

HOMEWARD.

Through winters and through summers
sweet,
By lonely road and crowded street,
We travel home.
With never-resting, rapid feet,

The hours of every passing day
Bring us good distance on the way,
No hindrance can the march delay,
We travel home.

The path we take is often fair,
Love's tender music thrills the air,
The smile of God is everywhere,
As we go home.

But if some grief our joys enshroud,
And if the skies be dark with cloud,
And if the storm-voice thunder loud,
We travel home.

Some dear companions with us pace
The onward road, and tender grace
Lights for us many a loving face,
As we go home.

Some comrades have good prizes won,
And some of them we have outrun;
But some have seen their journey done,
And hastened home.

We hear glad voices in the night,
We follow in the path of light,
We keep our Father's house in sight,
And so go home.

The skies are sunny in the West,
Perhaps these evening lights are best;
We are not far from love and rest,
And Home, sweet Home!

—Marianne Farmingham.



WHAT DO OUR MINISTERS NEED?

1. In the first place they need to be more than just good, they need to be good for something. They need a good deal of the man — virility, it may be termed.

The public consciousness should have no excuse for rating the minister as "a nice little man," which is a way of thinking of him as a harmless, inconsequential personage, an excuse for keeping up public religious functions. The minister is to be something besides the "imitation" of a man in slippers, with soft manners, making himself agreeable, and spending precious time in making other people agreeable to themselves. When a parishioner meets a minister he should feel that he has been up against something real, something actual, someone to be reckoned with, a real entity, something worth while, something with a good reason for being around. That kind of a minister will have something of leadership, and leadership is becoming a lessening element in the present day preacher. Would it not be a good practice for the preacher to call upon the men in their offices down town during business hours, as well as to spend an hour with their wives and daughters in the drawing-room at their homes.

The minister owes it to himself as well as the cause to be a real man first, and after that to be the minister.

2. Our ministers need a broadening sense of brotherhood. This is a fine acquirement. To feel a deepening need of being the thoughtful friend and helpful brother of all, sinner as well as saint. Is this too much? Is it not true that we ministers think of ourselves too much as an institution and too little as a friend of man? It is an evidence of great mastery when we can be infinitely patient with the refractory, and still

love the man who has disappointed us, and will not do as we have tried so patiently to have him, and as we thought he would; to have infinite sorrow and compassion for the sorrowing and unfortunate, for there is sorrow in every community; to have a spirit so generous as to transcend personal pique; to be oblivious of personal slights, and to lay aside personal distastes; to see good things in the worst of men. An experience of brotherhood is one of the minister's great needs. This experience of brotherhood puts him way above party spirit, clique or class. Class? The minister recognizes no class, or rather he belongs to all classes. He particularly belongs to every man, woman, child, saint and sinner, in his parish, and owes them the debt of tender, thoughtful, helpful brotherhood. The minister's high calling and privilege is to be the brother and friend of every living creature.

3. Our ministers need to follow the strenuous life. They do this so far as privation goes by existing without a living salary. In matters of economy they know what it is to be strenuous. But I speak particularly of the habit of grinding, laborious toil. The minister should be an example of industry to his flock. I don't know why a good many people get the impression that our pastors do not know what real, hard, taxing work is,—a feeling that the minister wanders about rather aimlessly, works in a desultory, lessy fashion, and spends too much time in hanging around the parish and never buckling down to honest dust and sweat. We will all admit that he ought never to give the impression that he has nothing to do. He should be the most industrious man in town, and give all to understand that he has a very important responsibility that takes all his time and all his strength. Certain it is if any pastor succeeds with his task it will be only after he has given to it the best of his strength and all his strength.

4. Our ministers need financial ability. They must not have any fine scorn for so earthly a necessity as good finance. They must know that good financiering lies at the bottom of church prosperity. The most spiritual church will fail without it, and will very soon cease to be practically spiritual. It will take a considerable part of the minister's time to "boost" the finances and provide money enough to run the church and keep up its benevolences. He is a poor pastor who ignores this important matter. It is just as religious to see that the church provides the proper amount of money for the kingdom, as it is to preach or pray.

5. Our ministers need to be missionary. A missionary pastor makes a missionary church. The whole world is his field, not simply the local church. The local church is only his recruiting ground—only the base of supplies for the whole wide world, and he is a recruiting officer. He must see that his church recognizes its duty to the whole heathen world.

God pity us as ministers when we spend our time in merely gloating over our record of numerous funerals and weddings and other social functions. The minister must have the whole world in his eye, and its great needs on his heart. He ought to read the "India Report," at least.

