

T H E

Reformed Presbyterian and Covenanter.

VOL. II.

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No. 1.

THE MINISTRY—THEIR HABITS AND DEMEANOR.*

GENTLEMEN OF THE THEOLOGICAL CLASS:—Another year has elapsed and brings us to the opening of another session of our Seminary. We meet you with sincere satisfaction and once more extend our welcome to all, whether you have already been with us, waiting upon our instructions, or now for the first time appear in our Hall. The months that have passed since our last session closed have been eventful ones in the history of our land. Much has occurred in the providence of God calculated to impress our minds both with fear and gratitude: with fear, as his just and holy hand and power have been made manifest in the condign infliction of heavy judgments upon us, for the sins of the land, past and present, calling upon all men, high and low, to repent and turn to the Lord; with gratitude, as notwithstanding these inflictions He has left with us, has showered upon us, as a nation, many tokens of his forbearance and his bounty. The earth has still, in measure, yielded her fruits; no ravaging pestilence has visited our borders; the hum of busy commerce is heard in our cities, and throughout the extended thoroughfares of our land. While the barbarian enemy with whom the nation is at war, has been permitted to overrun some portions of Northern territory, his advance has been stayed, and few of our homes have been subjected to the tread of the spoiler. We may also remember gratefully the continued evidence of the divine presence with His church. "The word of the Lord has not been hindered." It has had 'free course.' Nor has his effectual grace in converting sinners, and confirming saints, been altogether withheld. The work of building the walls of Jerusalem has made some progress in these "troublous times." Nor are indications wanting that the calamities which have fallen upon our country have not been without some beneficial results. During these months many thousands of the oppressed have been "rid from the might of ill

* Read, by Prof. James M. Willson, at the opening of the Reformed Presbyterian Seminary, Allegheny, November 3, 1863.

men;" and if the condition of these rescued bondmen is not, in all respects, what we would desire, means are in operation which give promise ere long, by the blessing of God, of a better future for these descendants of Ethiopia. Christian benevolence has found its way among them, and holds out to them the incalculable gifts of education and a pure gospel. Nor is the public glory of our Lord and Saviour entirely unappreciated. The minds and hearts of not a few have been turned to the Lord and King of nations; and a movement is going on, accelerated by these days of tribulation, to win this nation to his sceptre.

You come, young gentlemen, to the work of preparation for the holy ministry in a time of great public interest; an age requiring not special qualifications for the ministerial calling—for the duties and the trials of the Lord's ambassadors have been substantially the same in all ages—but a large measure of these qualifications; a larger measure than in times less active and less subject to change. The fundamental qualifications of the minister of Christ I have already endeavored to present and enforce from this place. First, undivided attention to one's chosen avocation—unwearied and persevering diligence—candor and fidelity; candor in speech, fidelity in action—a philanthropic and benevolent spirit—enduring patience and fortitude—habitual and prayerful reliance upon the help, guidance, protection and blessing of God. On another occasion I discussed the primary qualifications of "Intellectual Culture:" defining it as made up of three things—the sharpening of the analytic faculty, the strengthening of the synthetic faculty, and as the result of these, the purification of the "taste," or that power of the mind that perceives and relishes the beauty and fitness of things. The attainment of a high degree of this culture as a preparation for the ministry, I urged, from the excellence of the ministerial office—from the ample scope which it affords for the exercise of the highest mental gifts and culture; confirming these arguments by the history of the church, which bears conclusive testimony to the esteem in which this culture has ever been held by the most intelligent of the Lord's people. When last called to discharge the duty before me this evening, I dwelt at some length upon the moral and spiritual attributes of the good minister of Jesus Christ, specifying, 1st. A high estimate of his office, from the fact that it bears a peculiar relation to Christ, the Prophet and King of the Church, and from the excellency of the work itself. 2d. A sanctified curiosity. 3d. A sincere and earnest piety, as this awakens and regulates this holy curiosity—gives true religious intelligence and ability to exhibit the truths of the gospel in some measure in accordance with their character and worth—as this is the true and only fountain and source of that purity of character which is indispensable in him who has to do with sacred things—as it sustains the heart of the faithful laborer amidst the toils and discouragements attending his work—and as it reacts upon the church herself and acts powerfully upon the world.

