

Original Contributions.

OUR NEED OF PREACHERS.

I have just read for the second time the editorial in the *JUNE CHRISTIAN*, on "Our need of preachers." I trust it has been carefully read by the churches. If any have not done so, will they not find that paper and give that article an attentive reading?

It reminds us that we are face to face with a difficulty of the greatest magnitude, which we are unable to carry forward for want of preachers of the word. In proportion to the fields where laborers are needed, the supply is less than in former years. Can any remedy be found and applied for this condition of things? In the United States many of the best young men in the churches are preparing themselves for the ministry; so that although the demand for preachers is large, and continually increasing, the supply is nearly keeping pace with it. But where are the young men who are to take hold of this work in these provinces? It is to be hoped the editor will follow that article with others, which will be helpful to the churches in reaching a judicious course to be taken to remedy the difficulty. Three questions need to be considered: the kind of preachers needed, how to get them and how to support them.

1. *The kind of preachers needed.* Precisely the same as in other countries. After preaching for a good many years in different lands, some of them thousands of miles apart, I am convinced that all countries want the same kind of work done and the same kind of workers to do it. The demand is for godly, humble, self-sacrificing, wise and industrious men, who by natural and acquired ability are qualified to preach the Gospel and build up churches.

2. *How can they be obtained?* The editorial has shown us the answer to this in the words of Jesus, "Pray ye the Lord of the harvest that He will send forth more laborers into his Harvest." Has this direction been faithfully followed by the churches? And have we worked for the answer as well as prayed? "Give us this day our daily bread," is good praying, but another very important factor must not be omitted. We must help in the answer to our prayers. There are two sources only whence preachers for these provinces can be gotten: *import* or *raise* them. And as we cannot expect men to leave more promising fields to come here, it remains that the churches are left chiefly to the latter. Are there not among us young men who, by judicious encouragement, would grow into usefulness in this work? There has been much said on the duty of the churches to educate young men for the ministry. If this means that they should pay their college expenses while engaged in these necessary studies, I confess I stand in doubt of it. Some assistance, in some cases, might be rendered. But to my mind there are many reasons why it is preferable that a young man, unless he has private resources; should earn the money with which to pay his way. Schools and colleges are now brought within the reach of every young man on such terms, that he can by proper industry and economy obtain in a few years the necessary education for the ministry, and what he will have learned by a dependence on his own resources will not be the least useful of his acquirements to him in his life-work. If men can educate themselves for teachers, lawyers and doctors, can they not for preachers? As a young man on setting out in his studies does not know that he will be able to attain to the work of the ministry, he should be unwilling to place himself under obligation to the churches. It is most important to true, manly development to know that he is not dependent on the gifts and earnings of others.

There are about three answers given to the question, Why are not young men preparing themselves for the ministry? viz.: "There is no

encouragement for them to do so," "cannot get an education," and "no prospect of support." Is not the true answer to be found in the too general want of interest on the part of the churches in the conversion of the world? When in the history of the church the spirit of conquest for Christ prevailed, the men were never wanting to fight the battles of the Lord. Out of churches filled with the spirit of the great commission must come the preachers of the word, and earnest prayer for the laborers, as taught by Jesus, will greatly tend to produce that condition on which so much depends.

3. *How shall preachers be sustained?* It is not my purpose at present to discuss methods. As there is no method laid down in the New Testament to which we are confined for the support of the ministry, we are at liberty to adopt whatever plan accords with the spirit and principles of the Gospel and is best suited to place and surroundings. Much precious time has been wasted while we have been hiding behind our discussions of the way things ought to be done. It is time we understood that the Lord would much prefer that we support the preachers of the word by *supporting* them. Hairsplitting over plans is about as good for the support of preachers as the kind sentiment which blesses the poor with the tender words of sympathy, "Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled," etc.

