

The Minister's Time-Table.

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(Concluded.)

Fifth: The Ministers Time table must take due account of the Minister's own family.

Does it seem quite needless to refer to such a thing as this? It has been said of the shoemaker that he is the one who wears the poorest shoes. Thinking he can turn most any time to the making of something for his own feet, he puts off the doing for himself as orders keep coming in from outside. Men cross oceans to behold the wonders of other lands and never gaze upon the marvels that are only a few miles from their own door. So a man may not sufficiently cultivate that part of the kingdom of God which is under his own roof. Not all fathers are acquainted with their children, not all children know their father's. The duties that are without overtop those that are within, "Don't bother me today, Johnnie, I must visit a family at the other end of the town," or "I must put in the horse and make some calls on the mountain." If a man is lazy he will put off for the present both Johnnie and the mountain unless grace abound above laziness. If there is no lazy bone in his body he may neglect Johnnie in thinking that duty lies in the direction of greater physical exertion, of the most formidable outward obstacles. The very number and taxing character of pastoral requirements may tend to rob a pastor's own household of pastoral oversight, verily, where there are so many things that the under-shepherd can do, so many things that he ought to do, I see no hope of his being kept from over-doing in one direction and under-doing in another unless there be completeness of surrender to the Holy Spirit's leadership. Upon self guidance sad havoc waits.

Dr. Livingstone, while in the Manyema country and looking back to the only considerable period when he had his children about him, wrote in a manner that many years ago arrested my attention when he said: "I often ponder over my missionary career among the Bakwains, and though conscious of many imperfections, not a single pang of regret arises in the view of my conduct, except that I did not feel it my duty, while spending all my energy in teaching the heathen, to devote a special portion of my time to play with my children." Robbed to such an extent as those children were of the father's presence, and counsel, the good father was pained in the review that he had not more highly prized the time once afforded him of mingling with them in larger intimacy. Many a one has profited by this intimation of the great explorer, and I trust that it may do us good. After all, the home life may be to the preacher a perpetual Theological school, where the teaching surpasses what learned Doctors give. It is recorded of Luther that "in the simple, natural, innocent, and happy ways of children he recognized the precious handiwork of God and his protecting hand. He loved to watch the games and pleasures of his little ones all they did was so spontaneous and so natural, children, he said, believe so simply and undoubtedly that God is in Heaven and is their God and their dear Father, and that there is everlasting life."

Sixth: Our Time-table must provide for a suitable measure of suitable recreation.

If a man proposes to cultivate holiness exclusively, neglecting mind and body, I fear that he will be a very abnormal specimen, not very good company for ordinary folk, and indeed not very long for this world. When taking "holiness" in the large sense of wholeness, we see that it includes in its scope a care of body and mind along with soul, and of body and mind for the sake of soul, and of body and mind and soul for the sake of the Redeemer's cause. I recollect hearing my sainted father, who was one of Acadia's earliest students, telling that once while he was at College, there came to Wolfville one of the dear old consecrated ministers in order that he might see the much loved school of the Prophets. And this pious servant of the Lord saw soon after his arrival what pained him exceedingly. Lo, here were a number of the young theologians, the hope of the Baptists in these quarters, here they were in the very shadow of the famous old building engaged in the godless diversion of pitching quoits. Nothing short of tears could suffice to express the sadness of that visitor's heart. Just to think that these promising young men who had come thither, followed by prayers of parents and friends and churches, come to prepare themselves to publish the glad tidings of salvation to a sinful world, to think that these should have time and inclination for such a vain sport was altogether too much for this ripe saint. Blessed old man. Right glad am I that thou art not now around to witness a game of football. Well, that brother, unintelligent in one particular, represented an extreme. There is a statute of physical limitations which we preachers must not ignore. There is an imperative demand for what we may call the play element in life, and this must be met for the Divine glory as well as the work element, the latter being somewhat dependent for its success upon the former. One person finds needed recuperation in social enjoyments, another in certain diverting outdoor or indoor games, another in little turns at a mechanical pursuit or at gardening, another by getting off to forest or river-bank with gun or fishing-rod in hand. One is best refitted by one thing another by

