

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

YOUNG MEN AND THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY

THE fact that fewer young men than formerly are preparing for the ministry is arousing comment in nearly all denominations. We extract below from Rev. D. J. Burrell's comments on this question and concede that as an educator his opinion should have weight. Nevertheless we can agree with it only in part. From our point of view the loss of *positive faith*, induced by so-called "Higher Criticism" and the "Evolution Theory," make void the Word of God. The very few young men who come out of college with a remnant of positive faith in the Bible are perplexed and inclined to doubt their convictions, and see that anyway they are out of tune with the majority of those with whom they had hoped to colobar and to serve, and that the message they intended to give would no longer be palatable to the people they would address nor satisfactory to themselves.

They feel drawn more to some service like that of the Salvation Army, and yet they feel that somehow it is not right either, and certainly far from their original ideal when entering college. Several of these, as well as some ministers who have resigned their pulpits in Churchianity, are now having blessed times "harvesting" – colporteuring.

Those described, however, are seemingly but the few. The vast majority seem intent merely on choosing a profession; and law, dentistry, medicine, osteopathy call loudly to them, and business holds out still more inducements. Hence the smaller proportion offering themselves for the ministry.

Dr. Burrell's views from "*The Christian Intelligencer*" are as follows: –

"Put yourself in his place. With life before you, presenting its various avenues of usefulness, you would be likely to reason thus: 'I am urged to go into the ministry. What for? "To seek and to save the lost?" But they say there are no "lost." To preach the truth? What truth? A personal God? They say there is no God but law, energy, a "something not ourselves, that maketh for righteousness." The supernatural? They say the miraculous is played out, and all things are to be accounted for by natural law. A divine Christ? His virgin birth is denied, and he is affirmed to have been a mere excellent man. The atonement? The idea that sin requires expiation is pronounced unphilosophical and therefore untrue. Justification by faith? Justification from what and by faith in what? In the New Theology faith has no object and justification no ground. Well, then, since all the doctrines once regarded as fundamental are explained away, suppose I devote my life to the preaching of ethics? But where shall I find my ethics? In the Bible? Pooh, pooh! The Bible is merely one of the many volumes of the world's literature and by no means the truest of them. In the Decalogue? The Decalogue is declared to have no more authority back of it than any other portion of the discredited book. Is there, then, no ultimate authority for truth and morals? Only in the inner consciousness of the individual. The question of entering the ministry, then, resolves itself into this: Shall I invest the assets of my life in a profession which has no end but to persuade a man to believe what pleases him, to be what he would like to be and to do what, in his opinion, without any reference to "authority," he ought to do? And, that being so, is the game worth the candle?"

"If he is a really 'smart' young man he will be sure to answer, No. He knows that he has only one life to live in this world, and it behooves him to make the most of it. He would be a fool to put all his eggs in such a basket as the ministry of 'The New Theology.' It isn't worth while. The man who chops wood to keep people warm and bake their bread is a contributor to the general

good, but the man who preaches when he has nothing to say is a non-producer. His profession ought to fail for want of candidates, because there is nothing in it.

"It is a mistake, however, to assume that 'bright young men' are not consecrating themselves, here and there and everywhere, to the work of preaching the straight gospel. The doubter drops out; why not? [R4049 : page 260] But the youth who believes in Christ and the Bible covets the privilege of treading in the beaten path of service; and he knows that the higher form of service is proclaiming a positive gospel, on the authority of a 'Thus saith the Lord,' with the supreme purpose of saving men."

LOOKING THE FACTS IN THE FACE

There are over 250,000 insane and imbeciles in the United States today. Statistics show that insanity is increasing three hundred times faster than the population. At the present ratio of increase, even if it gets no worse (in reality it is getting worse each year), it will require but 290 years to produce the utter destruction of the mental endurance of the race.

One death in every seven is from tuberculosis. Recent statistics issued by the German government show that one-fourth of all people dying of diseases other than tuberculosis, have had consumption at some time in their life. It would thus appear that very nearly one-half of the grown-up people have had or now have tuberculosis in some form or other.

The deadly cancer is terribly on the increase, and a prominent surgeon, appointed by the State of New York to investigate this disease some time ago, said that if it continues to increase the next ten years as fast as it has in the last ten years, it will claim as [R4050 : page 260] many victims as tuberculosis.

On every side there is abundant evidence of the rapid increase in the numbers of deformed, defective and degenerate human beings.

Nervous diseases and stomach troubles number their victims by millions, and very nearly three-fourths of the population are afflicted with one or other of these disorders.

It is an acknowledged fact that vice and crime are tremendously on the increase. The rapidly increasing army of dentists testifies to the fact that, as a race, we are tending toward toothlessness.

– *Exchange*.
