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REVIEW SECTION.

I.—THE PARISH MINISTER KNIGHT-ERRANT.

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(Concluded from page 281.)

GREAT words and even gravely true, I think, are these of Thomas Carlyle, concerning Louis XV. : "And yet let no meanest man lay flattering unction to his soul. Louis was a ruler ; but art not thou also **one**? His wide France, looked at from the fixed stars—themselves not yet infinitude—is no wider than thy narrow brickfield, where thou, too, didst faithfully or didst unfaithfully mean symbols of eternity imprisoned into time. It is not thy works which are all mortal, infinitely little, and the greatest no greater than the least, but only **the** spirit thou workest in, that can have worth or continuance."

And the test of ministerial faithfulness or faithlessness is whole heavens **higher** than the fixed stars even. "Moreover, it is required in stewards that a man be found faithful," says the great apostle, "but with **me** it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you or of man's judgment. Yea, I judge not mine own self, for I know nothing by myself. Yet am I not hereby justified ; *but He that judgeth me is the Lord.*" The test is not conspicuous place. The test is, shining motive toward God compelling scrupulous service toward men anywhere, everywhere. Judged thus your little and lowly Eversley may be lordlier and loftier than the biggest pulpit London can make offer of.

Looking further at this sphere of this parish minister knight-errant, is there not suggestion also as to the *true winning of ministerial reputation*. Our Lord did not find fault with the desire of the sons of Zebedee, to sit the one on His right hand and the other on His left, but only with their proposed method of promotion. "The best work ever I've done has been my plain parish work," wrote Charles Kingsley to Mr. Thomas Hughes, when fame had already laid various garlands upon his brow. But the structural reason for that fame was plain parish work, well done. This was the trunk of the tree on which banners of other leaves unfurled themselves. Poet he was, and author with wide audience, and militant reformer with clarion call. But first, foremost, chiefest, he was parish minister. These things were fringe, parish duty was the center and the main substance. The in-

reach Heaven, Death will have to pull the ghost away from me; I will never give up the ghost. Another is that I do not often allow my work to wear on me. I work very steadily and very systematically. Another is that I have great talent for sleeping. I can sleep on the cars, sleep amid crowds, as I have when five thousand men were marched within fifty feet of where I lay sleeping without waking me till the time to preach had arrived; as I can in church, having actually slept while the congregation were singing the hymn immediately before my sermon, on their ceasing to sing the silence, of course, waking me up. "He giveth His beloved sleep." Another is my keen appreciation of the fun there is in the world. I could not endure the tragedies I am compelled to witness as a Christian minister if I did not, on all proper occasions, step aside to witness the comedies of life.

Really and sincerely, I believe that my health is maintained very largely by the faith I have in prayer and the assurance I have that every day and every night many of my congregation are making prayer that my health and life may be spared.

I believe that the minister is bound to take care of his health. When I was a boy I adored brains. Now, the first question I want to know about any man is as to his stomach. In preaching, health is to thought what in rifle-shooting powder is to the ball. I have taken gymnastic exercises under a teacher, believing that it is not safe for an unprofessional man to guide himself to any great extent in that matter.

"An impression sometimes prevails among people," says Dr. Storrs in his lectures to theological students, "that religion is good for dyspeptics and invalids, for nervous people and for women; but that it does not suit well with a body full of spirit and health. People are apt

to expect to find in a minister a debilitated student who does not know much of what real and vigorous manhood means. His words are for persons like himself, and not for hale men in an out-door life. A full development of vital force, a robust and athletic habit of body if he can gain it is the best answer to such an idea. Therefore, if for this reason only, it is a Christian duty to gain it and to keep our merely physical force at the highest point."

I find a good deal of exercise in pastoral visiting. I have walked several miles to-day in paying visits to four sick parishioners. When my time allows I walk instead of ride and amuse myself with the shop windows. I regard it a healthy thing to stroll through the streets of New York and look at the shop windows, in addition to the fact that it goes far toward giving a man a liberal education.

I think the mistakes of young preachers lie largely in their zeal outrunning their knowledge in the desire to take the world by storm; in the irregularity of their habits, some of them priding themselves upon not finishing their sermons until 1 o'clock Sunday morning; their failure to observe the Sabbath law, and invasions made upon their health by irregularities in their diet. Old pastors know how to eat small meals at big dinners, but it requires years to attain skill in that department, and many a man in those years destroys his stomach.

Eccentric Sermon Work.

BY G. S. PLUMLEY, D.D., NEW YORK.

FATHER B— was a well-known city preacher of half a century ago. He was pastor of one of the early, distinguished missionaries, and was said to be especially successful in preaching to Christians.

His method of preparing for pulpit work was entirely his own. Having a regular plan of study and pastoral

occupation for each week, he wrote no sermons for his public services until Saturday evening. Then, at his study in the church building, he commenced writing, and spent the entire night at his desk.

