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An old resident recalls the "good old days" of "preaching matches" between ministers of different denominations, when on successive Sabbath evenings the respective pulpits would deliver attack and reply on Immersion, Infant Baptism, Calvinism, Armenianism, and the like. Possibly some of these questions are not today regarded as quite so important or essential as they were once thought; perhaps the discovery has been made that the minister who propounds his views affirmatively indulging very little in attack, attains his end as effectively as if he immersed himself to the neck in irritating controversy.

The Church News Association of New York has recently taken a census of the Sabbath attendance at the churches in that city. The results are that in round numbers one-fourth of the population of New York, excluding the 400,000 Jews, was found in the various Protestant and Catholic churches of the city. The total number of churches counted was 451, their total membership was 664,885, the total number in attendance was 427,135, the percentage of women being 64.3 and of men 39.1. The Episcopalians stood first among Protestants in number of churches, membership and attendance, and the Presbyterians second. One-fourth the population in the churches on any one Sunday is regarded by the Presbyterian Banner as "not a discouraging proportion."

## "ALWAYS AT IT, AND ALL AT IT."

Presbyterians and Methodists are getting to be very good friends. When they unite their energies for some common object, in most communities they constitute a pretty strong combination of influence. Very likely each can learn something from the other. In many places the Methodist motto, "always at it, and all at it," is admirably worked out. Every new member of a church should, if possible, be given something to do. The benefit is two-fold: the church gets another worker; the new-comer or the novice gets an interest obtainable in no other way. In the case of a new-comer, especially if at all shy, there is no better way of becoming acquainted with some of those in a congregation best worth knowing. When one thinks of it, what a power for varied good, what an influence in the community, any congregation might become, were its members properly seized of the idea that for the work in hand their responsibility in degree is not less than the responsibility of the minister! The minister should not be expected to do it all. Perhaps it is a tactical error, a mistaken kindness, for him to attempt to do it all. It is not a bad maxim, as one thinks it over,—"always at it, and all at it."

## CONCERNING ENCOURAGERS.

The supply of depressers is usually equal to the real needs of humanity. A youth unduly bumtious may need the services of the depressor. But after all, circumstances and the battle of life presently knock some sense into the heads of the most bumtious. What may be needed is a larger supply of encouragers. There are a few people in this world who are so far from being bumtious that they are actually discouraged. There are those whom a word of encouragement is as necessary as sunlight to a plant. Even the preacher has his human side; we are inclined to think his preaching would show more improvement under an occasional word of honest and hearty appreciation of a good sermon, than under criticism of some sermon not quite so good. The encourager need not confine himself to any sphere of life; nor need he be afraid the average traveller along life's highway will be spoiled by over much encouragement. The depressers can be relied on to keep the average right.

THE WORLD TO-DAY of December fulfils admirably the purpose implied in the title of this publication. It contains first of all a review of events of the month, in which the revolution in Panama, the Alaskan Boundary award and the Russo-Japanese imbroglio find a place. Following is a Canadian view of the Alaskan award by the author of *The Pensionnaires*. H. P. Cope writes interestingly on "The American Invasion of Canada," while William Elliot Griffiths contributes a spirited article entitled "Korea and International Politics." Other noteworthy features are Professor Small's article on "The German View of America," "Impressions of the Far East" by the Barrows lecturer for 1902-3, of the University of Chicago, and "English Colonial Experience and American Colonial Problems" by N. Darnell Davis. Very appropriately stock is taken of the year 1903 in a section headed "The Making of To-Morrow." The illustrations, as usual, are beautifully executed.

## HONOUR TOWARDS GOD.\*

It is a pleasure to call attention to a little book published by Oliphant, Anderson and Ferrier, of Edinburgh and London. The title is *Honour towards God*, and the author is John Kelman, whose late work *The Faith of Robert Louis Stevenson* has met with such a favorable reception. The present book is somewhat unique in outward appearance, but pleasantly so, and its plain, grey covers do not in any wise diminish one's appreciation of the sparkling thoughts contained therein. In eight short chapters Mr. Kelman develops his main subject, "honour towards God." The first chapter deals with the value of a point of view, and immediately strikes a note which will find a deep response in many hearts. The value of a point of view, especially where we are considering so important a matter as life, cannot be denied; the instability of unprevailing souls is too general to admit of any denial. The author with fine liberality points out that there may be several points of view from which men may look out and see the world and life in some sort of clear perspective; the all-important matter is that men should have some sane and worthy point of view. Mr. Kelman finds such a point of view in the conception of God's trust in man. It is usual to speak of man's faith in God, but our author reverses the order; and because God has honoured man by believing in him and trusting him, he conceives that man is thereby under a high obligation to think and act worthily. And so we have the idea of "honour towards God." Life is an affair of honour; it has been the policy of God from of old to trust men. The author's treatment of this phase of his subject is very luminous and inspiring. "It is an easy judgment, and pleasant to a certain type of mind. It is always easy and pleasant to that type to be hard on a man when his back is at the wall. If the tower of Siloam falls, or Pilate's sword slaughters, no doubt the victims were sinners beyond all the rest. Now the worst thing about this view is not its cruelty to sufferers, but its slander of the character of God. God, according to it, is but the head of the party of Job's friends. He is regarded as suspicious, watching for men's failures with better opportunity than the keenest human eyes can have; always distrusting men, and cynical about their goodness; always at the catch, and ready to sneer that he knew that they would fail. In the Prologue in Heaven which forms the first two chapters of the Book of Job, a sharp division is made between the attitudes of God and Satan, and the role of suspicious watcher is once for all assigned to Satan....."

The above quotation is fairly representative. The following are from the chapter entitled "The Venture of Faith." "Those who are always protecting themselves by bad views of human nature forget that there is nothing so dangerous as to sink into a miserably minded man who disbelieves in the world he has to deal with. This is to escape the risk of battle only to fall into the certainty of disease; it is to choose to be a spiritual neurotic rather than a wounded soldier." Christ was "God's great trust to man, the para-

\**Honour towards God* by John Kelman, Jun., M.A. Published by Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier, Edinburgh and London. Upper Canada Tract Society, Toronto. Price, one shilling.