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The Average Man.

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The ministry is the sphere where genius may find itself at home. There is no platform so free as the pulpit, no influence so deep and far-reaching as that of the preacher. We have heard it from the tutor's desk and the Assembly platform times without number. The age demands genius in its religious leaders. Of course, churches cannot expect all the virtues and accomplishments, with a touch of genius added, even for the guaranteed stipends, proposed by the Baptist Union, but congregations have great expectations. Just as each mother's first baby is a "little love," showing early signs of genius, so each church with a new pastor has an extraordinary man. Yet as one looks round the ministers' conference, it is hard to believe that one is not in the midst of a company of average men. There are streaks of genius, but the mass is made up of common clay.

The average man is well represented in the Gospels. There was only one with modesty enough to stand up before God and say, "I thank Thee, Lord, that I am not as other men are," and he did not go down to his house justified. St. Paul reminds the Corinthians that not many wise,

after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called, but God chose the foolish things of the world that they might put to shame them that are wise, and the weak things that He might put to shame the things that are strong. But he also adds that "Christ Jesus was made unto us wisdom from God and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, that according as it was written, 'He that glorieth let him glory in the Lord.'"

The Lord must take great interest in the average man or He would not have sent forth so many editions of him. It takes time to find one's level, but it is worth while acquiring the knowledge. It becomes a restraint, if not an inspiration. The Baptist ministry is a good place for genius. It provides for the strong man great liberty. He may travel all over the land during the week, so long as he comes back fresh for Sunday. It provides influence of a sort, and popularity that expresses itself in crowds, newspaper paragraphs, and post-card portraits. It gives freedom from restraint. Details may be neglected and many things left undone. The strong man may have a great time. He may run a newspaper, and tack on Parliamentary duties to the vocation to which he is called. There is no end to the possibilities that open out for the strong man of magnetic personality, powerful physique, and self-assertive temperament. He may not have much time to linger in the green pastures or beside the still waters, where the soul hears in the silence, and sees visions. He may be, as old Father Faber quaintly says, "So full of engagements, that he gains an added dignity in the eyes of the world by being thought so hard at work that he has no time for anything."

The average man is not so. He must learn his limitations and work within the measure of his powers. He may have no paragraphs describing his more abundant labours, no requests for special services. His sphere may be off the main line, some distance from a railway station; but if he be faithful to his vision, his vocation shall be justified, and his memory, after he has passed from the scene of his toils, shall be fragrant as the flowers.

The average man is compelled to work. He is not like the American minister who preached twice each Sunday to a great congregation, travelled by the Sunday night mail to get to an engagement at a conference on Monday, lectured four nights during the week, prepared his two sermons in the Pullman car as he travelled home, and could have made six sermons if they had been required, and on the next Sunday, quite fresh, preached to an immense congregation, etc., etc. It was said of C. H. Spurgeon that he prepared his Sunday morning's sermon on the Saturday night, and the evening discourse after tea on Sunday, but nothing was further from the fact. Spurgeon wrote his pulpit notes on Saturday and Sunday afternoon, but he was preparing his sermons every day of his life. The sermon prepared in ten minutes may be forgotten in even less time. There are not many gifted souls who can lie upon the couch and dream the dream that shall delight a congregation, and be of use for edification. Perhaps it is an insult to the congregation and to the Lord to address them without having given serious thought to the subejct upon which one is going to speak. Certainly the practice would not be tolerated in any profession other than the ministry of the Gospel, and there it is blasphemy.

Robert Louis Stevenson, the acclaimed master of style among modern writers, wrote, "I imagine nobody ever had such pains to learn a trade as I have. I slogged at it, day in, day out; and I frankly believe, thanks to my dire industry, I have done more, with smaller wits, than almost any man of letters in the world." The average man must write and re-write and think, and think yet again. It is almost an education to look at a page of John Ruskin's manuscript. How he corrected, amended, and perfected! Genius may be a capacity for taking pains. If so, we may all acquire its possession. But it is more than that. It is that something which cannot be defined, a will o' the wisp, that you see but cannot grasp, an irritation in the brain, not far removed from insanity, a power that certifies itself, magnificent, but perilous. If Paderewski found it necessary to practise twelve hours a day that he might learn to play a piano, one need not complain if the preacher's art can only be acquired by hard work. One of Ruskin's students, after visiting Florence, remarked to the master that he, upon the instant he entered the Gallery at Florence, knew what Ruskin intended by the supremacy of Botticelli. "Indeed," said Ruskin, "on the instant, did you? Well, it took me twenty years."

