

larger encouragement than distinctly to hear the voice of God indicating to him his appointed work, for which, as appointed for him and not chosen by him, he will be graciously endowed. This is the meaning and the gladness of a clear call to the Gospel ministry, in that the call itself ensures spiritual success to those who heed it and conscientiously fulfil its functions, while irretrievable failure must await him who enters into such a service at his own option and for secondary ends. We are not now discussing what constitutes a call to the Christian ministry. What we affirm is that when such a call is really made to a man and so accepted, the ultimate success of his ministry is thereby assured. Untold good would result to the Church if it were oftener true than it is that before a man calls himself to the holy ministry, or before any body of people call him, God himself should issue the call in the innermost experience of his servant.

The very consciousness of having received such a summons, and the consequent conception of the supreme importance of it, would awaken every dormant spiritual energy and stimulate the recipient of it to the most intense devotion of his life to his work. As Carlyle, once again, tells us: "Blessed is he who has found his work; let him ask no other blessedness."

So, life is a vocation, and every separate calling in it, however high or lowly, is a call of God to Christian service. So is it in the liberal professions, outside the ministry of the word—in law, and medicine, and journalism, and all the varied forms of educational work. So is it in the arts, and trades, and most secular industries of the world.

We need not wait for Carlyle to tell us that "all true work is sacred; that were it but true hand-labor, there is something of divineness in it." Manual toil is not necessarily menial, save as the laborer so makes it; nor is any service necessarily servile, if, indeed, it be one for the fulfilment of which we have divine authority.

Hence, the duty of every man to have a calling and to give himself wholly to it. Idleness in this active world is a positive sin against God, and man, and self. Every man should be, in the true sense, a man of business—a busy man, and ply his calling in the fear of God.

"Get leave to work

In this world—'tis the best yon get at all."

says Mrs. Browning; and she adds—

"God did not anoint thee with his odorous oil
To wrestle, not to reign."

Not only work, but hard work; patient, persevering, and often discouraging work is the part and the good fortune of man, and he is the happiest in it and the most useful who addresses himself to it with something like apostolic zeal, "serving his generation," as did David, "according to the will of God." Some men there are in the church as well as out of it, in the ministry as out of it, in the secular profes-