

to accept such congratulation as a measure of the faith of the Church? And how natural the consequence that the progress will be in conformity with it! The handful rescued creates a rapture that drowns a sympathy for the millions left enchained. Or, to use again the apostolic figure, the inch gained in the wall expels the mortification that would follow the reflection that the growth should be measured by feet.

Taking into account that results are expected from the evangelism of the membership as well as the ministrations of a ministry, the Christian out of holy orders attracting by a magnetism, as hinted in Matt. v. 16, is it a cause of congratulation that in twelve months a force nearly 90,000 strong can only report an increase of a little over 3,000 to the communion to which they belong? Surely in so many months each consecrated workman might by some means have placed one stone in this building! Then would the increase be estimated by tens of thousands, and the mortification of reporting so small an increase would be saved the pen that constructs the Pastoral Address of the Church.

There must be some way of accounting for this tardy growth, and sufficient cause for holding inquest on the subject. For the growth is so wanting in proportion to the professed power employed, that it can hardly be called stunted; it amounts to a stagnation. And although it would be within the limits of such enquiry to gauge the share taken in this building by the individual Christian, and it would be easy to show that out of the pulpit but little comparatively is done to advance the Church, it is the purpose of this paper to deal especially with the department of the work that has been committed to the care of the pulpit of the Church.

I am free to say, however, that what often passes for failure in ministration is not worthy that charge. For apparent inaction is not always such. Progress may obtain without ocular demonstration in a spiritual work. That as a row of brick may be laid around an entire building, costing a day's work, without a perceptible difference in height, so may the ministry of a period accomplish a work no more evident to the ordinary spectator.

Altering the figure here, may it not be said that growth occurs imperceptibly in the seed sown? In husbandry, it is not necessary that the shoot should immediately follow the casting of the seed. I know there are some in the Church ready to express horror if the blade is not simultaneous with the seed-casting. But a turning aside the soil, if such are not too lazy, would save to such the trouble of complaint, and the Church a pain, as they discover that the root has begun to grow downward; and on close inspection it would occur to such critics that the root is as important as the blade, inasmuch as the safety of the blade depends upon the root.

In this connection, many in the ministry of every branch of the Church have been misrepresented, if not thoroughly ignored; because, with more aptness to teach than arouse, and dealing more with the intellect than the emotions, they have succeeded in rooting well the seed for a harvest to be reaped by others who, with the hoe or harrow of appeal, are better adapted to bring to the surface and to ripeness the moral effect of well-digested truth.