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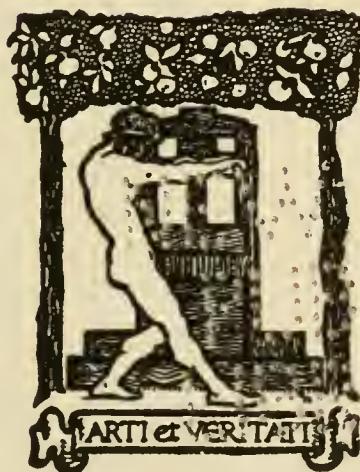
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THE PASTOR

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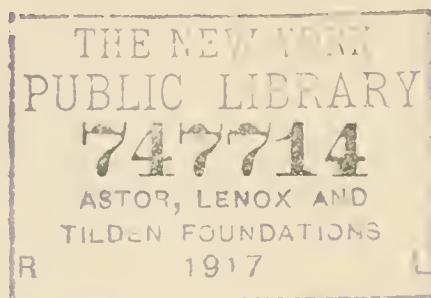


BOSTON: THE GORHAM PRESS
TORONTO: THE COPP CLARK CO., LIMITED

[1916]
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THE GORHAM PRESS, BOSTON, U. S. A.

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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THE PASTOR

THE PASTOR

CHAPTER I

THE PASTOR

THE sun was casting morning shadows across the study floor as the Rev. John Calvin Brewster, D. D., entered the room and sat down in his chair. His face showed that a great struggle was going on in his mind and heart. On his high forehead were drops of burning perspiration, heated ten times by thoughts of the unjust and unchristian treatment he was receiving from men with whom he had lived as pastor for fifteen years.

Dr. Brewster was known as a "scholarly man," with a well balanced mind that caused him to weigh everything in the even scales of justice. Strong physically, mentally, morally, and spiritually he was an exceptionally high type of man. In Presbytery, Synod, and the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church his counsel was respected and his manly eloquence appreciated. He shunned cliques and scheming brethren whose delight and greatest desire are for the "chief seats in the synagogue."

He wished everything done "decently and in order," open and above board; giving every man a "fair field and no favors" when seeking preferment in church assemblies. His shrewdness, coupled with a big and generous nature, caused him to know men whose finer sensibilities often kept them from prominence, when men of smaller caliber were being pushed forward by their friends.

Possibly he was more outspoken on such occasions than his ecclesiastical interests warranted, and at times his admirers reminded him of the wisdom there is in policy. Being a man of great courage and strong conviction he said and did what he believed to be right without fear or favor of men; yet always tried to speak and act in the spirit of the Master he served. His motto was, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" Unconsciously men of Dr. Brewster's stripe often bump hard against those whose standards of right and wrong are not elevated.

If money was needed for a new church building, whether by the congregation he served, or by another, he cheerfully lent a helping hand. In this line of work, as in others, he had been preëminently successful. God had given him "many souls for his hire." The church he served had a reputation of being one of the most progressive, generous, and harmonious churches in the West.

Having been chairman of Presbytery's Home Mission Committee for ten years he was in close touch with the weaker, and therefore struggling churches. By voice and pen, and by personal gifts he had proven a tower of strength to a number of mission churches that had become strong, self-supporting organizations, and whose influence was being felt in many ways.

Yet notwithstanding the good accomplished during fifteen years, and the many warm friendships that had been formed, a cloud had risen. At first no "larger than a man's hand," but ultimately proved, as such clouds generally do, to be the overthrow of a faithful pastor, and the undoing of much of his good work.

Men in the church and congregation had turned against their pastor. At first their complaints savored more of surprise than of hatred; but their surprise finally gave way to anger, and at a "joint meeting held by the elders, deacons, and trustees," it was decided that "the pastor be advised to hand in his resignation." It was argued by those who were greatly opposed to his remaining, that unless he resigned, "the church would be divided; that the dissatisfied element were becoming more pronounced in their opposition as the presidential campaign progressed."

The only church officer who was not a member

of the church, although opposed to the pastor's political views, had sufficient common sense and manliness to stand up nobly for Dr. Brewster. He knew that as a trustee his influence was below that of an elder or a deacon, but he believed in a "square deal," and could see no reason why the pastoral relation between Dr. Brewster and the church should be severed or disturbed because the pastor saw fit to be out of sympathy politically with the large majority of the membership.

William C. Bass, the friend of the pastor, suggested that much had been said during the past fifteen years about the sacredness of the pastoral office; that at the time the pastor was installed this relationship had been likened to that of "the marriage tie"—a relationship "not to be trifled with or easily severed." Mr. Bass also reminded them of the good work accomplished, and of the solid and often eloquent sermons it had been their privilege to hear; of Dr. Brewster's high standing in the city as a man as well as a minister.

But the tide had turned against the pastor, and the majority of the officers said: "Dr. Brewster must go, and the sooner he goes the better it will be for the church." Unfortunately, a committee composed of the most sanctimonious and discourteous men among the officers was appointed to inform the pastor of the situation. Lacking in all

that goes toward making men of refined manners and a keen sensibility of what is proper, this committee had waited upon the pastor, and bluntly informed him that there was a growing dissatisfaction in the church, and that at a joint meeting of the officers held the previous evening it was thought best that he be informed of the situation, and advised to resign his pastorate.

Dr. Brewster's warmest supporters knew there was dissatisfaction because of his "political views," and that he opened what had been termed "a gold bug political convention" with prayer; but they knew nothing regarding the church officials' intention to suggest that their pastor resign. This information would cause a storm of just indignation among the fair minded people in his church and congregation. It would be like lightning in a clear sky, because until the "sixteen to one" political movement became prominent, and the feeling of hatred against "gold bugs" was intensified, not a word had been spoken against the pastor. But men's minds in the western mining states, where silver mines brought prosperity had become like the "troubled sea when it cannot rest." Their opinions were warped, and good men made unkind remarks, and suggested strange remedies for the healing of their wounds.

Mr. Bass admitted that he had labored long and

faithfully to convince Dr. Brewster that the financial salvation of every state where there were large silver interests depended on the defeat of the Republican nominee for president; and had found the pastor, not only an admirer of Mr. McKinley, but one of his staunch supporters. However his feelings toward men of opposite political views were kindly.

Mr. Bass was grieved when he heard the pastor denounced as a "traitor to the state," as a man who "worked against the best interests of the community in which he lived," as a "man devoid of principle;" and all this coming from the lips of professing Christians—officers of the church who had often praised their pastor's "nobility of character," his "leadership" in everything that was for the betterment of the city and state, and for the uplifting of humanity.

Nor was Mr. Bass slow in resenting these unjust accusations, and reminding the pastor's enemies that their changed opinions regarding Dr. Brewster were evidently based altogether upon their financial losses; and that they were placing the dollar above the man. Mr. Bass suggested to his wife, who was a church member and a great church worker, that "Christian men's views and actions are often governed more by the almighty dollar than by the Almighty."

During Dr. Brewster's pastorate an elegant church edifice had been erected, a beautiful manse had been bought; and everyone admitted that it was largely owing to the pastor's thorough going business ability, untiring efforts, and great popularity. When called as pastor, many said; "The man is too large for the church;" but it proved to be a case of a "large man," with God's help, making an uninviting field bear a bountiful harvest.

When sharp lines were first drawn on account of the political situation, the Doctor's support was mildly sought. Being a good judge of human nature, the pastor knew it would be the part of wisdom not to get mixed up in the rapidly approaching squabble; but soon men began urging him to take a stand and express himself. By his success he had often aroused the jealousy that lies hid in the heart of brother ministers, especially in the hearts of those who longed for his pulpit. These ministerial brethren quickly joined hands with his enemies. They thought Dr. Brewster had "acted unwisely," that it would be for the "best interests of the church" that he resign, that the "church is always larger than the man," that the "Lord's cause should be considered first and the pastor's convenience afterwards."

Many more hypocritical remarks saturated with the meanest kind of piousity instead of piety were

made. Now that the storm had burst upon him in all its fury, "what was the wisest thing to do?" He had entered his study determined to seek God's guidance, and calmly consider the whole matter before letting his wife know what had happened, or before he decided what course to pursue. The pastor was more hurt than angered. The injustice toward himself as a man and a citizen of a free country, to say nothing about church relations, was overpowering.

It was soon noised abroad that there was "serious trouble in the church," that the officers had "discovered that Dr. Brewster was an unsafe man to follow," that some of his "words and acts were unbecoming in a minister." Soon the pastor found that he was being painted, not in all the colors of the rain-bow, but in those of the lower regions. Since every heart as well as every home has its skeleton, there were heavy burdens resting upon this man of God. Among the heaviest was that of a son. Thoroughly educated, with considerable genius, and many manly traits of character, but inclined to be wild, he had taken a great dislike to churches and church people during his college course.

Something had "disgusted him with the whole church business." He took the mining engineering course, and went to Alaska at a good salary, and

with the confidence of his employers. This son, MacDougall, seldom wrote to his parents, and never referred to the subject of religion. Another burden was that of an assistant pastor, whose warm and impulsive nature might not have been wisely controlled toward the leading alto in their church choir. Miss Cardo was a remarkably attractive woman, and greatly appreciated the slight attentions shown her by the equally attractive assistant pastor.

Nothing "alarming" had ever come to the surface, yet the Doctor feared that where there was evidence of smoke there might be some fire. No one had noticed this but the pastor, and he felt confident that no intentional wrong had entered their minds or hearts. Yet he feared that a gossip would some day start something, which would do more harm by bringing them closer together, than it would do good by causing them to investigate the gossip, or draw them away from each other.

CHAPTER II

THE YOUNGEST SON

ARAP on the study door announced the arrival of Daniel Brewster, the pastor's youngest son, who was ready to enter college, and was considering the advisability of studying for the ministry. It was for the purpose of talking over this important matter that Daniel made the morning call.

Self control, under the most trying circumstances, was one of the strong points in Dr. Brewster's character. He knew what his son wished to talk about, and was determined that the mistreatment he was receiving should not prejudice him against the cause for which he labored, or the noble calling in which he was engaged.

"Father you seem worried, possibly I had better not disturb you," remarked Daniel. "Sit down my son, I have been waiting for you," answered the Doctor. The pastor knew many things about the ministry, church work, and a certain class of church workers of whom he wished he did not know. When Daniel said that he was still undecided about studying for the ministry, his father seemed at a loss what advice to give him.

Among the many things considered objectionable by Daniel in "the high calling," was the humiliation of candidating for a pulpit, and being placed in a show box for one or more Sabbaths while people criticized. Evidently this rose before the young man like Banquo's ghost, and would not down. Other objections were the smallness of the average minister's salary, the many petty annoyances to which he was subject from the "cackling of the dissatisfied old hens," and the lordly airs of trouble breeding church bosses, the uncertainty of a permanent abiding place when so much restlessness was being exhibited by church members; and last but not least, the often unreasonable demand that a candidate be under forty-five years of age.

While carefully considering his son's objections, the pastor's soul was refreshed, and some of the dark clouds removed by recalling one verse of the hymn:

" 'Tis not a cause of small import
The Christian's care demands,
But what might fill an angel's heart
And fill a Saviour's hands."

"My son, your objections, from a purely human standpoint are well grounded; and having had considerable experience myself, and having often

listened to brethren in the ministry, who have been shamefully mistreated, relate their experience, I may truthfully say the objections that have been given by you for not entering the ministry are not half that might be presented, nor are they the greatest: nevertheless the truth remains, that to be an ambassador for Christ is the noblest and highest of all callings, and the sacrifices and petty annoyances—often humiliating in the extreme—are not to be compared to the many opportunities a faithful pastor has of doing and receiving good, to the confidence placed in him by God-fearing, high-minded Christian men and women, and to the privilege of advancing the Master's kingdom, and of helping to elevate the morals and intelligence of many where ever his lot may be cast. As long as this old world lasts it will remain true that many men will wrangle for religion, write for it, die for it; anything but live for it."

"During your school days you have learned some lessons, but you have not learned that life fellowship with Jesus is the only school for the science of heavenly things. 'What I do, thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter,' is a law of the kingdom. 'Receive what thou dost not comprehend, submit to what thou canst not understand, accept and expect what to reason appears a mystery, believe what looks impossible,

walk in a way which thou knowest not.' Such my son are some of the first lessons in the school of God, and that have proven a strong tower in the day of trouble, into which many of Christ's ambassadors have run and found shelter."

"Remember, my dear son, that a pastor's reward is not altogether in what he receives on earth. Every soul won to Christ will be a diadem to ornament his crown of rejoicing, when he has ceased to belong to the church militant, and has joined the church triumphant."

"I know something of your strong and abiding faith in the work in which you have spent so many years," replied Daniel; "But is it not true that some of the most unreasonable members of your church have been converted through your preaching, and the church would be far better off if they had remained on the outside?"

"True, my son, but these church members, after being received into the church remained human and retained their prejudices."

"But how about some of the sanctimonious hypocrites, who never miss a service on the Sabbath, or a midweek prayer meeting? Mr. Bass said that he thought some of our church members were so good, that like over ripe apples, they were a little bit rotten."

"Mr. Bass is a very dear friend of your father's,

but being outside the church, and inclined to criticize professing Christians is sometimes sarcastic."

"One more thing bothers me. It is the injustice so apparent which makes my blood boil. If an influential citizen becomes angry at a merchant, doctor, lawyer, mechanic, or a laboring man, the one who has incurred the influential man's displeasure need not break up his home and seek another location; but when ever some influential officer in a church gets angry at the pastor his days in that church are soon numbered."

"Possibly the evils you mention, and that are so objectionable, come from the weaknesses of human nature rather than from a malicious desire to injure a pastor. Should you decide to enter the ministry, you will soon learn the need of doing everything as unto the Lord and not as unto men, and of reaching upward rather than leaning on the broken reeds of men's opinions."

"Interest in your calling will cause you to feel ambitious to excel in all good work, because for each of us the secret of excellence, either in the field of sport or in the arena of serious life, is to play the game better to-day than we played it yesterday."

"In our work we try to remember that improvements may be measured by inches rather than strides; but steady progress, however slow, will at

last bring the goal and win the prize. Should you enter the ministry your objections may become realities, but God's grace will be sufficient for you, and the needed strength will be furnished day by day."

"The evidence of an increasing injustice toward ministers of the Gospel is apparent, but human nature is so constituted that in our case it is difficult to weigh evidence with impartiality. We often see only what we want to see, and give weight only to what goes with our inclinations; while on the other hand we are blind to what we don't want to see, and make light of what tells against our prejudices. If therefore we consider the objections to a certain course with out minds filled with assumptions and prejudices, that really decides a question before we weigh the evidence; therefore we do not judge impartially—indeed we do not judge at all."

"I fear that our good friend, Mr. Bass, has helped strengthen your objections to entering the ministry, yet I confess that in my hours of weakness I have felt that he was not far from right when he said: 'Sometimes I have thought that the way some church members conduct themselves, and the way some churches are managed, that we might size the whole business up as the world, the flesh, the devil, and the church. For years it has struck

me as a little peculiar to see how some of your brethren in the ministry who profess to be so very spiritually minded dig out after any plum that may be hung up in ecclesiastical circles, or as some might say, ‘rustle after the chief seats in the synagogue.’ Evidently there are worldly streaks in their natures that savor somewhat of the life and actions of less spiritually minded men.’ ”

“I admit,” said Daniel, “that Mr. Bass has caused me to look at life’s problems, and especially those that are liable to need solving by a minister, from a different standpoint than your teaching has led me to consider them.”

“I have never urged you to study for the ministry, yet your mother and I greatly desire you to do so. I believe it to be true, that ‘the man who is truly called of God will find his way into the Gospel ministry.’ No one should ever enter it who is not fully persuaded that the Lord has called him by his word, providence, and Holy Spirit. When the Lord has shut up a man to his work, he will give him the needful endowments and open a door to service. It may not be just how, when, and where the individual may prefer, but it will be at the right time, and in the right place.”

“Parents should devote their sons to the sacred calling oftener than they do, yet, if after this is done, another profession is preferred by any of

those thus set apart, it is to be regarded as evidence that the Lord sees they are better fitted for something else than that to which parental devotion has intended them."

"The Lord is sovereign, and chooses whom he will, and it becomes all to recognize his wise ordering. We are to pray to him for more laborers, and await the developments of his providence as to whom he will select."

"What the church needs is men really called of God, for then they will be qualified and sanctified; and prove true, faithful, and successful workmen."

After an earnest prayer for the guidance of God's Spirit—a prayer filled with that consecrated earnestness and soul life which strips away the curtains of the skies, and approaches boldly but meekly into the presence of Him who dwells in boundless and inaccessible majesty—father and son separated until the noon meal brought them together again.

CHAPTER III

THE STORM

AS the pastor stood on the front porch of the manse, and watched a gathering storm, his thoughts were in harmony with the heavy black clouds whose edges were made beautiful by the setting sun. He looked toward the great mountain range that had so often reminded him of the Psalmist's words: "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help," and saw that the high peaks were covered with snow; the sight of which gave him a vague idea of a brighter realm of existence. The noble promontories and forest-covered eminences no longer rose in stern contrast with the sky. They were dipped in celestial blue, they wore the silvery and sparkling luster of the morning skies, they blushed in the effulgence of the sunset, with as rich a crimson as the cloud that crowned them.

The day had been one of intense anxiety; therefore as the thunder growled in the distance, and gusts of wind began driving showers of rain over the thirsty city, there was something in the pastor's heart and mind that caused him to receive strength from the approaching storm. "Although the ele-

ments should combine with men against me, there remains the same all-wise, all-powerful, and loving Father above me."

His wife, who had stepped into the hall, heard the pastor's voice. "Did you speak to me?" "No dear, I spoke to my own beating heart."

The storm increased, and the pastor stepped back and leaned against the screen door, while his strong faith in God caused his thoughts to go upward calmly and bravely. His heart's desire was to stand manfully for what was right in spite of the result. During his fifteen years' pastorate he had stood for what he believed to be true, and for the best interests of the church he served, and the city in which he lived. The pastor remembered what he had done, and that remembrance told him that other people must likewise remember.

During the past week he had noticed a coldness toward him on the part of men who had always greeted him cordially, but he attributed it to their being busy with their own thoughts, or that something worried them. Although dignified in his manner, and courtly in his bearing, the pastor was friendly, easily approached; and greeted men, women, and children kindly. He visited the poor of the congregation as often as he did the rich. He had proven himself a friend to the entire flock; therefore had many friends. Still he knew, as

other ministers know, that in cities “people live too close together, and too far apart;” and that here friendships are not supposed to thrive.

People are too preoccupied, too busy, too distracted to shine in those amenities which require peace, rest, and leisure. Bacon quotes the Latin adage: “*Magna civitas, magna Solitudo.*” It is in cities where real solitude dwells; since friends scatter and “Crowds are not company, and faces are only as a gallery of pictures, and talk but a tinkling cymbal: where there is no love.”

“Come in the house dear,” called Mrs. Brewster. The storm is too severe for you to remain on the porch;” but the pastor was in a deep study, and did not heed his wife’s call.

“If it be true that I have lost the respect and confidence of the majority of my church members because I have been man enough to do my own thinking, and open a political convention with prayer, surely these people would, if they could, deprive me of my rights as an American citizen and as a man.”

“Our civil and religious liberty is a priceless heritage, and we cannot do too much for its preservation. There are many forces at work to rob us of it, and it can only be maintained by vigilance, and a strict adherence to truth, right, and Christianity. Whatever wars against these preservative

agencies should find no countenance and support from those who would be free civilly and religiously. In the past it has cost pastors their pulpits, and others their lives to gain and preserve liberties that should be considered dearer than life."

A dash of rain in the pastor's face caused him to notice atmospheric conditions, and to step inside the house and close the hall door. A small fire was burning in the parlor grate, and the wife and youngest son were sitting before it engaged in conversation regarding what was so near the mother's heart.

Since Daniel's conversation with his father, his objections toward studying for the ministry had increased, and the difficulties to be met and overcome had multiplied.

There was a lull in the conversation as the pastor entered the parlor. "Why father! your clothes are wet, you stayed too long on the porch watching the storm." "Possibly my interest in watching storms; the drifting clouds as they cover the great mountain range; and the sun breaking through in different places, showing the whitening effects of the early snows on the high peaks; and the darkness of the gulches, caused me to remain longer than I should."

"Father," said Mrs. Brewster, "Daniel and I have been talking about that which is so near

your heart and mine; and which should be nearer our dear son's heart than it is. I greatly fear that obstacles to his entering the ministry, no greater than mole hills, have been magnified until they look like mountains. Our dear good servant Kate told Daniel, 'A preacher called on your father this morning when he was in his study.' Daniel asked, 'How do you know he was a preacher?' 'Because his clothes looked as though they had been better once than they are now.' "

"This quaint yet shrewd remark of Kate's seems to have set Daniel thinking along what you have sometimes called 'the poverty line of the ministerial calling.' " The pastor smiled, then said: "A minister may not make money by preaching, but he has compensations that belong to no other calling. He is not sent on an errand of gain, but of soul-winning. It is not his to heap up earthly treasures, but heavenly. To him is given a joy of service and a reward of effort that are peculiar and blessed. There is a sense of satisfaction in spiritual ministry that the world can neither give nor take away."

"He who is true and loving, and in sympathy with his Master's call and kingdom finds that his sacrifices, hardships, and work are not in vain, but are accompanied by corresponding grace, solace and recompense."

"Walk boldly and wisely in the light thou hast;
There is a hand above that will help thee on."

Said Daniel: "After talking with mother, then listening to your earnest words regarding the sacredness of the ministerial calling, and its blessed rewards; I feel that the objections which so fill my mind and heart should not deter me from doing as you and mother wish: yet the injustices, and what might be truthfully called indignities, that are so often heaped upon ministers by certain classes of narrow-minded church members, keep rising before me."

"This morning after leaving father's study, on my way down town, I fell in with Mr. Bass, who said to me, 'Well, Daniel, have you decided to become a preacher, and set yourself up as a target for every disgruntled old two cent hypocrite in some congregation to shoot at; and to be kicked around as though you had no feelings, and was hardly human?'"

"I confess that I was a little surprised at this outburst against churches by Mr. Bass, but he kept on going."

"Were I a young man thinking of choosing a profession, it seems to me that for many reasons I would not choose the ministry. Not only on account of the ridiculously small pay for the work

required, and the long years of preparation; but on account of the injustice so apparent along many lines. In some of our states a common laborer gets better wages than the average church pays salaries to their pastors. Remember Daniel, a laborer is paid his wages while a minister's salary is given him."

"Then consider that only a small number among the clergy have a certain abiding place, even in churches where people profess to believe in the pastorate. A few years at the longest is sufficient to sever this supposed sacred relationship, and the worst feature is that the severance is brought about by a heart-sickening, ungodly church row that must make—if there be such beings—the devils in hell rejoice. A laborer can spend his lifetime in one place, if he sees fit, with none to molest or to make him afraid."

"I tell you Daniel, some of our business men on the outside of the church are decidedly human, and look at things from a common sense standpoint. We have a kind of a creed that is practical, if not spiritual; and although condemned by the sanctimonious outfit that gets into almost every church, have our own religion that we call 'The square deal.' We know that there is one religion for the pulpit and another for the pew, and hear much about what goes on in the churches, especially

those among us who have religious wives; and who for their sakes, and the respect we have for those who are true in the church, attend religious services, hold some minor office in the church, and cheerfully help support the work."

"Why in the name of common decency, not to mention justice or common sense, should every disgruntled church officer or church member be permitted to register their kick against the pastor, making him the target to shoot at? If a pastor was like a merchant he could say, 'If you don't like the goods I keep in stock you can trade elsewhere'; but with a pastor the case is different. He can go elsewhere whenever some influential church member has his toes tread upon by the pastor telling the truth. Then there is the damnable injustice of saying to an educated, capable man when he has reached the age of fifty, and is at his best, 'You have crossed the dead line, therefore we want a younger man for pastor.' If in view of this fact a competency was provided for such men as they face this condition, there might be a shadow of justice in it; but as it now is, the measly, miserable pittance provided by the church for retired or infirm ministers is a disgrace to humanity. Common honesty cries out 'shame on the churches.' "

"If there be a just God, as we sinners are constantly informed from the pulpit, I can see why

he should inflict sore punishment upon churches rather than bless them. As a general rule when miserable business policies are adopted by a church, and the pastor's salary is not paid promptly, and in the end the church gets way behind financially, the one man blamed for the whole rotten business is the pastor; and should he sue the church in order to get his just dues he is black listed by every church in the land."

"I am extremely sorry," said the pastor, "that Mr. Bass saw fit to speak to you in such a way; for although there is truth in all he said, I doubt the wisdom, or the propriety of his saying so much against church members to a young man who has in mind the entering of the ministry; and as a trustee in our church he should be more guarded in his language: but possibly something has stirred up this good friend of ours, and he said more than he intended."

"Father," said Mrs. Brewster, "You have tried to keep from Daniel and I, or at least said but little about the trouble that is brewing in our church; but 'Old Lemon Face,' our leading gossip has been to see me this afternoon, and has fully aired matters, even to telling me that 'A committee composed of officers of the church, representing the Elders, Deacons, and Trustees have called upon you to acquaint you with the situation, and have

suggested that the wise thing for you to do is to resign.' ”

A cloud quickly passed over the pastor's face, as he said, “I had expected to impart this disagreeable information, and speak of the unjust treatment to you in a way that would take from it some of the sting; but if the cackling old hens have taken it up every one knows about it. Job knew a thing or two that never would wear out, and churches and church people know a few; and one is the end of cackling, gossiping tongues: but God be praised. A generation shall arise who know Joseph, and shall remember their obligations to God and their fellow man.”

“Since you know the perplexing position I am in, and the likelihood of our being set adrift, and branded with all that falls to the lot of a pastor who has been asked to resign, no matter how unjustly, I presume there is no need of concealing what has been officially designated as the ‘situation.’ But bad as it is, and as indignant as I feel, you may rest assured that I am neither frightened, discouraged, down, or out: neither shall I surrender one iota of my rights or opinions as a man and a minister. And I firmly believe, as I ever have that God ‘Makes even the wrath of man to praise him;’ that God rules over all, and orders the steps of those who put their trust in him. I have done noth-

ing wrong or unworthy of my high calling in asserting my right to open a political convention with prayer, or to express my political opinion."

"Other ministers have done both, but because they are with the majority, are considered as keeping within the bounds of propriety and standing for what is right. I have not flaunted my unpopular political opinions in men's faces, but when called upon to express myself, did so in what I consider a manly, Christian, patriotic way; and I am not ashamed of it, neither have I any regrets or apologies to offer: and God helping me, I shall always be a man first, and a minister afterwards."