The average man cannot afford to take risks. He must insure against contingencies. He does not make the fatal blunder of leaving everything to the last minute, or waiting upon the hypnotic mood that comes when one faces a congregation. He must prepare his sermons, seek for his illustrations. He may not rise to the supreme rhetorical flights for which some of his friends are famous; but then he will never talk nonsense. If he climbs no Alpine peak, it is equally true that he does not

descend to the lowest depths. It is amazing what an average man, baptized with the Spirit of God, can accomplish. Here is a description of the American, Charles Williams: "A young friend of mine, now gone to the high reward which every day of his beautiful ministry richly earned, was very short of stature—Zaccheus-like; he was slender of frame, his figure out of the pulpit was even boyish. In the pulpit one never perceived, after the invocation which opened the service, that he was smaller in stature than other men are. His manner was devoid of mannerisms. His movements were the perfection of manly grace. Many times I listened to him and observed him. I never saw him do anything incorrectly. He never picked up a hymn-book upside down. He knew exactly the location of every passage in the Bible he intended using, and never went racing through the pages of the Book with the frantic scrambling which told everybody that he had lost his place, and didn't really know whether his chapter was in the Old Testament or in the New. He never shuffled his sheaf of 'announcements' as though he were dealing for a game of whist. The simplest portions of the services were perfectly prepared. He never 'er-er'd,' nor 'hawed,' nor mumbled. He could take a sip of water from a glass so easily that no one noticed he was drinking. I complimented him one Sunday on his wonderful ease of manner. And he said: 'It's compulsory. A six-footer may mumble and stammer. He may even drop a hymn-book now and then. He may lose his place, and if he had to ask the janitor to help him find it his size would excuse him. But my deficiency must not be emphasized. I must do everything in exactly the right way, or the congregation will notice how short I am.'"

Out of the pulpit the average man must attend to other things that make a ministry useful and successful. He does not depend upon preaching. He is known in the homes of his people. He lingers by their beds of pain. He is interested in the anxieties and the pleasures of the household, and does not pass the children unnoticed. He must keep his appointments and attend to his correspondence, like an ordinary mortal. He takes no risk of memory playing tricks, but carries a notebook. He does not attempt a one-man ministry, but is keen upon finding work for other hands to do, and thereby multiplying interest in the Church.

Genius can afford to be diffuse; it can spread itself over a wide area; but the man of average power must be content to cut narrower channels that the strength of the current may be strong. It may be that the ministry provides greater temptations than any other sphere for the dissipation of energy. There are so many things to do, and no earthly voice to say with authority which shall be done first. There is not the discipline that comes to the man who has a given time to arrive at his office, and a stated hour for going home. The minister may work when he likes, and it may be easy to delude oneself with the idea that one is very pressed with work when the truth is that the time is being frittered away. "It is probable," says William James, "that genius tends actually to prevent a man from acquiring habits of voluntary attention, and that moderately intellectual endowments are the soil in which we may expect here as elsewhere the virtues of the will strictly so called to thrive." But whether the attention comes by grace of genius or by dint of concentration, the longer one attends to a topic,

the more mastery of it one has. And the faculty of voluntarily bringing back a wandering attention or a roving fancy will strengthen the mind and multiply the power and become the source of judgment, character, and will. The necessity to concentrate all one's powers upon one thing at a time has enabled ordinary men to accomplish some extraordinary results. Weakness may be a strong asset if the knowledge of limitation compel a man to work; it may call hidden forces into play and reveal unsuspected gifts. There is a true message in Edward Carpenter's lines:

I heard a voice say unto me,
Now, since thou art neither beautiful nor witty,
It is in vain that thou hangest
About the doors of admired palaces,
For thou wilt not gain admission, Thou.
But here outside is a plot of waste ground
Where thou canst build a little
Cabin all thine own;
And since it is close by the common road,
And there is no fence about it,
Many a weary traveller parched with the heat
Of the day shall turn in unto thee
For a drink of cold water and that
Shalt suffice thee for thy life.

The commonplace man has special claims upon the Lord. He is made to realise that he cannot be independent of Divine power. He must keep in harmony with the Spirit. He has nothing that will even for a time appear as a substitute for spirituality. If his motive be true, and his heart free from envy, he shall find in the ministry a great vocation, and joys not given to those who scale the heights and carry the palms in their hands.

Christ's Poor Fund.

In Christ's day Palestine was not oppressed with the grinding poverty which the people were to experience in later years. There was a considerable trade in the country. Galilee was a thriving community, extracting a comfortable existence from its fertile fields and prolific sea; and if, on the one hand, Roman taxation was excessive, on the other, the money spent in the country by the conquering race was by no means insignificant. But in places there was extreme poverty. Judæa was poor, and in Jerusalem luxury and penury existed side by side in that violent contrast which Christ pictured in His parable of Dives and Lazarus. The approaches to the Temple were besieged by beggars clamouring for alms, and wherever Christ and His disciples went they found this class, and also the more deserving who did not parade their poverty. Even in comparatively prosperous Galilee there were the shiftless and the improvident, as well as the hard-working poor. That this was so, and that abject poverty obtruded itself upon our Lord's notice, is clear from the fact that He instituted a means of relieving it.

Christ's Poor Fund was organised for the double purpose of meeting the needs of the disciples and affording help to the poor. There is no reason to assume that the fund ever reached large dimensions, or that its proprietors were able to exercise a very liberal charity; yet it is clear that the men who were with Christ attached importance to this part of their work, and believed it should be extended. Judged by their standard, it was so obviously a splendid method of minister-

ing to the needs of men, that the restriction of its usefulness gave them concern. They were so keenly interested in the fund that they could not conceal their vexation with the woman who poured the exceeding precious ointment on the head of Christ. "When the disciples saw it, they had indignation, saying, To what purpose is this waste? For this ointment might have been sold for much and given to the poor." Their reply to Christ's commandment, "Give ye them to eat," was prompted partly by alarm for the scanty contents of the bag. To buy bread for those who could well buy for themselves threatened to cut off their philanthrophy from more pressing claims. Their Poor Fund could not stand the strain. Evidently, they regarded this part of their work — the dispensing of charity — as very important.

