

[Southold, Suffolk Co.]

The Amen Corner
By John Sayles
LAMPLIGHTER MURRAY

Shades of James Fenimore Cooper! the lamplighter of fiction has become an ecclesiastical fast.

Observe the following from the New York Tribune, afterward sent out by the associated press and the occasion of numberless aditorialettes and scintillating sqibs throughout the journalistic world:

Preacher a Lamplighter—Minister Takes Job at \$25 a Month—Gets \$700 a Year Salary, Too.

By an agreement with the village authorities of Southold, Long Island, to light and extinguish the street lamps each night for \$25 a month, the Rev. W. H. Murray, pastor of the Southold Universalist Church, has brought upon him the criticism of many of his congregation. Southold's populace retires very early. All street lamps must be extinguished promptly at 11 o'clock.

The Rev. Mr. Murray's salary of \$700 a year will be increased by \$300 through his work on the street lamps. He proposes to use the time spent on the streets twice each evening in thinking out his sermons. He has made for himself new friends, who admire his plunck [sic].

The Amen Corner is proud to know and bear witness to the worth of the Reverend Mr. Murray.

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For years he has done, and is now doing, good ministerial work at Southold, Long Island. In every way he is an excellent man and is a good servant of Jesus Christ. This is written without mental reservation.

...

The Lamplighter's new job will bless his congregation. Think of the sermons that will spring into life as he silently trudges along with lantern and ladder, his heart aglow and his face set heavenward!

...

And if some continue to love criticism more than pluck, console yourself with the thought that your conduct has put Southold on the map and your own little church in the nation's limelight.

Best of all, you have in a single stroke proclaimed world-wide that humble toil and common honesty are cardinal doctrines with the Universalist Church.

The Convention at Work, Herkimer NY, January 1906

Transcribed on 16 Nov 2015 by Karen E. Dau of Rochester, NY