"Yesterday Mr. Bass suggested that I preach a sermon on the French proverb: 'A wise man is like a pin, he has a head on him to prevent his going too far.' He thinks some of our church members have lost their heads, if they ever had heads, and have gone too far when attacking their pastor, because he has formed his political opinions without consulting them. Although men like Mr. Bass are counted among the irreligious, they are not devoid of common sense, and often say and do that which is deserving of praise."

"During my fifteen years' pastorate no one has contributed more toward the support of the church, or toward the building fund. His cheerfulness and readiness to help in every good work have

often been commented upon by our church officers; and I have often prayed that Mr. Bass might be led to Christ and make a public profession of what I believe is in his heart; but with a church fight staring him in the face I fear that such action on his part will be postponed indefinitely. Mr. Bass is a mild mannered man, yet business like. His closest associates say, that when aroused he is anything but mild mannered. I sincerely hope that nothing will occur to rouse the tiger that is in him."

The phone rang, and when Daniel answered, his father was asked for. It was Mr. Winchell, clerk of the session, who wanted to talk with him. Mr. Winchell said that two of the members of the session had joined with him in asking that a special meeting of the session be held in the church parlor the following Thursday at 8 P. M. "Very well," said the pastor, "I will call the meeting."

CHAPTER IV

MEETING OF THE SESSION

IN the Presbyterian church there are elders who help keep peace in the church, and there are elders who make pieces of the church. Unfortunately the church of which Dr. Brewster was pastor was cursed with three of the latter class for officers.

Nothing had ever been quite up to "their standard." When the church prospered financially, they could see "signs of spiritual decay." When refreshing showers fell to the lot of the church, they admitted that "rich blessings were being poured out upon them, but feared the reaction that was sure to follow a revival of religion; and the great harm the church was liable to receive on account of men and women being received into membership who had not been truly converted." When time came for the "pastor to take his vacation," the old chestnut of "Satan never taking a vacation," was recited; and the "bad effects of the pastor's absence from his pulpit," was commented upon.

But the brighter spots in church work, and the pleasant things interested the pastor most. "Petty annoyances were to be expected;" therefore the

pastor listened respectfully to the complaints and fears of these men, but paid little attention to their constant growl.

The church had grown wonderfully, and prospered spiritually and financially in spite of the unconscious efforts of these men to stop the wheels of progress—if these efforts were of that nature. Having been “ordained as elders,” and the church never having adopted the “rotary system,” they remained in office. Twice the pastor had suggested adopting the rotary system; but these dear brethren opposed it bitterly as “an innovation of the devil for the purpose of interfering with old and tried methods of church work.” Had the suggestion been pushed there would have been a “battle royal;” because each of these old men had large families, and a number of their children had married into influential families, whose membership was in the church: so that with their votes and the votes of their friends it was a question how matters might terminate should this greatly needed innovation be tried.

Although the members of the session often differed widely in their opinions regarding church matters, and the suggestions made by the pastor had often been “turned down,” there had never been an open rupture between Dr. Brewster and the members of his session; but it was evident that at

the next meeting there would be. The time arrived for the meeting, or as Mr. Bass said when he heard of it: "The time has come for the ball to open."

The usual preliminaries of "opening with prayer," the "reading of the minutes of the previous meeting and their approval," having been observed, the meeting was "open for business." The prayer made by elder Peckwith, the husband of "Old Lemon Face," was what might be expected from such an elder. After informing the Almighty that 'serious trouble was brewing in the church militant,' and that 'this portion of the vineyard greatly needed the dews of divine grace,' and a general looking into, he prayed that 'As God-fearing Christian men, office bearers in the church, who had a high and solemn duty to perform, they might stand upright, and be firm, fearing nothing but sin. That as true soldiers in the Lord's army, valiantly fighting for the right, nothing might be done through strife or vainglory, but in lowliness of mind each might esteem others better than themselves. That the broadest Christian charity might be duly exercised, and warmest sympathy shown toward each other; and that through all the impending trouble God's name might be honored and his kingdom established.'

Elder Brimhall, who had heard this brother express himself in the bitterest terms against Dr.

Brewster, saying "He ought to be driven out of the state as well as out of the church," drew himself up into a knot when brother Peckwith prayed that "the broadest Christian charity might be duly exercised, and the warmest sympathy shown toward each other." Soon it was evident to the pastor that there was disagreeable work on hand; and although the elders were against him, they were far apart regarding just how to proceed in order to drive him out of the church.

Two of the elders had made it their special business—helped by some of the "old hens," with "Lemon Face" in the lead—to find to what extent the feeling of bitterness engendered by the pastor's opening a "gold bug" political convention with prayer, had spread. To their surprise and chagrin they found that a large majority of the members of the church and congregation, though wedded to the "sixteen to one" policy, and bitterly denouncing "gold bugs," were unprepared to turn Dr. Brewster out of the church. Some manifested such a spirit of antagonism to such a suggestion that suspicions were cast upon the Christian reputation of these information seeking brothers and sisters, who had the best interests of the church at heart, and nothing personal in the matter, only so far as that interest could be used for the good of all.

Should a congregational meeting be called, and

the matter “threshed out publicly,” and the pastor “make a fight” to retain his position, “the fur would fly;” and some of the “broadest Christian charity, and the warmest sympathy” for which brother Peckwith prayed “might be exercised,” would most likely be worsted in the battle. No one seemed disposed to make an open attack on the pastor.

When the moderator asked: “What is your pleasure, brethren?” they hitched and moved on their seats, but no one spoke until the pastor said: “Let us proceed with the business of the meeting.” Then elder Brown proceeded: “Dr. Brewster, it is the unpleasant duty of the session to emphasize what has already been told you by the committee, regarding the action taken at the joint meeting of elders, deacons, and trustees, with but one dissenting voice—that of Mr. Wm. C. Bass. The growing dissatisfaction calls for something to be done. The breach between the pastor and the church is widening day by day, and the membership and congregation are becoming divided, so much so that a disastrous split is likely to occur.”

Though hostile toward Dr. Brewster, these elders knew that the every day life of their pastor, coupled with glimpses of those visions of manly beauty and truth which shone from his soul, were a rare treat to his friends. Many placed a high

value upon their pastor's ripe experience, and had often sought his advice when difficulties confronted them, or sorrow had darkened their hearts and homes. To attack such a man openly at a meeting of the session required more gall and impudence than any one member of the session possessed. The fear of being the one on whose head the wrath and indignation of the pastor's friends would fall, required more courage than his most bitter enemies had ever been accused of having. Therefore just "how far to go" at this meeting was troubling them.

Finally it was "moved and carried" that in "The judgment of the elders the best interests of the church demanded a change in the pastorate, and that a meeting of the members of the church and congregation be called two weeks from the following Thursday to consider this important matter."

The next order of business was an altogether different affair, and savored of an underhanded attack upon the assistant pastor—the Rev. Paul Wardner—a brilliant young man—whose preaching and personal appearance had attracted considerable attention; and whose warm impulsive nature manifested itself in his cordial manner. He was a married man, and the father of two bright little girls. Dr. Brewster had recommended this young clergyman to his church, and had greatly

enjoyed his society, and appreciated his scholarly, scriptural sermons, and great helpfulness in general church work. Much of the hardest of the work had been performed cheerfully and competently by Mr. Wardner.

Unfortunately for the assistant pastor, his wife, exceptionally intelligent, a fine pianist, and elegant in her manner, was of a cold and jealous nature; and often wounded her affectionate husband by holding him at a distance, and failing to enter heartily into the work of the church. She adored her little girls, whose faces and forms showed plainly, that like their handsome parents, they had much about them that would make them decidedly attractive.

A man of Rev. Paul Wardner's disposition will love some one, and be loved by some one though the heavens fall.

The assistant pastor had been engaged in the work less than a year, but in this time had become very popular in the church and congregation. His handsome, but less admired wife, seemed to feel jealous because so many ladies expressed their liking for her husband. One woman in particular, the leading alto in their choir, had aroused her jealousy. Miss Cardo—tall and beautiful in figure and face, with a fine head of hair, tastefully arranged, made a deeper impression on the mind and

affections of Paul Wardner than he would have liked to admit.

No one had ever seen anything out of the way between the assistant pastor and Miss Cardo, nor had anything been said until "Lemon Face" ventured the remark, that one evening as she was passing the pastor's study door she had seen him and Miss Cardo standing close together, and his arm seemed to be near her waist. This remark had been repeated and enlarged upon until it was rumored that Mrs. Peckwith saw the assistant pastor standing in the study door with his arms around Miss Cardo's waist. The elders thought that such scandal coming at this time, when dark clouds overshadowed their beloved church, should be investigated; and if there was truth in it, the alto singer and assistant pastor should be dismissed.

Elder Peckwith had informed his associates that his wife never said she saw Mr. Wardner's arms around Miss Cardo's waist; but knowing as they did the strong feeling of friendship that existed between the two clergymen, and the strong hold the younger man had on the affections of the people, their object was to spread the scandal, and injure the assistant pastor's influence.

Dr. Brewster sat down so hard upon the suggestion of an investigation into such a contemptible scandal that could only spread the gossip, that the

THE PASTOR

meeting adjourned without a committee being appointed.

What the pastor would do before or at the coming church meeting was not divulged to the elders. The closing prayer made by elder Brown was brief, and contained less information for the Almighty regarding conditions in the church militant; and less about the "exercise of the broadest Christian charity and the warmest sympathy," than the opening prayer made by elder Peckwith.

CHAPTER V

WM. C. BASS INTERVIEWS THE PASTOR

“**W**HAT goes on” at a meeting of the session is supposed to remain under the hats of the members until the proper time comes to “give out” any part thereof that is considered the people’s business. But elders’ wives are often as anxious to know what has transpired at a sessional meeting, as some women are to find out whether or not the goat threw their husband when he was being initiated into the lodge; or whether or not he managed to climb the greased pole.

All that transpired at the meeting of the session soon became public property—scandal and all—to which “Lemon Face” soon added that, “No one doubted but the placing of a man’s arms around a handsome woman’s waist was usually accompanied by a passionate kiss being imprinted upon her lips. But mind you I did not say I saw this, it is that womanly intuition that I so pride myself on having that has taught me these things.”

“I would be the last woman on earth to wrong Mr. Wardner or Miss Cardo, or anyone else. Husband and I pray daily that the good Lord will

so fill our minds and hearts with his love, that by his assisting grace, we may exercise the broadest Christian charity and the warmest sympathy toward all."

Before forty-eight hours had passed the "passionate kiss" suggestion had become a "fact" in the eyes of the scandal mongers in the church, and was placed side by side with "arms around Miss Cardo's waist," which latter piece of gossip was so well known and widely circulated that several of the "old hens" were "certain" they had noticed an "undue familiarity between these guilty parties." It was about this matter, as well as the pastor's troubles, that Mr. Bass had called to interview Dr. Brewster.

That there was "fight" in the trustee's eyes, was evident; and that somebody was liable to get the worst of it before this matter ended, was plain. Being an outspoken man, and his mind and heart on fire, fed by the fuel of righteous indignation, Mr. Bass soon gave vent to his wrath. "Here it is Doctor in one of the evening papers." "Reported that the Rev. John Calvin Brewster, D. D., will be retired, that his resignation has been asked, and that a serious scandal has broken out that connects the assistant pastor's name with one of the most attractive women in the church."

"I feel that I need offer no apology for saying

in your presence, that should you rake hell with a fine tooth comb, you could not find a meaner, more unmanly set of lantern-jawed old hypocrites than the members of your session; nor a dirtier set of scandal mongers than the old hens who are a disgrace to womanhood. Led on as they are by "Old Lemon Face;" whose wretched countenance indicates the foulness of her impure heart and mind. Such people have no respect for common decency, the common courtesies of life, or for anything else that is praiseworthy. They delight to injure their superiors, and lie like pirates. So far as I am personally concerned I shall never affiliate, in any way, with these creatures. Possibly I let my temper get the best of me this morning, when old Peckwith came into my store and began trying to prejudice me against you. I told him he was a contemptible, trouble-breeding old whelp; and more than this that I will not repeat in your presence. I could hardly keep my hands from him; and I know that had he been a younger man, I would have kicked him into the street."

"Please control yourself Mr. Bass, I am surprised that a strong man like you, and accustomed as you are to meet all phases of business annoyance, should lose your self-control."

"Dr. Brewster, I have heard you say in your pulpit that 'there is such a thing as righteous in-

dignation, and that there are times when men should have the courage of their convictions, and speak the truth though the heavens fall.' ”

“We should speak the truth at all times,” but whenever we speak it in an impulsive tone of voice, or manifest the wrong kind of a spirit, the force that should accompany the truth is largely lost. In my home we greatly appreciate your true and tried friendship, and that of your dear wife and daughters. Truer friends we have never had. Nor would it be possible to have friends who could show their friendship in more ways than you and your family have. I imagine how your feelings have been wrought up during the past week. But in all kindness I ask you to be a little more guarded in your defence of your friends, who have enough to bear without being reproached on account of ill-timed bursts of anger on the part of intimate associates.”

“Promise me that during all the trying days that are to come you will control your temper as far as possible.”

“I know that what you say is correct from what you call a ‘Christian standpoint;’ but you know that I am not a Christian—that is I am not counted among those who will go to heaven when they die—and Doctor, do you know, that honestly, if I had my choice this moment of going to heaven

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with a sanctimonious lot of old hypocrites, or of going to hell with the boys, I would choose the latter?"

"Surely a man of your intelligence must know that such language is very improper, and makes light of one of the fundamental doctrines of our beloved church—You cannot mean what you say."

"I did not call to annoy you, neither did I expect to express myself so freely; but the truth is, I am all stirred up over this matter."

"That is evident," said the pastor. "What I did call for was to tell you, that come what may, your friends inside the church and outside of it are going to stand by you, and whether you decide to resign or remain with the church we are with you to a finish. A number of influential, moneyed men have said, 'Tell Dr. Brewster that if he desires we will rent one of the opera houses, or any other place he may wish, and see that he receives as large or larger salary; and will ask him to preach but once each Sabbath.' "

"How does that kind of a proposition strike you Doctor? These men, like myself, are not so much interested in what you call the 'pure Gospel,' as they are in sermons like you delivered last winter, and called 'A Course of Sabbath Evening Lectures.' "

"I catch your idea of what would be called an

independent church, and I understand the style of preaching that would be expected. I also realize that in this age ministers are affected by their environments, and are liable to the temptations and allurements which beset them. They hear so much of a preaching demanded by the spirit of the age, and are so pressed by churchly competition, that many of them feel that they must adjust themselves to existing conditions, or lose their grip upon the public; and so they often descend to means which their love to Christ and souls disposes them to forego. But they should remember they are amenable to God, not to the people; and that it is theirs to exalt God, His Word, and the Cross of Jesus Christ at all hazards. Those who are faithful to their mission may not be advertised so much in the dailies, nor make such flaming bids for an audience, nor get such flattering ‘puffs,’ yet they go on steadily, from year to year, in their work, moulding character: starting holy and beneficent influences, upholding a pure Gospel, glorifying God, and building their congregations upon enduring foundations. It is not only one’s duty, but his best policy and greatest honor to plant himself behind his Lord, and move forward to the conquest of the world in Christ’s name.”

“Your proposition has more than one objection, but the principal one would be the kind of sermons

that would be demanded. I firmly believe that to-day there is a special call for less of man and more of Christ in the pulpit. There is a craze for popular preachers, or men who can tickle the ear of the public, fill the pews, and cause things to 'boom.' Anything is deemed legitimate that will win recognition, and make a church the center of attraction in town or city."

"I am glad that I called, and learned your views regarding what might be considered a proposition from your friends in case you should resign your pastorate, and desire to remain in the city. In addition to this I have enjoyed your manly utterances, and I sincerely wish there were more of your type in the pulpits of our land. Without wishing to flatter you, or to prejudice you against your ministerial brethren, I will say ministers of your type are like angels' visits, 'few and far between.' "

"Do you know, Doctor Brewster, that all but three of your brother ministers in the Presbytery have approached one or more of the officers of your church, and have said, 'Should your church become vacant I wish to be considered a candidate?' And more than this each one has expressed himself as believing 'it would be a wise thing to dissolve the pastoral relations,' or, 'evidently your pastor's influence is at an end,' or, 'the best interests of the church require a change,' or, 'the church is always

larger than the man ;' or else some other remark intended to let the officers know that as individuals they were ready to stand by the officers should Dr. Brewster make a fight, and the matter come before Presbytery."

"Talk about low down political ward-heelers. Do you suppose any ward in this city, or in any other city can produce a more cowardly or disloyal lot of men than these preachers who have set themselves up as examples before the world?"

"I confess that I am greatly surprised at this information ; because as yet no meeting of the members of the church and congregation has been held, and no action has been taken."

"You may be surprised, but the truth is, figuratively speaking, the dear brethren have already appointed your pastoral funeral ; and will see to it, after much prayer and conscientious meditation that the corpse is ready for the solemn occasion."

"I know that I have said things that will disturb your rest for the night, but to quote from the Bible : 'Out of the fulness of the heart man speaketh,' or words to that effect. And surely my heart was full when I entered your study. Good night, Doctor, and success to you in all that you undertake in life's great battle."

CHAPTER VI

MORE TROUBLES

“TROUBLES never come single handed,” is a trite saying; nevertheless the experiences of many have convinced them of its truthfulness. Surely the pastor had enough troubles of his own to look after, and his burdens were numerous enough for one man to carry; yet he had often realized, as have other ministers, that part of their work is to help other people bear their burdens.

“A beautiful morning, Dr. Brewster! Such a day as this makes a man glad he is alive,” was the cheery greeting from the assistant pastor, as he proceeded to take off his overcoat and make himself at home in the pastor’s study.

“Yes indeed,” answered Dr. Brewster. “Sometimes such days make me think of the old Quaker’s saying, ‘Every day is a good day,’ and why should not every morning be beautiful?”

Mr. Wardner laughed heartily, then said: “At sight of thee my gloomy soul cheers up, my hopes revive, and gladness dawns within.” “Usually gloom and you have little to do with each other, and I have thought that possibly you had received

from the hand of your Creator considerable more of the oil of gladness than the majority of men who adorn our profession," said the pastor.

"If so I should be thankful for it, especially since I am called upon, for the first time in my life, to walk in darkness."

"Sorry to hear that you are in the dark, yet I am not unprepared to hear you say so. The cause of your troubled thoughts is partly known to me, as it must be to all who have read the miserable insinuations against your character in the yellow journals of our city; but remember the Psalmist's words: 'For thou wilt light my candle, the Lord my God will enlighten my darkness.' "

"That is true," said the assistant pastor, "and would make a good text for your morning sermon, and for a companion sermon in the evening I might dig the wicked in the ribs by preaching from Job 18:6: 'The light shall be darkness in his tabernacle, and his candle shall be put out with him.' "

"Yes! Yes!" said Dr. Brewster, "human nature is very much the same in ministers as it is in the rest of Adam's descendants, and were we inclined to do so could easily assert our humanity in the pulpit, and 'rake our enemies fore and aft;' but I believe as do you, that the pulpit is not the place for a minister to air his grievances."

"But I must air mine in your study. It is for

that purpose that I called. Miss Cardo was at my home last night, and is indignant because she knows the miserable and unreasonable gossip that has been going the rounds about my having placed my arms round her waist, and imprinted a passionate kiss upon her lips, connects her with me as the attractive woman mentioned in the daily papers."

"I have called to get advice of you; knowing that under the circumstances a man of my make-up, impulsive and quick tempered, needs advice from one whose blood is not so liable to boil when he receives such treatment as I am receiving."

"My own unjust treatment has caused my head to be filled with thoughts not in harmony with that which makes for peace with all men; therefore my advice may not be valuable to you: but this I will suggest, that you be guarded in what you say and do. Make no confident of any ministerial brother, or of anyone else. Remember that 'Little said is easily mended,' and that gossips and scandal mongers are expecting a rich feast out of the troubles in our church."

"Your advice is worthy of consideration, and I shall try and profit by it; but Doctor, is a man because he is a minister not permitted to defend himself?"

"You have the undisputed right to defend yourself, but in making that defense remember your

high calling, and that the men from whom you have a right to expect help will be the last to come to your aid. Yea, more than this, some will be the first to take sides with your enemies against you."

This was said with more warmth of feeling, and with a greater show of bitterness than Dr. Brewster had ever manifested in the assistant pastor's presence. The Doctor had been pre-eminently successful as a preacher and pastor, and sad experience had taught him that this was sufficient to turn against him a certain class of small-souled preachers, who rejoice not in the success of the Gospel, or that of anyone, except glory is reflected on their own little souls.

Dr. Brewster knew that the passion of envy—"That gives rancor to the odium Theologicum"—that fatal passion which caused Daniel to be cast into the lion's den, and Haman to plot the ruin of Mordecai—still lives and burns out the spiritual life of many would-be church leaders. This passion turns beautiful women into serpents, and learned theologians, who love the chief seats in the synagogue, far more than they love the Christ they profess, into fiends.

The pastor said: "Sometimes in my inmost soul I confess that we are not living in an age of faith, either in God or man, neither in the age of 'good will among men,' which we hear so much about;

but in an age of free thought, which often produces skepticism. Ill will instead of good will seems to have saturated business, political, social, and church life; until the reputation of man and woman is not safe for a moment from the jealousies and injustices of depraved minds and hearts."

Mr. Wardner remarked: "It is evident that my reputation, and that of Miss Cardo are receiving rough handling; and the good Lord alone knows what the end of all this mess will mean to us. Confidentially, Mrs. Wardner's jealousy has been roused, and she is making it very uncomfortable for me in our home. I sincerely hope she will soon be convinced of my innocence; because the jealousy of a man's own wife, the one who should be his strongest supporter in time of trouble, is unbearable."

"The less you say about a cloud passing between your wife and yourself the better off you will be. There are troubles that God and our own souls should know about, and that so far as in us lies should be kept there. If you can honestly say with the Apostle Paul, whose name you bear, that you have 'A conscience void of offence toward God, and toward man,' you can look the world in the face, as he did, without flinching."

The conversation turned from the assistant pastor's personal troubles to the subject of conscience,

when Mr. Wardner said: "The conscience even of the best men, is now and then erroneous and doubtful. Conscience may be unenlightened, yet take away the power of conscience, and what would become of our world? It has been asked: 'What is a man without a conscience?' A usurper, a tyrant, a libertine, a spendthrift, a robber, a miser, an idler, a trifler, whatever he is tempted to be. A supreme egotist, who says in his heart, 'There is no God.' "

"The Almighty Creator places His instinct in the souls of men to prevent the total eclipse of faith, and to preserve some allegiance to Him, some guidance in the trials and temptations of life. We lament a perverted conscience, yet better this than no conscience at all—a voice silenced by the combined forces of evil. A man must obey this voice. It is the wisdom of the ages to make it harmonious with eternal right. It is the power of God to remove or weaken the assailing forces which prevent or silence it."

"Before leaving I cannot refrain from referring to what Mr. Bass told me this morning about the number of ministers who had asked to be considered as candidates for your pulpit. Wouldn't that knock you off the Christmas tree with a feather?"

Said Dr. Brewster: "When you have had as many experiences as I have had, and spent as many

years in the ministry, fewer things will surprise you."

The pastor was often eloquent, and at times deep, but always sympathetic and helpful; yet there was an unexplainable something about him that excited envy as well as admiration. Wherever he had labored, without trying, he gradually worked to the top; and was placed on the committees of the Presbytery to which he belonged.

Unconsciously perhaps, his opponents misrepresented him, and like all strong and original characters, he had bitter enemies as well as admiring friends. His enemies exaggerated his failings and watched that they might strike him in the dark. They found their opportunity when the present church trouble began, and were taking advantage of it.

"Your time is valuable," said the assistant pastor, "and mine ought to be; therefore if you will excuse me, I will not vex you longer with my troubles. Of this you may be sure, like our friend Mr. Bass, I am 'with you through thick and thin.' "

CHAPTER VII

SECOND CALL FROM MR. BASS

TO the delight of the church officers, except Mr. Bass; and to the surprise of many, and sorrow of others, the pastor read his resignation the Sabbath following his talk with the assistant pastor. Now there was something tangible for the members of the church and congregation to consider.

This was the reason Mr. Bass called. He had been chosen by the pastor's friends "outside the church," as a kind of "go between" for them and Dr. Brewster, and as their champion to "do the fighting, if necessary at the coming church meeting."

There was one thing in particular of which Mr. Bass wished to be sure. Could subscribers toward the support of the church, although not members, vote on the acceptance or rejection of the pastor's resignation? When he was informed that it was their right should they see fit to act, he was greatly pleased, and said: "Your resignation will not be accepted. Your friends inside and outside the church will join hands and show the disgruntled element that their respect for you as a man and a

minister has risen far above any ill feeling that may have been caused by your opening that 'gold bug' political convention with prayer."

"Had you not done that your friends would still have considered you the personification of everything good on the earth, above the earth, or under the earth. We love you dearly and will show your enemies a thing or two. We know that after all you have done for the church you are not getting a square deal, and we will not stand for it."

"Really Mr. Bass, your frankness and earnest efforts to get me justice are refreshing, and like a balmy breeze at the close of a sultry day, are invigorating. I feel as though the storm had spent its fury; and although I have no intention of remaining with the church, being human, I do not object to such action on the part of my friends as you have informed me will be taken. Nevertheless what I have done on this field during the past fifteen years has been done as unto the Lord, and not as unto men; and He is a sure paymaster, as well as a bountiful benefactor."

"You clergymen have a peculiar way of looking at your work, and at the treatment you receive. If men would dare treat me as some of the officers in your church have treated you, something would be doing, and some of the leading lights would believe they smelled sulphur."

"During my long and not altogether unsuccessful pastorate, many members of the church and congregation have treated me royally. The favors received are innumerable, and God is always good."

"I know that what you say must be true, nevertheless it is a burning shame that you are not to be permitted to enjoy preaching longer in the beautiful and commodious house of worship, that you, more than anyone else, have been instrumental in building."

"There is room to doubt the justice of the action taken by the officers of my church, but whenever a minister goes against the political opinions of men, when there is such intense excitement in political circles throughout the entire state, men do not always act as wisely and justly as we have a right to expect."

"But these men practically forced you into making public your views on the political situation, and although I do not agree with you politically, and make no profession of religion, for my life I cannot see either the justice or the Christianity in men becoming so bitter toward you and demanding so much that is radical and unreasonable."

"Yes, I did try to evade the political issue. When a committee called and almost demanded that I give them my political views, that they might

inform the church members, I listened respectfully to what they had to say, and replied: ‘Tell the officers and members of the church and congregation that your committee don’t know what your pastor’s views are.’”