However small the payments were, they must have been fairly numerous in a land like Palestine, which, in common with all Eastern lands, had its hordes of mendicants and its poor; and there must have been many who were glad to receive the small but timely aid from this source. Yet, absolutely nothing is told of the fund's administration. We are informed of no individual who either paid into or drew from it. We do not know if Christ ever appealed for subscriptions, or ordered money to be given to a poor person. We can imagine that when the widow cast in her all into the treasury at the Temple, He saw to it that she did not lose by the sacrifice; but we are not told so. Nothing is said of donors or recipients. We know only that the fund existed, that the disciples were interested in it, and that their Master permitted it to become one of the features of His work.

Such silence is significant in that it reveals something of Christ's attitude towards charity.

What the Gospels tell us are the things that matter. When one or two men sat down, pen in hand, to give the world their memories and impressions of the Wonderful Life, they related the words and incidents which were strictly relevant to its purpose, and in their story nothing is set down which is unimportant. We read that men and women came to Christ, but never that they asked for, or received, alms. When the Gospels were written, the perspective of time enabled the writers who "had seen and heard" to distinguish between the essential and the less essential, and one result of the longer view is that the old importance of the Poor Fund was forgotten. It is therefore referred to but casually.

It is clear that our Lord regarded "charity" —in our limited reading of the word—as one of the least satisfactory ways of serving men. Money then was as great a power as now, but Christ seems to have used it as a means of alleviating distress, or in any way as a solution of the social problem, with the utmost care. It was never allowed to become a vital part of His propaganda, or recognised as an essential element in the saving of men. This could not have been due to scarcity of funds, for Christ had weathy friends, of whom He had but to ask to receive.

He thought so little of His fund that He appointed Judas treasurer. Now, "Judas was a robber." He was a man who would have been a traitor in any capacity, and he was given a post where treachery would have less dire effects than if he had had charge of more important work.

Our Lord's teaching reveals that He had a vivid fear of money, and is suggestive of reasons

why he did not use it more freely in His work. He knew its subtle and terrible fascination for all men, and for those of His own race in particular. It handicapped those who sought to bring in the Kingdom of Heaven, and so the Seventy were told to take no purse with them on their journey; this not only to strengthen their faith, but to prevent men coming to them and making profession for what they could get. Healing they were to exert, for He came that men might have abundant life; but the pitfalls of charity were removed from their path. Money made enmity between brothers, and Jesus refused to divide between them the cause of bitterness. Rich and poor alike He warned against the love of money, saying to the one, "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the Kingdom of God!" and to the other, "Be content with your wages." He declared riches to be the moth and rust which corrupt the soul.

It is conceivable, then, that Christ had a deep-rooted distrust of charity. He gave material things, but, as far as we can tell, He did not regard the giving of money as an effective way of helping men. His Poor Fund was a negligible thing in His eyes, for He saw clearly the possible degrading effects of charity, to giver and receiver alike. "It is more blessed to give than to receive"; but it is far from blessed to become a professional donor to good works and to let thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth.

And yet Jesus was the greatest philanthropist the world has ever seen, and in His name all the great charities have been founded. But the philanthropy of Christ was infinitely more than distributing charity, and as such His disciples

came to recognise it. They remembered how men came to the Master—poor men and rich—for something that was harder to give than cash—sympathy and perfect understanding. They recalled how they were sent out, "without purse," to preach to the poor the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man. They were to preach and live the Gospel of Service, and to demonstrate that the world's greatest philanthropists might be men without a coin to give away.

In the parable of the Good Samaritan charity has a place, but a very minor one. It follows upon service, and does not take the place of it. The money given is insignificant, and even if he had to pay more when he returned, the outlay was not excessive. What the story emphasises is the Samaritan's *service*, his turning aside in a dangerous road, his tending of the victim's wounds, and the finishing of the journey on foot whilst the ass bears its unconscious load.

The intensely human episodes in the parable of the Prodigal Son are where the boy comes to himself, having spent all—money, good name, hope—and determines to return and serve the father whose love he has trampled on; and where the father, watching for his boy, runs to meet him, and flings his arms about the penitent, kissing him. The ring and the robe and the feast were little to that kiss, and they would have been less than nothing without it.

A rich young man was bidden sell his possessions and give to the poor. It was an exceptional case, which could only be met in this way, and such surrender was not enjoined upon all. The man's wealth was warping his soul. To get rid of it would help the poor, but much more would it help him. He could then

follow Christ, and "back up" his gift with personal service.

There is no need to preach a crusade against charity, and no desire to belittle its gracious ministry. Christ did use it, and He is using it. But we do need to remind ourselves that charity does not cover a multitude of sins. The "charity" of which Paul wrote these words was a very different thing. We need to realise that we cannot buy ourselves out from Christ's call to serve men, as conscripts are said to purchase their freedom from serving with the colours. We cannot pay another man to work out our salvation. "Bear ye one anothers' burdens" is not obeyed by the keeping of a subscription list.