6. He needs to be evangelical. He should be in a saved state himself continually and see that his church has saving power. The minister should give the impression that he is a religious man

—is in communion with God, allied to the spiritual world, having the power to impress men with the importance of salvation. But the minister must be found on earth when he is wanted. His business in this present world is to be as practical a toiler as possible. He should seek to have a revival at least once a year. He is not where he should be unless he longs to see men saved.

7. He needs to co-operate with the denomination. He makes a mistake if he does not. He is shorn of half a chance of making his life useful as a minister of Christ. He must lend a strong hand in helping the denomination meet its pledges, its promises to our missionaries at home and abroad, our colleges, our publications, and our ministry. That minister deserves to be scolded some and pitied more who fails to see that duty requires him to be loyal and true to the great work of his denomination, and in helping it to carry out its plans and promises.

8. He needs a just compensation. He is partly to blame for not getting it. Perhaps more so than any one else. If the depletion of the minister's salary goes much farther we shall have an immensely weakened and immensely inferior minister. It is a ruinous thing and every good preacher and layman should deplore it audibly.

9. Our ministers need the grace of cohesion. They should not affect the church as heat affects popcorn when the pot-lid is off. They should cultivate and practice the fine art of drawing together and tying together all the various elements in the church and producing harmonious feeling and action. It takes a master to do this, for in every church there are innumerable differences. The minister himself must be the harmonizing element, the divine alchemy that turns everything to gold.

10. He needs the co-operation of a broad-minded church. The church needs to be freed from narrowness. I do not speak with respect to doctrine, but to littleness of methods, the penny methods of doing things for Christ's sake, the meagre funds it doles out for benevolences, and the narrow conception it has of the world's needs, the little view it has of the things required to make the world efficient. Ministers often get disheartened, desperate, and,—well, they are sometimes near to losing their temper over the way some churches have of saving themselves from doing any great thing for Christ's sake. Well, the minister needs a great deal of grace.

—H. M. Ford, in *Morning Star*.



THE TEST OF STRENGTH.

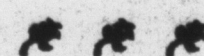
"I am bewildered and puzzled by the problems of my life just now," said a man who was going through a season of temptation and trial to a Christian friend. "I have prayed for strength to conquer, but it does not seem to come. I am fighting on the best I can, but the strength for which you say God promises to those who fight for him is not given to me. Why is it?"

"Are you sure that strength is not being given to you?" asked the other. "Not strength enough to conquer just yet, perhaps, but strength enough to keep fighting. That is the true test of strength. Many a saint of God has fought sin all his life, and being staggered by the problems of existence, and never solved them, and never fully conquered—but has fought on, nevertheless, to the very end. No man is beaten till he stops fighting and yields. To main-

tain a conflict, no matter how unequal, means strength. Victory is not always in God's plan for every soul, here in this mortal life—but a brave fight is, and strength for that will always be given. God's strength is made perfect in our weakness, when in our weakness we still go on striving, resisting, facing the enemy, refusing to give up, no matter what the odds are against us.

That's strength, not weakness. That's what makes the difference between hero and coward—the fixed determination never to yield, always to fight on."

"I see," said the questioner. "If I will fight as long as I can, God will strengthen me so that I can fight as long as I will. Strength is sure, whether I conquer here or not. It clears up the puzzle of things a good deal to know that; God helping me, I will fight on, whether I fight through or not," and he squared his shoulders with a new determination at the thought, and went forward bravely to meet his battle afresh.



Not on Speaking Terms with God.

The prayerless man is not on speaking terms with God! Neighbors whose friendly relation has been broken so that they pass each other daily without recognition, may resent to a third party, as hotly as they choose, the charge of cherishing hard feeling; the very warmth with which the charge is resented will intensify in the public mind the conviction that hard feeling is being cherished.

If a father and a son are not on speaking terms, the depth and intensity of alienation is still more manifest, and to all right minded onlookers more painful and distressing. One or other must be terribly at fault. A vow of being conscious of hard feeling will not avail to remove the conviction of it from the mind of the community pained by witnessing such a condition of things between father and son.

The prayerless man may declare that he is unconscious of hard feeling against God. So long as he is not on speaking terms with God such declaration only confirms the charge made in Rom. viii, 7, that "the carnal mind is enmity against God." Is it not a terrible state to be in? Not to be on speaking terms with God, his Maker, preserver and final judge! God waits to be gracious, and offers pardon and peace through the mediation of Christ; but the prayerless man refuses to be reconciled!—*Rev. W. T. McMullen, D. D.*

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