

An Old Minister's Complaints

Horatius Bonar

An old minister, speaking of some things that have troubled him in his congregation thus writes in the way of sorrowful complaint.

I. I complain that many of my people are not so prayerful or so earnest, or so spiritual as Christians ought to be. They seem to pray very little, for their minister, for their fellow-worshippers, or for the revival of the work of God in the midst of them.

II. I complain that so few attend the prayer-meetings. Not a sixth part of the regular worshippers come to it, as if it were no business of theirs, as if they had something far more important to do. They go to public meetings, scientific lectures, parties of pleasure, but neglect the prayer-meeting.

III. I complain that some, of whom better things might have been expected, are only half-day hearers. What they do on the other half of the Sabbath I do not know; but their seat in Church is empty each afternoon.

IV. I complain that some are not punctual to the hour, but come in late, missing the first Psalm and the first prayer.

V. I complain that some are, during service, not so reverent in prayer or praise or hearing as worshippers of God should be.

VI. I complain that some do not observe the Sabbath as it ought to be observed, and as it once was observed in Scotland. Their conversation, their employments are inconsistent with the holiness of that

Eusebeia

day.

VII. I complain that our workers are so few, that of a large congregation only a handful should devote themselves to the active service of the Master.

VIII. I complain that our Office-bearers and teachers are not so earnest and self-denying and prayerful as they ought to be; taking their work too easily, not as a matter of life and death for souls.

IX. I complain that our liberality is poor and stinted; our givings upon a low and narrow scale; God getting the least, self and the world getting the most of what we have.