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ARTICLE I.

MINISTERIAL CONSECRATION AND MINISTERIAL SUPPORT.

Perhaps there is now before the Southern Presbyterian Church no subject of more pressing interest than that which is announced as the theme of the following remarks. The particular view of it which we desire to present is: The hindrance to ministerial consecration arising from the diversion of the ministry to secular pursuits, the causes which conduce to it, and the means by which it may be removed. The subject in general is delicate, for one cannot but feel reluctant to urge upon the attention of others a duty in the discharge of which personal inefficiency and short-coming must be deplored. Infinitely preferable would it be to bend with them at the Master's feet, there to confess unfaithfulness, to entreat forgiveness, and to crave that furniture of gifts and graces which only His Spirit can impart.

In the special aspect, too, in which it will be treated, this subject is difficult; and that for two reasons: First, although the duty of ministerial consecration will, in the abstract, be at once admitted, there are concrete cases in which it seems to be limited and modified by peculiar circumstances, which to some extent condition the relation of the minister to his proper work. To

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weigh justly the influence of these circumstances and to make due allowance for them, so as while urging the performance of an obvious duty, to exonerate from censure those who are driven by necessity, would be no easy task. It is in the application of the general rule to individual cases that the difficulty exists. Secondly, the example of the Apostle Paul appears to furnish a warrant to preachers of the gospel, in certain cases, in engaging in temporal business in order to secure a support. To urge upon the conscience of each minister the necessity of separating himself from all worldly engagements, and appropriating his whole time and energy to the work to which he is peculiarly called, may be to enforce a rule the special application of which is invalidated by apostolic precedent and therefore by apostolic authority. Yet, delicate and difficult as the subject is, it is one which demands attention. The condition of our Church makes its consideration imperative. She is suffering incalculably from the want of pastors, and of pastoral consecration where in many instances the pastoral relation nominally obtains. Should there be no change for the better, the day may come when this question will assume still more vital consequence—it may be to her one of life or death. May God give us grace now, in time, to look the difficulty in the face, to ascertain its causes, and to apply the remedy before all remedial measures shall be too late!

The Apostle Paul employs the analogy of a soldier's life to illustrate the necessity of entire consecration on the part of a minister of the gospel to the work to which he is called. "No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life." When the soldier enlists he forsakes utterly the ordinary business of life, and devotes himself to the performance of military duties. They engross his whole time and attention; nor will he be permitted by the authority which has mustered him in to turn aside to his workshop, his merchandise, or his farm. So is it with the minister of the gospel. Jesus, his Sovereign and his Commander in the field, has enrolled him and placed him as an officer in a position of responsibility and trust. He is called to the very front; the enemy is just before him. He cannot look behind him; he cannot turn aside to the right hand or to

the left. Unremitting vigilance, unceasing toil, are his lot, until the clash of arms has been hushed, and the victor's rest attained. The illustration is complete. If it would be vain to expect the soldier to discharge military functions, and at the same time to attend to the common employments of life; it is equally futile to suppose that the minister of the gospel can properly and adequately accomplish his great and holy work, and at the same time turn aside to the unspiritual pursuits of the world.

I. In the first place, then, we remark, that the work to which the minister of the gospel is called, is of such a nature as to absorb his whole time, attention, and energy; and that engagement in secular pursuits so tends to entangle him as to hinder his consecration to that work. It is of the pastoral office that we would chiefly speak, since it is that office the great majority of ministers, under the operation of our system, discharge, and since special provision is made in our general sustentation scheme for the support of the evangelist. A simple enumeration of the functions which the pastor's calling requires will serve to illuminate the truth of the foregoing propositions. What are those functions?

First of all, the pastor is called to preach. This is the foremost of his duties; and this involves a twofold office—the inculcation and defence of the truth, and the proclamation of the gospel—offer to sinners of all ranks and conditions. The flock of Christ committed to his care must be fed with that word, which is the aliment of spiritual life, and the instrument of sanctification. All who have become familiar with the first principles of the doctrine of Christ must be conducted to those advanced views of Christian truth which their practised faculties demand to satisfy them. He must keep himself in their lead, still impressing them with his superior knowledge as a teacher; or his ministrations will fail to edify this portion of his charge, and ultimately fall into contempt, or be regarded with indifference. The truth of the gospel, vital to the welfare of the souls intrusted to his oversight, must be defended from objections, misrepresentations, and undisguised attack. He is set for its defence, and must contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the

saints. The enemy must not be permitted to flourish his banners, and proclaim his triumph in the very house of the Lord. To do this he must be a theologian, prepared by his intimate acquaintance with the whole system of revealed truth, not only didactically to state its component elements, but to expose error, convince gainsayers, and stop the mouths of adversaries. What a furniture of knowledge is thus required! And how can he attain it but by close, continual, toilsome study? The pastor must be a student to the end. He can never close his books and say, I need no farther extension of my stores—I have enough. He must study while grey hairs are upon him, and lay aside his books and parchments when he undresses for the bed of death.

In addition to this function of teaching, he must herald the tidings of redemption to the perishing sinners around him. He must convince the understanding, move the affections, and endeavor to persuade the will. It is incumbent on him to perform this great office as well as the labored cultivation of his powers will admit. The preparation to preach effectively is surely no light and easy task. Think, too, what an incessant and exhausting drain is made upon his faculties, as Sabbath after Sabbath he stands up to utter himself before the same hearers! No other profession is subjected to one so trying. A great modern master of oratory has said, that he who has passed through the ordeal of an extemporaneous effort without utterly breaking down should render special thanks to God. This danger most of our preachers incur week after week. Is carelessness or recklessness a fit preparation to meet it? What study, what discipline of thought, what charging of the mind, are required against such oft-recurring exigencies! To avoid a monotonous sameness, he must be by diligent application a steward who brings forth things new and old; and he must save himself from stale repetition of the mode of exhibiting truths which, from their intrinsic value, must needs be often reiterated. Add to this the oppressive responsibility involved in venturing to preach at all; and what true preacher is there, who does not cry out, "Who is sufficient for these things?" It is said that Martin Luther often trembled upon entering the pulpit. The pulpit!

