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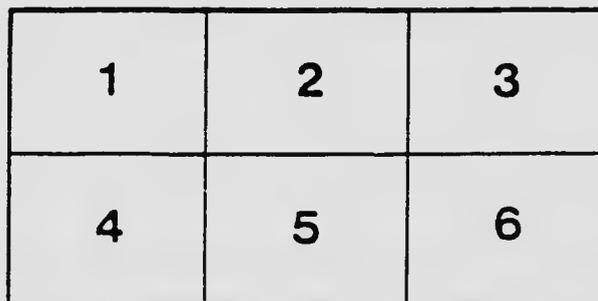
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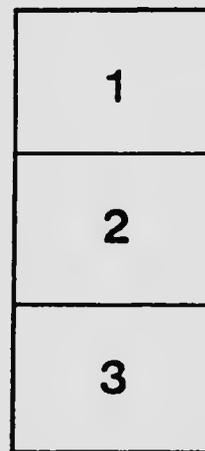
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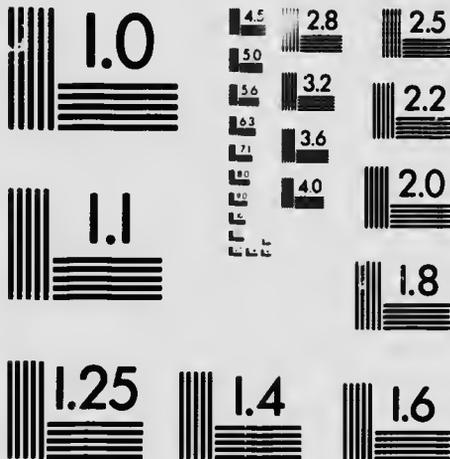
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The Twentieth Century Minister

By REV. JOHN GALT.

Awarded First Prize in the Competition offered by
the Forward Movement Committee,
Presbyterian Church in Canada.

Issued by the Committee of the Forward Movement of the Presby-
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THE TWENTIETH CENTURY MINISTER

A man, strong, very courageous, whose shoes are as iron and as brass and whose strength shall be even as his days. This is what the hour demands, for the Promised Land to which the Israel of God has been journeying, or, if you will, wandering, for many weary and some aimless years, is manifestly now in sight. The world, God's great harvest field, that on which He has bestowed labour, patience and out ; that from which He has promised His Son that He shall see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied, is surely white already to harvest as never hitherto. Words fail to tell the sum of the pregnant possibilities of the present and the near future. All the world of men seems to be ready for something, and something great, but whether the peoples will be seen wandering like sheep having no shepherd, or whether they will be led into the paths of righteousness and peace, must depend in large measure, under God, on the Twentieth Century Minister.

The Conditions and the Man.

God has never wanted for a man to stand for Him, and it would be strange indeed, if, after having graciously led thus far, He would now fail to find the man for the hour and the task. It seems to have been God's way in

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the past to raise up and prepare men for His work by means of the very conditions with which they would have to deal when their call came, and doubtless Divine Wisdom is working now as ever. The new day calls for men of courage, and God has in His wise providence been showing our youth, the class from which the ministry of the century must be recruited, what courage is.

Langemarck and Vimy Ridge, with their thousand deep-throated cannon, have sung the chorus of courage to our young men to such purpose that we dare not but believe that the high quality of heart of those who fell will live in those who could only hear and wonder. We shall need men of self-sacrificing quality; and our young people have had lessons in this, too, such as have never been given to any in times past. They have seen their own brothers leave well-paid and comfortable employment at great financial loss, plus the hardships, horrors and hazards of war. Shall we dare to think that the brothers of the men who compelled the world to admire and wonder, the striplings who could not go up to the war, are of a poorer sort? They are of the same breed, and it is ours to treat them as being such by telling them that we look to them to be the men who will make a highway of the trail their brave brothers blazed in France and Flanders.

The Great Challenge.