Dives doubtless threw the beggar at his gate a coin or two—"crumbs from the rich man's table"; where he failed was in sympathy, understanding, and personal service. Had Christ been able to say of that man, "he bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine," another tale had been told, and that which he had done spoken of for a memorial of him.

"Compassion" is a New Testament word, and it is applied again and again to Jesus Christ. "And Jesus went about . . . teaching . . . preaching . . . healing. But when He saw the multitude, He was moved with compassion for them because they were distressed and scattered, as sheep not having a shepherd." He saw the root cause of all human misery and want and disease—ignorance of God and His love. Because of that there was, as of old, "branding instead of beauty." Then it was that He turned to His disciples and said, "Pray ye the Lord of the harvest, *that He send forth labourers.*"

Labourers, transfigured with the love of their

Lord! Not every one that sayeth, "Lord, Lord," but "he that doeth the will of My Father in Heaven." Not he who only bestows his goods to feed the poor, but he who has the love which alone profiteth. Love gives itself, and tolerates no substitute. It gives itself first to God and His Christ, then to the shepherding of His scattered ones. We must take up His Cross, crucifying self, if we would draw men to Him, and through Him to God.

"The Master hath need"—*of thee*. That is the philanthropy of Christ——the giving of self.

"Father Stanton": A Character Study

"I dwell among mine own people" is the text that comes to me as I take my pen in my hand to write this study of, and tribute to, the Anglican clergyman so long and so familiarly (and even affectionately) known as "Father Stanton." Of gentle breeding, and country born, he reached the Psalmist's allotted span of three-score years and ten, and fifty of these he spent of his own free and glad will amongst the poorest of the poor in crowded London slums.

In addition to hearing Father Stanton preach on several occasions in his own church, I received two letters from him. The first was in reply to one in which I enclosed an "impression," which I wrote for a religious weekly, of a service I had attended at St. Alban's. He wrote saying that I had said far too many kind things about himself and his preaching. The second time, I had sent him a book on the after-life, in which I was interested, and he then wrote me that what

he missed from it was the Catholic doctrine of purgatory. Once I had the privilege of a grip of his brotherly hand and one of his ever-ready smiles all to myself.

As I ponder over his personality and his life, two things are borne in upon me as expressing most truly the real man: these are (1) his passionate devotion to Jesus Christ, and (2) his love for humankind. And these two, in his case, were really one and inseparable, for the last-named grew out of, and was the expression of, the former. I only give them individual mention here because it is possible to conceive of a man being moved by either of these sentiments without being touched greatly by its complement.

Nonconformists and Evangelicals are apt to think that the exercise of priestly functions, especially with the accompaniment of ecclesiastical minutiæ such as our friend was accustomed to, tends to harden and deaden the devotional spirit, and to lead to the attention being concentrated upon ritual rather than upon reality. For myself, I cannot say that it was with any great delight that I saw Father Stanton in the chancel at St. Alban's, robed in gorgeous vestments, swaying the censer, bowing at the altar, and *singing* the Gospel for the day; but then, although christened and confirmed according to the rites of the Church of England, I had no knowledge of the special significance of this act or that genuflexion. Of this, however, I am sure: Father Stanton found in these forms so many expressions of his love to the Master, and he himself never felt more at one with his flock, or to be serving their spiritual interests better, than when he was offering on their behalf "the sacrifice of the Mass." We lose nothing of our own

faith in spiritual realities by recognising that just as God speaks to men and women in divers ways, so one temperament may need to express its worship in a very different way to that which is most helpful to another.

Even the most rigid Protestant could not doubt, when Father Stanton had put aside his vestments, and appeared in the bare stone pulpit clad in simple cassock and surplice, that the preacher was "in love with Jesus." It might be difficult to reconcile the simple Evangelical teaching from that pulpit with the sacramentalism of the chancel, but the difficulty was with the hearer, not with the preacher; for no one could doubt that to him there was no contrast nor contradiction. The Master that he proclaimed from the pulpit was to him one and the same with the Lord he adored in the chancel. I have heard him use language concerning Jesus which would have been at home in the mouth of Samuel Rutherford; "the blood of Jesus" was almost as familiar a term to him as to General Booth. If one could have shut one's eyes (which it would have been difficult to do, as every gesture and tone was so interesting and so human), and if one could have forgotten the all-pervasive aroma of incense, one could have imagined one was listening to C. H. Spurgeon—only without that note of dourness which sometimes crept into the voice at the Metropolitan Tabernacle. There was no trace of the priest: no claiming of authority, or even of domination; no threats of excommunication; but just the heart-to-heart and face-to-face appeal to each individual to "take the cup of salvation." The great burden of his preaching was "God in Christ." No critical doubts as to the New Testament not representing

the real life-story of Jesus, or His veritable words, ever found expression. He was manifestly and entirely "in love with Jesus," and he would descant wooingly and winningly upon the beauties and glories of the Saviour. His very last sermon preached at St. Alban's is instinct with this note of wooing appeal and of loving devotion. And his lifelong friend and colleague, Father Russell, emphasised in the memorial sermon exactly the point which had come home to me in thinking of the life of our friend, for he says: "The great fundamental characteristic of this man was that he loved the Lord Jesus Christ." I do not wonder that, as the funeral procession passed through the London streets, crowded with reverential and sympathising onlookers, the hymns, "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds" and "Tell me the old, old story of Jesus and His love," were sung: it was only what our friend would have wished.