What a place it is! There the majesty of divine law is vindicated, and the love of the gospel portrayed. There are heard the thunder-tones of Sinai; there the melting accents of Calvary. Now it is luminous with the glory of the Cross, and anon it is clothed with the terrors of the judgment-bar. There truth—heavenly truth—arrayed in the garments of salvation, and invested with the sanctions of eternity, speaks to mortal men of their immortal destinies. There, it is true, a sinner stands to address sinners; but there, too, Jesus, the Saviour of sinners, lifts his hands to bless his people, and stretches out his arms of mercy to a ruined world. There a matchless Prophet extends his instructions; there a merciful and faithful High-Priest shows his atoning blood; and thence a mighty King issues his laws and bestows the Spirit of converting grace. To be prepared to occupy such a place; to do it with dignity, to do it with impressiveness, to do it with power, to do it as an ambassador of Jesus Christ to dying men, were sufficient, not to absorb the faculties of a man, but to exhaust the abilities of a seraph.

Cognate to the great duty of preaching, is that of catechizing the children and youth of the Church. It has always been conceded that the catechetical is the most effective method of imparting instruction. It was the method of the most remarkable teacher of Pagan antiquity, and no wise instructor will disregard it as a medium of communicating Christian knowledge. It is all-important that the young of the Church should be thoroughly indoctrinated in the truths of the gospel. It is upon them that these truths make the deepest and most lasting impression. Our fathers of the Scottish Churches always insisted upon this department of ministerial duty; the Church of England makes it incumbent upon her ministers. It cannot, without culpable neglect, be wholly remitted to other hands. No doubt the family is the great school for the religious training of children; but the minister is the shepherd of all the separate flocks of his charge. It is the collection of them which constitutes *his* flock. He is the pastor—the feeder of the little ones. Now he may accomplish this duty in one of several ways. He may teach from house to house; or, he may gather the children and instruct

them collectively; or, he may take advantage of the Sabbath-school, an institute demanded by the spirit of this age, and throw himself into connection with it as the surest means of reaching the largest number of the children of his charge. But whichever plan he adopts, it is one of his functions to impart the knowledge of gospel truth to the youth of his congregation.

Next in order comes the function of pastoral visitation. It is by no means intended to affirm that this duty rests exclusively upon the minister. There are also others who are appointed by the authority of Christ to perform it. The ruling elder is an overseer, a bishop of the congregation, and his office of inspection can only be properly discharged by personal visitation of so many of its families as may be assigned to his special oversight and care. It is cheerfully conceded that the thorough visitation of the people can only be accomplished jointly by the minister and the ruling elders; and that to devolve the whole duty upon the preacher is at once to overburden him with excessive responsibilities and to violate the express injunctions of the Head of the Church. But at the same time, it must be admitted that, as the minister is alike teaching and ruling elder, this duty rests by eminence upon him. He is in part to discharge his several functions of overseer and teacher by analysing his congregation, by inquiring into the spiritual condition of individuals, by comforting the poor, the sick, and the afflicted, and by instructing and praying with families at home. Thus would every house become a sanctuary, and every family a congregation. Oh, how sadly do we fail in preaching from house to house! How little can we say, with the faithful apostle, "I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears!"

It is also one of the functions of the minister to organise the active elements of his Church for the work in the Master's vineyard, which can only be adequately accomplished by an employment of the two principles of combination and division of labor. The Church is a living organism united to a living Head by a living Agent who dwells and works in her. She is not a mere aggregation of independent units, a simple collection of persons who stately assemble to hear the gospel and worship God, im-

portant as these ends confessedly are. The bond which unites them to Christ, as it makes them partakers of his life, imparts to them organic unity as sharers of a common spiritual life. They are one in Christ Jesus. Each member of this living body has a vital function to discharge; each has its own separate and peculiar office, and each combines with every other to the sustenance of a joint vitality, and the production of a common end. This great principle makes it clear that the Church should be a working body. There are three subordinate principles in obedience to which the energies of the Church should be employed to secure the glory of her Head and the welfare of men. The first is, the organisation of the working elements by combining such as possess kindred qualifications for usefulness in order to effect a joint result. The second is, the division of labor, in order that all may not be concentrated upon each separate object, and so loss of time, indefiniteness of aim, and confusion in action emerge, but that those who are peculiarly fitted for accomplishing certain specific offices may be set off from the mass by sub-organisation and detailed for the discharge of those offices. Some, for example, are eminently suited by their gifts for missionary labor in the community which surrounds them. They would properly be associated and assigned to that particular branch of Christian work. The third principle is, the direct responsibility of the working body as a whole, and in its detailed sections, or committees, to the session as the directing and governing power. The formation of independent, voluntary societies within the Church would thus be prevented. By the recognition and employment of these principles, a Church passes from the negative condition of a merely passive recipient of spiritual benefits, and rises in response to her Master's call—"Go, work to-day in my vineyard," into an active, energetic organisation. She becomes what the Master intended her to be, not only a school of training for individual souls, but a charitable institute, succoring her own needy members, and dispensing blessings to particular communities, and to the world at large. Of course, in all that has been said, it is not implied that the Church is not already organised by the divine appointment of office-bearers