“I heard that was what you said. It has spread like wild fire through the city, and everyone is laughing about it. The committee are a laughing stock, even among men who disagree with you politically. Really Doctor, it was the best and wisest answer that could have been given under the circumstances.”

“Possibly it would have been wiser had I asked the committee to kneel with me at the throne of grace, while we prayed that God would cause our hearts to grow warm in his love. I feel that I am not wholly without blame in sending such an answer, just at this time when men’s passions and prejudices control them instead of their Christianity and common sense.”

“I am not here to criticize a man like you, whom I love dearly, and consider my superior in every respect; but really I think you did ‘rub it in’ when you opened that heartily despised convention at the opera house with prayer, when you knew how bitter the feeling is against gold bugs.”

“That may be true, yet as an American citizen, although a minister, I believe I have an equal right

to my political views with any church officer, or any other man; and whenever I consider it my duty to show my colors, I have a right to do so."

"Excuse me Doctor, I was not questioning your right as an American citizen, I was only questioning your judgment at this time of financial loss to so many on account of the 'slump in silver;' and the almost insane feeling, coupled with the intense bitterness toward men who are called 'gold bugs.' "

"As a minister of the Gospel I do not care to discuss the political or financial situation, I only wish to say that I should have the same credit given me that I cheerfully give to others, whom I admit to be conscientious in their views of the situation."

"You certainly have the courage of your convictions, and have always been broad-minded and charitable to everyone; and it grieves me to hear you denounced as an 'enemy of the state.' Having heard the talk about spirituality in your prayer meeting, the few times I have attended with my wife—whatever spiritual matters may be—they appear to me, to be cut out in this unpleasant controversy, and everything has run into bitterness and 'sixteen to one.' "

"If you were a Christian you would understand that although Christianity works wonders in a man's heart, and should control all his words and

acts, a man remains human, and human nature is peculiar. I regret more than words can express, the bad effect such unjust and unreasonable treatment of a pastor will have upon the minds and hearts of men like yourself, who are fair-minded and generous toward churches, although not professing Christians. I have often appreciated your liberality and helpfulness, and prayed that you might be led to fully surrender your heart to Christ."

"I thank you for your kindly interest in me, and realize that we are all human, and that at times life is distressingly practical. Men who were considered rich before the depreciation in silver, are poor; but why you should be made the target for everything don't seem very much like the Christianity I hear so much about. I am the only officer in your church who is what you would not call a 'Christian,' and I am the only man among the officers who is willing to give you a square deal. But you must be tired of this unpleasant subject, so good bye, and if financial help is needed you know where to look for it."

Although so different in what is called "religious sentiment," these men were one in the manner of treating their fellow men, so far as the "square deal" goes; and there were many things in their natures that harmonized. In his home Mr. Bass

was a jewel, and sometimes the pastor remarked: "I wish some of the most pious in our church would learn lessons from the home life of Mr. and Mrs. Bass."

Dr. Brewster knew that all earth's goodness is not wrapped up in the wallets of church members. He also knew that many of these wallets often contained Satan's weapons, and that the mixture of good and evil was so even that it was extremely difficult to decide which predominated.

"Whatever the outcome of all this trouble," soliloquized the pastor, "one thing is certain—my regard for men like Mr. Bass has been greatly increased, and my faith in men like elder Peckwith and his kind has diminished. Just where to draw the line between what is Christian and what is not, is one of the most difficult of all problems; because those we call Christians often do such unchristian things, and those who make no profession of religion, do those things every Christian ought to do."

Thinking men who had listened to the pastor's sermons, never doubted either his scholarly attainments or his keenness when judging human nature. The vividness with which he described character; his readiness of illustration and earnestness, coupled with cheerfulness; his pathos and tenderness when pleading with men to walk on a high

plain; his keen sense of the ridiculous; and his pointedness when rebuking the follies of society, without being bitter, like a perpetual stream of pleasure, did good and pleased the majority of the people.

In recommending a man like Rev. Paul Wardner for assistant pastor, Dr. Brewster showed his broad-mindedness. Although the young man was not as "well grounded in the faith" as elder Peckwith would have liked, he voted to employ him. Elder Peckwith was strong in prayer meeting regarding "The faith that moves mountains," and in his judgment often changed some of God's plans.

As leader of the prayer meeting, Mr. Wardner had said: "There is an overruling Providence that orders the steps of those who trust Him. God knows what is best for His children, therefore we should trust Him implicitly; although we cannot understand His leadings. The best things in this life are not the best things God has in store for His own. The prayer of faith should mean much to a believer in God. Yet if some man's prayer of faith could change God's plan concerning an individual, the changing of those plans might change God's plans concerning other individuals, consequently the Almighty's plans might be changed any time by one of his children."

Part of this was very objectionable to elder

Peckwith, because he and his wife had decided that "metaphorically speaking," they, by their prayers had been leading the way, and the Almighty had been following.

"Some of God's children," said Mr. Wardner, "enter the kingdom through great tribulations, others enter through gardens where flowers bloom and literally carry them to heaven on flowery beds of ease. We cannot explain this any more than we can explain the safe journey by railroad or steamship, of one of God's dear children, and the death of another child dear to him on the same train or steamer. No accident can wreck one or destroy the other without His permission. God knows, we do not. Hair-splitting theologians make many stabs at an explanation without understanding their own efforts."

CHAPTER VIII

MORE OBJECTIONS FROM DANIEL

THE same day on which Mr. Bass made his second call upon the pastor, Daniel said to his father: "Although I have not given up studying for the ministry, I believe that I am farther away from that purpose than I was when we last talked over the matter. Not that I have lost my high regard for the sacred calling, but my contempt for an increasingly large number of church members is so intensified by what I read and hear, that I question the wisdom of a man putting himself into their power."

"Talk about liberty of conscience, and free speech, and then think how some numskull, or back biter, or old crank, whose hypocrisy is well seasoned with all Satan can hatch up against a fair deal being given a minister, makes trouble for an educated, high-minded, Christian gentleman, who is devoting his time to the work of saving souls and elevating men. It is enough to keep any self-respecting young man from taking such a foolish step."

"Think of the preparation that is necessary before a man is equipped for his work, and the ex-

pense connected with the acquiring of his education. Then the unreasonable amount of work that many expect a minister to perform. Here is what a young lady friend placed in my hand. If you don't object I will read it to you:

'To be successful a clergyman is only expected to give as much time

- To study as a College professor.
- To speaking as a lawyer.
- To writing as an editor.
- To visiting as a physician.
- And then he should possess the
Alertness of an antelope.
- Boldness of a lion.
- Credulity of a child.
- Devotion of a lover.
- Earnestness of a Paul.
- Fearlessness of a knight.
- Genius of a general.
- Heroism of a soldier.
- Immovability of a stone wall.
- Justice of a judge.
- Knowledge of a Plato.
- Lovability of an angel.
- Meekness of a lamb.
- Nobility of a king.
- Optimism of a sophomore.
- Patience of a Job.

Quietness of a mute (on occasion).
Robustness of an elephant.
Shrewdness of a politician.
Tenderness of a woman.
Ubiquity of the 'Wandering Jew.'
Voice of Demosthenes.
Wisdom of Solomon.
'Xpectation of Dickens.
Youth of Adonis.
Zeal of a prophet.

And then he should pray that he may find a charge where the members do not expect much of their pastor, and when he finds it, go to work but keep his 'grip packed.' "

Dr. Brewster made answer: "Evidently you are not considering the high ground and blessedness of the Gospel ministry, but are permitting all manner of objections to influence you against engaging in the glorious work of helping to build up the Master's kingdom. You must know that all churches are not controlled by men and women whose sense of justice forbids them giving ministers what you and Mr. Bass insist on calling 'a square deal.' "

"I admit that it is possible, or even probable that I have been unduly influenced by some things that are very objectionable to men with sensitive natures; yet it remains true that in hundreds of

cases ministers have not been treated fairly. Think of the injustice to a minister when he is given four, six, or even twelve weeks in which to 'look for another field;' and when he attempts to secure a church he meets the miserable practice of 'candidating,' which is such a disgrace and so prevalent. An 'old hen' in our church said to Mr. Bass, when speaking of getting a successor to you, 'We will have no trouble getting another pastor, everyone knows that there are scores of preachers sitting on the fence waiting to be asked.' Should you permit your friends to make a fight in your behalf, a lot of preachers who have churches will be disappointed, as well as those who are sitting on the fence."

"I will not make a fight, or permit my friends to do so, but like Isaac, when a dispute arose about the well, I will just pick up and move on rather than have the church divided."

"And yet," said Daniel, "ministers often preach about the 'unity of the church.' Unity nothing: underneath the surface of the majority of our churches there smoulders the embers of war, hatred, bickering, backbiting, and almost everything else the devil and his angels can devise to make it hard sledding for pastors."

"If your mind is so filled with objections to entering the ministry, I fear that your heart is well

MORE OBJECTIONS FROM DANIEL 73

nigh empty of the love for souls that ought to be the compelling and controlling power and highest aspiration of the minister's life and work."

"I imagine how my objections look in your eyes, but I called at your study to have it out with my own beating heart and with you; therefore I am making a clean breast of my objections as they appear to my mind at the present time. I know however, that 'fools never change their minds, wise men do.' "

"Another objection is the failure of churches to increase a pastor's salary as his expenses increase. You know that the Rev. Mr. Davis is right in his complaint. He accepted a call to the Third Church when his expenses were comparatively small, yet large enough for the salary that was promised. Since then the church has prospered greatly and grown in membership. But Mr. Davis has married, and three children have been born in his home, and yet his salary remains the same. The 'call,' like all church calls reads that his salary be such as to free him 'from worldly care,' or to that effect. You know how indignant that old snoozer of an elder was when he spoke about brother Davis having asked for an increase of salary. Said he: 'If his salary is increased, in order to get rid of the money he will be compelled to shovel it out.' I'd shovel him out if I was his pastor, or

bust."

"Mother and I have prayed earnestly that the true light may enter your mind and heart, and that every obstacle may be overcome. We feel that in God's own time and way you will be led to see what is your duty, and be given the needed grace to perform it. We believe that the great consecrations of life are apt to come suddenly and without warning. While we are patiently and faithfully keeping watch in some wilderness, the messenger is journeying toward us with the vial of sacred oil to make us kings."

"Had I the faith and consecration you and mother have I would go through fire and water, neither would all the meanness there is in the church or out of it keep me from preaching the Gospel; but I am sadly lacking in both: and if I have not tired or disgusted you I would like to go through with my present list of objections, for I came loaded this time."

"It is evident that you 'came loaded,' and I fear your objections will result the same as the firing off of an over-loaded gun, and do more execution at the butt end than at the muzzle: but go on you will feel better after unburdening your mind."

"Well then, here is another that I will put in the form of a question. Is it not true that men who make a failure of preaching themselves, often sit

MORE OBJECTIONS FROM DANIEL 75

in a competent pastor's congregation, and are among the most forward to be pronounced in their criticism of the pastor's preaching; and when attending meetings of the presbytery always take sides against a minister who may be having trouble in his church?"

"I admit that I must answer you in the affirmative; yet there are ministers, who from various causes sit in pews, and because of their great souls rejoice in and speak favorably of the doings and sayings of pastors whose merits may detract from their own.

"Mr. Bass said: 'I am convinced, that our church, like some soulless corporation, after getting the strength of a pastor in service, is ready to throw him into the scrap heap; but I hope with tact, patience, perseverance, and sweet oil to pull Dr. Brewster through his troubles.' "

"Mr. Bass means well, but not being a Christian, he sees only one side of the question; therefore is greatly prejudiced, ready to fight, and perhaps unconsciously to tear down what he has helped others to build, in order to get what he calls justice for your father. Respect Mr. Bass and appreciate his loyalty and financial support, but don't let him influence you against the church."

"I am old enough to take with a grain of salt, all that our friend says against the church; never-

theless what he says is to the point and true."

While speaking about the big fish in the church eating the little fish, as the big businesses eat up the small ones, Mr. Bass had said to Daniel: "I presume that is the way the big preachers literally become 'fishers of men.' "

Dr. Brewster said to Daniel: "Although Mr. Bass speaks pointedly, and says many true things about that which is detrimental to the church, he lacks reverence for sacred things. Everything with him has a materialistic color, and he makes no allowance for the wrong doings of weak and incompetent church members. One of his sayings however has amused me because it is so 'pat'—excuse the slang—and that is, that 'Every fellow has his racket.' Another is: 'There is just as much cussedness in one community as there is in another, only it differs in kind.' "

"Yesterday he told me that my superior intellect and genuine piety would not hold me up in any community if my vote on election day differed materially from the vote of my church members; and that unless a minister kept up with the procession, his head—figuratively speaking—would surely be taken off; because the dear brethren have a way of doing this that always proves effectual. They withdraw their financial support. He said, 'Doctor, many are doing this in your church just

MORE OBJECTIONS FROM DANIEL 77

now, so please accept this check as a little token of my respect for you.' "

"Mr. Bass has a heart that stays in the right place, and if there were more men like him, ministers would fare better than they do now. He says inadequate support, and over-work make a heavy burden for clergymen, no matter how strong their faith."

"You will think your son is not likely to follow in your footsteps, or have very much respect for the church; but before leaving your study, I want to read you two verses of poetry written by a minister who was perplexed in mind and short in estate.

'Since all my money now is gone,
And I have naught to live upon;
Grant me, Oh Lord, the special grace,
For meat and bread to run my face.

As I have followed at thy call,
To preach the Gospel unto all,
Give me, Oh Lord, for every day,
My bread, for which I cannot pay.' "

CHAPTER IX

THE CHURCH MEETING

GREAT difficulty was encountered in getting a minister to "moderate the meeting;" all but three ministers in the Presbytery being candidates for "Dr. Brewster's shoes." The three who were not were away from the city, and it looked as though the position would not be filled. It was surprising how many ministers were "sick and could not come." Others had "previous engagements that were pressing."

The dear brethren feared that if they moderated the meeting they might offend some one, and thereby lose their vote when names were considered for the pastorate of that church. These men were waiting to step into the pastor's shoes, and having expressed their views "confidentially" to one or more of the influential officers, their rulings, should they moderate the meeting, might be somewhat tainted with prejudice. Finally a minister, considered too small intellectually to be a candidate, was induced to fill the position of moderator.

Not having interested himself particularly in the "church muss," and there being no bitterness in

his heart—as he was greatly in love with the church he served—he announced a hymn with which to begin:

“I love thy Church, O God;
Her walls before Thee stand,”

After the singing of this beautiful hymn, the moderator read the 133rd Psalm, beginning, “Behold, how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.” He then offered an earnest prayer in which he asked the Lord to “Heal all wounded hearts and drive away all bitterness, that peace and good will might descend upon each head, ‘like the precious ointment that ran down upon Aaron’s beard, that went down to the skirts of his garments.’ ”

At the conclusion of the prayer the hymn, “Blest be the tie that binds,” was weakly sung. One after another quit singing until the presiding officer and “Old Lemon Face” formed a rather lonely duet. Mr. Bass commented on this part of the performance by saying that it was about as appropriate as “My Latest Sun Is Sinking Fast” sung by an infant class in a Sabbath School. “After this,” said he, “the ball opened.”

The pastor’s resignation was read by the moderator. A pause followed, so intense that everyone in the largely attended meeting could feel it. “What

is the pleasure of the meeting?" inquired the moderator. Elder Peckwith arose, and clearing his throat, and looking into the face of his helpmeet in life, and into the faces of those dear brethren who had manifested such an interest in behalf of the church at the joint meeting of the elders, deacons, and trustees, said: "I have no bitterness in my heart toward the one who has led us for fifteen years in green pastures and by still waters, who has spoken words of comfort to sorrowing hearts in time of affliction, and in every way has fulfilled the duties of his high calling. I feel that possibly it is for the best interests of the church we all love so dearly to move that the pastor's resignation be accepted. In making this motion I wish to be distinctly understood that I do so without any personal feeling in the matter; only so far as I have the best interests of our beloved church at heart, and to decide the momentous question which is now brought before us. Whatever the members of the church and congregation may think of me for doing this, I know that the Searcher of all hearts understands the purity of my motives, and the great responsibility that rests upon me as a ruling elder—a man whose duty it is to help rule in spiritual matters connected with church work."

Immediately there was a perceptible stir in the

congregation that sounded like the wheels of a heavily loaded wagon grinding on a graveled road.

Elder Brimhall rose and said: "I second the motion. In doing so I wish to emphasize what elder Peckwith said regarding the absence of personal feeling. Nevertheless for the best interests of the church I hope the pastor's resignation will be accepted. I am as ready to admit, as elder Peckwith is, that Dr. Brewster has made a success of his work; but wish those to remember, who might consider it a detriment to the church to have the pastor leave them, that 'there is just as good fish in the sea as was ever caught out of it.' A younger man will be preferable in such a rapidly growing church. Even the best men have their day, and as the evening of life draws near their physical, if not their mental power, begins to give way, therefore they are less capable of doing the hard work that necessarily belongs to the pastorate of a strong church."

Another and more pronounced stir was noticeable after elder Brimhall sat down. There seemed to be the grinding of the wheels, then a breaking of some part of the wagon. More than a dozen members of the church—men and women—were on their feet; and three of the members of the congregation. Among the latter was Mr. Bass. All began calling: "Mr. Moderator!" The clouds

had come together, the lightning began to flash, and the storm was upon the meeting.

Being unused to moderating public meetings, the moderator was at his "wit's end," and pandemonium to a great extent reigned. Finally quiet was restored, and a Mr. Carpenter, a man of first class ability and prominent in his profession, a lawyer well known and highly respected, a pillar in the financial affairs of the church, was given the floor.

"Although I am not a church officer, I presume I am as near to the man whose resignation is before us, as any officer or member of this church. Fifteen years ago when this church extended a unanimous call to Dr. Brewster, I had the honor of being present at the meeting, and of voting for him. Since that day my respect for our pastor as a man and a minister has increased; and I make the statement, without fear of successful contradiction, that our pastor is the peer of any man who has ever occupied one of our city pulpits."

"Intellectually he is head and shoulders above the majority of his ministerial brethren; and for breadth of sympathy, deep insight into human nature, depth of true charity coupled with sanctified hard common sense, he has few equals."

"Dr. Brewster is recognized by our attorneys, physicians, editors of our daily papers, and business men, as a born leader. A man who has often

been a tower of strength in the support of the great moral questions that have been fought out among our citizens during his successful pastorate in this church."

"I have refrained from expressing my views regarding the trouble that has recently risen in our church; not however because I feared to do so, but believing as I do, that, 'Where there is a little fire if no fuel is placed on it, the fire soon goes out,' I hoped that men's better judgment would prevail, and the whole matter would soon blow over like many family quarrels do."

"I confess that finally I was surprised at the way our church officers, with the exception of Mr. Bass, pushed this matter until the pride and sensitive feelings of our beloved pastor have been injured; and in a conversation with Dr. Brewster I learned that he would insist on his resignation being accepted."

"In the Presbyterian church the majority are supposed to rule; and since the pastoral relation is such that many consider it almost as sacred as the marriage tie, I sincerely hope that nothing will be done at this meeting that savors of hasty or unwise action, or that will place our pastor in a false light before the church and the world; therefore I earnestly wish that Dr. Brewster's resignation will not be accepted at this meeting."

The applause that followed these remarks was so hearty and prolonged that every one knew the pastor's resignation would not be accepted at that meeting.

"Question! Question!" was called for, but others wished to have their say. Among them was Mr. Bass, who was given the floor. "Not being a member of this church, although an officer, I feel that possibly true modesty would forbid my taking an active part in the deliberations of this meeting. Yet having a wife and three daughters who are members, and having been repeatedly elected to serve as a trustee, there are some things in connection with the question before us that I must mention."

"One is the cowardly attack made on the pastor of this church, and the contemptible attempt to stab him in the back." Cries of "Out of order," caused the moderator to request Mr. Bass to be a little more careful of his language. "Mr. Moderator, I thought that I was expressing myself mildly —just a little escaping of the heat that is in me, so to speak—but since the timely request to be careful, I will try and not explode."

"The real cause of this muss has not been referred to. The talk about 'The evening of life,' 'A younger man,' 'The necessity of greater physical strength,' and a lot of more nonsense that has

been presented at this meeting is disgusting to say the least; and the covering up of the real issue under a cloak of piousity is the rankest hypocrisy."

"Why don't the enemies of Dr. Brewster come into the open and say why they wish to get rid of their pastor? Everyone knows that it is on account of his political views that officers and members of this church have permitted their financial losses and their political bitterness to influence them against one of the manliest and best men the Almighty ever made; and it is a burning shame and a disgrace to the name Christianity that this uncalled for and unseemly muss has been stirred up. Therefore I trust that Dr. Brewster's resignation will not be accepted."

The burst of applause was even greater than it was after Mr. Carpenter's remarks. "Question! Question!" was heard on all sides. After a few desultory remarks the vote was taken by ballot. Two hundred and four, not to accept: twenty-eight, to accept. When the vote was announced there was clapping of hands and laughter and tears by many whose feelings were so wrought up they could hardly contain themselves.

After prayer, and the singing of another "appropriate hymn" the meeting was dismissed. The two hundred and four were soon on their way home, the twenty-eight remained to devise ways

and means whereby "the best interests of the church might be served," and they "get justice from the hands of Presbytery."

Elder Peckwith said: "I know the feeling among the ministerial brethren. Almost to a man they have said to me: 'No doubt a change in the pastorate would be beneficial to your church.' And several of them are pressing their claims for attention as candidates. I know that although we are in the minority, all we have to do is to keep the pressure on, and we will win out and get justice."

Elder Brimhall said: "A house divided against itself cannot stand. We must have harmony, and the only way to have it is to get rid of Dr. Brewster. He is the disturbing element."

"Old Lemon Face" said: "As president of the Ladies' Aid, I will, with the Lord's help, do my utmost to restore harmony by helping to get rid of the man, who, by his conduct is destroying our dear church."

All of the disgruntled element expressed themselves as being willing to do their utmost to "restore harmony in the church, that this vine of the Lord's own planting might not be injured; but bear fruit to the honor of His holy name."

It was near midnight when they went to their homes, pledged "to do their part to restore harmony in the church."

CHAPTER X

CLOUDS GATHER

THE pastor had "won out," so said Mr. Bass. "The disgruntled element has been sat down on good and hard." But the pastor knew that half the number which had voted against him were sufficient to "oust him" from his church; especially since his session and the deacons were against him "to a man," and only one trustee stood by him. He also knew that the members of Presbytery, "almost to a man," were "interested in his removal."

Having helped fight the battles of ministerial brethren who were being cruelly imposed upon by disaffected church officials, he remembered the unmanly stand taken by ministers who wished for the good will of these church officers. On one occasion, after he had listened to a pious brother tell how "The church is always greater than the man," Dr. Brewster rose, and in righteous indignation said: "I would sink that church so deep into the earth that not even the tip of the spire could be seen, rather than stand for them in their unchristian and unmanly treatment of their pastor."

Now that the storm was beating upon his head

he knew what to expect. Not justice, but injustice, therefore he would insist upon his resignation being accepted; and to his credit it could be truthfully said, that from the first to the last day, during the unpleasant controversy, Dr. Brewster "Preserved intact his clear ideas regarding what was best for him to do under trying circumstances; and the rigor of his brains sustained the rigor of his heart."

Dr. Brewster was not afraid to make a fight to get justice, but being a good loser as well as a good winner in life's battle, and considering carefully and prayerfully all sides of the controversy, he knew that even though he might keep his church for a while, in the end he would lose out.

Among the petty annoyances in connection with the church fight was the frequent visits of a very good friend, but a very nervous woman. When telling of the "Awful injustice of trying to remove our pastor," her arms and legs would twitch, then her mouth, ears, and nose; and she would say: "Oh dear me, it does seem that I will fly all to pieces!" During one visit she said to the pastor: "Do you believe that what is to be, will be?" In return he asked: "Do you believe that what is to be, won't be?"

The pastor assured her that it was possible to turn a defeat into a glorious victory, and that out

of his mistreatment good might come. This caused the nervous woman to quit twitching and start for home partly satisfied.

Another petty annoyance was the visits from a well meaning member of his church who had the faculty of gathering up the gossip which was going the rounds; then bringing it to the pastor. He told the Doctor that a certain member was "piqued;" and when asked "what about?" answered, "Don't know, only she is piqued." "Well, well," replied the pastor good-naturedly, "I think it is Lamartine who said that 'truly immortal benefactors have seldom been able to accomplish their mission without encouragement of either saints or women.' Evidently the saints have gone back on me, and the women are coming to my assistance."

Soon after the church meeting the elders began systematically to visit the pastors of the various Presbyterian churches, and to call on the numerous "Reverends" engaged in the insurance business, the selling of books, real estate, and other businesses; and whose votes counted in Presbytery the same as those of installed pastors. This was for the purpose of "telling their side of the story," and to poison the minds of the ministers against Dr. Brewster, so that in case the matter should be brought before Presbytery a decision favorable to the twenty-eight might be rendered and the pastor

removed, or be advised to insist on his resignation being accepted.

After the church meeting more than a score of men and women—among whom were the strongest financial backers of the church—called at the manse to see the pastor and his wife, and to let them know how dearly they were loved, and how large a majority stood firm for them. Some of the ladies wept when telling how distressed they were over “This unwarranted attack on our dear pastor.” They assured Mrs. Brewster that it would be “The last of it, because the disgruntled element had been sat down on.” But Mrs. Brewster was a pastor’s wife, and although greatly appreciating the affection manifested toward her husband and herself, knew that there was not a “ghost of a show” for Dr. Brewster to remain with his church. That if he did not insist on his resignation being accepted, although a large majority voted for him, the anxious brethren in the Presbytery would encourage those who were manifesting such an interest in the church’s welfare to carry the fight into Presbytery, where the jealousy toward Dr. Brewster would help “the saints” in his church to get rid of him.

Dr. Brewster was generous and broad-minded, but positive, and when right cared but little how great the opposition to his views, and waged re-

lentless warfare against any unfairness; especially if it was manifested toward some weak church or against the pastor. By so doing he had greatly offended some of the ministers and elders, who thought that now was the chance to get even with Dr. Brewster. His fraternal feeling had endeared him to many ministers and laymen of other denominations, so much so, that already he had been approached by influential men of another denomination to learn if he would accept a call in case his resignation should be accepted.

The pastor often said that "In proportion to the unimportance of the shibboleth was tenacity to it. A mark which has ever characterized narrow and illiberal minds. It is not because a man accepts a shibboleth that he is narrow and small, but because he fights for it."

The pastor had his "shibboleth," and was always ready to give a reason for the faith that was in him, yet he was truly liberal in his views, and respected those whose shibboleth differed widely from his. He looked for the good in men, and not for the evil. Said he: "Evil can be seen without seeking after it; but often we need to dig deep and exercise considerable patience before we discover the good in men; especially in those who have become cynical on account of unjust or imagined unjust treatment."

