

to these wretched material things on the part of their people. If the one think more, the other will be glad to think less. One thing is evident, at least, that if Churches which are content to give their ministers incomes which a high-class artizan would despise, yet expect them to be men of proved ability and experience, they have the unjust spirit of one who would reap where he had not sown, and gather where he had not strawed.

IDEAL MINISTERS.

But if much of the true power of the ministry depends upon the Churches, still more depends upon ourselves. Our churches may improve our surroundings, but they cannot give us soul ; and without soul we are nothing. We must be living men, not mere officials ; preachers inspired by a holy passion, not hirelings anxious respectfully to discharge an appointed function ; prophets acting under a Divine necessity, not stipendiaries working for our mess of pottage,—if we are to move this generation, or, in truth, any generation. The divinity which once did hedge even the office of the preacher, though it is not altogether a thing of the past, counts for little in an age which shows a stern determination to get at the root of things, attaches slight importance to prescription and precedent, and has a special pleasure in tearing the mask off impostures, however venerable.

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Men proud of the little brief authority in which they fancy themselves dressed, and eagerly clutching at all its prerogatives ; men who have wrapped the Nessus-shirt of tradition and routine so closely round them, that it has poisoned the very springs of life and power, will see the age pass on, unheeding them or their prophecies against the impiety which dares to despise their claims. But true men, who have human hearts which have been fired by contact with the heart of Christ ; who are possessed by a passionate love of truth which makes them its servants, ready to sacrifice all for its sake, and full of a holy zeal for the salvation of souls, to which nothing is impossible ; who preach because they cannot be silent, and preach not barren speculations or humbling confessions of their own doubts and uncertainties, but that which they themselves have felt, and handled, and tasted, of the good Word of Life—may do a work in our day as great as that of Pentecost itself. That Thou wilt send such labourers into Thy vineyard, we beseech Thee to hear us, O Lord !

OUR OPPORTUNITIES.

Brethren, if the work of the day is surrounded with great difficulties, possibly even with serious peril, it is full of grand opportunities, which it is for us to cultivate wisely. Boast as the enemies of our faith may, this nation has not become anti-Christian, but is rather in a state of mind and feeling which, if rightly improved, will issue in a development of true Christian power such as has been seen at no former period. It is weary of much that has usurped the name of Christianity ; weary of forms from which the spirit has departed, and grand names which have ceased to represent living realities ; weary of burdens laid on men's hearts and consciences by Church authority and human law ; weary of endless strifes about mint and anise and cummin, to the neglect of the weightier matters of the law ; weary of a faith that does not justify itself by its works, and holy feelings that are not incarnated in a holy life. But it can recognize and honour a religion inspired by the spirit of love and power, and of a sound mind still ; it appreciates the nobility of principle, and is won by the beauty of goodness ; it will listen to the pleadings of a true faith, and will bow before the majesty of love, and above all, it is wondrously swayed by the force of enthusiasm.

MEN FOR THE TIME.

To deal with a people like this, with intellect so active, spirit so independent, and temper so proud, so hard to impress, but so mighty when once its springs of