

setting in good earnest to seek after heaven. O! if you would bring in but every one his man to Christ, what a blessed thing were it! When so many are busy leading men astray, how active should the friends of Christ be in bringing back the lost sheep to him!"

Does any one ask the cause of the success which signalized their ministry? It is indicated by the passages we have quoted. The object they proposed was the conversion of men. For this they read, and thought, and conceived their sermons in the study, and prayed in their closets, and conversed in their visits, and wept in their secret places. Nothing less than this could satisfy them; reformed morals, intellectual orthodoxy, large congregations, with no stint of popular applause, were nothing in their regard, without the practical influences of the gospel sinking into the hearts of their hearers. They sighed for "souls for their hire," ashamed of the sermon which brought them nothing of this reward. They told nothing of "Platonism," "eclecticism," or "German philosophy;" or better named mythology, like the learned preachers and great Doctors of our day, leaving the congregation to doubt, as they conclude their discourses, whether the gospel is not a part of the "Gentile dispensation" instead of a revelation of light and love. Affectation had no place; popularity they never sought; around them was lying a world in sin; before them was the judgment; they had felt the power of the gospel; they heard an imperious call to do something—a call from above, which they could not refuse; it sounded in the deep places of their souls, and came back in echoes from the groaning and travailing creation, which needed the supplicated relief. They wrote, they preached, they prayed, with this single object before them, whose accomplishment became even a passion. The success did not come without "strong crying and tears," but it did come, and to all other ministers will come, who desire it as strongly and seek it as directly. A ministry which instructs and edifies is to be coveted, but more that which saves souls from death, and fills heaven with joy. Next to the assurance of his own salvation, it was the joy of Baxter that he had won others to the Saviour. It was also the joy of Paul; "for what is our hope, our joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ? For ye are our glory and joy."—*Congregational Journal*.

THE MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL.

The following is extracted from an Oration before the Literary Societies of Dickinson College, Carlisle, Pa., in July last, by the Rev. George W. Bethune, D. D., minister of the Third Ref. Dutch Church, Philadelphia.

"The preacher—and to the sacred office I am told that not a few of you aspire—perhaps more than all others needs the widest range of knowledge and cultivation of mind, in a day when the records of past ages, the developments of every science, and the most abstruse metaphysics, are ransacked by the opponents of revelation and the advocates of false Christianity. He owes it to himself, his hearers, and his God, to be prepared against all error, for truth, when fairly set forth, is never antagonistic to religion. It has been the fashion with some to pronounce zeal and piety

independent of mental cultivation for success in that cause which can proper only by the blessing of God. But God himself works not without means. Nor should it be forgotten; that though he chose illiterate men for apostles, he qualified them at the Pentecost with various learning before he sent them forth into the world; nay, that the very chiefest of them all, who was most successful in baffling the philosopher and the sophist, as well as in teaching the simple and the slave, was one trained in all the arts of the schools. One must read most superficially those epistles which have fed the church in all ages with divine truth, not to see that the Holy Ghost employed the varied learning and logical discipline of St. Paul, as well as his mighty mind and gigantic heart. It is true that the pulpit is no place for the parade of learning, and none so abuse it but the pedant and the pretender. But it requires no small learning to be correct, not a little study to be simple, and great command of language to be plain. It is, with rare exceptions, your uneducated or half-educated men that confound their audience with great swelling polysyllables of vanity, imperfect definitions which are fruitful of error, and thoughts good perhaps in themselves, but with as little arrangement as chaos. The thoroughly educated preacher alone is lucid, simple and intelligible, because his words are well chosen, his scheme preconceived, and his logic exact. But little do the people know that years of patient study over the yellow pages of classic lore, were spent to make the sermon so plain that the child bears it home and fancies he could have preached it himself. It is said of Cecil, (I think) that in his later years he separated all his classics from his library and burned them. Had he burned them at twenty, we should never have heard of Cecil. He had drawn the honey from the hive, and he burned but the straw. Moses was trained in all the learning of Egypt as well as kept forty years in the desert, before he was set at the head of Israel. Luther and Calvin, and the other leading reformers were men of the most profound erudition, and their immense volumes show that they used their learning in the midst of their fatigues and perils, to the last. John Wesley came a scholar armed from the university, and in his most edifying discourses a scholar's eye can see how well he used his early advantages. A cloak and some books and some parchments were all the wealth for which the apostle of the Gentiles seemed to care; and unless you doubt the inspiration of his advice to Timothy, 'Give attention to reading,' you had better go without the cloak than the books or the parchments."

INQUIRING SAINTS.

I was asked the other day whether I had had any recent meeting for inquirers. I replied that I had not—that there were few inquiring sinners in the congregation, and I judged the reason to be, that there were few inquiring saints. "Inquiring saints! that is a new phrase. We always suppose that *inquiring* belonged exclusively to sinners." But it is not so. Do we not read in Ezekiel, 36: 37, "Thus saith the Lord God, I will yet for this be *inquired* of by the house of Israel to do it for them?" *By the house of Israel*, that is, by his people—by the church. You see