

## **WHAT DOES THIS FOREBODE?**

During the session of the Ninety-Fifth General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of the United States, held recently at Saratoga, Dr. Herrick Johnson, of Chicago, in his opening address, speaking of the peril within the Presbyterian body, said:

"The Church is rapidly approaching calamity. It is threatened with a famine of preachers. Our Church numbers 5,741 congregations, and by no possible figuring can ministers be made to match churches. Take in every stated supply and retired minister, and still 500 churches are pastorless. When the taper burns at both ends look out for darkness. There are no grounds of hoped-for relief in the colleges and theological seminaries to supply the demand. The trend is continually the wrong way. Of the students in twelve colleges in the last decade, only nineteen per cent entered or proposed to enter the ministry. The loss has gone too far not to injure the Church. Unless it be retrieved, disaster follows."

This is indeed, a gloomy outlook, and we do not wonder that the Moderator of the Assembly views it with alarm. This is the more reasonable when we consider that the Presbyterian body within the past few years has not grown to any extent numerically stronger. It indicates a growing apathy among its members to take an active interest in the teaching and propagation of the Presbyterian tenets. But this apathy, this lack of vocations to the ministry is not confined to the Presbyterian body; the same wail of grief comes from the other denominations in the Protestant fold. The young men who enter their course of studies ostensibly for the purpose of becoming the exponents of the particular tenets of their respective creeds, are drawn away by the attractions of the world and embrace other avocations. While this dearth in the ministry exists, medicine, law

and other professions are overcrowded, and while the aspirants to worldly honors are nominally members of the Protestant congregations, they, as a rule, take no interest in church affairs beyond attending service when it suits them and contributing liberally to the support of their pastors and their Church institutions.

– Catholic Mirror.

-----