## **Clark University**

## **Clark Digital Commons**

Manuscripts, 1933-1953

Petersham, First Congregational Parish Church 1933-1953

## No Title. Notes on the Ministry

**Earl Clement Davis** 

Follow this and additional works at: https://commons.clarku.edu/petersham\_manuscripts

the year that I became a selficient student in the Haward Diricily School, the address to the students war made by the then President of 11. U. The concluding statever was in the words.

Thentlemen, I melcome you to the most neutresome feo. Jurion of the twentieth century!

Hot, I am me, still tolche.

at the alfe age of 91. that some man made a brief address in Tremont Temple. - often the last "I look forward to The Trew

age with Hye"

two other things I want to exact First. I was ordained and in -stolled by a tymour. That, with all its implications I cherih.

Serous To the minister,

The significant fact is that most of the sing is heing done out who of the Christian Chlucker."

The christian Chlucker."

The of your tarks as a minister of religion is to carry formand the rich spiritual tradition of doubt to bring together there divergent sheams of life."

and, I helieve, in valid in any moderatauding of modern life, of current difficulties, and is an ever feesent factor in your delivious:

0

Some factors invalved, and some chiminated; upon all of which a minister comes et one time or another.

1 the frinciples of the Congregational for the Cheek exists happy its affire its affire its affire its affire.

8-Minister of the congregation. Recent anniel election of minister.

is of the people,

Boch of the is the assumption that truck is chisconered not remealed.

Think not that I am some to destroy the dew acres the profests, I came out to destroy but to frefits

het a trade, or a ladder for social standing.

Marised ruinistry.

Profession = Call =

about fatterus and ab:
stractions would suithout
end, but in actual fact there
is something at the heart of it
so intimately fersonal as to defy
all definitive generalizations.
Witness the dear ald friest in
"The Mays to the Kingdom." and
ash why it for become, and
remained a best seller for the
long months.

"O toil for over, reat the will, but richely done.": The me have a may gennine ferden, cowing into chiret conflict with an old generaly when the individual farmality is just her king though.

Just what forces and factors

No title

Notes on the Ministry

Earl C. Davis

Petersham, MA

No Date1

The year that I became a resident student in the Harvard Divinity School, the address to the students was made by the then President of H.U.. The concluding sentence was in these words, "Gentlemen. I welcome you to the most venturesome profession of the twentieth century."<sup>2</sup>

That, I am sure, still holds.

At the ripe age of 91, that same man made a brief address in [the] Tremont Temple, after the last world war: "I look forward to the New Age with Hope." $^3$ 

Two other things I want to speak of.

First.  $\underline{I}$  was ordained and installed by a layman. That, with all its implications,  $\underline{I}$  cherish.

Second. Charge to the minister:

The significant fact is that most of the important thinking of the time is being done outside of the Christian Churches. One of your tasks as a minister of religion is to carry forward the rich spiritual tradition of the past, and, so far as possible, work to bring together these divergent streams of life.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Given the text this had to be written after Charles Eliot's remarks in 1925. The paper is the same as the paper Earl Davis used for preparing his sermons in Petersham. There is a reference on the last page—which clearly came from a different source than the first four pages—to a novel published in 1941. So we can tentatively date this to the mid-1940s.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Charles William Eliot (1834-1926) was President of Harvard University from 1869 until 1909.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> If Earl Davis' calculation of Charles Eliot's age is correct, this talk occurred in 1925. Eliot died the following year.

That charge still holds for me, and, I believe, is valid in any understanding of modern life, of current difficulties, and is an ever present factor in your decisions.

Some factors evolved, and some eliminated, upon all of which a minister comes at one time or another.

First. Our tradition goes back to the principles of the Congregational polity.

The Church exists before its officers.

- a. Separation of church and state.
- b. Minister of the congregation.
- c. Recent Amish election of minister.

So, in theory, the minister is of the people.

Back of that is the assumption that  $\underline{\text{truth}}$   $\underline{\text{is}}$   $\underline{\text{discovered}}$ ,  $\underline{\text{not}}$  revealed.

"Think not that I am come to destroy the law and the prophets. I came not to destroy but to fulfill." $^4$ 

Not a trade, or a ladder for social standing.

Married ministry.

Profession

Call

\_\_\_\_\_

One further page was attached to the pages of this manuscript with the text below. Clearly it is from a different—sadly unidentified—source. Here is its text.

...about patterns and abstractions would without end, but in actual fact there is something at the heart of it so intimately personal as to defy all definitive generalizations. Witness the

 $<sup>^4</sup>$  Matthew 5:17.

dear old priest in "The Keys to the Kingdom," $^5$  and ask why it has become and remained a best-seller for these long months.

"O Lord, for once, not thy will, but mine be done."6

Here we have a very genuine person, coming into direct conflict with an old generalization. The individual personality is peaking through.

Just what forces and factors.

 $<sup>^{5}</sup>$  A. J. Cronin, The Keys of the Kingdom, New York: Little, Brown, 1941

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Compare, Luke 22:42, "Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.