in crowded cities where business is conducted necessarily on stringent lines. Finesse, flattery, the constant suppression of one's impulses, the constant wearing of masks, are found essential to those who would conceal their own natural defects and show their best possible side to the world. Vast numbers of people are placed in relations of practical subserviency to the tastes and whims of others, and if they relax at all do so in off hours. This spirit of self-sacrifice to self-interest—the "getting along" faculty—is by very many recognized as a positive virtue, and nothing is more swiftly condemned than the impulsiveness or want of discipline and purpose which keeps some men poor and lightly esteemed throughout their whole career. The consciousness of this thrall in which men's minds and hearts are held in business, will most naturally make itself felt in things spiritual. The same general law of self-restraint, of putting the best foot forward, of striving to please, will mingle with the very closet impulses of the most sincere and earnest Christian minister, especially under the complex surroundings and constant social and business pressure of an incumbency in a great city. The man who wants to preserve his candor and sincerity, his love for the souls of those whom he serves, and not merely for their applause, must dwell close indeed to the oracles. For such the closet life must, indeed, be one of great heart-searching. Such a man will realize that no amount of popular idolatry or incense following his footsteps can possibly be an indorsement in the eyes of an all-seeing God. He will realize that a worldly-minded, self-seeking Christian minister is a contradiction in terms. He will pray most earnestly to be delivered from this frightful spiritual peril of which Saint Paul was doubtless thinking when he spoke of the danger of himself becoming a castaway.

The spiritual condition of the Christian minister is about the most serious problem which the church has to meet—not merely his original sincerity in entering the ministry, and certainly not his skill or eloquence as a sermonizer or his ability to raise big amounts by forceful appeals, but his nearness to God. If he should not dwell near the throne of grace, who should? What lay example will be as certainly and closely scrutinized as his? And spirituality in a Christian minister is an essence. It is as different from mere morality as can well be imagined. It is something which will be felt, or else its absence will be felt. People do not ask whether the minister is a strictly moral, upright man or not. They assume all that. It is a dreadful scandal to the church if he is not. They do not ask just how fervent he is, but they watch him. They do it unconsciously, and they form their estimate often unconsciously. No human being can assume a love of souls. A prayer without inspiration has the false ring. It would be better for any man who is conscious of being cold and dead to be honest about it, and not to assume a spiritual fervor which he cannot feel. But how urgent the call from heaven itself that he should wake from such spiritual torpor, that he who was set to guide others in the way of life shall not be found sleeping by the way, successful, popular, an organizer, a "promoter," and yet a spiritual castaway!