with their respective functions distinctly assigned them. What is urged is the necessity of employing the membership, in which resides a vast amount of latent working-power which is too often permitted to lie unused in the performance of Christian labors adapted to their unofficial position. Nor is it intended by any means to imply that where such an organisation of the membership for evangelical work does not obtain, the Church is a useless society. Far from it. The first, great end, subordinate to the glory of God, for which the Church exists, is the salvation of souls, and this is secured by a believing reception of the saving word. And it is also admitted that the very instincts of the new nature will lead individuals to work for Christ and souls where no such organisation as that described is in existence. But yet it is true that the perfection of the Church as an active institute cannot be attained without the employment of this great principle of union for the acquisition of joint ends, and that without it the tendency is to satisfaction with mere individual benefit. The power, under God, of a single church properly organised for labor is simply enormous; and what is here insisted on is, that the minister ought not to neglect the use of this joint power for the promotion of the Master's glory and the welfare of men. But this involves patient thought, untiring labor, incessant oversight. Having, with the coöperation of the membership of the Church, which must be secured by careful instruction of them in their duty and privilege in this respect, enlisted their energies for common work, he will find it necessary to supervise the operation of the whole scheme; to solve difficulties, to check the forward, to stimulate the fainting, to encourage the doubting, to support the weak. Like a faithful leader, he must throw himself along the whole line, but especially at the points which are threatening to give way under the pressure of the enemy.

Another function which the minister is called to discharge is that of ruling. In this respect he sustains a twofold relation: first, to his own congregation; and secondly, to the Church at large as a member of its upper courts. In connection with his own charge, besides the ordinary oversight of its interest in his

several and joint capacity, he will often encounter questions involving important principles and far-reaching precedents; and from the new and peculiar conditions, the modified aspects and relations under which old and familiar principles are presented, he will find his mind, however acute and penetrating, frequently tasked to its utmost ability. The exercise of discipline, always difficult and trying, will make large drafts upon his time, and often exact the most anxious and protracted reflection. These considerations are enhanced by the demands upon his time and attention, which are enforced upon him by virtue of his relation to the great and often embarrassing questions which he must meet as a member of the higher judicatories, and which he cannot overlook or slight without delinquency in his duties as a presbyter.

In addition to these binding obligations, he will feel himself, it may be, impelled to use the press—the grand modern agency for the extensive dissemination of the truth, and discussion of conflicting views, a medium through which he will be able to address a larger auditory than he can orally reach. He will also endeavor to fulfil, as far as in him lies, the offices of the Christian philanthropist. Pervaded by love for his fellow-men, he will feel a sympathy with every good enterprise which is warranted by the word of God, and does not contravene the constitution of his Church; and by active influence in their advancement contribute, to the extent of his ability, to the melioration of social evils, and the promotion of the public weal.

In what has been urged, nothing has been said of the greatest duty of all—that which lies at the basis of all others—the duty of attending to his own spiritual culture, and of living in communion with God, without which all his functions are dead works—all his gifts, however splendid, sounding brass and tinkling cymbals. Every Christian, it is true, experiences the same obligation; but it presses eminently and peculiarly upon the minister of the gospel. His faith must be a great faith; his love a mighty passion; his fight the combat of a champion in the forefront of battle; his conflicts with temptation such as men wage who hold against odds the gates of a citadel. When

others fall, he must stand; when they faint, he must press on; when they are cold, he must burn; and when apostasy sweeps off its hundreds, he must lift his standard between the living and the dead. No influence of earthly contagion must lower the tone of his spiritual life. When the earth is like iron and the heavens like brass, he must plead with his head between his knees until the harbinger of refreshing rains darkens the distant horizon and rolls its volumes of blessing across the face of the burning sky. And "as an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings," so must he nurse the weak, raise the fallen, cheer on the lagging, and on strong pinions of faith and love bear upward his charge to higher regions of holiness and joy.

This statement of the functions of a minister of the gospel, and of the work which he is required to perform is in itself sufficient without argument to show that he has no time for attending to a secular pursuit. Time! He has not time enough to do his proper work—this mighty, all-absorbing work which his Master has committed to his hands, and the adequate performance of which is demanded by his relations to undying souls, and the nearness of that account which he must render for them at the bar of final judgment. Time! When he has toiled night and day, rising early and burning the midnight lamp, he longs for more time. When the exhausted body falls like a dead weight upon its couch, he begrudges the time which its rest exacts. How often does he wish that he could duplicate himself, so that he might bring two minds and two bodies to the discharge of duties which his single self pursues but ever fails to overtake. "Oh," exclaims he, "that I had studied more diligently in the past, so that I might better meet the rigorous demands now made upon my intellectual furniture; but, alas! the exactions of my pastoral work in measure forbade it." "Oh," cries he at another time, "that I had more faithfully visited and prayed with and preached to the families and individuals of my charge; but, alas! the necessity of study, and of constant preparation for the pulpit greatly hindered me." "Oh," laments he again, "that I had oftener seized the opportunity to perform missionary labor

to destitute souls in my vicinity; but, alas! my pastoral work confined me to my flock." Time! Had he the age of Methusalem—one thousand years save thirty-one—in which to accomplish a work which must be achieved in an uncertain fraction of three-score years and ten, he would feel that not too much time were consecrated to an enterprise so gigantic, to ends so noble and sublime. Time! A few, brief—ah, how brief—years slip away, and his overtaxed voice begins to yield, the fires of his youth to die down, the vigor of his manhood to decay; and still there ring in his ears the thrilling words of his laborious Master: "I must work the works of him that sent me while it is day; the night cometh when no man can work." And as one beloved brother after another, who has wrought side by side with him, drops down under his burden, voices as from the eternal world, issuing from their graves, call like trumpets to him to "finish the work" which his Lord has given him to do. *What time, then, has a minister of the gospel to devote to temporal pursuits?*

It is perfectly clear that time is equally necessary to the successful accomplishment of any secular business. What employment is there that can be vigorously pursued as a secondary and subordinate affair? What merchant, or farmer, or mechanic, is there who feels that he has more time than can be legitimately and profitably bestowed upon his avocation?