another. And this man may get largest assistance now from this and again from that. At intervals a complete change of scene is advantageous, particularly when there comes a tendency to dwell too largely upon the darker side of things, as sometimes happens with most of us, with the accompanying danger of becoming morbid and losing our grip. An outing beautifies the world afresh, makes the Bible a new book, and turns prayer into a more delightful exercise than ever. Stated vacations used to be rare, but now they are the common thing and are given with appreciation of the fact that they yield profit to all concerned when rightly used. Any church that has not fallen into the habit of providing its pastor with a regularly recurring season for rest and change cannot too quickly come into line with the others. All things, of course, are liable to abuse, but diversion and vacations are not abused by those intelligently intent upon seeking above all to learn and carry out the mind of Christ.

Finally (if you have a moment more): A Minister's Time-table must not be so rigidly adhered to that no room is found for interruptions that are of God.

The very greatness of the end we have in view and the very earnestness with which we pursue it may make us impatient of any interference with our plans. We may chafe and fret even at the calls of duty. Bushnell, in showing that the character of Jesus forbids his possible classification with men, calls our attention to the fact that he was "just as even, just as serene, in all his petty vexations and hindrances, as if he had nothing on hand to do, a kind of sacred patience investing him everywhere." So we must "consider him." Near the close of his earthly life, as he was going forward with a great company to a great feast in the great city, having before him the great decrease he was there to accomplish, a poor blind beggar, hearing the tramp of feet, and learning that the famous wonder-worker was in the crowd, vigorously called out to the Nazarene to have mercy on him. But in the judgment of those around, this was a most unseemly interference. Would a king allow a pageant to be interrupted by the cry of a mendicant along the highway? How absurd! So the man is rebuked for his audacity. But the unfortunate fellow is too much in earnest to be silenced. Possibly what he had heard of Jesus had led him to believe that by no mere human custom were his actions bound.

Anyway he soon realized that fact to his joy. From the pomp and march and the great things ahead, the Saviour turned in glad response to the appeal of the one distressed, for we read: "And Jesus stood still and commanded him to be called." What a lesson is here for us in revelation to our carefully framed programmes. Moving toward Jerusalem and the Passover and the Cross, there can surely be no room for a thing so trifling, comparatively, as the wish of one who lives upon the alms of those who pass along the public road. But God's ways, are not man's, "And Jesus stood still and commanded him to be called. And Jesus said unto him, Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole." There are interruptions that are not of God and their name is legion. The preacher by his very position is the prey of many a scamp, and sponge, to say nothing of merely thoughtless disturbers, Happy he who is sharp to distinguish between the worthy and unworthy, happy he whose discerning wife prevents many of the unworthy from so much as getting her husband's love. But then there are interruptions not a few that truly have God for their source, and blessed is he who cheerfully accepts them for what they are, and makes the most of them for the honoring of his Lord. None of us wish to go counter to the Divine will by brooking an interruption from below, not by spurning an interruption from above. "If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God." What we account the great service, a service from which we would fain not turn away for one hour, will surely yield less than what at first appears too small for our attention, provided the Master himself bids a stepping aside from the former for a little in order to look after the latter. DeLesseps, the distinguished French engineer, was once detained in the Mediterranean by a tedious quarantine that he found it hard to endure. But as he waited, he conceived the project of the great Suez Canal. What he would gladly have avoided was the gateway to his highest achievement. Many a sermon has been delayed and many a diversion renounced for the greater good of men and the greater glory of God. What immeasurable gains have flowed from resolutely taking time to converse with an inquiring or an afflicted or a discouraged soul. More than the once has it happened, after hearing the word "Come ye apart into a desert place and rest awhile," that instead of rest, in the particular way expected service has been called for on behalf of the multitudes. But all is well, and all is just as we would have it, is it not, if all the while the plans that God cherishes for us are being carried out, and our biographies are being unfolded in accordance with his will. Whatever mistakes any of us may make in drawing up our provisional Time-tables, may prayer and complete devotion to God's gracious purposes prevent mistakes in our daily doings, that the blessing which Heaven has for conveyance through us to our needy race may not fail of reaching their destination.