The task that has emerged upon us is the greatest yet. It is chiefly in the realm of the spiritual and the ethical and so falls to be handled mainly by the Christian Church. For the work in hand, the Church needs men,

**"Men who will not fail their brothers,
Men who will not shame their mothers."**

Where are they, and how are we to get them? They are in our churches and schools and homes, and they can be enlisted as their brothers were. The army-makers of our Empire, in the work of finding men, did homage to the Church in adopting both her methods and her modes of appeal. Let the Church do honour in return, and once and forever make an end of talking about improving the comfort of the ministry. Tell them that their King has need of them, that multitudes are ready to perish, that brute force and atheism threaten to destroy what their brothers fought and died for; call them, not to comfort and to ease, but to hardship and heroic endeavour, as did every true crusader from Peter the Hermit, who enlisted millions in the most hazardous enterprise of all time, to the recruiting agents of the past four years who recruited millions for the greatest war of all time. Boys are not so much concerned about what they are to get in the days to come, as they are about what they are to be in the days to come.

A Man.

A boy wants to be a man. Too often in the past have the feebly witty spoken of men, women, and clergymen as if the Christian minister were neither one nor the other, but rather a sexless addendum to humankind. The insinuation has always been as mean as it has been untrue, for although there have been multitudes of unworthy men found in the ranks of the ministry,

it has been substantially true throughout that the Christian minister has been at least one niche higher than the average of his fellows.

However that may be, the minister that the twentieth century calls for, and the only minister that will count, will be the one who is cast in manly mould. He need not chew gum, nor flirt the cigarette, nor become excited over the spring openings for men's millinery, but he must be clean, strong, virile, fearless. The records of the Christian ministry simply teem with the names of grand men who played the man from youth even down to old age, and the twentieth century ought to be able to show something better yet.

A Man Among Men

It may be that in the past the training given to the ministry has tended somewhat to make the minister a man apart from other men, but there are signs which indicate that in the future greater pains will be taken to make the student feel that he is called to be a man among men, one whose advice may be sought and whose counsel may be depended upon in connection with everything that matters in the lives of men, a man who will count for something in matters relating to the well-being of his community. Other-worldliness, once so highly regarded by those of the school of the "unco guid," may still be valued by some of the best of people, but the man who would minister to his fellows in the present and in the near future, had better cultivate a sanctified this-worldliness and get to know the inner and

outer life of his fellowman so that his work may tell in matters connected with the daily round and common task. The man who aspires to distinction as a hunter gets to know the ways and thoughts of the animals he would capture; and so it is with those who watch for souls.

A Man of God.

The minister of the twentieth century must be a man of God as well as a man among men, one who has cultivated the knowledge of God, His will, His purposes, His plans. In the Great War it was found that the ideal officer was the man who knew how to keep in manly touch with his men and who, at the same time, felt out towards the higher command so that he might know all that could be known about the plan of campaign. The minister owes it both to God and to man to be a man after God's own heart, for only so can he be of every possible service to either; moreover, it will be expected of him. Woe to the man who fails to measure up, but for him who is truly a servant of God there will be abundant respect and admiration. When there is a man among men and a man of God in the same person, worth-while things are going to happen.

A Man With a Message.

There will be nothing feeble or indefinite about the truly called and sent minister of the twentieth century. He will be infinitely more than merely a man of good

and religious influence, if he knows himself to be a man with a message,—not a man with a theory or a philosophy, although he may have plenty of both, but with a clear and definite "Thus saith the Lord." There may have been ministers who have rightly been regarded as objects of pity, but never was it the man who knew God's message and made haste to deliver it. Such men always did, and always will, stand in the proudest position open to created beings. We speak but words of sober truth when we say that the man appointed to speak for God ranks highest and must have precedence. More, men will recognize it, if the preacher makes his King's business his chief concern. There need be no failure in knowing the message of God in all the plenitude of its power and beauty and simplicity: prolonged and devout study of the Word of Truth cannot fail to make the student wise unto salvation.

A Man With Authority

Of all men of the twentieth century who may speak to their fellows with authority, the minister of the gospel must be conceded the chief place. It will not, it is true, be an authority inherent in himself, but the authority of one sent.

There need never be anything cringing or apologetic about the man who is called and sent. In minor degree he may say with truth, "The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovery of

sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord."

The Authority of Knowledge

The correct language for the Christian minister in all the ages has been after the fashion of, "We speak that we do know and testify that we have seen." So is it now. The gospel message is not a new or untried thing, but has been subjected to every kind of test; it has been tried and proved by all sorts and conditions of men, and found to be yea and amen under every kind of circumstance. Peter, on the day of Pentecost, spoke as a man who knew with assurance, and Paul at Athens dared to be sure in the presence of the philosophical diletantes of his age. All the strong men of the pulpit have been clothed with the authority of knowledge, and it was largely this that made them strong and gave them presence and dignity before the people.