The next day Mr. Carpenter and Mr. Bass made an appointment with the pastor for the purpose of "Talking over church matters." These friends were prepared to give counsel that was wise and in perfect accord with some of the pastor's views regarding the unpleasantness in the church.

"If this were a matter to be settled in the realm of law, or among business man, there would be nothing more to it; but churches differ widely from anything known in business circles, and excuse me," said Mr. Carpenter, "but it is a recognized fact that men who are disposed to submit gracefully to defeat in social or business matters will fight to the bitter end, and never submit when engaged in some controversy about church matters. What they are pleased to call the 'higher law' upholds them in all their bitterness and unreasonableness."

"Already the twenty-eight defeated members of our church are preparing to attack you more vigorously than they have. Unconsciously perhaps, they are determined to 'rule or ruin.'"

"If they attempted to carry such a thing to a civil court, the judge would dismiss the case, and censure those who proposed such injustice; but an ecclesiastical court is different. The prayer element comes in. The great desire for the extension of the Redeemer's Kingdom has its part, and the greater desire to step into the pastor's shoes prevails;

therefore much as your friends regret the unmanly, unreasonable, and unjust attack that is being made so bitterly against you, they believe you are pursuing the wisest course by insisting on your resignation being accepted."

"Knowing your views, we have called to learn the time when your resignation, if accepted, will take effect; and how long a time you desire in which to secure another call. The injustice along with the great detriment to our church is a shame to Christianity; nevertheless they seem compulsory at this time. The way you are conducting yourself, and the womanliness of Mrs. Brewster, are commanding the respect of everyone whose respect is worth having."

Dr. Brewster replied: "I thank you for your kind words, and assure you that we are trying by the help of the One whose we are, and whom we serve, to keep bitterness out of our hearts, and not lose our faith; either in an overruling Providence, or in the church of His own planting. We are human, and feel keenly the unkind treatment of our enemies; yet we feel just as keenly the kind treatment we are receiving from our friends. Wife and I have talked over the situation, and judge that a younger couple can do better work than we are doing. We realize that we are on the shady side of life."

"Your friends," said Mr. Carpenter, "have never discovered any 'shady side.' And the church has a fine worker in Mr. Wardner. No part of church work is being neglected. The assistant pastor's preaching is popular. Yet many say it lacks the mature thought that is in your sermons."

Mr. Bass remarked: "To an outsider like myself, this whole business looks as though it was tainted with the meanest kind of hypocrisy, and would not be countenanced anywhere else but in ecclesiastical circles; and to my mind is characterized by the same old spirit manifested by the Scribes and Pharisees in Christ's day."

The pastor smiled at the latter part of his good friend's remark, because so unexpected. Mr. Bass was not in the habit of referring to the Bible in any way. Hardly an unbeliever, yet his religious views were humanitarian rather than religious.

"Possibly ministers expect too much from men," said the pastor. "The disciple is not above his Master, nor the servant above his Lord."

"I suppose then," said Mr. Bass, "that so long as the pesky old hypocrites don't crucify you, you think you have no kick coming?"

"My dear Mr. Bass, I can hardly endorse the exact sentiment of what contains a truth, especially in just the way you put it."

"I know that we men of the world sometimes

shock the finer sensibilities of our ministerial friends, but we are compelled to deal more with facts than we are with theories; and try to express ourselves in a way that will be understood. But to return to the matter that brought Mr. Carpenter and myself to your study. You state your time when it will be agreeable for you to have your resignation accepted, and depend upon it, your friends will see to it that you will stay and receive your salary until that date. Pardon a pertinent question, and possibly an impertinent one. Have you laid up anything for a rainy day, during your fifteen years' pastorate?"

"I have less than two hundred dollars in the bank, and that represents my wealth outside the furniture in the manse and my library."

"Just what I expected. Even elder Peckwith knew that you were 'eternally giving to some church board, or to the building fund, or the poor, or in some other way becoming separated from your money.' I'm no Christian, but there is one thing I believe in stronger than most Christians, and that is in a literal hell. It is a fortunate thing for some men that I don't have the directing of souls to their final abode after death; because if I did, I would turn the faces of men like old Peckwith and Brimhall hellward, and see to it that a whole legion of indignant angels were behind them

hurrying their lost souls onward to their doom."

"Please Mr. Bass," said the pastor, "do not show such a bitter spirit, or I will feel that my preaching has been lost on you. We are taught to love our enemies, do good to them that hate us, and pray for them that despitefully use us."

"That is all right Doctor for Sundays, and in some church building, but it won't work in business marts; and while savoring of the spirit of the place you call heaven, is not sufficiently practical for every day use. But since I did not call to engage you in a theological discussion, we will, if agreeable to you, drop the subject for this time. Yet truly I am as anxious to convince you of some of your errors in doctrine as you are to convince me."

"Of one thing you may be assured, neither you or any other minister will ever succeed in hooking me up in a team where such old duffers are wheel horses and leaders, as we see in your church. If they did succeed in doing so there would soon be a runaway that would leave neither harness nor vehicle."

"The next time you call to see me I hope you will be less vindictive in your remarks about the officials in our church. And yet from a purely human side of the question I must give you credit for not being very far out of the way."

"All right Doctor, we quit friends; and really I feel complimented because my wife, who knows me better than you do, says that I am intensely human most of the time."

The pastor told these friends that he would talk matters over with his wife, and announce the time the following Sabbath when he desired his resignation to take effect. With a cordial "good night," Mr. Carpenter and Mr. Bass left the pastor's study.

CHAPTER XI

THE ASSISTANT PASTOR

“**H**OW are you this morning, Doctor?” caused the pastor to look up from his work. “I am reasonably well, thank you, Mr. Wardner. How are you?”

“Well enough physically, but almost distracted mentally.”

“Why so? It cannot be that you have become involved in this miserable church affair?”

“Not in the affair to which you refer, but in a ten thousand times worse one of my own. The affair you know something about. The ridiculous scandal about Miss Cardo and myself has been growing, and ‘facts’ are being circulated freely by the sister you object having people call ‘Old Lemon Face.’ She ‘knows things’ that at first her miserable disposition suggested ‘might be true.’ The ‘placing of my arms around Miss Cardo’s waist,’ and ‘the passionate kiss on her lips,’ that she ‘did not see’ when she first started the gossip, have been revolved in her fertile brain until now she believes that she ‘did see both;’ and is telling it for a ‘fact.’ And because I am standing by you, there are a number who are insinuatingly spreading this evil gos-

sip. How to handle the gossips and the gossip is a serious question, because the evil report can no longer be ignored."

"Should I prefer charges against the wretched woman, they would be filed before the session of which her husband is a member, and the rest of the elders would stand with him. Mrs. Peckwith would wiggle, and squirm, and lie out of it, and the charges would be dropped; and possibly a vote be taken censuring me for preferring the charges: and if carried to Presbytery you know what I would get there."

"Are you sure this evil report is spreading, or has some one misinformed you?"

"The truth is, Doctor, knowing you had troubles enough of your own, I have bothered you as little as possible; and have not made a confidant of you, as perhaps I should have done, and oftener sought your advice."

"This report has almost broken up my home. Unfortunately for me, the first day Miss Cardo sang in our church choir, Mrs. Wardner took a great dislike to her personally. My wife praised Miss Cardo's singing, her style, and good looks, but said: 'I have no use for Miss Cardo,' and nothing that Miss Cardo can do avails to remove the prejudice."

"I am sorry to hear this, and sincerely hope that

it will blow over, because it is such a serious matter; and involves the happiness of a home, the character of a minister, and that of a lady: besides this the good name of our church will be injured. Handle it I beg of you in the most Christian spirit possible, and as delicately as the provoking circumstances will permit."

Mr. Wardner replied: "I have reason to feel how serious a matter it is, and the many hearts that will be crushed by it, unless something is done to put a stop to it. But gossip is like the killing of flies: 'For every one that is killed two take the dead fly's place.' "

A sorrow that had been the assistant pastor's, and that had never been hinted at to any one, was a consciousness that since the birth of his second child, his wife had bestowed all her affections upon her children. Naturally cold, her coldness at times manifested itself in such a way that it amounted to the refusing of the affection her husband tried to bestow upon her. She had said: "Paul, your warm nature, and my cold nature are positively antagonistic to each other." This had almost broken his heart, because he loved his wife intensely, as might be expected from a man of Rev. Paul Wardner's impulsive and intense nature.

Mrs. Wardner appreciated her talented husband's ability, and knew that he was strikingly

handsome; and had never said she did not love him: yet her actions toward him, and the rebuffs he received spoke louder than words. Underneath his sunny, handsome face clouds were gathering, and shadows were beginning to pass between his soul and his God. He must love and be loved, and if the natural channel is closed, a man like Rev. Paul Wardner—although a minister of the Gospel—remains human; and there will be a day when some other channel will be chosen.

The last call Miss Cardo made on Mrs. Wardner she was received so coldly, and evidences of positive dislike for her so cropped out, that the dignified manner in which her questions were answered forbade her calling again. Miss Cardo's feelings were hurt, and she was convinced that the evil reports had not only reached Mrs. Wardner's ears, but were believed. Being an intelligent, accomplished woman, she had a keen sense of the proprieties of life, and was careful not to allude to the cold treatment she had received. To the assistant pastor's cheery "Come and see us often," she answered, "Thank you."

There was not at this time, neither had there been, a word or act that could be construed into wrong thought or action; no placing of his hands on Miss Cardo—much less the placing of his arms round her waist, or the "imprinting of a passionate

kiss on her lips." Possibly there may have been a secret admiration for each other, such as is likely to be felt by these natures.

As assistant pastor Mr. Wardner was brought into closer touch with the choir than was the pastor. The placing of the morning and evening hymns in the choir leader's hands, and the arranging of the details of the services often brought him to the church the evenings set apart for choir practice. Being such a genial, cheery, social man, every member of the choir had something to say to him.

The choir leader's indignation knew no bounds when asked by elder Peckwith if he had noticed any undue familiarity between Mr. Wardner and Miss Cardo. The reply might be termed more forceful than religious, because Professor Samuel Hardine jealously guarded the good name of every member of his choir; and not being a professing Christian did not feel under obligations to be careful of his language when such an insinuating question was asked.

Elder Peckwith and his wife spent the greater part of that evening discussing the depravity of the human race, and that of Professor Samuel Hardine and Mr. Bass in particular; and the "need of the session drawing a tighter rein on the choir and upon the assistant pastor." Mrs. Peckwith thought

that the first thing to do for the purity of the church was to discharge Miss Cardo from the choir, and that the next thing to do was to get rid of the Rev. Paul Wardner. She said to her husband: "If it can be done some one must start the ball rolling. Since we are the recognized martyrs of our church, upon whose heads the ungodly element and the indifferent members, who are spiritually dead, are pouring out their vials of wrath, we might as well assume the responsibility."

Elder Peckwith hesitated at this suggestion. Not but that it was what he wished might be done, but there had been a perceptible falling off of his trade since the attack had been made on the pastor. A number of his best customers had come in, and paid their bills before the end of the month, and had said to the order man: "You need not call at the house, if anything is wanted we will phone to the store." But as yet nothing was "wanted," and being a money-lover, Mr. Peckwith began to think that possibly he had better not take an active part in this unpleasant gossip, and had better be careful about pushing anything more until the pastor was ousted.

Miss Cardo's parents died when she was twelve years of age, and being an only child, she fell heir to the property owned by her father. A sister of her mother provided her a home and looked care-

fully after her education, and when of age, Miss Cardo made the best possible use of the money she received from the sale of the real estate to which she had fallen heir. This enabled her to get first class lessons in voice culture, and after graduating from the conservatory of music she secured scholars and sang in church choirs. She was twenty-seven years of age, and as attractive as any young woman in the city. Having been well brought up and naturally religious, her conduct was above reproach. But now that this terrible gossip was casting a shadow over life's path, there came into her heart an indescribable feeling of helplessness, and a longing for some strong arm to defend her. She never failed to read her Bible, and prayed that she might be kept by "The power of God's might and in the hollow of His hand." Morning and evening she read many precious promises from the Book of Life and received strength from them. Still there was growing stronger day by day a feeling of utter loneliness, and a dread of something that seemed to follow her.

Miss Cardo had never placed confidence in any man, neither had she accepted favors from gentlemen. Her home life, her education, the pleasure she received from her chosen life's work—all united in keeping her soul from being restless or

her nature from asserting itself. Strange as it may seem, although self-possesed, strong mentally, morally, and physically, she did not know herself. Portions of her nature had been asleep, and when they began to awake she was amazed; and at times frightened at thoughts that came into her mind and suggestions from somewhere, which she seemed to resist, and yet to which she clung. "Am I drifting into troubled waters? Am I loosing faith in that true and tried anchor of my soul? Oh God," she prayed, "Help me, defend me, order all my steps!"

There came into her face a noticeable look of fear, and "Old Lemon Face" knew that it was her guilty conscience breaking through her skin. "Murder will out," said the old wretch. "You see if what I have been saying is not true. Just wait a little, and you will notice the same look of fear on our assistant pastor's face."

When Mr. Bass realized to what extent this miserable gossip about two innocent people had spread, and the defenseless position both were in—one a minister, whose reputation was at stake and his usefulness in danger; the other a lone woman, without relations to defend her—all the manhood that was in him was roused. And without waiting for advice he called at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Peckwith and told them what was what

in such a straight-from-the-shoulder, manly way that he literally made both tremble, and secured from Mrs. Peckwith a promise that she would not speak an ill word against Miss Cardo or the assistant pastor; and that so far as was in her power she would help undo the mischief she had done: although she insisted on saying she had "Only repeated what she had heard."

This promise was practically forced out of "Old Lemon Face" by a threat to begin legal proceedings against her for defamation of character. Mr. Bass was not a man with whom to fool, and he said: "If necessary I will spend my last dollar before this great wrong shall be carried farther against two innocent people."

The next day Mr. Bass met Mr. Carpenter and informed him regarding his visit at elder Peckwith's, and what had been said. Mr. Carpenter assured Mr. Bass that in case it became necessary to institute legal proceedings, if his services were acceptable, there would be no cost connected with the work. Said Mr. Bass: "I cannot see why the good Lord ever made such people as old Peckwith and his wife, and after making such a mistake, He don't rectify it by causing their automobile to 'turn turtle' and kill them."

Members of the church and congregation noticed that a change had come over "Old Lemon

Face," and when the gossip about the assistant pastor and Miss Cardo was mentioned in her presence, she "was not prepared to say;" and nothing more was said about "facts:" but occasionally she remarked that "Even the best people were sometimes inclined to misjudge or judge hastily."

One lady remarked, "Evidently 'Old Lemon Face' has received a warning from some direction that she had better go slow about Mr. Wardner and Miss Cardo." Notwithstanding all her meanness "Lemon Face" exerted an influence in the church, and was recognized as one of the leaders in all good work. President of the Ladies' Aid Society, vice president of the Woman's Missionary Society, teacher of a young ladies' Bible class, treasurer of the Ladies' Coal Guild, she also boasted, year after year, that unless out of the city or confined to her bed by sickness, she had never missed a church service on the Lord's Day or a mid-week prayer meeting. Yet it had been said that "Old Lemon Face" in the church did as much damage as a wild bull in a china store. When the pastor heard that this remark had been made, he said, "Severe, but true."

CHAPTER XII

HEARTS SPEAK

THE gossip about the assistant pastor and Miss Cardo began to die down, but two hearts had been sorely wounded and drawn nearer together. Both had been careful when mentioning the subject to refrain from the excessive use of language, or the appearance of being partners in trouble. As a married man Mr. Wardner knew his place, and as an unmarried woman Miss Cardo knew hers, and both refrained from all that savored of confidential talks.

Men and women who are strong mentally and morally are not easily loosened from their moorings. Their affections may be strong and their natures impulsive, nevertheless their better judgment is their pilot. And yet good men and women have permitted their "other self" to step in and surprise the "self" with which they are so well acquainted, and before they were aware of it the "other self" has taken hold of life's reins and is doing the driving.

Occasionally Mr. Wardner walked in the city park, principally for exercise, yet choosing the

more unfrequented parts he often did good work thinking, and would return to his study with a sermon well thought out. Miss Cardo had visited the city park a few times for pleasure and relaxation from work, but had kept near the center of attraction. The assistant pastor and the alto singer had never met in the park, or spoken about going there. But for some reason, the Saturday following the "blessing" given elder Peckwith and his wife by Mr. Bass, Miss Cardo had gone for a walk unusually early, and on account of the soreness in her heart avoided the center of attraction; and had taken a seat in a quiet shady nook some distance from where the crowds congregated. With a book in her hand she was trying to read, and get her thoughts away from all that was unpleasant.

Not long after she began reading, Mr. Wardner's voice started her: "Well, well! this is an agreeable surprise. Really I am delighted to meet you this afternoon, I was thinking of calling on you." "I am always pleased to meet either my pastor or his assistant. But Mr. Wardner!"—Miss Cardo's voice trembled, and the blush of modesty reddened her face. "But what? Does my presence at this time embarrass you?" "Very much," said Miss Cardo. "I am truly sorry, because I have been seeking an opportunity to talk with you on a delicate subject that relates to both

of us; and it seemed to me that when I saw you sitting in such a shady nook that our meeting was providential." The ice having been broken, the color began leaving Miss Cardo's face, and she remarked "Perhaps so."

"I have no desire to intrude my presence on you, but I sincerely believe that we would be benefited by a quiet talk over the absurd scandal that has been going the rounds in our church; and that so distressed you the evening you called at my home." "Nothing else has so affected my feeling, Mr. Wardner, and it is an experience I hope will never cross my path again."

The assistant pastor's reply was such that soon the quiet talk was begun; and ere long the pent up feelings and sense of injustice opened the hearts of the participants wider than either intended.

Miss Cardo said by way of suggestion: "Possibly the best thing for me to do is to quietly leave the city for parts where I am unknown." Mr. Wardner answered: "This world is growing smaller every day, therefore my advice is for you to remain where you are known and have many good friends. Men and women whose friendship is worth having know that this whole matter is miserable gossip. Nevertheless I admit that at times I have been restless under the unjust accusation, and have felt like fighting. We are both old

enough to know that preaching is one thing and practicing another. There is so much in life that is contradictory, and so many things in our own experience which are hard to understand, that we feel weak at times, and hesitate to go forward in the discharge of duties that are plain enough on their face; but inwardly may contain a disappointment or possibly a danger. For weeks I have felt that something must be done, and the sentiment expressed in the inscription on an ancient battle-ax, 'I will find a path or make one,' appealed to me: and yet I knew that even this contained a danger. The experiences of life have taught me that old John Newton was right when he said: 'I never try to carve for myself, but what I cut my finger.' 'A self-chosen path is not always a God-chosen one.' "

"What you say may be true, and I confess to you Mr. Wardner, though you are not my confessor, to feeling my weakness as I have never felt it before. When I see a strong man like you, whose calling should help lead him to the highest heights, faltering because of uncertainty, I hardly know what to think or say. I confess however, that my faith in God, in humanity, and in self has been at such a low ebb. There seems to be a something in me that won't down. Yet I am conscious that what that something suggests is not

right. Can it be that ‘other self’ you preach about is asserting itself strongly and in the wrong direction?”

This led into lines of conversation such as Miss Cardo had never engaged in, and that had been almost foreign to Mr. Wardner’s mind. All the human nature that was in these ill-used people seemed to come to the surface, and an insight into each others thoughts and hearts, that had better not have been had, was obtained. They saw each other in a new light because hearts had spoken.

There are times when the best people fail to speak the right word for their soul’s best interest. And words honestly spoken sometimes bear fruit that surprises the speaker. There was nothing wrong in what was said, or in the way it was said; nevertheless a man of the assistant pastor’s disposition, whose home life was becoming unbearable —through no fault of his own—and a woman like Miss Cardo, whose “other self” had never been fully awakened, and whose affectionate nature had never been trifled with, walked on dangerous ground when their talk grew confidential.

Purity of heart, strength of character, intelligence, and honesty of purpose are safeguards. Yet being susceptible to the influences of the human nature that is inside, as well as to that which is outside, no one is absolutely safe from temptation.

Especially is this true when temptation comes in the form of mutual friendship and helpfulness. "Save me from myself," might not be an inappropriate prayer at any time; but "Save me from my best friend," might appear inappropriate, although greatly needed.

Some of the fruit that true friendship has produced has ripened under a sun that has been hotter than the fruit could successfully stand; although occasional cloudy days and refreshing showers furnished nourishment. There may be a determination to avoid the appearance of evil on our part, yet we may rest assured that many of life's evils will not carefully avoid us. Before these people, whose friendship had ripened rapidly during their unexpected meeting, were aware of it, the sun began casting long shadows across the park and the laborers were turning their faces homeward.

Mr. Wardner hastily said: "I see the men have quit work. Surely time has flown rapidly, and I have kept you from reading the book you brought with you."

Miss Cardo replied: "Possibly I have learned more from our conversation than I would have learned from reading my book."

Mr. Wardner rose, and Miss Cardo placed her ungloved hand in his; for the first time in her life she permitted a gentleman to hold her hand, ex-

periencing that sensation that is more human than divine, and that must exist if the divine purpose is to be fulfilled wherever man is found.

No appointment was made for another meeting, nevertheless both knew that they would meet again in the same place.

CHAPTER XIII

THE PASTOR'S MIND UNCHANGED

TO men like elder Peckwith, and to women like "Old Lemon Face," what did fifteen years of successful work by a faithful pastor mean? Did they mean anything in particular? His nights of weeping and mornings of joy, his days and nights of hard study and anxiety, the visiting of the sick, the burying of the dead, the comforting of mourning hearts, and the warnings given to the wayward, the sermons preached and the lectures delivered, meant everything to the pastor; but were no more to some people than a pair of worn out shoes. Once the shoes answered a good purpose, but they were considered useless now, and the only thing to do was "to get rid of them." The sacredness of the pastoral relation was meaningless, and the breaking up of a home, so long as it was not their home, was nothing to them.

That Sabbath the sun rose with a splendor never surpassed, and the sky seemed to appreciate its beauty. Not a cloud was in sight. The crisp, frosty air was invigorating, and all nature was in perfect harmony. At the manse two hearts beat

as one. Three daughters slept in a well kept lot in the beautiful cemetery, where every lot is endowed. One son was in far away Alaska, the other had just gone to college.

The white haired couple ate their breakfast almost in silence. The usual devotions of the morning were conducted by the pastor. The chapter read was comforting, savoring as it did, more of heaven than of earth. There was pathos mingled with faith in the pastor's voice as he read: "In my Father's house are many mansions." Tears filled the wife's eyes as she thought of leaving the manse where her daughters had died, and from the steps of which she had seen her eldest son start for Alaska, and her younger son go away to college. The pastor prayed, and undoubtedly the Lord God of Sabbaoth heard that prayer. As the old couple rose from their knees, the pastor put his arms around his wife's waist and kissed her, then went to his study to finish preparations for the day's work.

When all was ready the pastor leaned forward, and propped his head on his desk, and tried to rest his tired brain. Not until he heard the strains from the pipe organ did he realize that it was time for him to take his place on the rostrum. Without hesitation he walked to his accustomed chair. His assistant had taken his seat, and smiled pleasantly

as the pastor sat beside him. The auditorium was full—something a little unusual for the opening of the service. The ushers had commenced carrying in chairs from the lecture room.

Soon a quietness prevailed that could be felt. The assistant pastor took the opening part of the service. Then the pastor preached a sermon that was full of Gospel truths, from the text: "Here we have no continuing city, but seek one to come." The tenderness in his voice, and the manliness in his whole bearing impressed every one; and tears were seen in many eyes. After a brief prayer, the pastor read his resignation. It was to take effect at the end of six months.

The pastor briefly stated his reasons for insisting on resigning his pastorate, and urged every one to do their utmost to promote the welfare of the church, and to be united in their choice of a pastor who would "Go in and out before them while breaking the bread of life."

Many heads dropped on the backs of pews, and some hearts were so full that sobs were heard. Mr. Bass walked out of the church. A cloud passed over elder Peckwith's face, as he whispered to his wife, "Six months is a long time to wait." "Be patient Dear, the Lord will be our staff and strength," said "Lemon Face."

During the time which elapsed before a con-

gregational meeting could be held legally, "something was doing." Had it not been for the good judgment and deep convictions of the pastor that the wisest thing for him to do was to get out, there would have been one of the bitterest fights ever known in a Presbyterian church.

"The cussedness" of the twenty-eight had roused all the fight that was in the hearts of many of the pastor's friends, and the "Injustice of the whole affair" had been widely commented upon by many citizens who had seldom attended a service in that church.

The pastor had insisted on his resignation being accepted—not wholly on account of the opposition to him by his church officers and a few others—but partly on account of the fact that all but three ministerial brethren were "candidates for his shoes." Like elder Peckwith, some of these "dear brethren in the ministry" thought "six months was a long time to wait."

Mr. Bass was on the "warpath," and told the assistant pastor: "The preachers in your Presbytery are the measliest, meanest, and most disloyal lot of snoozers I have ever known. The whole bunch ought to be fired so far that they would never light." "You are rough on the preachers," said Mr. Wardner. "Yes I am, and they deserve rough treatment. Do you know Mr. Wardner,

that if such cut-throat tactics were resorted to among business men, as some preachers use, things would grow so hot in business circles, that men would believe that the roof of the lower regions had either come off, or caved in. We who make no profession of religion resort to tough enough tactics to down our competitors, but never get quite as low down as some of you preachers do. Where is your much talked about 'brotherhood of man,' when one knows that the manly thing to do would be for Dr. Brewster to remain as pastor, and the disgruntled element to get out?" The dissatisfied element dared not demand that less than six months be given the pastor to get another field; therefore said, "It is the best we can do."

Miss Cardo remarked: "Surely churches are an enigma." When Mr. Bass heard that she had made this remark, he said: "Enigma! is that what she calls it? Mild ain't she, after the treatment she has received, and the treatment the pastor is receiving. For my part I have quit using mild language when speaking of such a church; and say it without fear or favor of anyone, that our church is a fraud."

Mr. Bass sent in his resignation as a trustee, and insisted that it be accepted. He was "following in Dr. Brewster's footsteps, and would see to it that the Doctor was provided for financially, should

he ever need assistance." It was Mr. Bass' special delight to roast the officers of that church. He told them individually what he thought of them, and felt it was his "religious duty" to cuss them "individually and collectively."

Mrs. Bass was all broken up over the church troubles, because the pastor had been the one minister Mr. Bass "swore by." He often said: "If I can come half way up to our pastor's religion, I would be satisfied and feel safe." Occasionally Mrs. Bass said: "It is evident you go to church to worship Dr. Brewster, and not to worship God."

