

Pastor and People.

A PASTOR'S ASPIRATION

If, when the darkness veils the night,
And buries in forgetfulness the light
With shadows deep;
If, in that silent hour of peace and rest,
I, too, like a tired bird, seeking its nest,
Lie down to sleep;

And if, unlike the bird, who with gay wing,
Wakes in the morn its glad some notes to sing,
For darkness past—
If I, with folded arms and head bowed low,
Sleep on (while all things round me stir and glow)
In slumbers fast;

Friends will come round me, whispering: "He is
dead;
Silent the body, and the spirit fled:
Gone home; good-bye."
O, in that hour shall any gather near,
Too full for words, but with a silent tear,
Or stifled sigh;

Shall stoop and murmur o'er the form laid low.
"To him the highest hope of life I owe,
My guide, my friend;
He taught to hate the evil, love the right,
He led the way to purer realms of light,
Man's noblest end."

Welcome, ye victors, to your crowns of gold,
Or a plain laurel wreath; with praise untold,
Let the air ring,
All that I ask the simpler, sweeter thought,
Of some lone wanderer lost, but homeward
brought
To life and King.

Honors in arms or science strew your way
Empires and men but live their own brief day.
I ask just this:
That when all nature dies, and like a scroll
Earth vanishes, O may some rescued soul
Greet me in bliss.

—W. B.

Written for THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN.

DEFICITS IN THE FUNDS THE CURE—II

BY R. A. DEN.

"How shall they hear without a preacher?" "If the trumpet give an uncertain sound?"

I said in a former paper that ministers must bear the blame in the first place. I said it simply because it was true; not because I was willing to blame the ministers. I shall have something to say by and by about the duty towards them which the Church neglects, or rather, does not attempt to fulfil; but my immediate subject is the duty which they owe to their people—and to their Master. It does certainly seem to me that they are too commonly under the dominion of the "fear of man." Sometimes it may be fear of the man who examines the figures as to the increase of membership and so forth; sometimes it may be fear of the man whose subscription is an important item in the congregational revenue; very often it is fear of the "young" man—and woman. If "this" is insisted upon, Mr. Moneybags might leave the congregation; Mr. Sociation and Miss Lightoes will certainly take themselves off, unless they are not allowed to have their way about "that." Perhaps they will; although it is also possible that, instead of leaving the congregation, they might be brought into the Church. But the question for you, my brother, is this. Would you rather take the risk of their anger, or, securing yourself against that, bring yourself within the wide sweep of the anathema which in Ezekiel is denounced against the unfaithful watchman? It is a serious question, but I am afraid it must be faced.

I know that the "multiplication table standard" is a strong lion in the path. [How strong it is you proved, O my friend, to whom I can go nevermore in this world, for light to see or strength to dare!] But this lion and all lions must be faced. Not long ago an editorial in THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN had something to say about this "multiplication table standard," declaring that "the whole business is becoming absolutely repulsive." To many in the Church it became all that long ago. It rests with the ministers to abolish this standard, and as they suffer

from it more than any other class of people, it is a standing astonishment to me that they have not rebelled against it long ago.

Of course I do not mean that ministers should denounce this evil, or kindred evils, from the pulpit. Indeed, denunciation is not to be recommended, although there are occasions when it must be resorted to. The way to conquer evil is, to recruit the forces of the truth. We complain of lack of reverence in these days of want of earnestness; but there are few people who do not reverence something, and there is earnestness enough and to spare about money-getting. Surely it is possible so to present the mind and will of the Eternal Father, the revelation of the Eternal Son, as to call out reverence without austerity, earnestness without fanaticism! In the times of our forebears, the pendulum swung too far in the direction of austerity—in our time it is flying out on the opposite side of the centre. One great function of the ministry is, so to regulate it that the Church shall keep true time. We are always in danger of losing our bearings if the chronometer is out of gear.

And is not something badly out of gear when we have such combinations as this. The text is, "Where their worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched." The sermon is "literal." Then come the announcements, and among them "The ladies of the congregation will hold a social in this church on Tuesday evening. An attractive programme has been prepared, and a good time may be expected. Admission . . . cents, Proceeds for the . . . Mission Fund." The pity of it checks our scornful laughter.