Once I went to the three hours' service on Good Friday at St. Alban's, when Father Stanton was officiating. I shall always like to think of our friend as I heard him then—especially as I can never forget that it was at one of these services, in a quiet country church, in the days of my youth, that the love of Jesus won my heart. In dealing with the passion of Jesus and with His utterances from the Cross, Father Stanton was perfectly at home. The Cross and the Victim were alike dear to him, and whether one fully agreed with his exposition or not, the absolute sincerity of his passion for the Master could not be doubted.

Father Stanton would speak in the pulpit of "we Catholics," but while he counted it a privilege to be designated in this way, we do

him honour when we say he was not only Catholic, but catholic. Of his friendship with Dr. Parker, and his attendance at the City Temple services, everybody knows; but this was not an isolated fact in his life—it was but one example of the true catholicity of his spirit. Indeed, it was more than catholicity. If there was one trait more than another which was the foundation of the charm of his personality, it was his *humanness*, his *homeliness*. Nor was this merely a trait—he was human through and through. And when we recall, as already mentioned, that he conscientiously regarded himself as a *sacerdos*, a sacrificing priest, this humanness becomes the more striking. He never folded a wife to his bosom nor dandled his own child on his knee, yet he was a great lover of the little ones, and greatly beloved by them—and the children are splendid judges of a man's reality.

One will always wonder how it was that for fifty years his heart was kept sweet and pure and sympathetic. It was not merely that he lived in depressing and disheartening circumstances—regarded materially and physically, and knowing so much as he did from actual personal contact with the poor of the parish; but there was the more serious danger (shall I call it?) of spiritual contamination and disgust because of his intimate acquaintance, such as few men have had, with the foibles and sins and sorrows of his flock: I refer, of course, to his wide and long experience as a "confessor." Without entering into any discussion of the ethics of confession and absolution, I only state as a fact that his help and advice was greatly sought after in this regard. Readers of George Adam Smith's *Life of Henry Drummond* may recall Professor

Smith's testimony that Drummond became "prophet and priest to hosts of individuals," and how he mentions that on one occasion, after Drummond had been listening to the confidences of a number of students, he exclaimed that he felt overcome by spiritual nausea and disgust at the sins of these men. But Stanton's experience of confession was far and away a more poignant thing than Drummond's, and the marvel is that he never lost his faith in human nature—or rather, in the power of the love of God and of the presence of Christ in the soul. The ideal of the manhood of Jesus must have been a stay to him when he realised to what depths a man could fall; and I believe, too, that his love for the Mother of Jesus helped him in his dealings with sinning and sorrowing womanhood. For as Father Russell says: "To Mary he looked as to the mother of his soul, and her feasts were dear to him, and her image, and her pictures, and her hymns. He loved her with the tender, reverent devotion of a son."

A notable feature in Father Stanton's humanness was his keen sense of humour. We do not associate this gift with the ecclesiastical type of mind—and Father Stanton was a born priest—but he could always see the humorous side of things, and this must have helped him greatly, not only in the sorrows and perplexities of his own life, but in his care and cure of souls.

Father Stanton was ascetic, but he was no hermit, no misanthrope. He was very far removed from the ancient monk who refused to smell a rose lest it should lead him into temptation. Our friend loved the birds and the flowers and all the beautiful things of Nature, and the spring must surely have been his favourite season. It

was fitting, therefore, that, when his body was brought to the church where he had ministered so long and so faithfully, for the requiem service, the chancel in which the coffin was placed should have been embowered in flowers. The scenes in the church were such as to baffle description. "Mothers with toil-marked hands and tear-stained faces; working men leading their little children by the hand and kneeling with them by the coffin; young boys from school and lads from the workshop; hospital nurses, City men—all were there. One felt that it was all just as Father Stanton would have had it to be—his own people, many of them manifestly the very poorest, gathered to offer up their loving prayers for his soul."

There is much more one would have liked to have said, not only concerning our friend, but regarding the lessons of his life. The *Church Times* is somewhat concerned lest the *ordinary* clergyman should be led to copy Father Stanton's example too closely. "Father Stanton," it says, "could preach a Methodist sermon, because everyone knew he was a Catholic, and he could sit under Dr. Parker at the City Temple, because he was the veteran curate of St. Alban's, Holborn. But we do not advise a general and indiscriminate copying of these, or, it may be, other breezy and quasi-whimsical ways and methods of speech and action. They are not for the ordinary man. The really eminent example which Stanton has left behind is that of a parish clergyman." The Bishop of London says the secrets of influence are five, and he names them in this order: Absolute straightness, absence of "side," sympathy, a sense of humour, faith. Father Stanton had all these, but surely the one