CHAPTER XIV

HEARTS SPEAK AGAIN

CROSS the “border line” once, and you find it easier to cross the second time. The barriers that keep hearts apart and that are sometimes called “imaginary” are far easier removed than many suppose. After a heart has spoken once, it finds less difficulty in speaking again.

Even the coyness that was one of the marked characteristics of Miss Cardo ceased to manifest itself when speaking to Mr. Wardner, after their accidental, or else providential, meeting in the park.

That there was no good reason for not working together to protect themselves against the gossips in their church, was clear to their minds; and that whatever one heard against the other, if made known when they had the opportunity of doing so, could not harm them.

Much that is reasonable on the surface, when uncovered, contains that which is harmful. The gossip having been started by “Lemon Face,” relating to what she did not see, “yet might have been,” was of a character that had the strength of evil suggestion in it. “Arms around her waist,”

the "passionate kiss," were dangerous subjects to talk about. Especially was this true when the assistant pastor's wife was holding him at arms' length, and the other self had commenced asserting its power in Miss Cardo.

Heart-sick, physically tired, and his brain in a whirl, the assistant pastor had started to the city park to meet Miss Cardo; because it seemed the best and safest place to meet each other. With fear and trembling Miss Cardo had turned her face in the same direction to fulfill her first engagement with a married man. By the time she alighted from the street car she had almost decided not to meet him.

Sometimes our feet seem stronger than our wills, and instead of doing as we desire, we find ourselves doing something else; and permit our feet to take us into "by and forbidden paths."

This day Mr. Wardner had arrived early at the park, and was waiting in the "shady nook." When Miss Cardo approached he remarked: "I came early so as to secure this pleasant and cozy seat."

Without hesitation Miss Cardo sat beside him. Their conversation was earnest, and during the greater part of the two hours they sat beside each other, Miss Cardo's ungloved right hand was held in Mr. Wardner's left.

There was no intention of wrong, but an unexplainable desire to be helped. The mutual feeling of having been wronged caused them to seek strength from each other.

When two hearts that should not beat as one meet and cross the border line together there must be a cause back of their action. It was not gossip alone that led the assistant pastor to make this engagement with Miss Cardo, but deep down in his heart there was something else. He yearned for a woman's love. His love had been rejected by the only woman he had ever loved outside his father's home; and he had been falsely accused by that woman of wrong doing, when he knew there had been no reasonable excuse for her doing so. Where was he? Had he commenced drifting toward some dangerous shoal?

Impulsive natures have frequently caused impulsive love; but there is a vast difference between them. Nevertheless impulse often has the germs of love in it, and if cultivated will grow and ripen into love.

"The church trouble" had not affected the assistant pastor's position to any marked degree. His remaining with the church or going away was a small matter in his eyes. He preferred the pastorate of a church unhampered by an associate, and would rather be the "head" than the "assist-

ant." The salary would be equally good in some smaller church, if he was a pastor; and his standing in Presbytery a little more independent. Instead of being known as "Dr. Brewster's assistant" he would be recognized as a "pastor;" and instead of being "passed by" on many occasions, he would be the one most in evidence.

Mr. Wardner was loyal to the pastor, and had often expressed himself in a straight-from-the-shoulder, manly way, which he knew would make his remaining with the church doubtful after Dr. Brewster retired.

The cause of his requesting this meeting with the alto singer was brought about by home troubles. Was there a way by which Miss Cardo might help allay his wife's jealousy, and if so could she suggest it?

Miss Cardo had never mentioned the way Mrs. Wardner treated her the last time she called. Neither had Mrs. Wardner mentioned to her husband that she had called. It was a great surprise to learn that any one should be treated so by Mrs. Wardner. Was Miss Cardo sure she did not imagine a part or the whole of it?

The assistant pastor knew that his wife was cold and distant at times, but could not believe that she would so far forget herself as to become rude. Miss Cardo said: "I should not have mentioned

it, only it seemed forced from me by your question."

Like the explosion of powder in an undeveloped mine, there is no telling what will be discovered by a question as that to which Miss Cardo referred. What might be termed the "toboggan slide" of love's unholy desires carries men and women rapidly downward; and although the Russian saying could not truthfully be applied to these troubled hearts, the borders of it more than touched the hem of their garments—"Wherever the king of love came, he left no room for the strong arm of chastity. The perfume from flowers that grow all along forbidden paths has an intoxicating influence. Nor can it be consistent with the conditions of love that any thought of life should divert the heart from affection for its mistress."

Even a married man's heart may turn toward another woman for sympathy, when his wife's heart turns him away from her. For months, on Monday, the assistant pastor had been accustomed to riding to the end of some street car line, and then taking a long walk into the country. While doing so he meditated upon nature's wonderful works, and often thought out the outlines of sermons. His love of nature when a boy amounted to a passion, and this passion increased as he grew older. His wife never seemed to be interested

along this line, while the alto singer delighted Mr. Wardner with her enthusiasm over the descriptions of what he saw, and the feelings awakened by nature.

Mr. Wardner's long walks helped keep him vigorous, and enabled him to do an immense amount of work. This mutual admiration for nature was a bond between them. Although warm hearted, impulsive, and fond of convivial pleasures, the assistant pastor had never inclined toward immorality. Nevertheless the awakening and increased interest in another woman, besides his wife, tended toward that which men should avoid, lest to their sorrow, they discover when it is too late, that the lack of self control is one of their weaknesses.

It will ever remain true that an affectionate man runs as great a risk in marrying a woman who is absorbed in something else besides her husband, as a woman runs in marrying an "absorbed man," whose greatest love is for books; even though his character is irreproachable. Undoubtedly the assistant pastor and his wife were "ill-mated," though both were intelligent and refined.

His greatest craving was for a woman's love. His wife desired above all things the comfort, happiness, and advancement of their children. Her whole life had become wrapped up in what she

considered their welfare. Mother-love for her children had completely covered a wife's love for her husband. She was apparently unconscious of it; but it had become noticeable. Not only the alto singer was aware of the feeling it made in Mr. Wardner's heart, but the pastor had grieved over it; and asked his wife to try in some way to inform the woman whose heart had been given entirely to her children, of the mistake she had made; and how she was unconsciously alienating her husband's affections, and the danger of driving him to seek sympathy from some other woman.

Hearts that warmly seek after sympathy, soon touch some part, and have been known to touch all parts, of other hearts that crave affection. It is a pity that sound morals do not always accompany intellect; and that warm affection should not always be confined within virtue's walls. We may be slow to condemn affection's waywardness, and not care to weaken the eternal distinction between right and wrong. Nevertheless affection's overflow, or its seeking an outlet when unfortunately hedged in by that which can never be righted by human wisdom, seems not void of palliation.

Affection must and will be bestowed on some one or something. It never has and never will be left unused. A sickly sentimentality may rest quietly under a lid, sealed and screwed down, but affec-

tion never. Affection, though under restraint, if not appreciated by the one to whom it is due, will seek a channel where its strength will assert itself and its sweetness and influence will be appreciated.

Being strong, its strength often surrounds it with temptation; and if connected with wayward nature that has been uncontrolled by a higher power than man, then nature will goad it on to overt acts of unbridled love, regardless of duty or the opinion of well regulated society.

Some men and women are born with far keener sensibilities than other members of the human race possess. They have powers of affection of tremendous sweep and force, and when these powers are neglected by those whose duty it is to help guide them, or when they are injudiciously crossed by a partner in life, or what is worse mortified, unhappiness will soon be written over that home.

All that was said by the assistant pastor and the alto singer during their second meeting in the city park, would require a volume to record and explain. Miss Cardo could not help meditating upon one thing Mr. Wardner had said: "When we consider the aspirations of the soul and its unrest, its indefinite longings, its raptures, and its despairs, the unfettered imagination that at times leads the soul into the light or toward darkness, controlling every impulse of affection and passion, mixing

transports of passion with the purest love, we are in a wilderness of ecstasies, doubts, joys, and sadness; and are tempted to distrust the virtues which we have been taught to exalt, and the better self that is in every man and woman declares must be recognized and properly exalted, in order that humanity may not prove a failure."

Miss Cardo had asked as an answer to this: "Can it be true that the first emotions of passion, however violent, may be pardoned; and it is only the course of them which makes them inexcusable?"

"You have asked a pointed question Miss Cardo. One that calls for a pointed answer. Passions are perhaps the 'strings' without which they say no honey is made. Yet I believe all sorts of men agree, they ought to be our servants and not our masters; to give us some agitation for entertainment or exercise, but never to throw our reason off its seat. Better no passion, than to have it too violent; or such alone, as instead of heightening our pleasures, affords us nothing but vexation and pain."

"It being unnatural for man to court and hug solitariness, his face and heart will be turned toward company. If by so doing he falls into sin, he gives evidence of being a man. Should he grieve over his sin, there is evidence of his being a saint; but should he boast of it, the devil will soon have

him."

"Guilty solicited love and encouraged passion find many doors men believed locked by intelligence, that open quickly when the one desired knocks for admittance. And while there will ever remain a vast difference between lust and affection, uncontrolled affection has often ripened into lust and borne all the marks of passion."

"Customs and manners change, but human nature will ever remain the same. Yet what has passed for chivalry is now considered vice. Without its devotion to the fair sex chivalry would have lost a very abundant portion of its life and spirit. Its very motto was 'For God and the Ladies.' "

"Cervantes says: 'A knight without a mistress is like a tree without leaves or fruit, or like a body without a soul.' "

"I am somewhat surprised, Mr. Wardner, to hear you speak as you do. It is so different from anything I ever heard. Can it be that your other-self is beginning to assert itself strangely and strongly? Should our other-selves come together I fear for the result. Really this thought frightens me," said Miss Cardo.

"There is no reason for our not becoming intimate friends, but there is reason for both of us to control our other-self, and enjoy what is right while avoiding the appearance of evil," said the assistant

pastor.

"We may not meet in this shady nook again, but the words spoken will never be erased from memory's pages; and were it not for gossiping tongues I would see you home, Miss Cardo, but must say good-bye for to-day."

CHAPTER XV

THE PASTOR'S RESIGNATION IS ACCEPTED

AT the end of two weeks the pastor's resignation was accepted, to take effect in six months. Now that he was practically free, he could candidate at his leisure, and secure another field.

Many said: "Dr. Brewster will soon have a stronger church, and a better salary." But the Doctor and his wife did not expect either. They knew that a minister past sixty is not in demand; and ere long the pastor "bumped up against" the "forty-five years old" ministerial line.

He was "favorably introduced" to three "desirable churches" in other states, but was informed that they were "looking for men under forty-five years of age." His friends in his own city were strongly insisting on the organizing of an "Independent Presbyterian Church." So far as financing the scheme, there would be no difficulty, but it meant the death of the church he was leaving; and to the pastor that seemed the height of folly and disloyalty to the church in which he had been ordained, and to which he had given the best years of his life.

The invitation to become the pastor of a church of another denomination in the city where he had labored fifteen years was flattering, and yet there was in it something that savored of the spirit of attempting to tear down what he had worked so faithfully to build up.

Mrs. Brewster stood nobly by her husband in his determination to remain with the church of his choice, and to labor just as faithfully in a smaller field, if that was God's will.

When it became known that the pastor had accepted a call to a village church, his friends said: "It is a shame for a man with his splendid abilities to go to so small a field." The Doctor smiled and said: "No part of the Lord's vineyard should be overlooked; and no field where souls are to be won to Christ is too small for the greatest man in the ministry." He also said: "Make any duty clear and commanding to a Christian and he will cheerfully conform to it."

Before Dr. Brewster left the city, a minister from outside the city, whose chances to be invited to take charge of the church were good, called to see him, and asked: "Are there any peculiarities about the people who compose the membership of your congregation?" "Only the usual peculiarities of human nature, and you will find a good friend in the janitor." The would-be "new pastor" did

not succeed in drawing anything in particular out of the retiring pastor. Dr. Brewster was conservative, yet keen in all his answers.

One thing that greatly pleased Mr. Bass was the way the ministers in the Presbytery, who manifested such an "interest in the pastor's removal," got "turned down." Not one of them was "given a hearing." They had been "too anxious to see a change in the pastorate" of that church. Mr. Bass expressed his pleasure at their "disappointment," and received a gentle reminder from the pastor that "All the misunderstandings, quarrelings, and weaknesses of his ministerial brethren, and the mistreatment he had received, would be forgotten in the better world; and as brethren, redeemed and washed clean, would bask together in the sunshine of Christ's presence and love."

"Dr. Brewster," said Mr. Bass, "I would give all that I possess for a good portion of the spirit that is in you, but that is impossible. Your religion leads you to forgive and forget the injuries done to you, while my principle is 'Help your friends, and swat your enemies just as hard a blow as you can give.' "

"Hardly so bad as that." "Yes, just that bad, and some of our mutual foes will feel my just wrath and indignation as sure as they have felt the warmth of your forgiveness." "We must forgive,

"if we expect to be forgiven." "Yes, yes, but first I intend to let some of them know that 'Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap.' "

"I am pleased that you are beginning to quote portions of Scripture correctly, even though you are inclined to misapply them."

To a sympathizing ministerial friend who had been "let out" of a very influential church in another denomination, and who had practically been compelled to accept the pastorate of a small, and in his eyes "unimportant field," Dr. Brewster said: "It is seldom that very great men lead either a life of perpetual contemplation or of perpetual activity."

"Without occasional rest and leisure to mature knowledge, no man can arm himself with the weapons of the gods. To be truly great, a man must blend a life of activity with a life of study, like Moses, who matured the knowledge he had gained in Egypt amid the deserts of Midian."

Now that the pastor would soon be settled in a village, he felt that a long cherished desire to do literary work along certain lines would be gratified. He did not intend neglecting either his work for the pulpit, or his pastoral work among the people; but he could see that the work in a village would be far less than in a city. Just how to get away from his friends who had stood so loyally by

him, without permanent injury to the church, was a serious question.

The Ministerial City Alliance, of which he was chairman, was planning to show the high esteem in which he was held by churches of all denominations, and his presbytery would cause something complimentary to be spread upon the minutes, and a copy of the same would be placed in the pastor's hands. That there might be as little bitterness in the hearts of his own church members as possible, under the circumstances, was the pastor's earnest desire.

The newspapers were friendly, for they had always received the most courteous treatment from Dr. Brewster for fifteen years. They spoke in the highest terms of "the retiring pastor."

"The stowing away of a talented man at the age of sixty-three years" was an "outrage" in the eyes of Mr. Bass, and "showed how little common sense there is in the Presbyterian Church." Mr. Carpenter remarked: "Our friend, Mr. Bass, delights to rub it into the churches and church people; nevertheless we must admit that one of the crying evils of the present day is the lack of fair treatment of ministers. This is keeping many level headed, intelligent young men from entering the ministry; and I believe that one of the greatest blessings that can be imagined would be the closing of every

theological seminary in America, for at least ten years. It would make people think, and cause them to open their eyes to the enormity of the crime against manhood, the Christ, and the Church."

"Like some other professional men, I love the church, and am willing to contribute liberally toward its support; but would be unwilling to contribute one of my sons, when I know the treatment he would receive would wound the sensibilities of an educated man, and at an age when in my own profession our counsel is considered the most valuable, he would be considered on 'the shady side of life,' and find it difficult to secure a competent living. What I have long considered a disgrace to Christianity continues to raise its ugly head, namely, for Presbytery to permit a man or woman who is literally a fire brand to scatter himself or herself among a congregation, until others who should know better are affected by them. A minister may preach with the spirit and power of Paul, he may distribute the zeal that is in him among the people, his strength may be spent in going about doing good; and yet one dissatisfied official, prominent in church affairs and influential on account of his money power, can completely upset and unsettle such a pastor. Call him a 'Church Boss,' or whatever name you please, he is there, and no power on earth has ever been able

to remove him."

Mrs. Brewster's lady friends remembered her handsomely, and were urgent in their request that she was to "Remember that a cordial welcome awaited her and the Doctor in their homes as often as they desired to visit the city."

"The final winding up of the whole miserable, hypocritical farce; and the apparent respectable preparation of a godly man and his faithful wife, for the old age scrap pile is finally concluded," said Mr. Bass. As the train pulled out of the depot handkerchiefs that waved a farewell to the pastor and his wife were soon wet with sympathetic tears; and if the Almighty ever 'bottles' the tears of the righteous, the tears that coursed down the cheeks of the aged minister and his wife, as they left the city and people they loved so dearly, were surely 'bottled.' "

CHAPTER XVI

MAC DOUGALL HEARD FROM

GOD does not forget His own when dark clouds envelop them. Often when one burden is placed on His children's shoulders another is removed. The burden of sadness that was so heavy to bear, was lightened, if not entirely taken away, by a long letter from their eldest son; who informed his parents that he had "struck it rich" in the Nome gold fields, and expected to be home in a few months.

Their "wandering boy," their "first born"—the one who had turned his back upon the church—was coming home, "prepared," as he wrote, "to take care of his aged parents." When the news reached the city, Mr. Bass said, "Good for MacDougall. I always knew he had the right stuff in him, although he does damn the churches. Mac is O. K., and in some way will help heal the wound in his parents' hearts."

MacDougall was a "man of few words," so much so that even his mother, whose influence had often been a power to hold her son in his wildest days, knew but little about his associates or his

affairs.

One young woman—a college classmate for the freshman year, but whose course of study after that led in another direction—was very near MacDougall's heart. Unknown to his parents, she had often talked seriously with Mac about making the best of his talents, and controlling the wild streak that was in him.

Before leaving for Alaska MacDougall had proposed marriage to this young woman; and although she did not refuse his offer, she made their proposed marriage conditional. Said she: "MacDougall, you know some of your weaknesses, and they are not unknown to me. You are young, and so am I. Marriage is a serious matter, something not to be hastily entered. I love you dearly for your manly traits of character, and possibly realize as few young people do, that the man who makes no mistakes has never really begun life's battle, and will achieve no triumphs."

"I am willing to trust your love during our separation, and I believe you are willing to trust mine; but Mac, the church to which you are so opposed, ought to be your pride when blessed by having a man like your honored father in one of her pulpits. The religion you are so bitter against, should be the strength of your manhood, and the light of every home. For your parents' sake, for

your own sake, and for my sake, think this matter over seriously and do not I pray you longer permit your prejudices to control you."

Without any promise in particular on MacDougall's part these young stout hearts came nearer together than ever before, as a warm kiss was given in love and received in purity, and the good-bye was said. She too knew that MacDougall had "struck it rich," and ere long would be home.

His letters, never very long, showed marks of trueness; nevertheless some of his brief yet graphic descriptions of "wild life in Nome" made his sweetheart fear that in some way he had ventured too near the precipice. In several letters she lovingly, yet firmly, warned her lover against permitting his weaknesses to control him. But now that she was to look into the face of a lover who no longer could be thought of as a graduate with a "creditable standing," but as a weather-beaten strong man who had successfully faced the hardships of Alaska—first as a trusted employee of a mining company, then as an independent seeker after a fortune in the gold fields of Nome—there was, she admitted, a strange feeling of admiration mingled with love; yet something akin to fear in her heart as the time approached for her lover to return. Of admiration, because he had "won out;" of love, because she could not help loving her handsome

suitors; of fear, at the thought of becoming "a part of a man," of being "one with some one."

Five years had been a long time to be separated, and physical changes, as well as mental had come. Now Miss Evelyn Martin felt that she was "a woman," which in her eyes was far more than "a graduate from a college;" and that MacDougall must have developed into "a man." She could be caressed by a college chum, or by a graduate; but "the man" thought caused such a queer sensation, that she had asked her mother: "Were you ever afraid of father?" She received for an answer: "No my child, only so far as womanly modesty at first dreads to be intruded upon even by the man one has married."

Then her mother had asked: "Is that feeling troubling you as you look forward to your probable marriage?" "Not that exactly, only I am nervous, and wish MacDougall was here so that I could be with him, and know that our love has not grown cold. Hardly that either, but just to see if we are the same to each other we were five years ago."

In MacDougall's home a mother's heart was warm, and the weeks were beginning to be counted. "Father" was often asked: "Does the time not seem long while we are waiting for Mac to come home?" Had exposure during five years in Alaska

changed Mac's looks? and had his mother's prayers, that he might be strong to resist temptation, been answered? Mac was in his mother's mind, and lay heavy upon her heart. Now that he was coming home—a successful man of the world—would his attitude toward the church change, and would his marriage to a sweet Christian woman help remove his prejudices?

The assurance of a competency for their advancing years relieved the pastor and his wife of any anxious thought concerning their temporal welfare; and pleased them to know a son had them in mind in his hours of prosperity. Yet after all, worldly riches were not uppermost in this faithful couple's mind and heart. Their three daughters had been earnest Christians; and though taken from them for a season, they were confident they would meet again in a better world.

Daniel—at one time a disappointment because he did not study for the ministry when he left for college—was a Christian. MacDougall was the one broken link in the family circle, and this grieved his mother. Nevertheless Mac was her “first born,” and dearly loved.

Instead of being “several months” before Mac returned, a few weeks later a telegram from San Francisco was received, informing his parents that the money for his mine had been paid; and they

could look for him the following week. Joy filled the hearts of the old folks, and a similar message caused Evelyn Martin's heart to beat fast.

When MacDougall went to Alaska his father was the pastor of a strong and influential city church, and there were no indications of any change being made. Now Dr. Brewster, after passing through the furnace of church troubles was pastor of a village church.

CHAPTER XVII

THE ASSOCIATE PASTOR

MR. WARDNER was asked to supply the pulpit of Dr. Brewster the Sabbath candidates were not being heard, until a pastor could be chosen. This gave the assistant pastor full use of the study, and made a convenient place to prepare his sermons and meet his friends.

He was appointed moderator of the session until the next meeting of Presbytery, and consequently heard all letters, regarding supply for the pulpit and relating to candidates, read. A curious lot of epistles. The majority being from ministers who were "pastors." Some of these men had been "installed" less than six months. But few mentioned the fact that they were seeking a larger salary, or a more prominent church. Yet this could easily be read between the lines of their letters.

A variety of recommendations that accompanied applications, or were sent to the clerk of the session by interested friends who had been asked to write in the behalf of certain men, were received. The clerk of the session said: "I never supposed there were so many talented, successful pastors in

the Presbyterian church, who, for various reasons were willing to leave churches where they had so endeared themselves to their flocks; and who ‘stood so high in the estimation of their ministerial brethren.’ ”

He thought it would be “cruel to separate these pastors from pulpits and people they loved so dearly.” It was an “eye-opener” to Mr. Wardner. Since this was his first experience as moderator of a vacant city church session. The first month over fifty applicants for the vacant pulpit, had either asked for a “hearing,” or had requested friends to recommend them.

The man whose chances seemed so very good, and who had called to see Dr. Brewster; and asked so many questions regarding the church members, was “turned down,” and at the end of the first month no one was “in the lead.”

Mr. Bass said: “Evidently the session decided that the best thing to do was to furnish the preachers a fair field and no favors.” Mr. Carpenter thought it the only sensible thing the session had done in a long time.

The second month one candidate made it known in his sermons that he had traveled extensively in Europe, had spent six months listening to lectures and studying at Oxford, and had visited Egypt and the Holy Land. He was anxious to display his

own importance, rather than present the Gospel. Some one irreverently remarked: "It is a great pity the reverend gentleman has not extended his visit long enough in Europe to have prevented our being bored by him."

This man was followed by a minister who belonged to the highest type of higher critics, and left so little of the Bible that people feared, that should he be called as pastor, "his Bible would be so small that he would soon run out of texts." After this experience a man preached who pleased many in the congregation; but was considered far too independent in spirit to suit the elders and deacons. But at the earnest solicitation of members of the church and congregation, he was "chalked down," as Mr. Bass told his wife, as a "candidate whose name would be voted on."

Sabbath after Sabbath ministers appeared in the "show box." Some, according to the reports brought home by Mrs. Bass and her daughters, "performed well;" others had "unpleasant mannerisms," or had "poor health," or a "weak voice," or "talked too loud." One minister "had his necktie on crooked," and his "general make-up lacked that neatness their church required in a pastor." Yet it was admitted that he was the most "forceful speaker," and preached the "most eloquent and logical sermons they had heard from

the many candidates."

Then vacation season came on. Since many would be away from the city during the summer it was thought best not to hear candidates until the people returned. During the summer months the assistant pastor was to occupy the pulpit. Mrs. Wardner was invited to spend a month with an influential family at their cottage among the mountains, and took her children with her; so that the assistant pastor was left alone. How lonely a man of Mr. Wardner's disposition becomes, when left alone in his home, no one of a different disposition can imagine. Nor does anyone know better how to use the opportunity presented by his loneliness for his own purposes, than Satan. Quite naturally, when thinking of company, Rev. Paul Wardner thought of Miss Cardo.

Having confided in each other, but few difficulties needed to be removed before the study proved a pleasant, though not altogether safe place, for them to meet and enjoy each other's company. Safe enough from scandal monger's eyes, but not safe from their "other-self." A couch on which the assistant pastor sometimes rested himself was the most convenient place for two intensely interested people to sit whose hearts had grown warm toward each other. Often minds move bodies in the same direction. Many good people have been

surprised at the extreme modesty of sin when approaching a tender conscience. So modest in its requests and suggestions, that at first sin does not appear on the surface; but when once it has secured a footing in some heart, how immodest its proposals, and how stern and unyielding its demands.

Like the murderer, who approaches his victim with the intention of drowning him; but at first asks permission to wash the tips of his victim's fingers, nothing else has a softer voice when softness answers the purpose, than sin. No voice is harsher when sin's victim is helpless and can be driven.

"Surely in vain the net is spread in the sight of any bird;" and yet human nature, unadorned with mystery, has taught us that like the silly bird, men and women have permitted themselves to be decoyed into some net by the bait their own hearts have provided, and refuse to be warned by what their eyes see and their better judgment dictates. Therefore instead of carefully considering whether or not they stand on a firm footing, they place themselves on some treacherous covering that conceals beneath it an enormous abyss. Sometimes one heart draws more strongly than others, and sometimes two hearts appear to draw with equal strength. If the stronger heart desires, it can easily

master the heart that is weaker and make it its own.

It is not always true that "he who is immersed in the contemplation of a vice feels a hatred of vice." The intensity of his hatred is not always measured by the intensity of his contemplation. The force and duration of emotions must be considered, and the intensity of a man or woman's nature must not be overlooked. Affections, may at first, be considered as a generous stimulant which produces a pleasant excitement and intoxicates the senses to a limited degree; and if too closely confined, like some kinds of liquor, it will burn all that it touches, and will corrode even the vessel which contains it.