"Man's weakness, waiting upon God,
Its end can never miss,
For men on earth no work can do,
More angel-like than this."

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India.

PRIMARY EDUCATION AND MISSIONS.

Status.—India has no system of public schools, only a heterogeneous and disjointed mass of units, originated and propagated by all sorts of agencies both native and foreign.

These agencies are chiefly of three different kinds, sometimes working more or less in unison but often wholly independent.

In the first class would come those villagers who desiring an education for their boys (not girls) band themselves together, establish a school and call a teacher. This is not alone as a village matter nor as a matter concerning a particular section of the village but simply by those who group themselves around some chief organizing agent.

In the next class would come those who have been called into existence, by some teacher, or someone who thinks he can teach, for the sake of a livelihood. There is no school to call him so he sets to work to create the school. In the last class, and the most modern, are those called into existence not from selfishly interested motives so much as benevolent, and represent the action of government and missions.

The Indian government seeks to rule the people for their good. Their revenue for school purposes, however is so limited, they have more and more adopted the policy of throwing education into the hands of private enterprise, attempting at the same time to give a general direction of unity by establishing a scheme of public examinations and inspectors.

But as yet the larger number of primary schools is run regardless of government code or exams. These schools are held about the village anywhere, on a verandah, in a cow shed, under a tree or in a temple. They are just vernacular schools and are taught according to the ancient methods, with little system, order or discipline. The rudiments of the three R's is about all to which they aspire. Education for its own sake is never sought by this class of schools consequently such subjects as history, geography, etc. are never taught.

The schools which do conform to government regulation are called by the people "English schools" because English is taught as one of the subjects and they are run according to the government code. The government code is foreign and English to them. The teaching however is all done in the vernacular but a good degree of attention is paid to the study of the English language as all the higher government appointments demand a working knowledge of English. Most pupils in "English schools" have a government position in prospect. These schools when well established are usually supplied with a building and are regularly inspected by the government inspectors.

These schools are hated by the priests and orthodox Brahmins as they are a disintegrating force for ancient Hinduism even though they are neutral on religious matters as such, the government of India being pledged to strict neutrality in religion since the time of the mutiny.

The government has but little to do with the originating of schools, but schools that have been established by private enterprise and can show a reasonable degree of permanence and success may be taken over under full government control and support, at the request of the originators, or may remain under their private managers and receive a grant-in-aid according to their success at the exams.

All such schools must conform to regulation and have properly qualified teachers according to grade.

Schools of these latter classes are the kinds towards which missionary effort tends. In consequence of the few going it will be seen that primary mission schools may be of three different kinds, viz, schools in the initial stage beyond which, from the difficulties encountered, many never advance schools taken over fully under government control and schools which remain under mission control and receive a grant-in-aid from government.

The latter of these three grades is perhaps the most satisfactory both for government and the manager for the following reasons:—

The result grant usually goes to the teacher and becomes thus the strongest kind of an incentive to him to do successful work. It releases the missionary free to give all the religious instruction he wishes in the school. It keeps the Christian teacher under mission control. It secures government inspection, impetus and standing. Our own mission so far has followed both plans of procedure. The school handed over to the government in the other code, continues to do the same work for the same class of people. The teacher who was in charge is taken over and continued. The school is still taught in the Christian chapel for which a small rent is paid. But while the mission has gained the salary, for new work, it has lost the stimulus, from the financial side, for religious teaching in this school, and may lose the teacher, too, later on, by transfer to another village.

All government servants in India are subject to a constant series of transfers on very short notice. This Christian teacher when transferred to a heathen village must remain neutral on religious matters in his official capacity, and a heathen teacher may be sent to teach the Christian school. This has happened with the writer in one or two cases. But while this danger exists the inspectors, who have these transfers in charge, generally respect the desires