The Authority of Urgency

Nor is this all, for, in the nature of things, the minister of the twentieth century will be invested with the authority of a great and pressing urgency, and urgency always brings with it the highest kind of authority for the man who can point the way, for the man who has the word to speak, and who can deal with the situation. All of this the Christian minister can do, and all the more if he himself is charged with a sense of the supreme urgency of the situation, if he sees and feels

the dire condition, both now and in the hereafter, of those who know not the gospel.

As has been set down elsewhere, "the humble country hind who would under ordinary circumstances have an attack something like palpitation on hearing the majestic tones of the voice of his lordship's splendid footman, on the steps of the great mansion, if that mansion were on fire, would instantly forget all his fears, and the great oaken door before which he trembled so a few hours ago, would now quake with the blows and kicks he would deliver upon it under the inspiration of a terrible urgency. He, the erstwhile trembler, would now order the silk-stockinged men-servants about as if they were mere gutter boys, and he Emperor of all the Europes in Scotland. The very persons of the great lord and lady would now be sacred to him, only to be rescued from their danger. A few hours ago this poor man feared that he might not be holding his hat in a sufficiently respectful manner, now he fears only that he may be too late to throw their Graces out at a window. The consciousness of a terrible urgency has transformed the man."

So will it be with the minister who knows and feels the urgency of his mission, to whom it is a reality. The man of the Book will know that no such message of urgency as that which he is charged to bear, ever sounded in the ears of men. Its language is "Flee," "Haste," "Tarry not," "To-day," "Now." From end to end of the Book of books, text after text rings out to the soul of man like the sound of some great clarion

trumpet sounded in the night. When the preacher takes these upon his lips and yields himself to their divine spell and storms the ears of every creature with them as if he were the first to speak them and as if he might be the last who would have that privilege, he will most assuredly speak as one having authority.

A Man of Courage

We have learned of late to value the man of courage, the man who, at the call of duty, flings himself against death itself if need be. All honour to such, and may the world become worthy of them and of the great sacrifices they have made! It may be that the Christian minister has not loomed large in the eyes of men as a man of courage; but it is difficult to see how a man can be a worthy minister without a brave heart and a ready will to sacrifice. To reprove, to rebuke, to exhort, without fear or favour, or in spite of fear and in defiance of personal interest, demands courage as real as that called for in any military campaign; moreover, the call is for the exercise of courage not for a campaign but for a lifetime.

Nor can the minister dispense with physical courage, for the path of duty will always lead him to where death is doing his most deadly work. In times of epidemic he will practically live in the infected atmosphere of the sick-room. He will be expected to be calm and strong, when others are full of fears and weakly prudent. His must be the courage strong enough and tender

enough to go to the brokenhearted in their hours of darkness and despair, for his it is, of all the sons of men, to bind up the broken heart.

A Man With a Tender Heart

The minister of the twentieth century must be a man with a tender heart as well as a strong and brave man, for his duties will oftentimes call him from the heated contest to the bedside of the sick or dying, and the ideal man will know how to be as gentle with the sufferer as he is stern with the robber of widows and orphans. He will know how to be as tender with the erring but repentant, as he is severe in the denunciation of sin. The world will admire the man like Luther, who said, "Though every tile in Worms were a devil, I would go." But the blessing of those who are ready to perish will ever belong to the man who knows how to speak the name of Jesus in just the right kind of whisper, the while a soul passes the portal from life to life.

Nor is it unusual for men to have the grace to be big enough equally to fit the fight and the sick chamber. Doctor John Clifford, sometimes known as "the fire-brand," is literally a living benediction in the house of pain or sorrow. One said of him, "It is worth while being sick to have the pastor come the way he does." The man of the clenched fist can also be the man of the tender touch.

Who is Sufficient?

Nor need the ordinary man fear that this is not for him, that he is not big enough; any man is big enough for all this and more, whose one hand is given to the Christ, that he may be held and made to stand, and the other given to his brother man, that he may be the link between. St. Paul thanked God that he could do all things through Christ which strengthened him. Divine grace makes the man of faith in the living Christ invincible; faith as a grain of mustard seed is still the formula for the removal of mountains. If the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth, there is no need for anyone to say, "Who is sufficient for these things?" The promise to Asher is a promise to every called and sent man: "his shoes shall be as iron and as brass, and as his day so shall his strength be."