It is unwise to attempt to depict any part of affection as being ugly and repulsive. It may however be depicted as having its danger points, where if not strengthened or subdued as may be needed will run into voluptuous passion, that unless checked in time will bring ruin, not only to the unsuspecting; but also to men and women of wide experience.

Sometimes we find it difficult to be as inflexible in judging the flow of our affections as we should; especially is this true when our nature is warm and impulsive. "When convinced of wrong doing none are flayed so reluctantly as self, although conscience may suggest a severe whipping."

There were times when the assistant pastor half

confessed to his beating heart, that everything was not just as it should be between Miss Cardo and himself. To mention this to the alto singer would be a great wrong. Neither one was wholly to blame. Circumstances over which they had no control first opened up the avenues of their affections. Neither one was bad at heart, yet both had gradually drifted too near each other in thought and deed.

Rev. Paul Wardner knew that he was intensely human, yet had always been the "soul of honor." He was a man of wide experience along many lines, and still under forty years of age. A first class judge of human nature, yet modest regarding his own ability; elegant in his manners, spotless in his character; and honorable in his dealings with all; and especially tender toward the erring, whether inside or outside the church.

He was a person in whom men had great confidence, and whose magnetism influenced those who came in contact with him. The assistant pastor much preferred to help men walk on a high plane than to strike the fallen or cause any to fall.

Without being aware of his danger, changes were taking place in his character; because there was a time when in his deep calm, he quietly listened to his own clear, strong, and invigorating thoughts without dark clouds passing between his soul and his God. There was sweet peace within and around

him. Mr. Wardner appreciated everything that was practical, yet his imagination was keen. Frequently he felt the force of Wordsworth's words: "To me, the meanest flower that blows, can give thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears."

He delighted in the grandeur and beauty which he beheld in nature, and read helpful lessons in the "trivial events which weave the woof of our most commonplace days." But this man had dared too much against conscience, and walked too near the precipice of sin; and while preaching to others to avoid the appearance of evil had not avoided it himself.

While conversing with Miss Cardo the assistant pastor confessed that during the past ten days unholy affections had burned deep into his soul, and that he had sat for hours in his study and mused, while he permitted the wildest fancies to fill his brain, until every thought in his mind boiled like bars of metal heated in some furnace. Then saner and purer thoughts would come into his mind, and bring relief so that he could work on his sermons.

Miss Cardo knew that she was drifting away from moorings that had always held her safely, and she began to realize that vague sense of some evil to come which always carries with it uneasiness and fear. The greater the fear in our hearts the

longer and larger grow the shadows.

The shadows began to frighten her, therefore she said. "I believe I had better not visit you again in your study, because each time we become more familiar, and no telling where our liking for each other will lead us. If you were an unmarried man it would be far different." Miss Cardo was almost paralyzed when the assistant pastor quoted Dryden's words:

"Why should a foolish marriage vow,
Which long ago was made,
Oblige us to each other now,
When passion is decay'd?
We loved, and we loved as long as we could,
Till our love was loved out in us both,
But our marriage is dead when the pleasure fled;
'Twas pleasure first made it an oath."

These words could not have found a ready response in the assistant pastor's heart unless affection's cords for his wife had been severed. They strike a responsive cord only in the hearts of those whose foundation stones have been loosened by impure thoughts and unbridled affection.

It will ever remain true that betwixt the slime on the bottom and the scum on the surface of much that passes for affection rolls the turbid river of lust, that can never be purified by its own motion;

and the true color of this dangerous stream is visible to every close observer, no matter under what cloak it may attempt to hide.

Before Miss Cardo recovered from the shock she had received, the assistant pastor's arms were around her waist, and he had drawn her close to him. Yet she did not struggle to be freed from his embrace, because that "other-self" forbade her doing so.

The "ice had been broken," and the delights of a lower self felt. Therefore that "passionate kiss," suggested months before, by "Lemon Face," was given and received with pleasure. Miss Cardo said: "I am surprised at you Mr. Wardner, and ashamed of myself. How strange all this seems, and how treacherous is human nature. Are our actions proof that,

'He alone may be true in whom none will confide,
And the nymph may be chaste that has never been
tried?'"

"The truth is, Miss Cardo, the treatment I have received from my wife has almost unbalanced my mind; and having permitted my liking for you to grow into love I am bewildered, and know that I am not myself." How true,

"The voluptuous kiss, given without pure intent
Soon melts the morals of the most earnest saint."

CHAPTER XVIII

AFTER VACATION

"WHEN the show box was again opened," said Mr. Bass, "the performers again began to perform." "Candidates" had been "crowding" the session for a "hearing," and the number had increased two fold.

It was impossible to hear all the available and highly recommended candidates; therefore the committee began to carefully select those they thought the most desirable.

Mr. Bass tried to tease his wife by saying: "The crowd of candidates reminds me of the crowds that tried to get into Dan Rice's free afternoon circus performance, when all boys under fourteen years of age, in St. Louis, were admitted free, if they could get in."

The greatest surprise which the moderator of the session met was the swiftness with which the committee was made acquainted with anything considered derogatory to a candidate's reputation as a minister. The smallest indiscretions were emphasized; and if a candidate had ever had any trouble where he had been pastor, or his health had

ever been poor, or one of his family had ever slipped on life's trail, it was reported and enlarged upon.

There seemed to be an underground ministerial wire for the express purpose of quickly reporting everything that would be injurious to a candidate's prospects. Yet how "courteously and fraternally" the ministers met each other if one happened to appear on the scene before another got away.

Mr. Bass and Mr. Wardner discussed this "feature of the performance" to their heart's content, and decided that it was nothing less than "a regular cut-throat business," although it was "carried on by ministers." This weakened the assistant pastor's faith in his ministerial brethren as nothing else had, and caused him to almost wish he had chosen another profession.

Having begun to lose faith in himself, the failures and short-comings of his brethren were magnified until he became cynical at times, and began to lose confidence in humanity.

An "exceptionally strong man," regarding whom the committee had been "flooded with recommendations" from east, west, north, and south, was given a hearing. This D. D. and LL.D. was all that could be desired. His appearance was attractive, and his sermons logical and interesting. "We have found the right man" was heard on all sides.

Some said he went beyond their "highest expectations." But when interviewed regarding the acceptance of a call, it was discovered that this strong man had been "misinformed regarding the salary paid."

The assistant pastor's salary of eighteen hundred dollars had been added to the pastor's salary of thirty two hundred, and "salary for pastor" had been reported as "five thousand dollars." This man was receiving seven thousand in an eastern city, and had been led to seek a hearing on account of a daughter's failing health—hoping that a "change of climate would be beneficial." But a salary of five thousand was the least that could be considered, and an assistant pastor would be required.

Mr. Carpenter met Mr. Bass on the street, and said: "The church is up against a proposition unless some of the tight wads loosen up." Mr. Bass remarked: "I am through with that church, and have requested my wife and daughters to ask for their church letters." Financially this was a hard blow, because Mr. Bass was one of the largest subscribers, and paid promptly. Others had withdrawn their support. Therefore after skirmishing around to see what could be done, this D. D. and LL.D was counted out of the race. A lull followed this disappointment, and for two Sabbaths

the assistant pastor preached. And the people began saying: "We might go farther and fare worse" than to settle Rev. Paul Wardner as our pastor." But the officers said: "No, we will fight that proposition, because Mr. Wardner showed altogether too much heat in his denunciation of our action in getting rid of Rev. Dr. Brewster." So that ended his chance.

"Then the procession," as Mr. Bass said, "began to move again." "More candidates" with still "more to follow." The fall and half the winter passed, and no satisfactory solution of the question—"Who shall we call as pastor?" was discovered. The congregation grew smaller. Many had taken their letters and joined other churches. But "the rule or ruin" element remained. Some said: "Let them have the church, it is nothing more than a corpse."

Elder Peckwith and Lemon Face, with the assistance of the "chosen few," were doing "all that was in their power to harmonize the people, and seemed to be everywhere with their influence; but for some reason "the people did not harmonize," and friends of Dr. Brewster reminded them that they were the "disturbing element," and had "caused all the trouble." But being "martyrs in a good cause," they "battled bravely on."

A "Prayer circle" had been formed among the

chosen few, and that circle had worked hard to "oust their former pastor;" and now they were working just as hard to get another pastor, that in time they might have the pleasure of "ousting him."

One good woman said: "That prayer circle was ordained of Satan for the destruction of the peace and prosperity of our church." Every member, according to Mr. Bass was an "old hen" of the "oldest and meanest church type." He questioned "If Peter would permit one of that bunch to enter heaven's gate," and he was "sure the Devil was too smart to permit one of them to get into his kingdom;" therefore in his "judgment they would still have their prayer circle all to themselves in the next world, the same as in this."

It was suggested that "Presbytery look into the affairs of the church," but the ministerial members of Presbytery were not manifesting the same interest they did before the pastor's removal. Not having been "considered as candidates" they had become offended. The church "could go on with its string of candidates as long as it pleased."

Even a "candidating performance" must come to an end. A man below the former pastor, intellectually, was finally "called and installed" at a reduced salary. Mr. Wardner's salary was reduced to fifteen hundred dollars, and an intimation ac-

companied the reduction, from which the assistant pastor gathered that his services "might be dispensed with at any time."

Thus a once prosperous, peaceable, and influential church was permanently injured by the piratical political narrowness of the church officers, and a small number of the members of the church and congregation.

CHAPTER XIX

DANIEL IN COLLEGE

UNDERNEATH the twenty-seventh and twenty-eighth verses of the first chapter of First Samuel, in the family Bible, were heavy lines of black ink; and at the side of these verses, on the margin, the date of Daniel's birth in his mother's hand writing.

Dr. Brewster noticed this a few weeks after Daniel's arrival, and guessing what it meant, said nothing, but thought seriously; and watched the development of his youngest son's mind with unusual interest: and waited patiently to see if his wife's faith would be rewarded. "For this child I prayed; and the Lord hath given me my petition which I asked of him: therefore also I have lent him to the Lord; as long as he liveth he shall be lent to the Lord."

The harder Daniel tried to banish thoughts of entering the ministry from his mind, and the greater the number of objections he brought forward, the stronger grew that "unexplainable something," he tried to analyze; and the harder it "tugged at his heart," and the more restless and dissatisfied he became.

Daniel Brewster had been elected captain of the college football team, and threw his whole soul into the work of bringing the team up to a high standard of efficiency. This work occupied much of his attention, when not engaged in his college studies. Being of a literary turn of mind he interested himself in the monthly paper, and wrote a few "squibs" and "articles."

The young ladies liked Daniel, and he liked them. Therefore some of his evenings were spent in their society. An occasional walk with a lady friend on Saturday afternoon, when it was not football season, caused him to feel the warm impulses of manhood toward his properly chosen young lady associates. The question had often been asked: "Daniel what are you studying for?" or "What do you intend to be?" These questions brought forth an answer that did not satisfy his lady friends or himself. The "I don't know," or the "I have not decided yet," seemed so contradictory to Daniel's character; because "being decided" appeared to be one of his strongest traits. His father had frequently said: "Son remember that a wise preparation is usually indispensable to success. Men are not born full-grown. No one ever gained anything by trying to push beyond his possibilities."

All of which Daniel remembered. It was on his

heart to take the mining engineering course, the same as MacDougall had done. Since his brother "struck it rich," the drawing of his mind in that direction became stronger every day. But still that "unexplainable tugging at his heart," drawing him in another direction, grew stronger.

Was he to be "literally pulled apart?" At last he confided in a young lady friend—the daughter of a Presbyterian minister. She knew something of her father's struggles, and like Daniel, had seen her father "thrown out of a fine church and a good salary;" just at a time his family needed a college education: and soon the troubles that come to a minister were thrashed out between them. Neither one was very complimentary toward churches; yet in this minister's daughter was an abiding faith in the religion she professed, and at times a "strong desire to go as a foreign missionary." Therefore while expressing herself freely regarding "the indignities heaped upon ministers, and the cruel treatment many of Christ's ambassadors received," she spoke of the ministry as the "highest of all callings," and was "proud to say she was a Presbyterian minister's daughter." She also reminded Daniel of the "lovely treatment her father and his had often received; of the courtesies accorded them by the medical profession, which would make a large amount in dollars and

cents; of others equally anxious to show their appreciation of the work of the ministry; of churches where pastors had remained forty or fifty years, and even longer without one unkind act toward them; of the love for ministers that so often manifested itself in a thousand different ways; and of the many ministers, elders and deacons who were high minded, conscientious Christian gentlemen: who when necessary for the advancement of Christ's cause had endured hardness as good soldiers in the Lord's army.

After talking with Miss Anna Preston that "unexplainable something" pulled still harder, until Daniel said: "Miss Anna, I will either be compelled to keep away from you, or else decide to study for the ministry." "Daniel Brewster, you flatter me, I never supposed that what I said had such an effect on you. Surely you are making fun of me." "Not at all" was Daniel's reply, "I mean just what I say."

"If that be true, for the sake of your godly mother, an honored father, and for your own sake, I trust you will not keep away from me; or turn your back upon what your better self and conscience would lead you to. Please don't think I am forward in saying this, especially since I seem to be included in it. You know that I mean, if my influence is leading you in the right direction, you

are more than welcome to it."

One Saturday afternoon Daniel ventured to say: "If I thought my heart was in it, and that I would not make a failure of the ministry, I believe I might decide to study for the high calling." "I am only a girl in my teens, and you are only one year younger than I am, but you are a 'captain,' and almost a man. Therefore don't be offended when I remind you, that no one can afford to sit down and count his failures in advance. The longest journey is made up of successful steps. No one is required to succeed always. We are all entitled to a certain number of failures; but our first duty is to begin."

"Off comes my hat, little girl, to a philosopher. Surely you have an old head on a pair of young shoulders."

"If it were not undignified, I would be tempted to slap you good and hard, for making fun of me. I was only trying to encourage you to decide to do what your home training and best judgment should lead you to do. And Mr. Daniel Brewster, my head is no older than my shoulders. I never could understand how college boys can be so provoking."

"I apologize most humbly Miss Preston, and if you will forgive me what you suppose is a hit at your wisdom, I will be good for ever and ever,

and one day more."

In some ways the minister's daughter reminded Daniel of his mother. She had the same large, soft, intelligent, brown eyes his mother had; and she walked like her, though shorter and more slender.

Frequently Daniel had said to his mother: "I am looking for a woman just like you; and if I ever find one she will have the opportunity of saying yes or no to me."

CHAPTER XX

THE CHURCH BOSS

THE "village church" to which the pastor had been called, proved to be a "one man church." The surprise was, that "the Boss" had called such a man as Dr. Brewster.

"Out of the frying pan into the fire," was the remark made by Mr. Bass when he learned that the church, "body, soul, and all," belonged to one man.

The pastor's desire to get away from the city as quickly and as quietly as possible had influenced him in the acceptance of a call to this village church without "particular investigation." One thing that made him a little suspicious was the question, whether or not he was "Scotch, Scotch-Irish, or descended from one or both?" Being of Scotch descent he answered the question satisfactorily to the Boss.

Another thing that appeared strange. The man who did the corresponding was not only not clerk of session, but not an officer. As a member of the church the Boss took the reins out of the hands of the officers and did the driving.

Soon after the pastor's "arrival on the ground," he learned that the man with whom he had corresponded was the "banker" of the village; and his cashier was clerk of session. That the assistant cashier was president of the board of trustees, and the other church officers were either employed in one of his stores, or as foreman on one of his farms. Other church members had either mortgaged their farms to the Boss, or owed the bank money, on sixty or ninety days' notes.

When the Boss first met Dr. Brewster he held out his hand, but it was kept straight like a board; and his cold gray eyes seemed to look through the pastor.

Everything moved pleasantly until something was proposed by the pastor that was strictly within the province of the session; but nothing was done, or any particular notice taken of it, until the Boss had been consulted. This stirred up the Scotch blood that coursed through the veins of the pastor, and called for a sermon on "The Duties of the Eldership."

This "stirred up the Boss," and he began "laying down the law" to the pastor, as he had been accustomed to do, and received in return a "good dressing down;" and an explanation of "Presbyterian law and usage," such as he had never heard before.

"A mistake was made in calling Dr. Brewster." He was not "making good." He was a "heady man," desirous of "dictating the policy of the church." "Had queer notions of his own," and would not make "a success of church work" in that place.

All this was repeated and emphasized by the men in the employ of the Boss, until the people began saying: "Another church row on our hands."

A number of members who were in comfortable financial circumstances, and not under control of the Boss, said: "We hope our pastor will stand for his rights. Our church has been ruled long enough by one man."

The banker was anxious to remove "the new man," but a little afraid to make an open attack on the pastor, for fear there might be more doing than he bargained for.

The farmers had been trying to shake the hold the Boss had on them, and to be free from his clutches. A number had succeeded, and marketed their grain where they pleased, without having it go through the elevator of the Boss, and without having him dictate the price.

The pastor announced that his subject for the "following Sabbath," would "interest farmers in particular," and he hoped to "see a large number at the morning service."

The service was well advertised, and the church was crowded. The pastor's subject was, "The burial of the Trust, and of the Bosses who Rule." There was nothing bitter in his sermon, but it was manly and strong. One old farmer remarked: "The preacher hit the bull's eye every shot."

One thing that greatly displeased the Boss was this which Dr. Brewster said: "The trust is going to die hard in this country. When men have piled up fortunes, they are not going to welcome a new order of things that will give the farmer or anybody else a square deal. If you want fair play in this world you have got to go after it." The banker said: "Rank anarchy, and an attempt at stirring up ill feeling among people who have always been satisfied and easily led. To put it mild, such sermons are out of place in churches built for the purpose of having the Gospel preached, and are calculated to do harm."

Soon after the pastor was called a "socialist" by the henchmen of the Boss; but "new faces" were seen in the congregation, and the church offerings began to increase as the congregation grew. "There is such a manly independence in all that the pastor says," was the remark made in many homes. "Nothing like it was ever heard before in that pulpit."

After the Boss was consulted, the officers re-

marked: "All this seeming popularity is only a whiff of sentimentalism and socialism, and will soon blow over." The Boss said: "Let the pastor alone for a little while, then we will get him by pinching him on his salary, that is none too large to begin with. The church treasurer received notice not to pay the pastor his next month's salary, although it had been collected. The pastor was to feel the power of the Boss.

The banker was not aware of MacDougall's good fortune, therefore was taking the wrong weapon at the beginning. Mac had already made a handsome deposit in a city bank to his father's credit, and had sent the bank book and a check book to his father. The pastor made no complaint because his salary had not been paid, but went on steadily with the good work; until the time came for their annual collection for the Board of Ministerial Relief. Then he spoke of the injustice shown toward ministers in not paying larger salaries, and of not paying promptly what was pledged for their work. He said: "How many ignore the fact that the pastor, if a married man with a growing family, is just as apt as other people to find that the passing years bring to him larger financial burdens; and the churches for the most part are not given to taking notice of such burdens?"

"Although churches grow and church members prosper, their pastor's salary remains the same, and in the majority of cases ministers work year in and year out for their living expenses—just enough to pay for their clothes and food. Should misfortune overtake a pastor and his family, or sickness enter his home and lay him aside for a few months, or a few years, there is often nothing for him and his family but the tender mercies of charity; and these sometimes are not very tender."

"Is it right," asked the pastor, "that ministers of the Gospel, and their families should have the exclusive privilege of making such sacrifice and self-denial? Then when overtaken by old age be turned out with nothing but a set of resolutions, beautifully worded, but meaningless, in his pocket; and a gold headed cane in his hand, that he could pawn for about three dollars?"

After this sermon the Boss was wrathy, and could "see in it a secret thrust at the whole church membership—a thrust the people should not stand for." But only the Boss and his henchmen felt the thrust; and when the collection was counted it was by far the largest in the history of that church for the Board of Ministerial Relief.

A shrewd young lawyer who had a lucrative practice, and who understood the banker's way of doing business, and that he had financially ruined

several men, remarked: "The banker is looking diligently for a place where he may put in his crow-bar, and lift the new preacher out of his pulpit."

MacDougall had made two short visits to the village, and urged his parents to move back to the city; promising them a comfortable home and ample means on which to live. On one of these visits the banker met MacDougall, and was favorably impressed by his fine address and handsome face. In a brief conversation he discovered that he was talking to a thorough business man, and the next day read an account of a MacDougall Brewster, the son of an honored minister who had been "pastor fifteen years in our city," returning from "Alaska after amassing a large fortune, having struck it rich in the gold fields at Nome."

By inquiry the banker learned that it was the young man whose father was his pastor. Having three marriageable daughters, the banker began "looking down the other side of his face," and his attitude toward Dr. Brewster changed. The church treasurer sent a check for the full amount of salary due, with a polite apology "for the delay." The change was "so sudden," and the Boss's "appreciation of Dr. Brewster's sermons so great," that even the banker's henchmen could not repress a broad smile.

Soon it was commonly reported that "the Boss

had discovered that the preacher was a bigger man than the banker." Only those near the Boss knew why such a change of front had been made. A fortune far larger than the banker's was not to be sneezed at, especially when it belonged to a handsome, well educated, respectable, marriageable young man.

The Boss's automobile had always been for the exclusive use of himself and family, but now the pastor and his sweet faced wife were often seen riding with the Boss and his wife. In some way the news of the intimacy between the pastor's family and the banker's reached the ears of Mr. Bass; and having heard of the Boss's efforts to work up ill feeling against Dr. Brewster, he said: "If I were a betting man, I would bet dollars to doughnuts that the Boss has opened the cocoanut and discovered who MacDougall Brewster is. What a world this is. In the church and out of it, money talks; and since I can see but little difference between the church and the world, I let my wife and daughters remain in the church, while I remain in the world. I confess that the women folks have the religion while I have the money. If the truth was known, that is the trouble with some churches. The women hang on to their religion, and the men hang on to their bank account."

Mr. Bass and family having been invited to visit

the pastor and his wife on their new field, and the pastor's sons and the daughters of Mr. Bass being good friends, the invitation was accepted. The villagers soon knew that "city friends were visiting at the manse." They supposed that Mr. Bass was one of the ruling elders in the city church where Dr. Brewster had been pastor. When Mr. Bass heard this he asked the Doctor if he really had the ear marks of an elder. The pastor thought not, and Mr. Bass said: "Simple people are easily fooled."

One day the topic of conversation was the "dishonest cry for more ministers." It was generally acknowledged that there were far more ministers than there were fields that could pay a living salary. The pastor was compelled to admit that scores of churches counted "vacant" had less than three "heads of families" among their membership; that in other places where church services were "kept up" in three, four, or five churches, one building would hold all the congregations in the town; and that all these churches were supported largely by business men who did not belong to any church, and by the various boards of home missions.

"It looks to me," said Mr. Bass, "that all these churches are trying to have the people save them, instead of their trying to save the people. I

sometimes think that the secretaries of the boards of education in the various churches keep up their cry for ‘more young men to enter the ministry,’ in order to keep their positions and draw large salaries; and that the useless multiplying of churches in small places is a waste of good money. If the truth was known and carefully considered the majority of our theological seminaries would be closed, and the small army of professors employed would be out of a job.”

“You are a very interesting man,” said the pastor, “especially when giving your views about church matters, but I fear you are inclined to get on the wrong road, and place the church in a false light before the world. Other professions are equally crowded, and it is as Daniel Webster told the young law student, who complained of the law being ‘over-crowded’—‘Plenty of room at the top young man.’”

“All men who enter the ministry are not fitted for the work, and in the ministry, as in other professions, many who enter do not travel far on the chosen road. With the deaths and break-downs, the number who are qualified to engage in active service is greatly lessened.”

“Then you know,” said the pastor with a smile, “the over-crowded ministry draws out and develops the wire-pulling qualities in the ministry;

and lets disgruntled church officers and members know that it is an easy matter to get rid of a pastor, and an equally easy matter to hear a large number of candidates."

"Let me tell you something confidentially, because it may only be gossip," said the visitor, "You know the Rev. Mr. —— who accepted a call to the Fifth Church in our city, and the eldest daughter of our friend Mr. ——?" The pastor said he was well acquainted with both. "Well, it is reported that the minister proposed marriage to this young lady, and that the reason she refused to marry the preacher, was the fact that as a teacher of modern languages in one of the city high schools, she received a larger salary than he did as pastor of the Fifth Church. Wouldn't that jar you, Dr. Brewster?"

"I presume," continued Mr. Bass, "she thought that by marrying the minister she would not be as well supported as she could support herself. Men say the preacher first studied law, and is seriously considering whether he will give up the ministry and marry the teacher, or remain in the ministry and become a confirmed old bachelor. How does this strike you, Parson?"

"It strikes me as being an injustice against the ministry, not to pay a man in such a position as much money as a young woman gets for teaching

in a high school."

Said Mr. Bass: "Possibly this gossip may not be just the thing to repeat, lest what a Frenchman said, speaking of a certain person, might be applicable to me; 'His mouth costs him nothing, for he always opens it at the expense of others.' "

"It will go no further than myself, Mr. Bass. I am extremely sorry for the Reverend ——. He is doing a good work, and ought to have a capable helpmeet."

When the Boss was introduced to Mr. Bass, he was very gracious, and as cordial as it was possible for him to be. He spoke highly of Dr. Brewster's "good work." One of the church members said to Mr. Bass: "For once the church Boss has been made to back down."

CHAPTER XXI

THE ASSISTANT PASTOR SEEKS ANOTHER FIELD

BEING a "city man," and never having lived in a small town, Rev. Paul Wardner very naturally tried for a city church when seeking another field.

A classmate, with whom he had roomed during his theological course at Princeton, was pastor in one of the cities of the middle west; and the first ministerial friend to whom he wrote. The answer he received is a fair sample of many letters written to would be candidates for various pulpits:

"Dear Mr. Wardner:

"Your letter came duly. Matters have not taken shape as yet at Bethany. The truth is however, that I am about all in for a man here in the city, as far as initiative is concerned. About the only way to get before them will be for you to have some friend send your name in, and use me as a reference. You might have Mr. —— write to Mr. ——, 642 Avenue D, Michigan, and then follow his letter—which will be a good one—with some others. There is, of course, the disadvantage of your great distance from the scene of battle.

They certainly will not call a man whom they have not heard. They are not big enough for that yet. They will not pay more than fifteen hundred dollars a year; and, really that is not any too many ducats for city living, when the rent has to come out of that. Practically none of the churches of the city have manses, so that the element of rent is one of importance and of uncertainty; for one cannot always get the house at the rent he wants to pay in the neighborhood in which he wishes to live.

"It is highly probable from correspondence which has already come to me, that there is going to be a scramble for Bethany; so that if anything opens up nearer by, you had better not sacrifice it for the D— position. Hope you may get an early connection. Let me know of anything I can do for you.

"YOURS FRaternally."