It is equally obvious that concentrated attention is required, either for the thorough discharge of ministerial duties, or the adequate accomplishment of any worldly business. It is out of the question that it can be competently paid to both. There is apt to arise, in cases in which both are undertaken by uninspired men, a competition between them, in which one or the other must give way and suffer. It deserves serious consideration, which is likely to yield to the claims of the other? which will exercise the paramount influence? Let us, then, contemplate the probable effects of this rivalry between the ministerial work and a secular pursuit?

1. In the first place, either one succeeds in a temporal business, or he does not. If he does, his success is the result of the devotion of time and attention to the pursuit in which he is en-

gaged. That supposes a corresponding withdrawal of those elements of successful work from the labors of the ministry. If he fails, the cares and anxieties which follow must needs have the effect of diverting his mind from the cure of souls, and the heavy, though sacred, burden of ministerial responsibility. Let him succeed or not, in either event a prejudicial influence is, to a greater or less extent, exerted upon his proper work.

2. In the second place, a consecration of the minister to his sacred calling is in this case hindered by the law that two supreme ends cannot be pursued at once, two controlling principles of action cannot coördinately operate in the same heart. "No man," says our Saviour, "can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will hold to the one and despise the other." Now, in what way is it likely that this law will operate in the case of a minister who pursues a secular business? He will probably, if a conscientious servant of Christ, will certainly commence aright. Unable to secure a comfortable support by the preaching of the gospel, and yet, by the love of his great work and the profound convictions which relate him to it, impelled to continue its discharge, he betakes himself to some temporal employment to furnish him the means of proclaiming the unsearchable riches of Christ to his fellow-men. His motive is undoubtedly a commendable, a noble one. And in cases in which stern necessity exists and in which that motive continues to exercise a supreme control, it is hard to ascribe any other spirit to such a man than one which the Lord Jesus will himself approve. But constituted as even such a man is, the question arises, whether he will be likely to end as he began. The danger which he incurs is one which springs from the fact that he is imperfectly sanctified; that there co-exist in his one personality two natures which are in perpetual conflict, and which struggle incessantly for the mastery of the soul. The one allies him to Christ, to holiness, to heaven; the other to the earth, to the devil, to sin. The new nature by its very instincts, affections, and principles, urges him to the performance of his holy work; the old, as by the force of gravitation, draws him downward from it. His engagement in a secular

employment powerfully enhances the tendencies of his carnal nature. It gives it peculiar motives for exercise and opportunities for domination. It is difficult enough for one who is entirely consecrated to his sacred work to resist the impulses of his sinful nature, so potent within him as often to wring from him the cry of the agonized apostle, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" But how much more arduous must it be for him who, in addition to these native cravings of the old nature, is compelled to supply the additional incentives to its desires which spring from an earthly employment foreign to the very genius of that singular mission to which he is divinely separated. Is it not manifest that there must be a tendency at least to the relaxation, if not the overthrow, of that supreme motive with which he commenced this dual employment of his energies? Is there not danger of his bestowing a divided heart upon the work of the Lord?

These painful apprehensions are strengthened, when we reflect that, from the nature of the case, more time is ordinarily devoted to the secular than to the ministerial work. The necessities of a temporal business require that this be so. Its results are more tangible, and the fruits of neglect very speedily and conspicuously show themselves. This is serious; for the earthly thoughts and affections are thus seen to have immense scope in which to develop themselves, while even proportionate opportunity for expansion is denied to those principles which infuse spiritual energy into a minister's heart and work. He is in danger of looking at the things which are seen and temporary, and not at the things which are unseen and eternal.

Let it be remembered, too, that it is easier to bestow attention upon a secular business than upon the self-denying, self-sacrificing work of the ministry. The former falls in with the natural tastes of the heart, and the wants of the body; and the peril thus created of one's being absorbed by it is immeasurably increased by the very law of contagion. In pursuing an earthly employment he has the sympathy of all around him who are similarly engaged. In the ordinary intercourse of life he will be stimulated by this community of earthly interest and fellow-

ship of secular feeling, even against the protests of the minister's heart, and the cautionary remonstrances of the Spirit of God to think, feel, and act as a man of the world occupied like others in the things of the world.

It cannot, moreover, be disguised, that during this period of engagement in worldly business, the tendency must be great from the very laws of his nature, to the establishment of worldly habits which, if they do not actually oppose his ministerial culture, go to neutralize and hinder it. He is in danger of becoming secularized. It is important to reflect that habits of genuine ministerial labor are not the most facile of formation. They require for their mature development time and painful effort. To the zenith of his activity the habits of the minister are forming. It is apparent, therefore, that the contemporaneous cultivation of secular habits must tend to interfere seriously with the legitimate growth of the ministerial character, and the highest attainments of ministerial usefulness.

In order to vacate these considerations of their force, it may be replied that they would impeach the piety of every Christian man who industriously devotes himself to his earthly business. The answer is, that were the two cases strictly parallel, it would have to be acknowledged that the temptation is sore on the part of every non-ministerial servant of Christ to sacrifice his sympathy with his Master's kingdom in his engrossment in his temporal interests. What prayer, what vigilance is required to defeat this threatening danger! And when all means are employed to avert it, how small is the success which the Christian man obtains, compared with the convictions and desires of his spiritual nature! One of the great and pressing wants of the Church and of a perishing world, is the consecration of the members of Christ to his glory, his kingdom, his cause. What could not be accomplished, did this dedication by Jesus' people of their energies and their property to him once become a fact! Such a discussion as this would be superfluous, since no minister would have a reasonable excuse for engaging in a secular pursuit. The treasury of the Lord would be full. All the tithes would be brought into his storehouse; and the soldier of Christ paid

