

Living Preachers.

THE CURE FOR THE MONOTONY OF LIFE.

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"Our conversation is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ."—*PHIL. iii. 20.*

IT is well known that "conversation" in this verse means citizenship, or rather state polity, carrying with it not only the notion of belonging to a state, but of actions which our nationality inspires. Just as, in the crisis of affairs around us, Turk and Russian, German and Briton, think and act with a view to the interests of their nation, so a Christian's bearing will indicate his heavenly birth. The context complains of men who are enemies of the cross deifying their appetites, glorying in their shame; but we, it says, are loyal to the "statutes of a heavenly king," our state polity is in heaven, from whence also we expect a final rescue from all peril by the coming of our Lord, "we look for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ."

Among the countless lessons offered by such a verse, which would only distract our minds if they roved unchecked amongst them, let us now fix our attention upon one minor thought, the effect of such relationships on our common days and occupations, the romance which vital religion pours over the dull and plodding lives which most men are doomed to live.

It has often been said, and truly, that faith in Christ is for tens of thousands the sole chance of living with any kind of ideal, any clear aim, any defined conception of what they would fain be, and any effort to mould themselves accordingly. It is not only the true ideal, the right aim, but it is the only possible one which can arrest those vast masses of mankind who live from hand to mouth, going just where the hour leads, trading, or pleading, or even preaching, because circumstances draw them on, just as a mountain Rambler strolls by the sheep-track or the stream, and as a man in a crowd goes where he is thrust. That is the way most lives are shaped. It is a shallow mistake to say that most men have a master passion, that business men are consumed by avarice, or professional men by ambition.