lesson above all others is that we yield ourselves entirely and utterly to the love of Jesus Christ. "The love of our friend for the Lord Jesus Christ," says Father Russell, "was the surrender, not of the intellect and will only, but of the heart—a heart given to a Heart. Out of that love—that root-love—sprang his simplicity, his single-mindedness, his unartificiality, the unconventionality of his ways, the directness of his speech, the plainness and frankness of his dealing with men. Out of it sprang also his glowing enthusiasm, and with it a fine sobriety, a self-control and common-sense which never lost its footing; out of it, too, sprang that wonderful sympathy known to every one of us — that overflowing sympathy which simply enfolded everyone who came near to him. And this same love of the Lord Jesus Christ it was which governed all his outward action on the world about him. Loving Christ, he learned to find Christ everywhere. And he found Christ and loved Christ in the souls of men, and—though it may seem perhaps a paradox to say it—most of all in the least worthy; for this was one of the marked features of his life, that, like his Master, he loved the lost sheep and the publicans and the sinners."

Father Stanton himself said once: "When a soul has learned to love and serve, and trust God right through and through and through, without any reserve, that soul is ready to die." Judged by this standard, our friend was "ready to die," only "death" means not the cessation of loving, and serving, and trusting, but the continuance, and the enlargement, and the deepening, of them all.

PHILADELPHOS.

"If there be no Interpreter—"

THE BIBLE IN BULGARIA.

The Baptist movement in Bulgaria can be traced to three distinct sources: the settlement of Russian Baptist exiles in such places as Burgas, Varna, Rustchuk, and Sofia; the return of Peter Doycheff from the U.S.A. and commencing work in and around Tchirpan; and the self-started community in Kazanlek as a result of the purchase of a copy of the New Testament from a colporteur.

Kazanlek is famous for its acres of rose gardens and manufacture of "attar of roses." The town lies on the southern slopes of the Balkans, and is about ten miles west of the village of Shipka, at the foot of the renowned Shipka Pass.

In 1876, a colporteur of the British and Foreign Bible Society, travelling through Turkish lands, commonly called "The Balkans," came into Kazanlek selling his wares.

Amongst those who purchased Bibles were Gregor Dumnikoff, an apprentice in a stationer's shop, Petero Kirkilanoff, employed by a firm of "attar of roses" distillers, and Vasilli Tartargeoff. As these friends read the Gospels with other young men they discovered that there were four things upon which they were all agreed, whilst there were many ritual practices for which there was no foundation in the book, some of which were even contrary to its teaching.

At last a short creed was drawn up, to which all gave ready assent. A true Christian, they declared, was one who (1) gave one-tenth of his income to the Lord; (2) would refuse to take an

oath before a magistrate if involved in a lawsuit; (3) would be baptised upon profession of faith in Jesus Christ; (4) would preach the Gospel to every creature. Obedience to the first two articles was comparatively easy, but the young men were confronted with the problem, "who is qualified to baptise us?" They interviewed a priest of the Orthodox Church, who was ready to immerse them, but they demanded that he should first of all be baptised himself upon profession of faith, and should desist from immersing infants. As he was not willing to conform to their conditions, they formed themselves into a community, and began their search for someone to baptise them.

Inquiries were made of travellers if there were any communities in the Balkans believing as they did, and at last Dumnikoff heard from a commercial traveller that in Tulcea, Roumania, there was a colony of Russian exiles who practised immersion. At a meeting of the Kazanlek community a letter was drawn up and signed by all present, asking the Russians to come to their help. Not knowing the name of the church, they addressed the envelope:

"To the Church of Strange Practices,
Tulcea,
Roumania."

To this epistle no reply was forthcoming, the reasonable inference being that it was never delivered, as the government of Roumania would probably confiscate such a communication.

During the waiting time they rented a small hall in which to meet for the study of the Word of God, and on one wall was fixed a great placard with the following:

NOTICE.

It is absolutely forbidden for any one to preach any doctrine, practice any rite, observe any ceremony in this building contrary to the plain teaching of the New Testament.

"Howbeit in vain do they Worship Me, teaching for doctrine the commandments of men."—Mark vii. 7.

By Order.

Years passed by, the community grew and flourished, still they waited for the "qualified person," until at last, after much prayer and waiting upon God, the following advertisement appeared in some of the Bulgarian papers:

"To whom it may concern:
We believe that a true Christian should devote one-tenth of his income to the Lord; he should not take an oath before a magistrate; should be baptised upon profession of faith, and should preach the Gospel to every creature. If there is any body in the wide world who believes as we believe, please come to our help or communicate with

Gregor Dumnikoff,
The Stationer's Shop,
The Market Place,
Kazanlek."

This quaint appeal was brought to the notice of the founder and pastor of the Church at Rustchuk, a Russian exile, and now the pastor of the Church in St. Petersburg at Vasilli Ostrow. With one of the brethren he gladly travelled over the great Thracian Plain and across the Shipka Pass, on foot all the way, met with the brethren, and companied with them for some

days, and one morning went with them to the turbulent mountain stream flowing past the town, and immersed them in the Name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

Obedience to the command of baptism being an accomplished fact, they now felt free to carry out the last command of their primitive creed, and began to propagate their faith in other towns and villages.

The "tenth" has been used for the purchase of an old Turkish mosque in a fine position, and here the Church intend to erect a more commodious building for worship.

