

COMMERCIALISM AND THE MINISTERIAL LIFE.

Not long ago, a cynical weekly paper, published in New York, made the announcement that "one hundred thousand dollars' worth of pulpits in N. W. York are now awaiting occupancy." The words are cited by the Rev. Dr. E. S. Triple, a Methodist clergyman, to illustrate his contention that "there is a very marked tendency at the present time to put a commercial value on ministerial labor." He says further (in *The Methodist Review*, November-December.)

"For this new conception of the ministry the ministry itself is in good part responsible. They are creating the impression that the loaves and the fishes have much to do with the heart and strength they put into their work. Whatever the causes may be that have produced this condition of mind, or the reasons that have conspired to this parasitic growth, the existence of a growing commercialism is unmistakable. This man is popularly known as a thousand-dollar man, that one as an eight hundred dollar man, and the one sitting next to him in the annual conference as a two thousand dollar man, the next a three-thousand dollar man, and so on. Grades have been created almost as distinctive as the castes of India, and these grades are all on a monetary basis. The amount of salary a man receives is the measure of his ability and the seal of his success in the eyes of the multitudes. The distinction between men is based, in the popular mind at least, not on intellectual vigor or moral tone, but on their incomes as printed in the minutes. Edward Everett Hale was once talking of education with a Japanese prince, who said to him: 'We do not give so much time to arithmetic in our schools as you do. We think arithmetic makes men sordid.' Those columns headed 'Ministerial Support' tend to the same thing. They are unwholesome in their influence, demoralizing in their effect. What a blessing it might prove to be if all this should be eliminated from the minutes! Promotions then might be promotions other than by increase of salary. At present, when a church has a man under consideration for its pulpit, the first question is, What does he get? And if no one happens to know, the minutes are consulted and the seemingly important information obtained. When a place is mentioned to a preacher for himself or some one else, the question is, 'What does it pay?' And the minutes are requisitioned again. What inquiry is more frequently heard in the vestibule or other places where preachers and people congregate during the sessions of the annual conference than, 'What does it pay?' Now this in many cases may be only the expression of a laudable interest or concern, but too often it denotes that sordidness of aim which more than any other one thing is working havoc with our altar fires, confirming church-members in their worldliness, furnishing an excuse for avarice and selfishness, keeping sinners away from the sanctuary, and making the so called power of the gospel a jest and by word."

There can be no success in the ministry, in the opinion of this writer, unless the impression prevails that there is absolute purity of purpose, and "nothing will more quickly obliterate such an im-

portant impression than the suspicion, which cannot remain long unvoiced, that one is impelled not so much by a consciousness of duty or spiritual reward as by love of money." We quote in conclusion:

"What was the secret of the grin Philip Brooks and Harry Drummond had on men? Why, it is found in their very abandonment of selfishness, self-forgetfulness, and self-expenditure. . . . The distinctive power of the pulpit is in its personality; not primarily what it says, important as that is, but who says it; not the clothing which a man wears, but what is the spirit of the man who is inside the clothes; not whether a man receives three hundred and forty dollars for every sermon he preaches, as it was computed that a certain well-known minister received—he was in somewhat delicate health and has since resigned—but whether the man and his message so correspond that the voice of God is heard sounding in the soul. . . ."

There is no money equivalent for this kind of a life. The compensation is of another sort. It is indeed. We must stop this talk about salaries—not that cloistered stewards may grind us, and mean congregations grow meaner. If you love and serve man you cannot by any hiding or stratagem escape remuneration, are Emerson's wise words. But the moment we make a commodity of ourselves, and take our stand in the labor market, and put our services on the basis of bargain and sale, that moment the glory fades from the western sky, the fragrance vanishes from the heart of the rose, and we are only hirelings. And then God pity us!

PRINCIPAL CAVEN, D D

By the death of Principal Caven the Presbyterian Church in Canada loses its foremost man. For more than a generation he has been an outstanding figure in all educational, theological and religious movements; and while it cannot be said that any one is indispensable, it is certain that Dr Caven will be greatly missed.

Dr. Caven suffered a critical illness during the spring of 1903, lasting thirteen weeks during which he lay on his back, a victim to blood-poisoning. He recovered however and since then carried on his work as before, though a slight weakness in his voice was noticeable. His journey to England during the past summer, occupying six weeks, for a portion of which he presided at the Pan Presbyterian Alliance meeting at Liverpool, was a revelation of his endurance and devotion to any task undertaken.

William Caven's surroundings in his Scottish home had a marked effect on his subsequent career. His father, John Caven, was a man of strong mental endowments, and, being a school teacher, helped the son to a sound education. He was brought up under voluntary influence. Moderatism was dominant in the parish, but various forms of secession were represented, and the keenest interest was taken in theological controversy. Even the commonest people could argue the points characteristic of the Kirk, the Free Church, and the voluntary positions.

After coming to Canada his father taught school in Ayr, and served as superintendent of schools in that county. His mother was a woman of marked ability, and preserved her faculties al-

most unimpaired until her death in 1900, at the great age of 92.

Dr. Caven's life work was, of course, as principal of Knox College, the great Presbyterian educational institution of which he was principal for the past 31 years, and with which he had been connected for 38 years. On leaving pastoral work in 1866 he was appointed by the Synod of the Canadian Presbyterian Church to the chair of exegetical theology in Knox College, Toronto, and in 1873 he was chosen to succeed the late Rev. Michael Wilt as principal of the college. In conjunction with the Rev. Dr. Gregg he succeeded in raising funds for the new college buildings which was completed in 1875. For years Dr. Caven occupied, in addition to the principalship, the chair of New and Old Testament literature, but latterly his teaching duties were confined to New Testament literature and exegesis the other branch having been assigned to Prof. McFadyen.

During his long period at Knox, Dr. Caven exercised an influence on his students, and, through them, upon the country which is incalculable. Over 600 theological students passed under him, a larger number than have been touched by any other theological teacher in Canada. His students may be found in all parts of Canada, many of them in the United States, some in Great Britain, and missionaries who received guidance and inspiration from his gentle idealistic character may be found in India, Japan, China, South America, New Hebrides and Africa. The veneration in which he is held by everyone who has studied at Knox is only equaled by the respect in which he was always held by persons of every class and leaders of thought who looked to him for the expressions of a whole-souled, sincere man.

As a speaker he was the embodiment of calmness and logical intensity. With few gestures, with a steady, high toned voice, he appealed to the mind rather than to the emotions. His keen mind, unsurpassed in penetration, was capable of the clearest expositions of truth, and his view on any subject was sought with avidity by all public men who desired the light of an independent, high thinking mind.

Neither in the life nor in the death of such a man is there anything for regret. He fought the good fight; he kept the faith; he has entered on his reward.

Literary Notes.

The doings of Nancy, by Evelyn Raymond; Dana Estes and Company, Boston, Mass. This is a bright wholesome story of a courageous little girl who goes to work with a will to try to earn enough money to buy a brace for her lame brother. The plot of the story is slight, but the characters are most attractive, and altogether the book should be a favourite one for Christmas.

"Puss in the Corner," by Edith Francis Foster; Dana Estes and Company, Mass. This prettily bound book with its crimson cover and many illustrations is prepared for little children, and to them it will prove most entertaining. Instead of writing in the names in the text there is a picture of the object meant and the children will take keen delight in filling in the blanks. Even children of ten years of age, or more, will be able to spend many a happy hour over "Puss in the Corner."