out of his coffers would feel no temptation to entangle himself with the affairs of this life. But the cases are not wholly analogous. They differ in important respects. The ordinary Christian is legitimately employed when he devotes his time and attention to an earthly pursuit. To this he is called in subordination to his chief end—the glory of God, in the edification of the Church, and the salvation of souls. The minister, on the other hand, is called to a special work, the very nature of which separates him from worldly avocations. He is set apart to this work. This—no other—is his employment. The one in encountering dangers which arise from a legitimate calling is authorised to expect the aids of grace, and privileged to rely upon the promises of God. The other, in cases in which no absolute necessity exists for it, turns aside from his appointed work, and may find that God will turn aside from him, that he may be left to the full force of temptations which are not pertinent to his own proper calling. And even where necessity does exist, the analogy between the supposed cases fails; for, by devotion, within proper limits, to his secular calling the private Christian more and more qualifies himself for the service of God in his appointed lot. This is his business; and there can be no contradiction between it and the end to which his life ought to be consecrated. The minister, on the other hand, the more thoroughly he becomes an expert in a worldly pursuit, the more disqualifies himself both by desuetude, and by contrariety in the very nature of the things themselves, for a thorough prosecution of his peculiar calling—his holy and unearthly work.

3. In the third place, the effect on the minister's preaching must in a greater or less degree prove detrimental. The preacher who is wholly consecrated to his work finds it extremely difficult to secure and maintain that frame of mind and heart which effective preaching demands. How different at different times is the unction with which he delivers the gospel! Now he is borne as in the chariots of Amminadib, and anon the wheels of his soul drive as heavily as those which were disabled in the mud of the Red Sea. How hard it is at times to preach, when it is easy to speak! It is one thing fluently to utter a lecture or an

oration on the gospel; it is quite another thing to preach the gospel with power and with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. To thrust out the world, to divorce the soul from distracting thoughts and cloister it with the subject, to be so pervaded by the truth that the word of the Lord is like a burning fire which breaks forth with a vehement flame, to discard the arm of flesh and hang dependently on the arm of the Spirit, to glow with zeal for the glory of God, to melt with love to a dying Saviour, and to yearn with tenderness unutterable over perishing sinners—all this is difficult indeed to him to whom preaching is the one great business of life. Must not the difficulty be greatly increased by that occupation of the mind with worldly thoughts and of the heart with worldly feelings which engagement in a secular pursuit must tend to produce? Nor is this all. The case is aggravated by the consideration that the unction of the preacher is ordinarily the measure of God's blessing upon the people. Usually there is a correspondence betwixt the state of his heart and the spiritual effect of his preaching upon the souls of his hearers. When he is warm, they burn; when he is cold, they freeze. If, therefore, the tendency of a preacher's occupation in worldly matters is to damage the effectiveness of his preaching, it is obvious that only reasons of the most cogent character will justify him in incurring so fearful a responsibility.

II. If, then, these things be so: if the work of the minister of the gospel is of such a nature as to absorb all his time and attention; if engagement in a secular pursuit robs him of a portion of the time and distracts the attention which his proper calling imperatively requires for its efficient prosecution; if there is danger of his becoming entangled in the affairs of this life, so as in measure to disqualify him for the thorough-going discharge of his spiritual functions, the question obtrudes itself, Why are so many ministers occupied in temporal avocations? What account can be given of this extraordinary fact? Can it be that there is a lamentable failure on their part to appreciate the force of their divine call to devote themselves to the preaching of the gospel and the cure of souls, or to apprehend the true significance of the work assigned them? Can it be that their faith is

so small that they dare not, while laboring for Him, trust for their earthly support in the providence and promises of the Master they serve? Can it be for once supposed that they are not content with a maintenance sufficient for the reasonable wants of themselves and their families, but, impelled by the covetousness they rebuke from the pulpit, grasp after an accumulation of this world's goods? In short, is this remarkable state of things to be ascribed to the defective piety of the ministry? They themselves would be the first to admit their shortcomings in reference to the holy work to which they are called; but it would involve the most signal injustice to them to say that there are no other causes than those mentioned for the diversion of their energies into secular channels. Yes, other causes there are which go far to explain the huge anomaly; and it is a question which merits our profoundest attention, What *are* those causes? We will endeavor to describe the most prominent of them:

1. The principal cause of this state of things is, beyond doubt, the failure of the churches to furnish them an adequate support. Where this is the case, there are three alternatives before the minister between which his election must be made: either he must abandon the preaching of the gospel; or, continuing to preach, he must accept suffering for himself and his family; or, he must resort to a secular pursuit to eke out his support. The first he cannot do, if he be a true-hearted preacher of the gospel. Necessity is laid upon him, and preach he must. The second he might perhaps do, were he alone involved; but he would ill discharge his obligations to those dependent on him for subsistence by allowing them to want the necessaries of life. The third course is that which alone seems feasible; but must he be shut up to its adoption, with all its attendant evils? Shall he be driven to a worldly avocation through defect of comfortable maintenance by the church he serves? One is tempted to believe that a church needs only to know its duty in this matter in order to fulfil it. It may not be unprofitable, therefore, once more to state the grounds upon which ministers are entitled to support, and upon which the con-

sequent obligation of the churches to furnish it is susceptible of clear establishment. In briefly doing so, we will follow the argument which the Apostle Paul so lucidly and convincingly urges in the ninth chapter of the 1st Epistle to the Corinthians.