After reading this letter from his friend, the assistant pastor began considering whether or not it would be advisable for him to seek work in a smaller field than a city. He could furnish as long a list of recommendations as any man of his age; but after his experience as moderator of the session of the church where he was, he felt that possibly the fewer recommendations a minister offers, the better are his prospects to get a church.

Soon after his hopes for a city church were raised by the receipt of the following letter:

"Dear Mr. Wardner:

"The First Presbyterian church of this city is without a pastor. It is an inviting field—united and harmonious—with a large new church building, and an elegant manse. Membership twelve hundred. Salary four thousand. We want a bright, wide awake, up-to-date, energetic man. One who preaches without manuscript; and who has had successful western experience. Married, and between thirty-five and forty-five years of age.

"He must be an exceedingly good mixer, and preferably of Scotch or Scotch-Irish descent. Broad in his interpretation of the Scriptures, yet not lacking in spirituality. A man with a good physique, good health, fine presence, good voice, and free from unpleasant mannerisms.

"Would prefer one who is a good impromptu speaker, and whose wife would be helpful socially, and in all church work. Having heard you favorably spoken of, would be pleased to have you supply our church for two or more Sabbaths sometime next month. Or if you do not look with favor toward us, will you be kind enough to suggest or recommend some one, who in your opinion, will measure well up to the above specifications and re-

quirements. Thanking you in advance, I am very sincerely yours.

"CLERK OF SESSION."

At first the assistant pastor was greatly pleased, and felt the joys of what we term "a little flattery;" but after considering the matter for two or three days, it began to dawn upon him that considerable more was required than he could furnish.

With the letter in his pocket he had gone down town for a walk, and dropped into Mr. Bass's store, and finding him in his office, and not particularly busy, showed him the letter. Mr. Bass read it twice. During the second reading the smile on his face began growing until it was a broad grin. Then he leaned back in his chair and burst into a loud laugh.

He looked at Mr. Wardner, so queer, and seemed to enjoy his embarrassment; then said: "Do you know what these requirements have brought to my mind?" "I have no way of knowing." "Well, I cannot help telling you the story."

"There lived in New Jersey, a minister about your age who enjoyed bachelorhood, a large salary, and considerable popularity. He had a good bank account, and imagined that he would enjoy a horse; if the right kind of a horse could be found. Never having owned one he did not consider himself a

competent judge; therefore decided to get the judgment of a bluff, but honest horseman who, although not a church member, was a good friend of the preacher.

"The horseman was at his stable, and was pleased to have a visit from the preacher. During their conversation the minister made known the object of his visit, and was asked the kind of a horse he wanted. Thereupon the parson began to make known his wants. As he was to have but one, he would like a horse that would pace under the saddle and trot in harness; work single or double; be high spirited, but easily controlled; a dark bay with a long main and tail; a fast traveller; not specially large, but of the best possible build."

"When the minister got this far the horseman's eyes began to grow larger every minute, and after a farther description, the parson stopped, and the horseman said: 'You fool, there ain't no such horse.'" After both men laughed heartily, Mr. Bass said: "Parson, there ain't no such preacher as that letter requires."

Mr. Wardner replied: "I admit that I begin to look at the ministry from an altogether new point than I did when I began preaching. I believe that a minister should, as far as possible, try to meet the demand of the public by qualifying himself for his work. But many churches are capricious and un-

just in their estimates; and it is a notorious fact that the smaller churches are frequently harder to please than the larger ones."

"Churches which ought to be contented with a man of fair ability, who is a good worker, clamor for the graces of oratory and charm of style. If under such circumstances the hard-worked and poorly paid minister, tiring at last of unfair criticism and lack of sympathy, seeks a more congenial field, it only shows that he is human."

"You know that after the trouble began in our church, and a new man was called as pastor, my salary was cut down three hundred dollars."

Said Mr. Bass: "No one can blame you for seeking a better salary; but if you are expected to come up to the standard required in that letter there will need to be a wonderful change in your mental and physical makeup."

"I see it just as you do, but something must be done."

"By the way, Mr. Wardner, young Daniel Brewster is not as slow as some people suppose minister's sons to be. He and I have had several talks about his entering the ministry; and until MacDougall struck it rich, occasionally I remembered the boy: and in one of his letters of acknowledgment, here is what he wrote: 'Father and Mother keep urging me to decide for the ministry,

and lately I have almost yielded to their urgent request; but among my many objections to doing so, this one grows on me. Father was compelled to leave his field because he asserted his rights as a man, and voted as he pleased. Other ministers have found it necessary to make changes on account of their fidelity to truth. You make no profession of religion. Yet as a level headed man you know, as other men know, that the church to-day is intensely worldly. Materialism, money-worship, and the lust for fashion and pleasure are in evidence in all the churches. And just in proportion as the church is given over to the worldly spirit and life, it is bigotedly intolerant of any instruction from the pulpit on these points."

"The minister may preach anything he wishes in regard to doctrine, but he must be careful how he touches conduct. Not only must he not 'reprove' and 'rebuke;' he must not even express an opinion."

"Father's experience has taught me that a minister has no show to defend himself against even a small minority in a church fight; and that he did the wise thing to insist on his resignation being accepted, that he get out as quickly as possible."

"Everywhere ministers are being driven from their charges by the censorious conduct of a small minority, who would, if he attempted to stay, make

life a burden to him; when a large majority—as in Father's church—are attached to him, and desire him to remain."

"I tell you Mr. Bass, I lack the courage or something else to put my head knowingly into such a net."

"How does that strike you, coming from a minister's son?" "I fear Mr. Bass, there is more truth than poetry in it. 'No man, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God,' may apply to us ministers; but as sure as there is a God in heaven, the way we are treated is enough to make us look in all directions, to see whether or not there is some honorable way out of our troubles."

When the assistant pastor opened his evening mail, after his visit with Mr. Bass, a letter of inquiry, from a small church was read with interest:

"Reverend and Dear Sir:

"Our church is vacant, and thinking your position might enable you to help us get a suitable man for a pastor, we venture the following information: We have a small church of forty members, in a village of eight hundred people. It is a saloon town, and the majority of the inhabitants are a non-church going, Sabbath-breaking, infidel

set; and therefore a first class field for an earnest, energetic worker in the Master's vineyard.

"Nothing but a thoroughly equipped man will do for us. We do not wish anyone who has taken a 'short-cut route' to the pulpit; neither do we wish a man who uses a manuscript.

"His voice must be soft, and if possible, musical. His delivery must be forceful, and his eloquence persuasive. He and work must agree, because he will find this a hard field.

"Some manual labor will be required, such as helping to repair the church building and manse. Both are sadly in need of paint. This being a country field, he will need a horse and buggy. We must have a married man whose wife is sympathetic, and strong physically. A good musician and singer preferred.

"To a man truly called of God to preach the Gospel, the salary is always a minor question. For the right man fifty dollars additional, to what we have paid, can be raised—making his salary five hundred and fifty dollars and manse. If he should succeed in reaching the people, there would be prospect of a small increase over the amount named."

With a heavy heart the assistant pastor left his study, and turned his face homeward; wondering

if, after all, the reward was worth the effort. Especially in his case, where there seemed to be such dark clouds gathering above him.

CHAPTER XXII

A DECISION

AMOTHER'S faith, dedication, and prayers; coupled with a father's noble example, and a Christian young woman's influence, was more than Daniel could resist. When his parents opened one of his letters and read: "I have decided to study for the ministry," there was rejoicing in the manse; and soon father and mother quietly knelt at the throne of grace, and poured out their hearts in thanksgiving and praise to their Heavenly Father for past mercies and the present great blessing. Nothing could have pleased them more than Daniel's decision.

MacDougall's good fortune was insignificant in their eyes when compared with the choice Daniel had made. Being human they were pleased to know that their eldest son had made a fortune, and would soon take his place among the monied men of the city in which they were so well and favorably known. They were proud of the liberal spirit he was manifesting toward his parents and Daniel; but "Will our first born realize his responsibility toward God, and acknowledge that he

is only a steward of the gold in his possession, which should be used for the glory of God and the good of men? Above all, will he give up his dislike for the church, and become a Christian?"

A man with "red blood" in his veins cannot resist the influences of a good woman, especially if that woman has gotten a good grip on his heart.

Often had the minister's daughter listened patiently to Daniel's objections to entering the ministry, and sometimes would add some of the objections her father had often advanced after being unkindly and unjustly treated. Apparently she was helping to strengthen Daniel's determination to turn his back upon "the high calling." But before their conversation ended she would quote some appropriate passage of Scripture. Then speak of the heroism displayed by a Livingstone, a Judson, or some other foreign missionary; and of the good they had accomplished. How it took a true man of the highest type to pass by the petty annoyances of life, and to stand perpendicular and take the hard knocks when necessary, without flinching—to see the end of the race and strive manfully for the prize.

At times Anna Preston's whole soul seemed to pour out, and her eyes would blaze with an enthusiasm that kindled a fire in Daniel's brave heart. Said Anna: "If we could but see the path of duty

more plainly, and had the courage to walk in it, how happy we would be; for then instead of permitting our minds to be filled with doubts and complaining of the roughness of the path, we would look up and press toward the goal."

"I know it Anna, that is what I was taught at my mother's knee; but somehow I do not get the proper grip on our great Leader, and I hesitate whenever I try to say 'Here am I, send me.' "

"That is your trouble Daniel, you refuse to say it, and so long as you refuse your faith will remain weak. Just say it honestly, strongly, and manfully; and God will give you the needed grace to go forward." Then she drew near to Daniel, and placed her hand on his shoulders, and repeated her request: "Say it now, won't you? I know you will never regret it."

"Anna, if I say it, and decide to go as a foreign missionary, will you go with me? I love you dearly, is that love returned?" The little woman's eyes filled with tears, as she answered: "I love you, and will go with you to the ends of the earth."

Soon Daniel's arms were around Anna, and a holy kiss, such as the blessing of heaven rests upon, was given and received with pleasure.

In Daniel's next letter to his parents, he told of Anna's good influence over him, of her brave spirit, and of their engagement; and their decision

to offer themselves to the Board of Foreign Missions.

Had heaven opened, and the riches of the Eternal been showered upon an aged couple, greater joy could not have been felt in their hearts. Soon intimate friends were informed of Daniel's decision to become a foreign missionary; and the pastor and his wife were asked how they could make the sacrifice. Both said: "We have nothing that is too precious to lay upon God's altar, and would gladly have both sons go as missionaries of the cross."

A joint letter was written to Daniel, and to Miss Anna Preston, such as a father and mother like Dr. and Mrs. Brewster could write; which dispelled many clouds from Daniel's mind and heart, and caused the young people whose hearts had become one to rejoice.

Soon after Daniel's decision and engagement, he received a long letter from his friend Mr. Bass. In which the following was enclosed, with the remark added: "Here you are Daniel. If you can fill the bill, wade in, and may joy go with you."

"Young men who have been hesitating about entering the ministry because of lack of perfect understanding of requirements demanded of a first class minister, will doubtless thank the church of _____ for the formulation of a set of rules. This

church has been casting about for a pastor, and finally the trustees put out the following qualifications, which the successful candidate must possess:

First—"He must be a young man, not over thirty-five years of age."

Second—"He must be married."

Third—"He must be an evangelist."

Fourth—"He must be a lodge man."

Fifth—"He must be a man who will lead his flock, and who will take upon himself the burden of a pastor."

Sixth—"He must be a mixer."

Seventh—"He must be a crank."

"The last two numbers were inserted by the request of one of the leading trustees who remarked that 'A man must be a crank and a mixer to move things; and that's the kind of a preacher we want.'"

"It is encouraging to note that the church already has thirty-one applicants who think they have the necessary qualifications. Thirty-one young men who can fill seven such requirements, even to being 'mixers' and 'cranks' speaks well for the output of the theological seminaries. Evidently this talk about the decay of the ministry is all folderol. No profession can be in decay when seven such qualifications are demanded of its members, and when those demands are so readily met."

"Just like Mr. Bass," said Daniel, "What a power that man would be for good if his prejudice against church officers and churches could be removed. Although he has never advised me against studying for the ministry, his attitude has been: 'Don't make a fool of yourself by entering a profession where you won't get a fair deal, during your best days, and be cast off like a worn out shoe in your old age.' "

Mr. Bass was not the only man who was surprised at the decision reached by Daniel Brewster, in the face of all that had transpired in his father's church; and the unjust treatment his parents had received. The question: "Why so many ministers' sons follow in the footsteps of their fathers," was widely discussed. More than two score reasons were given why they should not take up their father's work, and only a few reasons were advanced why they should.

Some of the people proposed remedies. Others thought preachers would be compelled to the end of time to look above for their reward. That there was no decrease in clerical material, was believed by all; because as soon as their church became vacant, "there were applicants galore."

Some thought that a life of study, and the great opportunity to enrich the mind attracted many toward the ministry; and yet there were none so

blind but they could see that in other professions, where there were fewer petty annoyances, just as many opportunities to enrich the mind were offered.

One man suggested that possibly the bringing together of the various branches of the Presbyterian church would "eventually swamp the ministry, and throw half of them out of a job." This was already affecting the offerings in some churches for the Board of Education. There were those who said: "We have more ministers than we can use." Yet there were Presbyteries with "many vacant churches." Fortunately the "new pastor" spoke strongly on this subject the following month, and informed the people that in Presbyteries where the churches outnumber the ministers, the churches in excess were unable to support pastors.

He said: "By reason of our system of supplies —or rather our lack of system—we appear to have more ministers than we can use; yet the fact remains that the number of candidates for the ministry has greatly decreased. This can be accounted for in part by the dread of receiving unjust treatment when a man has begun to turn gray. So long as congregations retire their pastors as early as possible, and vacancies advertise that ministers over forty need not apply, the young men will certainly avoid the ministry."

"Possibly if the average congregation could

afford it they would secure a young man for assistant, and thereby gratify the popular demand for youth, and at the same time retain their old pastor. But alas, how few churches can do this!"

One of the popular city pastors had said before a large audience: "I am over fifty, and if I should withdraw from my church to-morrow, the chances are, I could not secure even the little country church which was fairly thrust upon me when I came out of the seminary." He then spoke of a friend who was an able preacher, and had proven himself a successful pastor, but now without charge. The pastor had interested himself to the extent of trying to introduce him to the officers of a vacant church. They had heard of him, and one of the elders said: "Yes, he is a fine preacher, strong and vigorous, and will give to any church from ten to fifteen years of excellent service; but he is sixty years of age, and our committee have been instructed not to hear a man over forty."

Undoubtedly, to the average man, it would seem that the unpardonable sin for a minister of the twentieth century is to reach the age of sixty.

Mr. Bass heard of the discussion that had been so lively in the church since Daniel's decision, and remarked to his wife: "If men want their property interests looked after, they consult an attorney of legal experience; whose age almost insures his

knowing what they want to know. If their bodies need repairing they call in an M. D., who's long years of practice enable him to find out what repairs are needed; but if people's souls need looking after they are anxious to employ some kid." "How would it do," suggested Mr. Bass, "to follow the practice of retaining men who are in the ministry, by advancing the dead line fifteen or twenty years, and cease the foolish and wicked work of silencing a man just as he reaches his prime, and is entering upon a period when he is qualified to do his best work?"

Mr. Bass further thought that the medical or legal profession would soon be depopulated if those in them knew they would be forbidden to practice after the age of forty. He said: "My head book-keeper is almost seventy years of age, and is worth his weight in gold to me. Whenever I want to know about some particular bill or customer, I ask him. These church people talk about my prejudices against religion. I am not prejudiced against religion, but against the lack of it in the hearts of the people to whom we give credit of having common sense. I believe that 'He who flings aside his prejudices will also fling aside his principles.' "

After the decision, Daniel thought less about the objections to entering the ministry, and more

about his preparation for his great work. When the first vacation came he insisted that Anna accept the invitation given her by his mother, to visit Daniel's parents, and have a good talk with them. After two days at home Anna came to visit Mr. and Mrs. Brewster, and brought her mother with her. Mrs. Preston and Mrs. Brewster had a regular "love feast," and enjoyed the young people's engagement almost as much as they did.

Mrs. Preston thought it just the thing that a minister's son should be engaged to a minister's daughter. She too, had experienced the heart burnings caused by seeing a faithful husband unjustly and cruelly thrown out of a church, after long years of faithful labor. But oh, the joy of serving the Master! Then those "mothers in Israel" embraced each other, and wept, because their hearts remained warm in their Savior's love. They might not live to see their children graduate, get married, and go as foreign missionaries to proclaim the glad news of salvation, through a crucified and risen Redeemer, but the joy of believing all this would be, was a rich blessing to them.

Both the young people had "inquiring minds." The college was controlled by a "scientific spirit," and the talk about "following truth wherever it may lead," drew hard upon Daniel. Not long after his decision he became convinced that recent

scientific discoveries had upset many time-honored notions; and, apparently, had made necessary a reconstruction of many traditional beliefs.

While this did not deter him from following his decision, it perplexed him. Just then he was unable to make the required adjustment of the new to the old, but after a talk with his "theological professor," as he called Anna, his faith in the inspiration of the Bible, "from the beginning of Genesis to the end of revelation" was stronger than ever.

During one of their strolls around the campus, Daniel said: "Anna, suppose my abilities as a minister should only demand a starvation salary, what would you do?" "I would either help increase it or starve with you." "That being your spirit, I presume it would be a clear case of two 'fools for Christ's sake' going it blind."

"Don't talk that way Daniel or else I will lecture you soundly." "Oh, I don't object to the smallness of the salary paid missionaries, and especially since MacDougall has volunteered to supplement my salary to almost any amount I may ask. But comparing the average salary paid to ministers, home missionaries get less than the foreign. Should I not be accepted as a foreign missionary, then the work at home would be the thing, and I do confess that I shrink from the possibility of having my salary raised by 'fairs, festivals, and fights.' For

which you would bake most of the pies, and I carry them from the manse to some store building on the main street, in which the supper ‘to raise the minister’s salary is given.’ ”

“Then the house to house solicitation, and public appeal, are extremely repugnant to a man’s self-respect and independence, because these church methods seem to stamp a minister as an object of charity and not as a laborer worthy of his hire.”

“I get to thinking about the often meddlesome interference of well meaning persons in a minister’s most private affairs—his domestic economy, his methods of study, his recreation, etc. He is criticized in every petty detail; even in the games he plays, and the clothes he wears.”

“Daniel! Daniel! I fear that like the children of Israel, you are longing for the ‘flesh pots of Egypt.’ ” “Not at all, Anna. I am not wavering in my decision, but I cannot help thinking. I know as you do, that in any of life’s callings, difficulties must be met and overcome, if success is to crown men’s efforts; and that self-denial necessarily goes with responsibility and influence, and that the object of very much of our self-sacrifice should be to make our lives count for the good of humanity and the upbuilding of God’s kingdom.”

“I have changed my tune somewhat since listening to you talk,” said Anna. “About what?”

"About the 'flesh pots of Egypt.' Because I remember of reading of an officer on old Napoleon's staff, whose cheeks turned pale when ordered to lead a certain charge. Another officer noticing the palor on the man's face, remarked: 'He fears the work.' 'No,' said Napoleon, 'he sees the danger, yet does not fear to lead the charge. He is a brave officer.' Really Daniel, I appreciate your courage more and more as I realize that you are not going blindly into the ministry, without first sitting down and counting the cost."

"Anna dear, why should the strength of a young man be considered of shorter duration in the ministry than in other professions? All that ministers, whether young or old, ask for is fair, just and honorable treatment. Or what our friend Mr. Bass calls, 'a square deal.' "

CHAPTER XXIII

THE FIRE BURNS

THE soft approach, the dreamy eyes, and well meant caresses, soon overcome, and make insecure the strongest man. Good men and women may sneer, frown upon, and reprove those who hold a loose rein upon the warmth there is in their affectionate natures; but so sure as water will find its level and a raging, internal fire an opening, or make one, so sure will affection seek after and find affection. Warm hearts must and will find comfort and satisfaction in equally warm hearts that reciprocate.

Until human nature changes, the wife who becomes so absorbed in her children as to neglect, or refuse to return the love bestowed by an affectionate husband, not only treads on dangerous ground herself, but helps lay bare her husband's heart and needs before those, who like him, are suffering for the lack of the sweet caresses and honest attachment every affectionate man and woman should have as a right.

When coldness sprang up between the assistant pastor and his wife, she being a proud woman, and of "good blood," although thoughtless at times

regarding her husband's feelings and her own best interests, could not bear "only to keep the barren name of wife." Careless in some things, she had a wife's heart, and like most wives she knew "how to give and how to bear," and believed she was careful not to sacrifice herself without knowing why.

Mrs. Wardner was a good woman, although she had been unintentionally cold toward an affectionate husband; and being intelligent, no vulgar mind could conceive of the pain that was in her heart when she began to realize that the place in her husband's heart—that rightfully belonged to her—had been entered and taken possession of by another woman. Had she permitted reason instead of jealousy and pride to guide her, all differences could have been settled; but no, she had been deeply wounded and would resent it.

Thus fuel was heaped on the fire. With a new pastor in possession of the study in the church, and the afternoons not warm enough to make it comfortable in the shady nook at the city park, opportunities for meeting and holding confidential conversations were far apart; but doors always have, and always will open that hearts may speak to each other. The "new pastor" had been appointed to take part in an installation service of a pastor in a town at the remotest part of the Presby-

tery, and would be away from home for three days.

The assistant pastor was asked to make himself at home in the study, during the pastor's absence; and Miss Cardo found it convenient to visit Mr. Wardner in the study. Their conversation, as usual, was about their troubles and themselves. The assistant pastor laughingly remarked: "Affection, although mighty in its strength when aroused, has often proven a frail plant that flourishes best in a warm air beneath a mild sun; and which, when suddenly exposed to that which savors of harshness or neglect, sheds its leaves, and quickly withers."

Miss Cardo answered: "I believe there is a limit of endurance even to love, especially if love knocks day after day against the door of some heart that persistently refuses to open and let love's messenger in."

"You are right, Miss Cardo, and I believe that many men and women have discovered that there is truth in what you say, when it is too late to call those who have knocked and have been refused an entrance."

"Be affectionate, and have your love returned if you wish to be happy. I believe that much as men may exalt learning, much as they may prize wealth and position; after all the only genuine joy comes through the deep emotions of the heart, and a

consciousness that we love and are loved."

"Although sensibility may not be the whole man, it far surpasses wealth, luxury, and very much many seek after. "Hidden ones" or unfortunate beings, enjoy being loved, and are worthier of love than some of those who imagine they have written their names large and high on the walls of fame."

"Society has often cried out against nature, as though nature were a demon and not a friend; as though unbridled passion was nature's chief representative; as though nature was something of which to be heartily ashamed, and not something of which to be proud."

"I believe it a sin for the social, business, or religious man to attempt to destroy the natural man. Let nature properly bitted and bridled have her way often enough for us to realize that men are men, and that women are women."

"I fear Mr. Wardner that you are permitting your liking for me to develop into more than is your legitimate right. Yet I am persuaded that affection in full flow has never been puritanical in its ideas. Like a coat that is too tight, and soon splits at the elbows and elsewhere, so is affection held within too close bounds. Nevertheless all must admit that without the proper restraint, even that which is needful, useful, right, and life-giving is liable to become destructive and operate against

that which it was intended to assist, strengthen, and preserve."

"Often we discover nature trying to insinuate forbidden things, that the flow of our affection may be turned into the wrong channel. A wounded heart seeking affection, without intending wrong, may cause the specially interested one to venture too far along some dangerous path."

The assistant pastor answered: "Never having known what the affection of a partner in life means, you cannot imagine the loneliness and distressed feeling when that affection grows cold. You are constantly feeling after and looking for something that nature must have, yet fails to receive."

"Pardon me, Mr. Wardner, but your impulsive speech reminds me of what has often been repeated, and sometimes with strange effect. 'Love, (the sentiment of love) is not merely an excuse for it, but makes it an actual virtue—provided it is disinterested and not a caprice, and is confined to one object.' "

During this conversation between Miss Cardo and the assistant pastor, Mrs. Wardner was considering the changed conditions in her home. Home meant a great deal to her. A model housekeeper, an intelligent mother, and an ornament in society, she had friends who appreciated her ability and attractiveness. Nevertheless she lacked the proper

appreciation of the man's affections that were so full and responsive; and that should have been returned with full measure and closely guarded. Herein lay the weakness of the assistant pastor's wife.

Natures that are extremely sensitive and affectionate must be appreciated, and a certain amount of domestic tenderness lavished upon them. The strongest men's affections are often far more poetic than many suppose; and poetic natures need careful handling and more caressing than "cold matter of fact" natures need. They are far more sensitive than they are given credit, and are capable of loving much, and crave much love in return for the affection they are so ready to bestow.

The assistant pastor was not free from blame, because he had unconsciously begun admiring the alto singer before his wife's coldness was severely felt. Her wonderful head of hair looked to him as though there was a halo round it; and an almost angelic sweetness sometimes was in her voice. So that altogether she was an extremely fair creature to look upon.

No one doubted that Miss Cardo, whether in motion or repose, was graceful and attractive. Even Mrs. Wardner had said: "Miss Cardo's manner and looks correspond with her sweet voice."

The assistant pastor had never admitted that his attachment to the alto singer was either love or passion, because his better judgment told him that his duty was to love his wife; and that passion for another woman was unholy.

When the alto singer rose from where she had been sitting, and said, "I must go," the assistant pastor took her right hand in his, and said: "Few people in the pew realize how tired men in the pulpit become of the steady, hard pull of sermonizing, officiating at funerals, advising those who are in trouble, answering letters that are of no particular interest to them, and of many things connected with a minister's life; and how often he longs for a word of praise and tenderness."

"Criticism may spur us on to do better and more work; but deserved praise and tenderness would help lift some of our burdens, and help smooth life's path."

Alas, for human nature—tried at times, and often tempted and troubled! There has never been discovered a safe guard that is always safe. Man's folly often causes more devotion to a woman than does his common sense. He falls in love, without knowing or asking why. And since it is far easier to fall in than to climb out, he not infrequently stays in longer from necessity than from desire.

Before Miss Cardo could get out of the study,

she and the assistant pastor were greatly surprised by seeing Mrs. Wardner walk into the room. Without appearing to be excited, she spoke to both as though nothing unusual had occurred. Then inquired: "Am I intruding?" "Not in the least," said Miss Cardo, "We were enjoying a friendly visit, after arranging some matters in connection with the music for the Sabbath services."

"Indeed," said Mrs. Wardner, "I thought the arranging of the music was in the choir leader's hands."

This heightened the color in the alto's singer's face, and when Mrs. Wardner added, "I am not here to cause unpleasantness, or to make trouble; but simply to claim my own," neither her husband or Miss Cardo knew what to say. But Miss Cardo did the wise thing under the circumstances. She said, "Good night," and quietly walked out of the study.