As I sat in the home of Petero Kirkalanoff, with Gregor Dumnikoff and Vasilli Tartargeoff as my fellow-guests, and listened through the long night to the entrancing story of how the Light first came to them, I realised afresh, as so many times before, that in Russia and South Eastern Europe the Word of God, without note or comment, even without human interpreter, is frequently the best Baptist Missionary.

CHAS. T. BYFORD.

Should Ministers Play Golf?

BY T. J. LONGHURST.

Ministerial golf does not need an Apologia, but for the sake of uninstructed brethren I will set down briefly some of the features of this ancient and alluring game which appeal to the sober-minded no less than to the frivolous. Indeed, there is no more edifying sight in the whole range of athletics than the Monday morning performances of some be-spectacled and

beaming divine under the spell of an enthusiasm which revives his boyishness and suggests comparisons in light-heartedness with Charles Lamb or Mr. Pickwick.

For the charm of golf does not really depend on the proficiency attained by the player. Enjoyment and achievement seem often to work in a kind of inverse ratio. The 5-man is compelled to take things seriously; he cannot afford to waste a stroke. But the 25-man can "play the fool exceedingly"; slice, pull, and foozle to the top of his bent; and arrive at the 18th hole surprised and pleased at not exceeding 120 strokes for the round. Of such stuff optimists are made. And each hole is an adventure. He does not know, nobody knows, what may happen to the volatile and elusive ball. It may fly skyward or seaward, high or low, perform circular tours, travel out of bounds, ricochet into sand, dive into water, baffle the caddie, exasperate the couple behind, and provide a variety entertainment not to be approached by the monotonous and mechanical precision of the "Plus" man or the "Pro."

This is *life*, let the cynic say what he will, and spend his own Monday mornings prowling round some fusty old bookshop, or talking "shop" with a deacon who has nothing better to do. Nor let the sedentary scoffer rail against the golfer on account of the supposed "waste" of time, money, temper, and language, untruthfully alleged to be part and parcel of the game; or quote for the ten-thousandth time that disreputable old sinner who would sooner give up the "meenistry" than the "gowff." Our withers are unwrung by such irrelevant trifling, and we tell the scoffer fearlessly (behind his

back) that he would gain in sweetness, breadth, and charity, in physical and mental fitness, and a general clearing away of his cobwebs, were he to betake himself, as a man should, to the breezy links.

A brother of very moderate income may find golf within his means. He is told that it is a very expensive pastime. But he is not obliged to play with half-crown balls, or to hire a caddie to carry his clubs for him—lazy beggar! —or to indulge in a club lunch. Really good golf can be played with less than half a dozen implements and with fifteen-penny "remakes," and there are still many golf clubs outside London where the subscription is not more than two guineas a year.

Why not look on this as premium for health insurance? There are scores of ministers who can testify that their immunity from illness or their rapid recovery has been largely due to regular and healthy exercise on the links, and that there is a practical *economy of time* when brain and body are better co-ordinated through physical fitness for more effectual and accelerated work.

Obviously, the time spent in this or any other form of physical recreation must be carefully regulated. It is conceivable that a minister who has the control of so much of his own leisure may be tempted of the devil to play when he ought to work. But the men who yield to that special weakness are practically unknown to us. The healthy golfer has a healthy conscience, and the dyspeptic or valetudinarian brother is just as likely to waste *his* time in novel-reading or bilious attacks. Some of us in the stress of the winter's work do not touch a golf-stick for

weeks on end, and few of us can play at all regularly or put in an extra game until May or June.

Golf is an admirable test of character, temper, and manhood. As the player (except in medal play) keeps his own score, his honour must be above suspicion, and his accuracy is rarely questioned by his opponent. Steadiness is a quality which counts for as much as skill; and patience, courage, and a cheerful serenity, especially when you are four down and five to go, are factors in a temperament which wins, perhaps, the majority of its battles, and can lose at any time with gallantry and a brow unruffled. It is bad form to punctuate every lost hole with comments on your adversary's "luck," or dolorous details of your own misadventures. It is bad form to suggest that if you had been "on your game" the other side would not have won. And of course it is bad form, and worse, to relieve the overcharged feelings with profane expletives. "Don't you know the meaning of an *oath*, sir?" said a judge, peering angrily over his spectacles, to a small boy suspected of prevaricating in the box. "Yus, I does; I was yer lordship's caddie yusterday." But in spite of *Punch* and popular legend there is comparatively little corrupt speech among players, and the man who lets himself "go" with a ministerial partner would be promptly rebuked, or quietly dropped in future matches.