Is it any wonder that the Church is lightly esteemed and lightly treated when such things are done in her name, as a part of her work? According to the creed we hold and preach, souls are perishing because there is none to hold to their lips the cup of the water of life; and when those who believe this are asked to give money that men may be sent, the most they can do is to get up an "attractive programme"—and, often, the more buffonery, the greater the attraction—in order to induce people to contribute a few dollars! When Paul declared his willingness to become a fool for Christ's sake, do you imagine he had in mind any thought of singing comic songs in church, to the end that a few denarii might be raised to help the mission in Macedonia?

It is not necessary—far from it—to be dry as dust. It is not necessary to be harsh or cold or sanctimonious. But it is necessary that sacred things be treated reverently. He Who said to Moses "Take off thy shoes from off thy feet," is the same God whom we worship to-day. Men and creeds have lied about Him and misrepresented Him to His children, and do so still; but because we have learned to think of Him—to know Him—as the Loving Father, surely we should not treat the affairs of His kingdom with a levity we should be quick to resent did it intrude itself into the heart chambers which enshrine our sacred human memories, our holy human loves!

ST. JAMES' SQUARE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

[A series of articles of much interest has been appearing in *The Week* by J. R. N. under the heading of "Pew and Pulpit in Toronto." The following is condensed from the first of the series treating of a Presbyterian Church.—Ed.]

When Rev. Louis H. Jordan, B.D., pastor of the St. James' Square Presbyterian Church, leaves the screening shelter of the reading-desk and comes out from it a step or two on one side or the other, as he does occasionally throughout his sermon, you see that he is a man in the prime of life, and every inch an ecclesiastic. Cultured correctness is in the calm and placid expression of his strong face—clean-shaven, with a well cut nose and a determined chin—in every contour of his compact head, with its short, very closely-brushed, iron-grey hair; in his smile, which

like his usual speech, shows a set of perfect and gleaming teeth. The black silk gown reaches to his feet, and has voluminous sleeves, which are very effective when the preacher raises his arm as he did on Sunday night when he pointed out over an imaginary door of hell, Dante's words: "All hope abandon, ye who enter here." He pointed out each word as he uttered it so that his hearers saw, in thought, the lurid announcement, duly spaced out over the gloomy portal. The black gown is a very striking background for the immaculate white bands, and as Mr. Jordan possesses natural dignity, and has a high idea of his office, he looks as though he might be anything from a dean to an archbishop. He is a strong, definite man; no dreamer; no poet; no doubter; no mystic. He has a facile and ready delivery, and he cuts off compact chunks of very definite theology and tenders them to you as clearly as if they were axioms in Euclid. You may take them or leave them, but there is no doubt as to what he means by them.

His sermon on this Sunday evening was a special one to young men; the subject of it was "Voices that Mislead," and the text was from the Book of Proverbs.

In the course of his sermon he said, that when young men were to be tempted to their everlasting ruin the devil did not appear in his own proper person. He spoke to the young man through the guise of one of his friends, one to whom, perhaps, the young man looked up with respect and confidence. It was very natural for young men when they had done their day's work, and done it well, to be anxious to get out to something amusing. The life of the average young man, during business hours, was spent under a roof, and it was the custom of most young men, when they had hurried through their evening meal, to escape to the freedom of out of doors. He (Mr. Jordan) had found this in his attempts to visit young men.