Fasting, he preached on the Sabbath two sermons, there being a morning and an evening service; but he did not return home until the second service was at an end, and did not break his fast until Monday morning, and it was said that he did not seem then to require more nourishment than he took on other mornings.

Another eloquent preacher who lived to old age left no written sermons except some that, subsequent to their delivery, he had prepared for the press. He was a laborious student and reader, and his large library showed, in references and marginal notes on many a volume, the traces of industrious research.

But his plan of application when composing discourses was strange indeed.

He would go from his house on an errand. Passing along, buried in thought, he would be attracted, no one can tell how, by a shop window. Possibly the window would display only a stock of small fancy goods, toys or candies for children. Here he would take his stand, with eyes fixed on some trifling object. Some friend, passing, would notice his attitude and see that he was unconscious of all the stir and bustle about him. Hurrying on to some engagement he might forget the incident until, returning after an interval of hours, he would be attracted to the same form of the pastor, standing in the same attitude, as if only a moment had elapsed.

And there he would remain until a train of thought was completed, and, possibly, a whole sermon worked out, and then he would start away as if he wondered how he had come thither, and return home.

Sometimes, when a parishioner called upon him, his wife would see the visitor and explain that her husband was in his study preparing a sermon, and that he must not be interrupted. But to intimate friends she would exhibit him in the act of composing.

Opening the door of an adjoining room he could be seen stretched at full length on a lounge, his head back on a pillow, his arms raised above him at fullest extent, his hands holding a broad-sheet newspaper. Upon this paper his eyes were intently fixed as if reading, but unconscious of the print or of the presence of observers, he remained motionless until the last thought of his discourse was at an end; then he would rise, knowing nothing of the flight of time, or of the mental efforts which had filled it.

It is not supposed that he fixed upon the words as well as the thoughts of his discourses.

But there was another most successful and impassioned preacher, who, like him, used no writing materials in preparing for the pulpit, yet had every word of his sermon in its appointed place.

His conduct in his study was that of the caged lion or hyena. Two days in a week, a true peripatetic, he paced back and forth on the floor of his study, each day completing a sermon.

He said himself that he could preach a discourse again, *ipsisimis verbis*, if a period of not more than six weeks intervened between the times of its first and second delivery; after that interval, if he again preached from the same text, he must make a new preparation.

A remarkable verification of this fact is stated by one of his congregation. This hearer was much impressed by one of his pastor's sermons. Being with him at a country resort the following Sabbath, he asked him to repeat it as he was about to preach,

wishing some friends to hear it, and the hearer said that he could not discover the slightest change, even of a word, at this repetition.

These, and many other instances

of varying methods in the production of sermons, may illustrate how very diverse plans and habits of study can be found along the same road to the highest success.

EDITORIAL SECTION.

HINTS AT THE MEANING OF TEXTS.

Christian Culture.

A Bright Prospect for the Church.

In that day there shall be a root of Jesse which shall stand for an ensign to the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek; and his rest shall be glorious.—Isa. xi : 10.

EVERYTHING the church is and has and hopes for is treasured up in the victorious life, love and power of Christ.

I. He is her ensign. Banners, standards are rallying points, the means of guidance, inspiration of courage and enthusiasm, token of unity and victory.

II. Must be lifted up. "Thou hast given a banner to them that fear Thee that it may be displayed because of the truth." Christ's promise still stands: "I if I be lifted up will draw," etc. Gentiles seek and Jews be gathered.

III. The rest "glory" "in His love." Every knee bow and no rebellion left, church sharing victory and rest.

The Crowning of Patient Endurance.

Blessed is the man that endureth temptation, for when he is tried he shall receive the crown of life which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him.—James i : 12.

I. TEMPTATION or testing an inevitable experience, a necessity of our condition. Not to think it strange, all have had to encounter it, in many forms. May be needful to prove us and develop strength and symmetry of character. Teaches us to feel for others.

II. Temptation is to be steadfastly

endured till conquered. Yielding is weakening. It *can* be, *must* be conquered. Love endureth, God's grace sustains.

III. Crowning of the conqueror. Not of merit but grace. Yet a royal nature fitted for a crown by patient endurance. Public and Supreme recognition. It is promised. John in vision saw the white robed, palm-bearing victors.

"Be Still!"

Be still, and know that I am God.—

Ps. xlv : 10.

In this Psalm we hear the turbulence of war. And in the world to-day what disturbance, upheaval, conflicts of opinions, revolution. The command is assuring. Fear not for the ark, for the kingdom, for yourself. God will not fail.

I. Why we need this injunction, "Be still!"

(a) On account of our ignorance and presumption, we see but a fragment of God's design and work. If we saw the whole campaign and consummation!

(b) Haste and rashness of our judgment.

(c) Conclusions without taking God into account.

II. The stillness enjoined not that of indolence, indifference, stoicism or despair, but of humility, observation, expectation.

III. Thus see God in all, riding the whirlwind, bringing forth judgment unto victory.

Environments of Deception.

They say unto every one that walketh after the imagination of his own