The social side of golf is one of its greatest attractions. The *camaraderie* of an afternoon foursome—how good and pleasant a thing it is! And how the formal civility of two strangers, introduced to one another for the first time to make a game, melts imperceptibly into friendli-

ness and cordiality as the match proceeds! And what delightful men one meets! Once in a holiday I played Lord Lurgan, a simple-mannered, quietly-dressed Irish peer, who happened to want a game, and seemed perfectly content to take on a Baptist minister. Let it be confessed that for the space of a week after he had laid on me the spell of his charming courtesy and unaffected ways, my hostility to the House of Lords sensibly diminished; and after that came a sort of psychological reaction, with the bitter suspicion that, after all, I was at heart a snob. Every golfer has a bright spot in his memory for particular partners or for certain unforgettable battles. There was a famous match at Walton Heath between the Bishop of London's team and the Free Church Ministers' Club. Silvester Horne said that "no golfer had ever had so many excuses made for his bad play as the Bishop had made for *him*." We were beaten badly, every man of us but one losing his match. The Bishop's secretary had whipped up the strongest team of Anglican golfers he could gather together for the occasion, having heard from Dr. Campbell Morgan that the Nonconformists were "a very warm lot indeed." They were warmer still before the parsons had finished with them. The Bishop was in great glee. "Now I know what you will say," he remarked to one of us. "You will say, 'These Churchmen have nothing in the world to do but to practise golf, whilst we of the Free Churches are visiting our flocks.'" "Well, Bishop," was the reply, "we badly wanted an excuse, but now we can quote your explanation with *episcopal authority*." At which Dr. Winnington-Ingram was vastly amused.

Time would fail to tell of ministerial golfers,

illustrious in other spheres, who are keen if not always successful players. Names occur to me, of course, but the absence of any official data as to their golfing value reminds me of a grievance. Why is it that the Baptist Handbook, and similar publications by the Congregationalists, Presbyterians, and Methodists, whilst containing a lot of superfluous matter about ministers, to wit, their colleges, degrees, churches, dignities, and ecclesiastical or literary achievements, omit the one thing most needed by this article—their handicaps? What are the editors thinking about? Mr. Shakespeare, one of the most ardent of golfers, must see the necessity for this reform. Why has he not the courage of his convictions?

The Bookshelf.

Reviewers have long since given up using the phrase, "the last word in cheap literature," but they might apply it to the remarkable venture of the firm of Macmillan and Co., who have issued the "Shilling Theological Library." That the six-shilling novel should oust the old "three-decker," and in turn be threatened by the well-illustrated and sumptuously furnished story of equal length, but less than half the price, seemed a natural law of literary evolution. But the way of theologians is hard and fast. Their works have maintained an exhorbitant price with a stolidity equalled only by the same characteristic in the style of not a few of them. Standard works on theology have been marked twelve-and-sixpence, and seven-and-sixpence, net, for so long that ministers in unappreciative spheres have become accustomed to borrowing or doing without.

Thanks to Macmillan they can now place on their shelves fifteen of the classics of Christendom at a cost of the same number of shillings. The twelve volumes just published are the result of the firm's recent experiment in issuing Seeley's *Ecce Homo*, and Farrar's two works, *Seekers after God*, and *Eternal Hope*. Priced one shilling, these three books met with a sale that warranted a large extension of the enterprise.

Incidentally, this issue of standard theological works at such a price is of great significance. It indicates a demand on the part of the general reading public for such literature. The ranks of ministers alone could not supply a sufficiency of customers to make the venture a success, and the publishers judge that there are many laymen who will gladly avail themselves of the opportunity to possess the writings of some of the ripest scholars and saints of the Church. This evidence of the deep and ever-widening interest in Christianity is one of many such signs. If some of the old standard measures of grace fail to record as they once did, there are abundant assurances that the leaven of Christianity is at work. As of old, beyond the encompassing chariots, the mountain is full of chariots of fire.

The twelve volumes include *Pro Christo et Ecclesia*, by the anonymous author of those brilliant epistolary essays, *Absente Reo*. Readers of the latter will not need to be told that the book under review is strikingly original in plan and detail. It is a study of the Pharisee, and attempts to show "that the gospel story is the verdict of Eternal Truth upon defects to which all of us who follow an historic religion are naturally prone, and the more prone when we are intense and

conscientious in our devotion to an unchanging religious ideal."

Other books in the series are *The Candle of the Lord*, by Phillips Brooks; *Discipline of the Christian Character*, and *Village Sermons*, by Dean Church; *Sermons on the Books of the Bible*, by Professor Hort; Illingworth's *Divine Immanence*, and *Personality, Human and Divine*; *The Faith of a Christian*, by Bernard Lucas; Kingsley's *Village Sermons*, and *The Good News of God*; Westcott's *Gospel of the Resurrection*, and *Faith and Modern Thought*, by Dr. Temple. The binding is of strong cloth, and the size convenient for the pocket.

There are many reasons why every minister should preach a missionary sermon frequently. "The missionary spirit is the touchstone of Chrisitanity," and without it there can be no true *esprit de corps* in the ranks. Missionary Apologetics is a topic whence the note of certainty need never be absent. It has countless avenues of approach, each leading to a triumphant conclusion. Here the preacher has an unanswerable argument where he may be as graciously dogmatic as he pleases, treading easily and surely and without fear of the weaker brethren. If any doubt this, let him read *The Great Embassy*, by Cuthbert McEvoy, M.A., a shilling book published by Clarke and Co. "Missions," says the author, "are not a *branch* of Christian activity; they are the *sap*." He proves his case by reference to the witness of the Old and New Testaments, and to the witness of "Past Results and Present Needs." In spite of its brevity—it has but ninety-six pages—this little book has packed into its orderly arrangement a brilliant and unanswerable apologia.