

burnt his pipe, resolved to give up that "small vice."

The next day he was very sick, and was unable to attend service in the evening.

Two days later his wife called on the pastor, and after stating the case, inquired most anxiously "whether they had better take it to the Lord, or *buy a new pipe and taper off gradually.*"

An annual conference was in session on the writer's first pastoral charge in Northern New York. The afternoon had been devoted to the reading of essays upon subjects previously given.

Near the close of the day a brother had exhausted both the time and patience of his hearers by a long article upon the "Divinity of Christ, copied mainly from 'Lee's Theology.'" Upon resuming his seat another speaker took the floor, saying he had not written anything, but would make some remarks upon the subject assigned him, and would be *very brief.*

A brother sitting directly in front of him heaved a sigh of relief, which emphasized the intensity of his desire, and solemnly responded, "God help."

This was too much for the dignity of the young pastor, who gave vent to his feelings in a very natural though undignified manner. At the close of the service this brother said to him, "I confess that sounded very much like the Irishman's 'Amen, hit or miss.'" W.

#### Questionable Advice.

ONE of our exchanges from the far West, in dealing with the subject of family prayers, tells its readers to "keep up the family *alter.*" We respectfully submit that, in view of the looseness of the marriage bond in the district that is represented by our respected contemporary, it is ill-advised to give such counsel. The "altering" business has proceeded far enough, and should be "kept up" no longer. Fixity,

not laxity, should be the watchword in treating of the marital relation.

#### Sermonic Dryness.

IT was during our first pastorate. We had retired peacefully after a day of hard labor and were wrapped in profound slumber, when the sudden cry of "Fire!" awoke us. The building next to the hotel in which we resided was in flames. Hurriedly dressing ourselves and locking the doors of our compartments, we joined the little group of firemen who were toiling at the old-fashioned hand engine and seeking to make some impression upon the fire, that was already under remarkable headway. The hotel caught, but we worked on till it seemed our arms would drop exhausted. In the midst of our efforts the Baptist parson came up, and standing idly by, with hands in pockets, drawled out the question, "W—, have you removed your things from your rooms?" "Not a thing," we panted. "What! not your sermons?" "Never a sermon." "Well, take my advice and get them out; for they are the driest things in the house, and will be sure to go first." For the time being we were converts to our brother's denominational views, and could we have secured the nozzle of the hose, would have immersed him with unmingled feelings of satisfaction. Our profound conviction was that, even more than the fire, he needed to be put out. But, like the gods of whom Homer tells us, he was a fellow of "unextinguishable laughter," and we question whether the humor of H<sup>2</sup>O would have quenched his own. W.

PERHAPS the advisability of an acquaintance with the original languages of Scripture was never better illustrated than by the good brother—a local preacher in a large seaport town—who had announced in advance his theme, "The Hardness of Divers," and who took for his text Acts xix. 9, "Divers were hardened and believed not."