

THE
AUBURN SEMINARY RECORD.

EDITORS.

PRESIDENT GEORGE BLACK STEWART.

PROFESSOR HARRY LATHROP REED.

JOHN WILLIAM NEEL

ORA FLETCHER GARDNER.

NORMAN CRAIG SCHENCK.

JOHN SHEARER WOLFF.

Volume I, 1905-1906.

The Auburn Seminary Record.

JANUARY 10, 1906.

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

ATTRACTIVEIONS 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."

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

certainly come always a little short of the demands made upon him. The ministry furnishes the largest possible recompense in the things for which a man's heart craves when he is at his best. Every Christian is a co-laborer with God, but in peculiar sense the life of the minister is linked to the processes of God, for the redemption of men not alone from sin, but from sordidness and the downward look. He is God's guide-board to the hills whence cometh our strength. He is God's messenger to bring the fresh breath and life of the mountains to the valleys where currents grow stagnant and men's souls are dulled. The chance to do any such thing ought to attract a man who loves God and his fellows.

Brooklyn.

APPROVAL AND COMPANIONSHIP OF GOD AND MAN.

REV. H. H. BARSTOW, '98.

The attractions of the ministry naturally fall into two classes, the essential and the incidental. The essential are the spiritual, the incidental are the temporal. The two classes overlap, but are quite distinguishable in thought. They must be kept distinct in the heart of the minister or woe be to his ideals and to his sheep.

The essential attractions are, first, the opportunity for developing personal Christian character under favorable circumstances, favorable because they afford not only special opportunity but also severe discipline. It is not easy for a minister to be good in all respects. It is however, difficult for him to be bad in most respects. This is true in spite of many subtle and peculiar temptations. Second, the companionship of God and good men. The former he must seek as do others. But he will often be driven to it as others are not. The latter is his in the nature of things. The matchless opportunity for Christian service, with its sweetness of self denial, its joy of cross bearing, its pleasure in following the Master's steps among the sick, the needy, and