First, the right of ministers of the gospel to adequate support, is evident from the universally recognised principle that the laborer is entitled to reward. This principle lies at the root of society. It could not exist without it. It is founded in natural justice, and commends itself even to the conscience of the heathen. All men act upon it. "Who goeth a warfare at any time at his own charges? Who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? Or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock?" The only way in which the resistless force of this argument can be evaded is, by denying that the minister of the gospel is in any proper sense a laborer. If he be a drone in the hive of society, as the infidel says, if the offices he discharges are useless, then his case falls outside of the scope of this fundamental principle. But our Saviour pronounces him a laborer, and a "laborer worthy of his hire;" and Christian men would be the last to deny the fact. Why, then, upon the principles of natural justice, does he not receive his reward? Strong as this view is, it does not present the whole case. The relation of a pastor to his people is of the nature of a formal contract, and if his hire is withheld, there is not only injustice but fraud. And still further, as he is, as a laborer, also the representative of his Lord, his servant hired out for His glory, the fraud is perpetrated not only against him but against Christ. The Master is cheated of his dues.

Secondly, the same right is strictly enforced in the law of the Old Testament dispensation, even in regard to brutes. "For it is written in the law of Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen? or saith he it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes no doubt this is written; that he that plougheth should plough in hope; and he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope." Here the general principle that labor is entitled to reward, is enforced by statute; and in accordance

with it the special labors of the priests and Levites—the ordinary ministers of that economy—were secured a competent reward.

Thirdly, the minister of the gospel is entitled to adequate support upon the principle of commutative justice. “If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?” There are three things suggested by this particular argument. In the first place, even taking the low view of commercial exchange, in accordance with which one thing is given for another, the minister ought to have temporal support. He gives to the people his things; they ought to give to him their things. In the next place, the argument is from the greater to the less: the minister furnishes to the people the higher class of benefits—the spiritual; they in return ought to supply the lower class of benefits—the carnal. In the third place, if we mistake not, the apostle intimates that this demand of commutative justice is enhanced by gratitude. You have received through us ministers the priceless blessings of redemption; even gratitude would impel you by yielding your carnal and perishable things to supply our ordinary natural wants. The argument is irresistible.

Fourthly, the analogy of all religions, especially of the Jewish, vindicates the right of the gospel ministry to a competent maintenance. “Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar?” The priesthood of every religion are supported in the discharge of their functions. This was eminently true of ministers of the Jewish religion. Their maintenance was most carefully provided for, not only from the system of tithes, but from the sacrificial offerings of the worshippers. They partook of what was given to God. Shall this analogy be violated only under the Christian scheme? Shall the ministerial dispensers of higher benefits than any other religion imparts, constitute the only exception to this universal rule? The Jewish minister lived of the temple, the Pagan priest ate of the altar; only the preacher of “the glorious gospel of the blessed God” shall be denied this privilege! *He* must labor with his own hands for his daily bread! “Tell it not in

Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon; lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice; lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph."

Fifthly, the support of the ministers of the gospel is provided for by the express ordinance of Christ himself. "Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel." Evidently, the allusion is to Christ, the Head and Lawgiver of the Church. As under the old dispensation provision was made by divine enactment for the temporal sustenance of its ministry, even so has the Lord Jesus ordered that the support of his ministers under the gospel economy should be derived from the discharge of their sacred functions, and not from their engagement in secular pursuits. Here the argument necessarily closes; the authority of Christ is invoked. That is enough, surely, to make it obligatory upon the ministry to seek from the Church, and upon the Church to furnish, such support as their circumstances require.

The only escape from the obligation thus irrefragably established, is upon the plea of inability resulting from poverty. In such cases several things would seem to be clear: In the first place, a church so situated, though unable to support the ministry, ought notwithstanding to enjoy its offices, in accordance with the principle that to the poor the gospel is preached. It must, at the same time, be content to be so classified. In the second place, it ought to refrain from entering into contracts which its circumstances preclude its fulfilling. In the third place, before declining to furnish a support to the ministry, it must be sure that the plea of inability is well-founded; that it is not suggested by the absence of a self-sacrificing spirit, rather than by the actual stress of its circumstances. Otherwise it incurs the guilt of disobedience to the express ordinance of Christ, and must expect to be visited with the tokens of his displeasure. In the fourth place, it should endeavor as speedily as possible, either by uniting with other churches, or by the development of its own resources, to secure the services of a pastor, and to give him a support. Its life is involved in it.

2. A second cause of the diversion of ministerial energy into

secular channels, is a partial misconception of the position which was maintained by the Apostle Paul. He wrought with his own hands in order that he might make the gospel without charge; and what was done by an apostle may be done by humbler servants of Christ. This consideration has a twofold bearing—upon the mind of the minister of the gospel himself, and upon the expectations of the Church. Perhaps no one reason has been so powerful as this in producing inattention on the part of both ministers and churches to the plain law of Christ, that they who preach the gospel should live of the gospel. But what if the course of the great apostle has been somewhat misapprehended, and his authority misquoted? What if that which was in his particular case purely exceptional has been constructed into a precedent for the institution of a rule contradictory to his teachings? Let us look closely into the case in the light of what Paul himself has said touching this matter.

First, it deserves to be considered that the apostle vindicates his right to a support from the very church from which he declined to receive it—the church of Corinth. This he does in the ninth chapter of his 1st Epistle to that church.

Secondly, he mentions the fact, at least by implication, that the Corinthian church supported its ordinary teachers, and claims at least an equal right with them to be maintained in preaching the gospel to it. “If others,” argues he, “be partakers of this power over you, are not we rather?” It is plain from this reasoning, that the Corinthian church supported its teachers, and that Paul approved of their course in so doing.