I have already said that it is better that young men prepare themselves from private resources, or by their own industry for the ministry as they would do for other callings. But let it be at the same time understood that when they have done so there will be a demand for their services and a compensation for their labor. These provinces have had several young men who, after a few years of study in the United States, would have returned to their own land had there been a reasonable prospect of financial support. I well know that our churches are not financially strong, but it is equally evident that the meagreness of our church finances, in many cases, is on account of our failing to recognize the true nature of our financial obligation to support preachers of the word. In an editorial recently in one of our papers the preacher who labors for a church for a definite salary is tauntingly designated "*a hired man*." If our churches are influenced by such sentiment there will always be a dearth of preachers. It is time that the justice and necessity of Paul's teaching be recognized that "the laborer is worthy of his hire." It certainly never was the intention of Jesus that those engaged in the grandest calling on earth should be classed with the dependent poor of the church, and obtain a meagre and precarious support as those poor do. It is in accord with both reason and scripture, that for labor, most important and necessary the well-being of the church, the workman should, as for other kinds of work, receive a fair equivalent; and until the justice of this principle is carefully and practically recognized on the part of all our churches, as it is already by some of them, there will be a scarcity of efficient ministers of the word. But this means the paying of more money for the carrying forward of church work. Are the churches—are the individual members—each willing to give more than in the past that a larger number of preachers may be sustained and a greater work for the honor of Christ and the salvation of men may be accomplished.

The foregoing has been written with an earnest desire on the part of the writer that the churches, to the full extent of their ability, will take hold of such measures as will in the near future supply the fields already needing preachers, and, as will be sure to follow, will open other fields for other reapers.

H. WALLACE.

West Gore, June 16th, 1892.

"Nature when she adds difficulty adds brains."

THOUGHTS HERE AND THERE.

For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water and scarlet wool and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book and all the people, saying, "This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you." Moreover, he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry. And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood there is no remission.

It is certainly a fact that the shedding of blood was necessary to the remission of sins. Just how or why that should be perhaps we do not fully understand, but it is certainly very apposite to the redemption of sinful man. Man, by disobedience, lost a life of happiness. Henceforward he could look for nothing but an unremitting life of toil until he should return to the dust. Life then was forfeited by Adam's sin. Life must be regained. As a fitting symbol of the end to be obtained a life was offered upon the altar. Blood was shed. The blood is the life (Deut. xii. 23). Hence the shedding of blood in the Jewish sacrificial worship. Hence the shedding of blood on Calvary's cross. Hence the divine institution of wine in the Christian worship. It is a seal, or sign, of spiritual life to be enjoyed through faith in the blood of Christ.

The earth revolves. Progression or regression, growth or decay, are certainly the tendencies of the whole universe. These are the only conditions possible in the entire physical and moral, or intellectual universes. If an animal be not attaining increased vigor from its correspondence with nature it must be decreasing in vigor. There is a certain stage at which, when attained by either vegetable or animal, a process of decay sets in, ending in the destruction of that particular organization. Again, in the intellectual or moral the same law obtains. That faculty of the intellect which is not fed and exercised must of necessity be weaker. If the talent be not used it shall be removed. "He that hath, from him shall be taken away even that which he hath," says the Divine Law-giver; and it is as true in the intellectual or moral or physical worlds, as in the spiritual. That there can be no standing still is equally as true in morals as in nature. Progression or regression is the general trend of all the history of the physical universe as well as in systems. There is a minority and a majority in the history of man individually. Man is a microcosm—an epitome of the universe. The individual man has his age of tutelage or his minority—and also his majority. Man collecting in relation to the Creator had his age of tutelage. We believe he is now in his majority under the present dispensation. The Christian is the only one to whom, relatively speaking, progression is known, either in the moral or physical universes. The moral progresses to the spiritual, and the physical progresses to the new heaven and the new earth. To the sinner there is neither progression nor growth in their proper sense. There is regression only and decay. Every system of growth, whether it be moral or physical, has its stage of perfection or rather maturity, beyond which it as a system cannot go. It must be destroyed before it can enter into another sphere of growth. The vegetable, as a vegetable, must be destroyed before it can become animal. The animal, as an animal, must be destroyed before it can become spiritual. Paul says: "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body." The natural body, as a natural body, is destroyed and then become spiritual. Decide who may the idea of a spiritual body; but to me it seems no more incredible to believe that the natural body becomes a spiritual body than that the vegetable body enters into an animal body. Yet such is certainly true.

JACK.

Spurgeon's father still lives at the age of eighty-two.