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Symposium on Attractions of the Christian Ministry.

A generous and quick response on the part of a large number of busy pastors has given us for this issue a valuable and suggestive "Symposium" on the Attractions of the Christian Ministry. A large part of its value lies in the fact that each writer speaks for himself. What he says is personal and practical, not indefinite or theoretical. He tells what first attracted him into the ministry, or else what attractions he finds in it now, after a period, long or short, of genuine experience. "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you." There is no more inspiring or convincing testimony than that. It is the point of view of the specialist that the young man wants when he is considering where he shall put in his life. For life is a "day's work," to be put in where it will count. Here is a group of men, who, with no uncertain sound, tell why the Christian Ministry appeals to them as the field for their "day's work."

Not long ago a young man was asked to take the position of assistant pastor in a large church and the only attraction which the invitation mentioned as an inducement was that, "it is a conspicuous place from which within a year or two to be called to a salary of at least three thousand dollars." There is a false note in such a presentation of attractions that does not fail to jar upon the ear that is listening for the music of a call to high things. But the note sounds true and clear in the ringing words of this Symposium. Sacrifice, not emolument; self denial, not self-gratification; battle, not peace; strenuous life, not ease; close contact with

ATTRactions OF THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY.

ITS CALL TO SELF-DENIAL, SACRIFICE, HEROISM.

WILTON MERLE SMITH, D. D., '81.

I sometimes fear that this side of the Christian Ministry is too often presented in a way that challenges the interest of weak men only. In the history of the world the call that finds response in hearts that are strong and heroic, is the call to sacrifice and heroism. To my mind, the greatest attraction of the Christian Ministry is the sacrifice it involves. It is very revolting to me to hear it described as an easy life, filled with great reward and tempting in every way to a man's love of fame and position. I would paint it rather as one of the hardest lives a man could live; as a call which meant insufficient support; a grinding along upon an income always inadequate; the meeting of important needs from a purse but scantily filled; financial remuneration far below that which is given men of equal genius in other fields; and the possibility, almost the probability that at the end one will find himself in a position of galling dependence. It is, in fact, this sense of dependence all along that makes up a large part of the hardships of the ministry. A minister must be all things to all men; he must pocket many an insult; give a soft answer to many exhibitions of wrath; decline to use a man's right to defend himself; oftentimes almost deny himself his own manhood for the sake of the Church and of the Kingdom. He will unquestionably meet in his own parish intolerant men who will be thorns in his flesh and make his very life a burden. He will need very often to pray the prayer of George Matheson, "Oh Lord, help me to remember that the summit of all broad-mindedness is the toleration of intolerance."

inherent and acquired, may count for their greatest usefulness, I summon him to enlist as a leader in that army of the Lord that is fighting for life's best music.

Oh, the discords of our common lot! The failure to appreciate that "His commandments are not grievous;" the slowness to grasp the truth that "He that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul;" the bitterness between labor and capital, unconscious of the common source of power and their mutual dependence and brotherhood; the spiritually deadening effect of modern luxury; the lack of conscience in commercial enterprise. What jarring discords ascend to that throne where there is an ear ever listening to hear His children's cry, and to Him who sent His Son into the world to interpret for us the abundance of life.

Young men of rich training, of keen vision, of fulness of vigor and of large hope, there is no call for your service that can compare with that which bids you engage in the struggle for life's best music; to reveal to men the Master's presence; to hold before the world its greatest need, Jesus Christ and His Spirit; to help heal the broken chords that men carry in their aching hearts, and have them vibrate once more under the Master's sympathetic touch; to gather the whole world, the nations that sit in darkness and the nations that have seen a great light, with the heavenly host, into one majestic chorus that shall shake the eternal hills with its grand redemptive song, the outpouring of melody unto our God and His Christ.
Lyon's Falls, New York.

A CLOSE AND PECULIAR PARTNERSHIP WITH THE SON OF GOD.

THEODORE L. CUYLER, D. D., LL. D.

I do not underrate the need or the usefulness of godly laymen, but there are peculiar satisfactions and honors and spiritual rewards to be won by the preacher who preaches God's glorious messages to men, and the pastor who gathers and feeds and leads the Master's flock.

In the first place, he is in a close and covetable partnership with the Lord Jesus Christ. His work is on the same lines with Him who came to reveal the mind of God to suffering and sinning humanity, and to "seek and to save the lost." Christ's great commission to the band of men who were in the most intimate relations to Himself was, "As ye go, preach!"

In addition to the joy and honor of a peculiar partnership with the incarnate Son of God, every true minister is, in the best sense of the word, a successor of the Apostles. Although without their infallible inspiration and miraculous gifts, yet, like them, the faithful minister is the ambassador of the Lord Jesus.

Think too of the glorious themes and the sublime studies that will occupy your mind as a minister of God's Word. Is human science elevating? How much more is the science of Almighty God and of man's redemption; and of the unseen realities of eternity! Your themes of constant study will be the themes that inspired the mighty Luthers and Wesleys and Pascals and Chalmers. You will be nurturing your soul amid those pages where John Milton fed, and amid the success that taught Bunyan his matchless Allegory, and Jeremy Taylor his heaven-like melodies. Every nugget of fresh truth you discover will make you happier than one who has found golden spoil.

If the high range of his studies and the preparation of his discourses are so stimulating to an earnest soul-winning pastor, he finds even richer satisfactions in his pulpit and in his labors among his flock and the surrounding community. During my ministry I have had an immense correspondence, but the letters that I embalm in lavender are those which express gratitude for a soul-converting sermon, or for words of uplifting consolation, spoken either in the pulpit or elsewhere. Happy the minister who is thus helped while he is helping others! He gets a small instalment of heaven in advance.

I do not assert that every able and godly young man in our schools and colleges should enter a pulpit. There are many who can serve their Master and their country more effectively in some other sphere. It is equally true that the only occupation that is not over-done in America is the occupation of serving Christ and saving souls. The only profession that is not over-crowded is the "guild of good clear-headed, conscientious industrious, Christ-loving ministers.

Not one such is likely to go begging for a place. They are in demand.

Brooklyn, New York.

SPIRITUAL POWER.

CLELAND B. McAFEE, D. D.

The Christian ministry is attractive to any man for the opportunity it offers to serve the Master's needs of men. The minister is doubtless a social force. He is more than that. He is doubtless an educational influence. He is more than that. The minister is essentially a spiritual power. He is not always prating againt the materialistic trend of the times, he is not always talking about the money greed of the day. If he is faithful, no man is swinging a heavier influence against that materialism and greed than is he. He stands to remind his fellows of the eternal verities, to keep them in constant touch and sympathy with the things that abide. He comes to men when they are neediest, not at their time of death, nor at the time of deepest sorrow alone, but at the time when their souls are most imperiled. No other man so fully as he represents these eternal verities and spiritual realities to men. He must be of course a man of the times; in far more important sense he is a man of the eternities. It is his business to shape the times in the direction of the eternities, to take men who have the strong downward look and teach them to lift up their eyes and see the heights where God is, and to which He is calling them. The ministry furnishes small financial recompense. A man's salary will quite