What followed between man and wife, no one need know. After this the assistant pastor became a changed man, and his most intimate friends were perplexed. Naturally mild mannered, sociable and kind; occasionally he appeared abrupt and gloomy. At other times his anger flashed out with the suddenness of lightning. He seemed eccentric when speaking of "leaving the ministry and seeking a calling more congenial" to him. When in the

pulpit he retained his power as a brilliant speaker, and his mind seemed as clear as ever; yet there was a great change noticeable in his prayers. He appeared to be crying out of some depth. Many thought they saw in these peculiar prayers "the deepening of their assistant pastor's spiritual life." But the new pastor, and others, thought they "discovered explosions of overwhelming and bitter spirit—evidences of a mind greatly disturbed, and rebelling against something that held the man, as in a vice, while he was trying to break through a barrier; although wounded and almost crushed." His tragic face and restless eyes showed that something was poisoning his life.

Truly the fire burned fiercely.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE OLD FOLKS' BLESSING

MEN may sneer at an Overruling Providence, and of the sure reward for right action; but the steps of good men and women are ordered by the Lord. Faithful servants receive a portion of their reward while on earth.

"Our boys," was often the topic of conversation in Dr. Brewster's home, and "Mother" looked forward with pleasure to the day Daniel's weekly letter would be received, and "Father" would frequently add a "Few lines" to the answer sent by Mother.

Daniel was doing well, and Anna was as true as steel. Their "air castles" were not concealed from their parents, and the years that must intervene before they could be married, would pass quickly, and they hoped profitably.

MacDougall was beginning to be "widely known as a successful mining man," and one whose advice in mining matters was valued highly. He and Mr. Bass were talking of entering into partnership, in order to greatly enlarge Mr. Bass's extensive business. MacDougall's name would not appear.

It was simply for an investment on his part.

Mac's frequent visits at home greatly pleased his parents, and realizing that anything said against churches pained them, he carefully avoided expressing himself on the subject of religion. When his mother appealed to him to contribute to the cause of "Home and Foreign Missions," he cheerfully wrote his check for five hundred dollars, and made it payable to his father, that the contribution might be reported as coming from the village church.

This greatly pleased the members of the "Woman's Home and Foreign Missionary Society." The Boss was not displeased because, on the "outside," most people would credit the increase in contributions to these causes to him. He being the only man in the church of sufficient means to make so liberal a contribution.

The greatest joy in the hearts of "Father and Mother" was, that their son contributed so cheerfully. "Father," said the pastor's wife, "surely MacDougall's prejudices against churches must be growing less, and I believe that in God's own time and way, he will be led to see what is right, and be given the needed grace to do it."

MacDougall's "Intended," was a joy to the old people's hearts. "Evelyn Martin is a jewel," was often said by "Mother Brewster," and she well deserved the praise. Intelligent, good looking,

strong physically, with "a heart in her as big as the side of a house," and as tender as Christian love and purity could make it.

Evelyn was as anxious to see MacDougall become a Christian, as any one could be; and was careful to live her Christianity before him, without giving offence. Frequently, to encourage Mac's mother's heart, Evelyn would quote Proverbs 22:6, "Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it." This always brought tears to Mrs. Brewster's eyes, as she remarked: "All God's promises are sure."

To please Miss Martin, MacDougall was attending church services with her every Sabbath evening, when in the city. Evelyn was devoted to her church, and to her pastor. One evening his text was Second Corinthinas 6:14: "Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers; for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?"

The sermon was strong, manly, and tender; and greatly interested MacDougall, while it stirred up Evelyn's very soul. Nothing was said in particular about the sermon that evening, but the next time MacDougall called, he noticed a depressed look on Evelyn's face; yet over all was a look of determination such as he had never seen in her coun-

tenance before.

"What is the matter with my Sweetheart? Has something gone wrong?" "Nothing has gone wrong, MacDougall, but I want an honest answer to an honest question."

Then drawing near her lover, she placed both hands on his shoulders, and looked him square in the eyes, as she asked: "MacDougall, do you in your heart deny the Christ?" Immediately her head dropped on his breast, and she cried like a child. When she was composed, MacDougall answered: "My Darling, even in my wildest days I never denied the Christ of the Bible in my heart; but for years I have heartily despised much of the professed Christianity of the Christ, as I have seen it practiced by many who claim to be His followers."

Evelyn placed her arms round her lover's neck, and kissed him; then said: "I am delighted to hear you say this, yet sorry that your prejudices have caused you to refuse to publicly acknowledge the Christ you claim never to have denied."

"I know Darling, that sermon must have impressed you deeply, and I am aware of the feeling that prompted you to ask me the question you did; and no man of honor can help appreciating a Christian woman's respect for her religion. Your Christianity, like my parents, is worth having; and no

man has a higher regard for such religion than I have."

"Oh! how I have prayed over this. I spent a sleepless night asking God not to separate us, but to draw us nearer to Him, and nearer to each other," said Evelyn.

"I have never been the heathen some people in father's old church in this city have thought me to be; and I believe that if we were quoted at our true market value, I would stand as high as they would."

That week Dr. and Mrs. Brewster visited the city, and called on Evelyn; and before they left her house Evelyn told Mrs. Brewster of the conversation between herself and MacDougall: and how earnestly she was praying that Mac might become a Christian.

The mother's heart was full and overflowing with gratitude to this dear girl, and said: "I know MacDougall has a generous heart, and a keen sense of what is right between man and man; but for years has shown such a dislike to churches. But now that he has opened his heart to you, and expressed himself regarding the Christ and Christianity, let us be more earnest in our prayers for his conversion."

With a warm, motherly kiss from Mrs. Brewster, and a "God bless you my dear girl," from the

Doctor, the aged couple bid Evelyn good-bye, and returned to the village.

Since the Boss discovered MacDougall there had been no attempt at creating a feeling against the pastor, and the work in the village church moved smoothly and prosperously. "How different from city work," remarked Dr. Brewster. "Not such a strenuous life, and fewer demands on a minister's time."

Instead of the "short calls" at the homes of the people, the pastor and his wife were gradually falling into the country custom of "visiting." Several times they had "spent the day" with families living on farms. The health of both had improved, and they began to enjoy their work and environment.

"After all Dear, don't you think it providential that we got away from the city work?" asked the pastor of his wife. "If not providential, it was timely, and so far I have not regretted it," answered Mrs. Brewster.

Week after week, MacDougall and Evelyn attended services Sabbath evenings, and many were the serious, sensible talks they had on the subject of religion.

Mac's "bringing up" had been exceptionally good, as had been Evelyn's; and both could quote freely from the Old and New Testaments. When

Evelyn said: "You must admit the truth of the prophet's teaching, 'Can two walk together, except they be agreed?' You know that we hope to walk together until death do part us. Should we begin agreed, what a blessing it would be; and more than likely we would be agreed all the way. Don't you think so my Darling?"

MacDougall's heart had been melting for some time, and the teachings and influences of a Christian home training had been doing their work. He was a man of few words, but quick action.

When Evelyn's eyes had looked into his very soul, and she had read his inmost thoughts, she said: "We will walk together, and we will be agreed, won't we?" "Yes," said MacDougall, "God helping me I will walk with you Darling."

With her arms around Mac's neck, she wept for joy, as she said: "I believed your heart was in the right place when we were in college together, although your actions did not always please me. And all the time you were in Alaska, I believed in you and loved you; and now I can ask no more from you except that you take your place beside me in the church where I belong."

"I will do it, and then we will have the pastor make us one, and together we will begin our journey."

The next morning Evelyn wrote Mrs. Brewster:

"Our prayers have been answered. MacDougall has decided to unite with the church, and I know that he will try and live up to his profession. I am so happy that I can hardly refrain from shouting."

When the good news was made known to Dr. Brewster, he said: "Now our cup of blessing is full, and we have an unbroken family in Christ."

CHAPTER XXV

COMMISSIONER TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

THE change in fields made no change in a minister's "turn to go to the General Assembly," but when it came Dr. Brewster's "turn to go," he said that "Having been commissioner to the Assembly four times, I feel that the honor, might with profit, be conferred on some member of Presbytery who has never been a commissioner." The members of Presbytery said: "We will stick to our rule, and it is Dr. Brewster's turn to go."

Dr. Brewster knew that going to the General Assembly as pastor of a village church, he would not be recognized in the same way as he had been as the pastor of a strong and influential city church. He knew as other men did that, "You scratch my back, and I will scratch your back," was as evident in the General Assembly as in any political convention ever held; and that ministers were rated in the Assembly—not according to their spirituality or mental ability—but according to the wealth, and size of their churches, and the amount contributed by their respective congregations to the various church boards.

Soon after it was known that Dr. Brewster was elected "principal" as "clerical commissioner," he began receiving letters and circulars, in which various candidates for the moderatorship of the General Assembly were recommended, and for whom he was asked to cast his vote.

The reasons given for urging their election were numerous, and entertaining, if not amusing. The one great qualification of a particular candidate was his ability to "open the purses" of a few very rich and reasonably generous men and women in his congregation, when some of the church boards were financially embarrassed.

Another candidate belonged to "a Presbytery that had never furnished a moderator for the General Assembly," and it was the pastor's private opinion that they "never would."

Other candidates were men of "marked ability as moderators," having "moderated Synods in a most masterly manner." Men of "great executive ability, powerful speakers, and commanding presence."

Had the pastor kept all the invitations given him to vote for these candidates, and copied the "send offs" given them by their friends, he would have had material for a very unique pamphlet of moderate size.

The various special trains going east from

Chicago, composed of sleepers for commissioners alone, caused the Doctor and the "lay commissioners" from Presbytery to decide to go by way of Chicago. On some of these trains, commissioners from other Presbyteries, who had been "college classmates," or "Seminary chums," would be found; and other ministerial acquaintances and friends would help make the trip pleasant.

On the special chosen by Dr. Brewster and the lay commissioners was a tremendously earnest effort made to influence commissioners to "stand by a western candidate for the moderatorship." The workers for him said: "We need this to influence the Assembly in favor of our Home Mission work. We are not getting the money we should have."

It was evident to the lay commissioners before they arrived at the Assembly, that although the feeling among the commissioners was cordial, and they believed the "Lord is Maker of us all;" yet some of the brethren thought they were a good deal better made than other brethren, and were deserving of far greater attention.

The pastor smiled, and said quietly: "You will discover when you reach the Assembly that the brethren are human, and that there will be commissioners who remember men they have known elsewhere, and are there to do good and honest work.

While others will remember themselves, and will want it known that they are at the Assembly; and that egoism will be in evidence as it is wherever man is found."

One great surprise to the lay commissioner who accompanied Dr. Brewster, was a country merchant's conversation regarding his presence at the Assembly: "I want to go to New York, and thought it a fine opportunity to get my expenses paid both ways, with the exception of the short distance I will need to pay myself. I have only been a member of the Presbyterian church three months. I put my letter in from another denomination."

A minister whose "wife's folks lived in Pennsylvania," asked, "What day does the Assembly pay commissioners their traveling expenses?" Said he: "I don't want to pay my wife's expenses at the hotel any longer than possible, and I want to get my money, and then get excused; so that I can have as long a visit as possible with my wife's folks."

The lay commissioner asked Dr. Brewster: "Why do men want to attend the General Assembly?" The Doctor answered: "For various reasons."

When the commissioners arrived at the Assembly grounds the special train was met with autos,

busses, carriages, hacks, and a committee to conduct foot passengers to the Assembly, to their places of abode during the ten days' meeting. Here was where the line of demarcation was drawn far more distinctly between "brethren," than it had been on the special train. Now the four dollar a day commissioners and the one dollar and a half day commissioners were separated as distinctly as ever the sheep will be separated from the goats.

Automobiles, surreys, and carriages took some to the largest hotel, while committeemen kindly and courteously showed the "foot-passengers" to their several lodging rooms, and gave them the required information regarding the different restaurants.

MacDougall Brewster had sent his father a generous check, with the request that he "take mother with him, and put up at the best hotel on the grounds." But "mother" could not be persuaded to leave home, and "father" did not care in particular for a four dollar per day hotel; so "put up" at a more modest priced place. During the first evening, and the first half day, there was a wonderful amount of cordiality, and a great effort to have the "brethren meet our candidate for the moderatorship." When the nominating speeches were made, and the records had been heard, the lay commissioner whispered to Dr. Brewster:

"There seems to be considerable available timber for the position—all men of renown and like tall cedars stand high in their various synods."

The battle raged fiercely before the different ballots were taken and a moderator chosen. Then the Assembly machinery, all of which was safely stored at the four dollar a day hotel, began its work.

There are not "bishops" in the Presbyterian church. "A parity of ministers" is the great rallying cry round our "blue banner." Yet there are a few recognized "bosses," or rather "leaders" in every General Assembly. Men of "wide influence" and "recognized ability," who either do the "steering," or the talking, or both.

Dr. Brewster knew "where" the Assembly "was being held," and where the "crowd met." But the lay commissioner had all this to learn. But being a shrewd farmer, he was an apt scholar; and soon asked the pastor if their moderator was "farsighted," or "near-sighted." Said he: "For some reason he only recognizes certain men, who seem to have come prepared to speak on certain subjects; and when they are through speaking the rest of us are permitted to vote according as they have dictated—at least that is the way we have been voting."

Dr. Brewster answered: "These men under-

stand the needs of our Boards, and have influential church members whose opinions are worth respecting, because church work must be supported."

"Then why not do away with the meeting of the General Assembly, and save all this great expense by having this influential bunch do the entire business?"

"That would not be Presbyterianism," said the pastor. "Possibly not, Dr. Brewster, but in my humble judgment it would smack just as much of Presbyterianism, as this boss business does."

The pastor could not help smiling at the old farmer's insight into the way the General Assembly was being "run" by the "four dollar a day crowd;" and the notice by the old man of the privileges accorded to certain commissioners who had their seats on the rostrum, without any apparent reason for being there.

"You will get used to the chief seats in the synagogue business, if you attend many meetings of the General Assembly; just as you will get used to the chief seat business in political conventions," said the pastor.

"We old farmers are slow to catch on, but as this Assembly progresses it is evident to me that the spirit is kind of like, 'make all the money you can, and do all the good you can;' and that everywhere in life—even in religious circles—every man

has his racket."

"Did you notice the tin drinking cups furnished us free, and how each cup has a hole in the side of it, so that you cannot drink out of it unless you hold it in a certain way that enables you to read the 'ad' so plainly printed on the inside?"

"Yes, I have noticed that," said the pastor, "and this proves that the spirit of commercialism has entered these Assembly grounds."

"We are not here for the purpose of criticizing," said the lay commissioner, "yet somethings surprise me; and one is the bowling alley. I sauntered round there yesterday evening, and learned that part of the year tobacco is sold, and part of the year it is not. I kind of figured it this way: that part of the time it was run for saints, and part of the time for sinners; and for revenue all the time."

"I met an evangelist down there, and he remarked: 'That sign, Bowling Alley, Cigars, Soft Drinks, and Confectionery' in a western mining camp would be called a 'Pool-shack'—a place for our boys to avoid. But in this Christian Assembly ground—a clean place for recreation.' "

"I did not say much to this evangelist, because sometimes these fellows forget that a man ought to spend eighteen hours each day attending to his own business, and sleep the other six. But my old head thought of what a handsome woman said

to a man in our neighborhood, when speaking about something some people thought was wrong, and some people didn't: 'It is all right if we do it.' "

One thing that greatly pleased the lay commissioner, and warmed the old farmer's heart, was the sympathy shown toward a bereaved father and mother, whose little girl died during their attendance at the Assembly. "The whole business machinery stopped for half an hour, while fervent, tender, and sympathetic prayers were offered for the sorrowing ones."

"That," said the old farmer, "showed real heart, and the kind of religion I like; and if there was some way of getting rid of small men with a little more prominence than some other brethren, and who feel their oats, I would say the General Assembly is O. K."

Suddenly, during an afternoon session, brethren began leaving the auditorium—one, then two, then three, four, and more at a time; until the moderator requested the commissioners to remain in their seats.

The pastor and the lay commissioner being near one of the doors, stepped out to see what caused the excitement, and discovered that the "bird-man" had commenced one of his talks on "Birds." The lay commissioner had lived in the country all his life, but learned more about birds in less than one

hour than he had ever known.

Some of the addresses at the popular meetings were inspiring, and the lay commissioner's interest in the work of the Boards of the Church was greatly increased. In his judgment the only speaker who "fell down," was the pastor of some wealthy church who began his address by apologizing for "personal references." Then told of what he called his "red letter days," when abroad he had talked with noted men, visited places of wonderful and soul-inspiring interest; until some of the brethren who had never had a "red letter day," but lives of hard work, became a little bit weary of this man's "personal show."

It was a difficult task for the leaders of the four dollar a day men to have every link alike in their great chain, or to have the chain equally strong in all places.

In the restaurants, hotels, and on the Assembly grounds, a surprisingly restless spirit was observable among ministerial commissioners, when talking of their fields. Nearly every man wanted to "make a change," and get a field of "wider influence." It was evident to the pastor that the reason for it, in part, was the ability of the large majority to successfully work larger fields than they occupied; and the limited number of churches that pay a living salary.

What are called "good fields" do not increase in the same ratio as do strong and educated men. Some of the ministers seemed to "butt in" everywhere, while others seemed retiring in their manner.

Some of the commissioners were full of schemes to have the Assembly visit certain places; others had schemes for founding colleges in their towns; while others appeared to be looking for a kind of graft, or else a good place on which to light; and still others were seeking for the best methods to build up the kingdom of God. Some expressed themselves as being anxious about bringing men to Christ, instead of bringing Christ to them.

Had it not been for the astonishing "brass-band business" when trying to "boom" certain men for certain work, the Assembly would have been creditable most of the way through. But this "brass-band business" caused one shrewd commissioner to say: "Had I been asked to advertise this part of the performance, I would have written over the bills for the magic lantern show: 'A chief seat in the synagogue or bust.' "

What greatly pleased the lay commissioner was a remark made by the moderator: "Americans should be better Presbyterians, and Presbyterians should be better Americans."

CHAPTER XXVI

A WEDDING AND SUNNY NOTES

THE announcement had been made that McDougall Brewster and Miss Evelyn Martin were to be married. Soon after invitations were sent out, and friends began getting ready for the wedding.

Evelyn's parents were in comfortable circumstances, and MacDougall had bought, and partly furnished, one of the fine residences of the city.

The wedding was neither "largely attended," nor "elaborately spread;" but those who were invited claimed that it was ideal. The pastor was at his best in performing the ceremony; and the guests thought they never saw a handsomer couple.

A wedding trip of three months had been planned, and after dinner the "newly weds," with their friends, were on their way to the depot.

The next week a party of six visited the pastor and his wife. Among whom were Mr. and Mrs. Bass, and Mr. and Mrs. Carpenter. These good people had never felt right about their pastor leaving them. These friends secured rooms at the village hotel, that they might not be a burden to the pastor and his wife during their three days' visit,

which took in the Sabbath, that they might hear two good sermons; and "Mr. Bass have the opportunity of worshipping Dr. Brewster"—was the way Mrs. Bass put it.

Mr. Bass could not refrain from hitting the pastor's old church in the city. Said he: "From what my wife and daughters tell me, that church is about in the same condition that a colored man was by the name of Washington Smith. During his last sickness, many friends called daily to inquire how he was getting on. Finally an old colored woman hit upon the expedient of putting bulletins out upon the veranda. These bulletins ran substantially as follows:

" 'Bulletin No. 1. Washington Smith am very sick.'

" 'Bulletin No. 2 (next day). Washington Smith am worse.'

" 'No. 3. Washington Smith am sinking.'

"And the final 'Buletin, No. 4,' on the following day read, 'Washington Smith am dun sunk.' That is just about the condition of your old church. It has a name to live, but is about done sunk."

Mr. Carpenter, who, with his family, retained his letter in the old church was unwilling to admit that the church was in so bad a condition, but said: "It is not prospering."

Two autos were hired by Mr. Bass and Mr.

Carpenter; and Saturday was spent in seeing the country. "The irrepressible Mr. Bass," as Mr. Carpenter called their irreligious friend, could not help from spinning yarns, and hitting churches and church members. He insisted on saying: "My observation leads me to believe that churches have come down to the world, and are remaining there; instead of lifting the world up to the church. Like Peter, they are standing and warming themselves at the fire made by the enemies of the Christ; and like him, when they are discouraged, follow the Master 'afar off.' "

The pastor listened good naturedly until Mr. Bass was through, then said: "Evidently you have learned a little more Scripture, but one verse you have not learned." "What verse is that?" "St. John 21:22, What is that to thee? Follow thou me." Then the pastor gave Mr. Bass a good lecture on his habit of finding fault with professing Christians, because of their inconsistencies; yet refusing to follow the Christ himself.

"What have their short comings and sins got to do with your duty toward Christ? If your standard is so high, why don't you step out, and set the needed example?"

"Now then, will you be good?" said Mrs. Bass. "I am glad that I brought you with me, because the Doctor gave you what you needed."

"I admit that Dr. Brewster is one too many for me, and has given me just what I deserve; and from this time on I will try and behave better when in his presence."

But Mr. Bass was hard to "down," and soon began to laugh, and said: "I was laughing at part of a report my good wife is going to read before the Ladies' Missionary Society. She says one society paid to missions per member nine dollars and ninety-nine cents. I told her to make it even ten dollars, and she said she could not prevaricate for one cent."

"If I had part of my wife's religion, and she had part of my unbelief, I think we would be evenly balanced."

"Men like you need something that you do not possess," said Mrs. Carpenter, "You think what you do and say is just right, when there is something radically wrong in your makeup; and were it not for good wives you would be regular heathens."

"Mrs. Brewster," exclaimed Mr. Bass, "come quick, I am being shot all to pieces in your home, and I know you won't allow a guest to be treated that way."

"What has happened to disturb you so?" "Happened! your good husband laid me low, then my wife hit me, and now Mrs. Carpenter is giving me a good thrashing. I'm going back to the city where

I can find my kind."

"The way of the transgressor is hard," said the pastor's wife. At which none laughed more heartily than did Mr. Bass.

The next morning the "Three Bass girls" came to the village for "a day's outing," and added greatly to the pleasure of the old people. The youngest daughter always admired the pastor's "sweet little wife," and grew enthusiastic whenever she talked about her.

"Oh dear!" said the daughter. "If I could be such an old lady as Mrs. Brewster—so beautiful, serene, sweet, and lovable, I wouldn't mind growing old."

Mr. Bass placed his hand on his daughter's shoulder, and said: "My dear girl, if you want to be that kind of an old lady, you had better begin making her right now. She don't strike me as a piece of work that was done in a hurry. It has taken a long time to make her what she is. If you are going to paint that sort of a portrait of yourself to leave to the world, you had better be mixing your colors now."

The "little white-haired woman," with her husband had been refined in the furnace of affliction. Yet were careful not to permit their private sorrows to interfere with their public duties, and always appeared cheerful.

Mrs. Brewster had entered heartily into all church work; but sometimes she protested against what was expected of her. "Just as though she had been settled as a pastor, and was receiving a salary!"

In the afternoon, the visitors added their plea to that of MacDougall's and his bride—which plea had been earnestly made—that the pastor and his wife return to the city, and live among their old friends.

The large and beautiful residence bought by their eldest son would make an ideal home; and "Mother" would be free from household cares, and "Father" could devote his time to study, and the doing of literary work. Mr. Bass added: "Would not be bothered with church work."

"Sometimes I have been tempted to consider our son's generous offer," said the pastor; "but one who has not been in the ministry cannot imagine how hard it is to give up the blessed work. I am strong enough to do my work, and I imagine that should I ever become incapacitated on account of my physical infirmities, I would be like the old fire horses in our city that are out of active service. Every time the gong gives notice of a fire, they want to go to it. Whenever a church bell would ring, I would want to preach."

"None of your good friends doubt your interest

in church work, but you must know that the younger men are crowding men of your age; and it would be different if there was a scarcity of laborers in the Master's vineyard."

"Possibly there may be an ample supply of men for all our pulpits," said the pastor; "nevertheless, in its broadest sense, it remains true that 'The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few.' When Mac and Evelyn return and get settled in their new home will be time enough for Mother and I to consider this matter; that means so much to our children, our friends, and ourselves."

After expressions of hearty appreciation for the requests for a "long visit" in each home, from the pastor and his wife, the guests turned their faces homeward, and the manse "seemed quieter than ever."

CHAPTER XXVII

“AT EVENING TIME THERE SHALL BE LIGHT”

WITH some men life is neither clear nor dark, but “hazy” all the time. “Not day, nor night.” Much of their time is spent between hope and fear; not knowing what to make of things. Not so with the pastor. His life had been marked by much that was positive.

There had been dark days, when great sorrows enveloped his soul; and clear days, when the sunshine of joy filled his heart, and lit up his face. Often it had been “day,” and often it had been “night.”

The hand of time was pointing on life’s dial toward “three score years and ten.” The village church of which he had been pastor for five years had grown and become a strong church, and a young man had been called to take up the work the pastor so reluctantly laid down.

The urgent invitation of MacDougall and Evelyn “to make their home with them,” had been accepted; and “Father and Mother” were enjoying the evening of their life, with everything provided to make them comfortable and happy.

MacDougall, under the sweet influences of a Christian wife and a home of his own, had learned "That after all churches were doing a good work," and he was contributing liberally out of his abundance to the support of the benevolences of his own church, and to the various Boards of the church.

Two boys blessed their home, and were a continual source of joy to their grandparents. The eldest—John Calvin—was a special favorite with the pastor. Evelyn said, "The child is well named after his grandfather, because he is very much like him." The second boy—MacDougall—was hard to control, and often caused friction between himself and his parents.

Daniel had graduated from college, and had completed one year of his Seminary course at Princeton. Two more years, and he and Anna would be married, and offer themselves to the Board of Foreign Missions. Anna had developed into a noble woman and enthusiastic church worker.

"Our blessings," said the pastor to his wife, "are new every morning and fresh every evening." But there was one black scar on the pastor's memory.

Miss Cardo—the faithful and sweet-voiced alto singer; who had so often charmed him with her solos; and had been an inspiration during the whole church service: and in whom the pastor had tried

to believe to the very last, had suddenly disappeared, and her relatives and friends could not discover where she had gone.

The assistant pastor had resigned, and engaged in the real estate and insurance business for two years, during which time he seldom entered a church. And not long after Miss Cardo's disappearance, he bid his wife and children good-bye, and never returned from his trip to the Pacific coast.

The pastor was not idle. Often he supplied some of the city churches acceptably, and spent part of his time doing literary work, which he had not found the time to do while engaged in the active ministry.

Truly at evening time it was light with the pastor and his wife.

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