

a tone too low to be distinctly heard, except by those close to him. The sound of his voice is however sufficiently audible throughout the house to attract the attention and effectually prevent any thing like close application of mind to the prayer which is being offered. The persons around the altar especially, must have their attention so divided that it is impossible for them either to unite in the prayer, or to give very particular attention to what the minister says. Now, if we could trust the opinions of those who rely on such methods as these for effecting conversions, we would have to admit that their labours are eminently successful. But, on the other hand, if we fall back upon the scriptural test of conversion, we will probably, in a majority of the cases, be led to a contrary conclusion.

The great danger, as I apprehend, at the present day, when so much has been paraded in the newspapers and magazines, as well as from the platform on this subject, is that the Christian Church should come to the conclusion that God has "created a new thing in the earth"—and that, now, we should cease to depend on such means for promoting a revival as are sanctioned in the Scriptures. Let us however beware. The past history of those Churches which have depended on artificial means of excitement presents nothing which should make us desire to emulate them. The Apostle said to Christians, in his day—"Ye were born not of corruptible seed but of incorruptible, by the word of God which liveth and abideth for ever." The direction of Christ to the ministers of the Gospel always is to "teach," to "preach the Gospel"—to aim at turning men from darkness to light, as the means of turning them from Satan unto God. With such directions as these before us, it would be presumptuous and sinful to neglect the great duty of preaching the Gospel. And to ask God to pour out his Spirit, and convert sinners, while we neglected the part of the work assigned to us, could be nothing less than an insult offered to the King and Head of the Church. Time and space do not permit me to enter upon the plain, scriptural, and I may add, common sense arguments by which this view of the matter can be abundantly sustained. Let me however say to those who think the history of recent revivals contradicts this view of the case, that the very supposition is absurd. There cannot possibly be faith without knowledge—a knowledge of the very truths which faith embraces. "How can they believe in him of whom they have not heard?" Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God. Plain, full, bold statements of Gospel truth accompanied with earnest persevering prayer, can alone be depended on for the conversion of sinners. Such means God will acknowledge and bless. But if people presume to set aside these means in order to make room for schemes of their own devising, they will bring upon themselves a curse and not a blessing. "As the fire devoureth the stubble and the flame consumeth the chaff, so their root shall be as rottenness, and their blossom shall go up as dust: because they have cast away the law of the Lord of Hosts, and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel."

ALFRED.

MINISTERIAL EDUCATION.

TRAINING SONS TO THE MINISTRY.

MESSRS. EDITORS:—From the infancy of my sons I have in heart dedicated them to the ministry. What course had I best take to make this purpose, under God, effectual?

EUNICE.

[Not by what is called "training them up to the ministry," giving them a theological education merely, and then urging their ordination before they know either their own hearts, or the temptations of the outer world. This is the course taken by the Church of Rome. She opens her school for the boy of eight, and keeps him there until the period of his ordination. But nothing is more calculated to produce a barbarous ecclesiasticism and an unsympathizing heart. The minister thus trained knows nothing of the world and feels nothing for the world. His dialect, his mode of thought, his resources, are all technical. That sacred li-