Thirdly, he received contributions to his support from the Philippian church and others. He seems to have had no objection to taking “wages” from them, as he terms the offerings sent him by those churches. Addressing the Corinthians, he says: “I robbed other churches, taking wages of them to do you service.” It does not appear that he refused to accept contributions to his support from any other church than the Corinthian. It is probable that the reason of his laboring with his own hands at Thessalonica, was the “deep poverty” of the

church at that place, for he commends their liberality. The wealthier Corinthians, on the other hand, seemed to think it hard—to deem it a species of indignity to them, that the apostle persistently declined to take anything from them. He justifies himself in doing this, by asserting his determination to be independent in this particular instance. For this exceptional action he alleges a special reason—his motives had been assailed. There can be but little question that certain teachers, or at least speakers, had attributed to him mercenary ends in preaching the gospel. Sustaining as he did a position altogether singular—that of the first preacher of Christianity to the Pagan world—he deemed it right to silence this accusation; and he did it effectually by utterly refusing to accept contributions from the Corinthian church. From this it follows, that the rule to which Paul ordinarily conformed himself was that which he stringently enforced by argument—the rule that the church ought to support the ministry; and that he departed from that rule only for two reasons: either the deep poverty of a church, or the vindication of his motives as a preacher, and his authority as an apostle. The position of Paul, therefore, in relation to the church of Corinth can afford no precedent to a church now to expect a minister to labor for his own maintenance, for they were willing to contribute to Paul's support. It was he who was unwilling. And surely no church would feel justified in giving grounds to a minister to decline a proffered maintenance by attacking his motives in preaching the gospel. The only excuse then for a church in failing to support the ministry is sheer inability. On the other hand, no minister is at liberty to cite the example of Paul as a precedent warranting departure from the scriptural rule, except in those peculiar cases which determined the attitude of the apostle. No general feeling of independence, and, above all, no desire for wealth or social position will sustain him in resorting to secular pursuits. To follow the example of the glorious apostle to the Gentiles, is to tread the painful path of self-denial and sacrifice.

Fourthly, the Church was in a forming condition in the apostle's day; and what may have been proper then, may not be

so in a settled state of the Church. Paul endeavored to educate the infant Church, just emerging from heathenism, up to the full measure of its duty. When the state of maturity is reached, the full complement of its duty ought to be discharged. What holds of an infant, does not hold of an adult. Besides this, the apostle did not sustain the specific relation of a pastor; he was an apostolic evangelist, and what he did in that capacity may not furnish a precedent for imitation by pastors. While he declined support from the Corinthian church, he admitted that it maintained its ordinary teachers.

Fifthly, it may not be unworthy of mention, that the secular business in which Paul engaged was one which made no draft upon his intellectual energies. It was a very simple mechanical employment—he made tents. His whole mental energy was devoted to the preaching of the gospel and the care of the churches. This is worthy of consideration by those who may be disposed to quote his example as entitling them to pursue secular avocations which, from their very nature, tend to enlist largely, if not to absorb, their mental faculties.

Sixthly, Paul was inspired. He did not indeed despise the aids of human learning, or neglect the means of attaining it. Even after his call to the apostolate, which of course involved inspiration, his “books” were the companions of his travels; and this, in itself, constitutes a powerful *a fortiori* argument for such a pursuit of knowledge by an uninspired ministry as would leave little time for temporal engagements. Was Paul a student? Who of *us* can decline to be? But the fact of inspiration places a chasm betwixt the case of an apostle, and that of an ordinary minister of the word. All his oral utterances and his written deliverances as a public teacher were inspired by the Holy Ghost, and consequently infallible. Such a man could better afford to engage in a secular employment, than one who, destitute of this extraordinary gift, must labor night and day to save himself and save others, by God’s help, from the blunders and faults to which every uninspired preacher is exposed. The argument from Paul’s case to ours must take in and make allowance for this capital consideration. We must toil even to

approximate that freedom from error which the apostle received by immediate inspiration; and that toil, if faithfully undergone, excludes habitual application to any foreign business.

These considerations go to show that the example of Paul has not unfrequently been misused by the ministry in justifying their engagement in secular pursuits, and by the Church in permitting them to do it.

3. The third and only remaining cause which we shall allege for the fact under consideration, is one which, though special and local in its bearing, exerts a controlling influence. It is to be found in a condition of the Church induced by the precedents established by some of our venerable fathers in the ministry of a former generation. They founded churches which were either too poor or too little trained to yield them at once an adequate support. In order to enable them to minister to these beloved flocks, they betook themselves to temporal pursuits; but unfortunately the state of things which they thus inaugurated, and which ought to have been temporary, has become in many instances the permanent condition of our churches. In regard to this matter we have three remarks to make. The first is, that it is far from our intention to derogate one iota from the honor due them as the laborious pioneers of our Church. They were good men and true, and their memory is deservedly held in the highest esteem by their survivors and the descendants of those who sat under their ministry. The second is, that though good and true men, they were fallible men, and, be it said with all deference, committed an error which has entailed most unhappy results upon the Church. That error was, not that in defect of adequate support from their poor or untrained charges they labored with their own hands to secure it; but it was, that they failed subsequently to indoctrinate their people in their scriptural duty in this matter, so that they might themselves have ultimately retired from secular avocations, and have saved their successors from the necessity which they themselves encountered in an infantile condition of the churches. The fact is that they virtually perpetuated that infantile condition, so far as their example went; and all the force of their character and the

honor rendered justly in other respects to their ministry, tend to hinder the emergence of the Church from that imperfect state. Their example is now appealed to as against those who labor to promote a more scriptural order of things. The third remark is, that, as our Saviour has instructed us to call no man master or father, we should refuse to be brought into bondage to the errors even of these good and holy men, and endeavor to emancipate ourselves from a yoke which they ought not to have imposed. One is our Master—even Christ. He has laid upon the Church and the ministry an obligation which no human authority however exalted can destroy, no human example however revered can impair. He hath ordained that they who preach the gospel should live of the gospel. That is our law. The Church and the ministry should alike strive to reach a better and more scriptural condition than that which has thus come down to us from a former generation. "Hoary-headed error," said a great writer, "is not on that account the more venerable." If this be an error it ought to be removed, even though it be hung round with precedents and grey with age. And an error—a grave and ruinous error—it is, if there be justice in man, truth in the Scriptures and authority in Christ.

