

This belief in the continued evolution of higher life may become so dominant that much of the dread of the transition we call "death" may pass. The body of flesh will more and more come to be recognized as the first garment of the soul, and while something of mystery may remain associated with the change in dying, the truth of Scripture may be revealed and realized more fully than ever that "when the earthly house of this tabernacle is dissolved we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens."

Ministerial Temptations

Without being a minister, anyone with kindred interests and ideals, and in touch with the practical work of the churches, must recognize that the temptations of the ministry in Canada are the reverse of the kind against which an eminent Edinburgh divine, famous not only as a preacher, but as a nauthor, was wont to warn the divinity students of former decades.

That talented teacher pictured the young minister spending Monday at ease with a novel, and following days, instead of being given to study and preparation for Sunday's sermons and services, frittered away by him, till toward the end of the week his purposed plans were interrupted by the death of some member of his congregation; resulting in the preacher entering the pulpit on Sunday with an old or ill-prepared message for his people.

No doubt some young ministers in the older lands, and especially in churches with assured fixity of tenure had to face and fight such temptations. Even now there may be, in Canada as well as in the homelands, a few congregational charges in which, if a minister is disposed to be indolent or to do other work "on the side" he may "take life easy" so far as his church "charge" is concerned, while regularly drawing its income. But in the large majority of cases the conditions are probably such that the difficulty of the pastor is not to avoid temptations to leisured life, but rather how to find necessary recreation.

Hours for Study: A Clarion Call

It is essential that the pastor who would appeal to his people effectively should, to ensure freshness and force in his preaching, have some hours set apart daily for study, and his general reading should embrace reviews bearing upon current conditions and the application thereto of Christian principles. Even the worthy war-cry applied to the "Foreign Field," "the evangelization of the world in this generation," should be supplemented by a clarion call for fuller christianization at home, of the practically "heathen" masses submerged in "Christendom."

A "Minister's Sabbath" Essential

In connection with the minister's Day of Rest there is room for progress. For instance, it ought to become a well-recognized "unwritten law" that, unless it is practically unavoidable, the minister should not be asked to do ministerial work of any kind on Mondays. "Six days shalt thou labour" should apply to clergymen as well as to other men; and, if the "Lord's Day Alliance" or any other authorities' powers extended far enough to analyze and differentiate, many ministers might be accused each week of "breaking their Sabbath."

Funeral services may unavoidably interfere with the minister's Day of Rest, but if the pastorate is to become more fully a "cure of souls," and the minister to be the fit and strong supervisor of the spiritual life of a congregation, it will be necessary for the various organizations of the church to cease to expect him to take part in their weekly meetings as a matter of course. That does NOT mean that the minister will not be actively interested in the welfare and earnest in the oversight of all departments of congregational life and work; but it does mean that organizations and officials will learn to make more allowance for the manifold claims and

calls on the time and energy of their spiritual leader. They will keep in mind, too, that he must have time for meditation and reflection, as well as for study, if he is to continue to be able to bring them messages of inspiration and upbuilding in his sermons on the Sabbath; that he has the sick to visit and the bereaved to comfort; and at least a selection of meetings connected with the community life to attend—not to mention his part in the work of the church at large and attendance at its various courts.

Ministers the Genuine "I. W. W.'s"

The ignorant and ill-informed who assume that clergymen work only one day a week, may now have demonstrated to them that many ministers do not get or take anything like the one full day's rest a week which comes as a matter of course to most so-called "working men." Indeed, if there be any genuine "Independent Workers of the World," who, when they put conscience into their work, need encouragement and consolation, they are Christian ministers of all denominations. But by worthy work well-maintained, as in other ways, men "rise on stepping stones . . . to higher things."

"Ho! ye upon whose fevered cheeks the hectic glow
is bright,

Whose mental toil wears out the day and half the
weary night;

Who labour for the souls of men, champions of truth
and right;—

Although ye feel your toil is hard, even with this
glorious view,

Remember, it is harder still to have no work to do!"

Fellow-workers With God Himself

True as that is, it is also true that among mental workers many a man may be thought to be having "an easy time" when, if the facts were known, his strength is being constantly overtaxed, and so much so that he becomes possessed at times of a desire to be at rest away from the ceaseless throb and incessant strain of the world's work. Such workers need not so much to be reminded that "it is harder still to have no work to do," as that they are fellow-workers with the Lord of Life and Love Himself, whose chief work in this world is "growing souls." In this connection, with allowances for fuller light and clearer vision as to relative values, we may well ask with Milton:

" . . . What if Earth

Be but the shadow of Heaven, and things therein
Each to other like more than on Earth is thought!"

So it may be that the work of the earnest churchman, while carrying much of its own reward on earth, may also be equipping those heartily engaged in it for more divine tasks in shepherding souls Beyond—in the "Father's House of Many Mansions," or "resting places," of which the Master Himself spoke.

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