

THE LABORER IS WORTHY OF HIS HIRE.

(From the Literary Digest.)

In every crisis of national life the clergymen of America have stood in the forefront of patriotic endeavour; in every human crisis they have brought support, and guidance, and comfort to souls in desperate need. Now it is time to measure the work and the needs of the preacher and pastor as men in other departments of work today are being measured and their value may be rightly appraised and their needs fairly met.

The cost of living has greatly increased. Clothing, food, fuel, and all the daily incidentals that go to make up American life have gone up from thirty to a hundred per cent. And the loans and taxes for freedom's war are ever making deeper drives into the purse. Wage-earners in every department of the nation's work have been demanding more income and their demands have been recognized as just and necessary. Railroad men and miners, lumber-jacks and shipbuilders, munition workers and telegraph operators, automobile makers and all the multitudes of skilled and unskilled laborers have been counted "worthy of their hire" and of higher hire. The United States Government very recently has raised the wages of two million railroad workers alone, giving the poorest paid men an increase of forty-three per cent. Corporations and individual employers without number throughout the United States have taken similar action. Trade unions are standing back of their men and using pressure when necessary to gain for them the means to live their lives and do their work as Americans should.

Who Stands back of the Minister?

Who stands back of the clergymen of America in these days of pressure? What great organization or compelling authority, what generous heart or spirit of fair play is winning for your minister or pastor or priest or rabbi the salary increase that will give him strength, courage, efficiency and success in his vital and exalted work for the welfare of the nation and the kingdom of God?

Your pastor is not a cheap man nor an unskilled laborer. He has brought long careful training to his task. He was chosen with scrutinizing care as to his qualifications and he is being measured today by high and exacting requirements in the performance of his work. Carry that measurement to its just conclusion. What salary would you expect to pay to the trained man in business of whom such important work and expert ability were required? Set down on paper some of the qualities and duties you demand of your pastor and then judge their value.

He must be a man among men, a man of force, tact, and agreeable personality, a good mixer, a man of knowledge, wisdom and authority whose presence commands respect and whose word carries conviction. He must be able to influence men and women, win their confidence, kindle their enthusiasm, direct their energies, and organize their working powers.

He must be full of sympathy, ready with consolation, a strength in weakness, a bright light in times of darkness, and a never-failing source of inspiration to the souls of his people. You expect all this of him.

Must be a Successful Leader.

Your pastor also must be the successful head and center of your organized church activities, business, social and spiritual. On occasion, or as a regular part of his task, he must be an expert money-raiser. You engage him as your chief and leader, the general manager of your church, if not its actual creator, or saviour from its difficulties. You put upon him a burden and a responsibility you would never dream of entrusting to any cheap man in business.

Nor are these his greatest tasks. He must understand men, and know their work, their trials, their problems, their temptations, their deep inner feelings and aspirations, and the avenues of helpful approach to their sympathies and convictions. He must know something of history, science, literature. He must be familiar with all social needs and institutions and methods. He must be able to interpret the Word of God with true spiritual insight, and practice human application. He must stand before you in the pulpit, on the Sabbath, and deliver messages that search the soul, feed the mind, bring courage to the heart, make plain the path of daily life, and lift you nearer to heaven, nearer to earth.

In these days also your preacher must proclaim the ideals and principles of America. He must stir the patriotism of his young men and send them with strong hearts and noble vision into the service of their country. He must pastor them in the camps and follow them with his letters and prayers as they go across the sea to fight. The Government values him so highly that it has already called thousands of American clergymen into active service to shepherd the fighting men and help them to win the war. At home the Government calls him to be its mouthpiece, in its appeals to its citizens, for every form of patriotic service or economy prescribed as needful for victory. You expect your pastor to be equal to such demands and to do your church credit when called upon for public addresses or community action.

Clergymen's Salaries a Pitiful Shame.

When you have listed all the qualities and services you ask of your pastor, make out the bill for the amount your church ought to pay for such a man, and then move things to see that the church pays that bill. Never mind what has been done in the past, nor what long habit has accustomed the church to believe can be done. The standing record of clergymen's salaries throughout this great rich nation is a pitiful shame, and belies the real heart and fairness of the American people. The average salary of clergymen in ten of the largest denominations is only \$793 a year. What trade or business would tolerate such a condition?

The minister of your church is a human being like the rest of us, and he is feeling

the pressure of increased cost of living just as we do. But no Government decree has raised his salary. No corporation or trade union stands back of him. He does not go on strike. He simply trusts his people, and works faithfully for them seven days a week, and many nights, and struggles to look respectable, and pay his bills, and perform the miracles expected of him, often for less than the salary of the young girl stenographer who teaches a class in his Sunday School, or the wages of the man who lays the sidewalk in front of his church.

Among the more than two million readers of The Literary Digest are active and substantial members of thousands of churches throughout the United States. To them this frank appeal is made, in keeping with the urgent needs of the day, and the American spirit of justice and generosity. Give your minister a lift. Take the initiative now and have his salary increased to an amount which will come nearer to the real value of his services, and enable him to meet the increased cost of living. He is not demanding it, but he needs it none the less, and your own sense of right demands it for him. If his salary is \$800, it ought to be made at once \$1,200. If it is \$1,000, it ought to be raised to \$1,500. There is scarcely a church, large or small, anywhere in America that cannot increase the pastor's salary at least 50 per cent. Money never was so plentiful. More actual cash—gold, silver, and paper currency—is in circulation today than at any time in the nation's history, and there is a bigger share for every man, woman and child. See that your pastor gets his fair share of your profits and those of every member in your church.

Back up the Clergy.

Back up the soldiers of America who follow the flag to France! Billions for them. Nothing is too much nor too good for our soldiers of liberty. But now remember that your minister is one of the bravest, worthiest soldier of all. He is fighting for America, for the righteousness that "exalteth a nation." He is fighting for America, as he puts his clean, valiant, patriotic spirit into the youth and into the men and women of his congregation and sends them out into the tasks of the week better fitted to answer America's call. He is fighting for the kingdom of heaven and earth, to help win its victories over the arch-enemy of the human race, the destroyer of bodies and souls. He is the soldier of mercy to those in distress, the ever-ready soldier of service to those who need help. Back him up with whole-hearted support and a quick, generous increase in salary.

We have taken this page to speak for the clergymen of America in this supreme crisis of the nation's readjustment because we know that they are the one great devoted, indispensable body of faithful workers who have no spokesman. Only in this way has it seemed possible to reach the individual conscience and hearts of millions of men and women, who, in all our experience, have never failed to respond to any just call.