III. What, then, is the practical conclusion to which we are driven by the discussion of this subject? It is, that it is alike the duty of ministers thoroughly to consecrate themselves to their one great and peculiar work, and of the churches to furnish them a comfortable support in the prosecution of that work. The responsibility of both the ministry and the Church in this solemn business is primarily to the Lord Jesus Christ. In view of the call which he has given the minister to do this work, of its stupendous import, its multiplied and arduous functions, of the consuming demands which it makes upon his time, attention, and energy; in view of the injurious effect likely to be exerted upon his ministry by his engagement in worldly avocations, and of the ordinance of Christ that he should seek support from the Church, it is evident that nothing but a stringent necessity, or the vindication of his ministerial character from unjust imputations, will warrant him in turning even partly aside from it to

secular pursuits. No other pleas will excuse him for slighting his proper work when he is confronted by its tremendous responsibilities, and stands side by side with his flock of deathless souls before the final bar. On the other hand, in view of the imperative law of Christ, that they who preach the gospel should live of the gospel, and of the impossibility of the minister's consecrating himself entirely to the service of the Master and the good of the Church without a comfortable support, nothing will discharge a church from its duty in the premises but an inability created by unavoidable indigence. No precedents of the past by whatever names supported, no plea of imaginary poverty, no husbandry of resources for the luxurious maintenance of families, no accumulation of property to be squandered by those who wrought not for it, no thoughtless inattention to the claims of Jesus and his cause, will avail a church when it looks in the face of the impartial Judge, and of His badly-treated servants in the blazing light of that judicial day. Sacrifice, self-sacrifice, ought to be the law of the ministry and of the Church, as it was the law of the life and of the death of their common Saviour. What is needed is, that the lesson of his Cross should be more deeply enstamped upon all our hearts. Spirit of Jesus, take us daily to that Cross, and imbue us with the self-sacrificing devotion, sympathy, and love of him "who gave himself for us" there!

But there is also a secondary obligation which the ministry and the Church reciprocally sustain. It is not to be expected that a church will make efforts to support a minister who, instead of consecrating himself to its service, is doing well for himself by employing his energies in a secular pursuit; nor is it to be expected that a minister will consecrate himself to the service of a church which fails to provide for himself and his family the necessaries of life—food, raiment, shelter, and the means of educating his children. What then? Must there be a deadlock? Not necessarily. There is one remedy for this difficulty—it is that both ministers and churches should do their duty, and do it simultaneously. Let the minister, in the exercise of a strong faith, throw himself upon the people of Christ; let him judiciously train them by instruction from the pulpit and by

practical measures, in the grace, the privilege, the duty of giving themselves and their substance to the cause of the Lord Jesus; let the chief motive appealed to be a love which responds to the dying love of Christ, and the manner of impressing it one of manifest affection to the souls of his people; and then let him resort to a secular employment only when he is convinced of the inability of his flock to support him, or when his church, though able to sustain him, drives him from his scriptural position by its invincible penuriousness and disobedience to the law of Christ. Because a people at first declines to guarantee a competent support, let him not at once make other arrangements to secure it. He should begin with the understanding that he on his part will do his duty. He should set his people the example of consecration, of faith, of liberality in proportion to his means, and leaning on them should look to God to incline their hearts to give him his daily bread. We cannot but feel persuaded, that if a minister should thus endeavor to comply with the divine call which sets him apart to God's work, neither God nor the Christian people would allow him to suffer. At any rate it is worth the trial. Nay, there are those who *have* tried it, and have not been disappointed. Oh, the measureless power of a simple faith in God, and a Christ-like love to men!

On the other hand, let the churches in a like spirit of faith make sacrifices to furnish a competent support to their ministers; let them divest them thus of all necessity for turning aside to worldly pursuits. There is no church with a fair number of members and a moderate share of this world's goods which cannot do this. All that is wanted is faith and love. Had we faith as great as a grain of mustard-seed, we should say to the mountains, Depart, and they would go. Had we faith in the promises of the eternal covenant, we should, without fear of loss, give of our substance to him who indeed calls us to the Mount of Sacrifice, but illuminates it in the light of that immortal word, "Jehovah-jireh." A little faith in him to whom all power is committed, who holds the reins of universal dominion, whose are the cattle on a thousand hills, the beasts of the forest, the fulness of the sea, and the countless treasures of earth and

heaven, what church that had it would hesitate to give of its earthly substance to Him through fear of privation and want? And had we that love for Jesus which impels us to provide for the physical necessities of our wives and children, we could not withhold our means from him who, in the persons of his servants in the gospel, throws himself upon the liberality of his people. Had we a little of that love to him which led him to die for us, we should deem no sacrifice too great to be made for the support of his gospel and the advancement of his kingdom.

ARTICLE II.

CHRISTIANITY AND GREEK PHILOSOPHY.*

Christianity and Greek Philosophy; or, The Relation between Spontaneous and Reflective Thought in Greece, and the Positive Teaching of Christ and his Apostles. By B. F. COCKER, D. D., Professor of Moral and Mental Philosophy in the University of Michigan. New York: Harper and Brothers. 1870.

This is a work of learning, and exhibits skill and ingenuity in its arrangement. It treats of an interesting subject which has divided eminent theologians for centuries. The more our attention has been drawn to the work before us, the more are we impressed with the necessity of giving it a full and impartial examination. The author's mind is richly stored; and while we admire the magnificent temple reared by his talent and labor, yet we regret that, in its structure, he has worked up many materials too nearly assimilated to the perishable matter of the Pantheon, and its inner courts adorned with too many images of Pagan philosophy, to bear the touch of Christian truth.

It is to be regretted that moral philosophy, which ought to

*We give place to this article, so excellent in some aspects, without committing ourselves to its philosophy.—EDS. S. P. R.