Well, now, supposing a young man in the condition mentioned; business over and the evening to spare; perhaps the friend said: "You have done well to-day, you have performed your tasks with assiduity, now, to-night, you need recreation, you must have something exciting, something to take your mind off business—you must let yourself go a little," etc. Perhaps he suggested a place of questionable amusement. The preacher did not say the theatre, but that was what naturally occurred to every one's mind. If the young man valued his soul's safety he must regard this suggestion of his friend as inspired by Satan. Or the young man might be fond of music, one of the most elevating and soothing of the arts. But here the Prince of Darkness was present again, and suggested music with unholy associations. The opera was not mentioned, but it was evidently what was in the preacher's mind. Sometimes the devil tried ridicule, sometimes persuasion. When he had tempted a young man astray he was given to displaying his amusement at the unfortunate being's attempt to get back again to the path of reformation and rectitude. Sometimes there was a young man of more than common strength of purpose who made up his mind that come what would he would go back, but, oftener, the victims of temptation, when they heard the demoniac peal of laughter with which the Enemy of souls met their efforts at reformation, went deeper and deeper into sin, and endeavored to drown the voice of conscience in dissipation.

Looking back on his sermon I think it shows that he is a master of the art of preaching. All that he says is put clearly, decisively and definitely. There is no mud-dle. Every word has its due place and every word tells. The consequence is that his discourses are easily remembered. He is deeply imbued with the traditional theology of his communion, and it is not likely that any doubt will be expressed as to his complete orthodoxy. A kindly man and a strong, who finds in the Bible a sufficient

rule of faith and practice, and who is entirely unswayed by the speculations of these idle days, and who will not swerve from declaring what he believes to be the "whole counsel of God."

The congregation, though not crowded, was large and eminently respectable; people of a high and intelligent type, who are accustomed, to judge from their appearance, to plain living and high thinking. Living the higher life of self-restraint and faith, God leaves its mark on the outward appearance of men and women just as every other sort of life does, and you may remark that you look around the pews of the St. James' Square Presbyterian Church.

There is no ornate singing—the quaintly paraphrased psalm at the beginning of the service, and plain, old-fashioned, but beloved hymns, with a voluntary and interlude on the organ while the collection is being taken up, make up the musical part of the service. The church is a handsome building at the acme of compact comfort. There is but little color in its decorations, but it has much architectural beauty and fitness. The thought occurs to you that it was designed by an architect who loved gothic, but had been brought up a Presbyterian.

THE POWER OF APPETITE.

A few years ago a noted wild beast trainer gave a performance with his pets in one of the leading London theatres. He took his lions, tigers, leopards and hyenas through their part of the entertainment, and, by his wonderful nerve and control over it. As a closing act to the performance, he was to introduce an enormous boa constrictor, thirty-five feet long. He had bought it when it was only two or three days old, and for twenty five years he had handled it daily, so that it was considered perfectly harmless and completely under his control. He had seen it grow from a tiny reptile, which he had often carried in his bosom, into a fearful monster.

The curtain rises on an Indian woodland scene. The weird strains of an oriental band steal through the trees. A rustling noise is heard, and a huge serpent is seen winding its way through the undergrowth. It stops. Its head is erect. Its bright eyes sparkle. Its whole body seems animated. A man emerges from the heavy foliage, and their eyes meet. The serpent quails before the man—man is victor. The serpent is under the control of a master. Under his guidance and direction it performs a series of frightful feats. At a signal from the man it slowly approaches him and begins to coil its heavy folds around him. Higher and higher do they rise, until man and serpent seem blended into one. Its hideous head is reared aloft above the mass. The man gives a little scream, and the audience unites in a thunderous burst of applause, but it freezes upon their lips. The trained scream was a wail of death agony. Those cold, slimy folds had embraced him for the last time. They had crushed the life out of him, and the horror-stricken audience heard bone after bone crack, as those powerful folds tightened upon him. Man's plaything had become his master. His slave for twenty-five years had enslaved him.

In this horrible incident is portrayed the whole story of intemperance. The man who has taken the first glass of intoxicating liquor has the boa of intemperance in his bosom. If he throttles the monster now, it is easily done. But if he permits it to live, feeds and nourishes it, he may control it for even twenty five years; but it is continually growing, and some day its soul-destroying folds will encircle his soul and bear it to those regions of woe "where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched." The changeable decree of Almighty God is: "No drunkard shall enter the kingdom of God."—*Bible Teacher*.

The St. John's-wood Church (Rev. Dr. J. Munro Gibson) reports a membership of 1,192, including 305 at the mission church in Kilburn.