There still remains a wide field of inquiry, to which it may not be

unprofitable to ask your attention—the habits and spirit and demeanor of the Christian minister. For while the traits of ministerial character, of which I have just presented an outline, are primary, fundamental, essential—there are others which, in some respects, may be regarded as of minor consideration, but in others are scarcely less important than some, at least, already considered. And if there be a difference of grade among them—as you will readily discern, as they came in order before you, none of them can be safely ignored or depreciated. And if some of them are entwined with those more fundamental, this is no more than we ought to expect, for the man is one, and his life is made up of acts which have their spring in one mind and heart.

The matters to which I purpose now to allude may be classified:

I. As the prudential, and II. Such as bear more directly a moral character; these definitions expressive, however, only of the more prominent features of these classes respectively. And

I. OF THE PRUDENTIAL, I mention,

1. *Habits of systematic study and work.*—An East India official, celebrated among his friends and coadjutors for the amount of work done by him during his term of official duty, in reply to the question, what plan he adopted, merely said: “When I have anything to do, I go and do it,” conveying the idea that he had no prearrangement of time and seasons of labor. But it must be remembered that the duties of one situated as he was, are in one department, and arrive daily in the regular routine of governmental operations. In such cases little, if anything, more was required, except the prompt and diligent response to emergent calls. To those occupied in other departments of labor and similarly situated, the same rule will be found all that is essential to their highest efficiency as workmen. Far different is the case of the student who pursues the study of various branches of learning, and of the pastor who has many and diversified duties demanding almost simultaneously his earnest attention. Here, as indeed in most of the occupations of life, due regard must be had to order and system. Certain hours must be fixed for each study, and these resolutely adhered to; and in the case of the working pastor, especially in rural localities, certain days must be devoted to each department of his work—to reading, to the preparation of discourses, to visiting, recreation, &c.

By following a plan, one is enabled to give attention to *all* his duties; to assign to each its due proportion of time; nothing is overlooked, and nothing allowed to engross more than its share of our very limited ability to labor. Again, working by system facilitates the exercise of that undivided attention which is so essential to successful effort. Working without a plan involves confusion, mental distraction, often undue haste, and subjects the mind to the constant feeling of dissatisfaction arising from a consciousness of something left undone. System divides the burden of duties, and by allotting each division to its own hour, renders tolerable and even grateful, what would otherwise appear to be a weight too heavy to bear. And, finally, the intellectual powers adapt themselves in

some mysterious way to times and seasons, to certain hours of the day, to certain days of the week. In a word, more is actually accomplished, and that more happily, when we work on some plan judiciously distributing our various labors.

In this, as in all else, there may be excess. A system may be too minute in its subdivisions of time; but especially it may be too tenaciously adhered to, to the disregard of imperative calls. He is a wise man who lives by some good rule; but he is a wiser man who knows when his rule is to be temporarily suspended; who sees the rule and its reasons, and, hence, departs from it cheerfully when more urgent reasons demand this. The pastor must always hold himself in readiness to answer the calls of the sick and the afflicted. No claims of the student, no apportionment of hours or days, can be allowed to interfere with such calls of benevolence.

This habit is formed during student life. Neglected then, it will be far more difficult to form amid the more stirring scenes and duties of pastoral life. One who studies only when he feels like it, or permits his attention to be withdrawn from his books by the casual solicitations of things without, will lose not only the present advantages of growth in knowledge and happiness in his studies, but is preparing himself for a shiftless and inefficient ministerial life.

I do not give this subject undeserved prominence. It bears a most intimate and almost, if not quite, inseparable relation to efficiency in the ministry. Order and system implies industry, and promotes it. The want of system tends to the waste of the strength in desultory and ineffective action. God works according to a plan foreordained and unchangeable.

2. *The acquisition of general knowledge.*—And by this knowledge, I mean the knowledge of things and events lying outside of the direct line of theological or indeed any professional study—the knowledge of what is in, and going on in, the world; the knowledge, also, of the past, as recorded in the pages of history. There may be some danger, particularly in the case of such as are naturally of a literary turn, that such, in measure, extraneous studies and inquiry, may engross too much of the interest and too many of the hours of the Christian minister. To this I have, on another occasion similar to this, discoursed at some length, and would repeat the warning: let no man, devoted to the high functions of an ambassador for Christ, allow the solicitations of polite literature—of poetry—of history—of science—of political operations and results—withdraw his heart from the reading and study of the Word of God, and the diligent perusal of the standard writers of theology, of earlier and later times. Theirs should be among the best worn books in the pastor's library. But while we remember and insist upon devotion to theological research, we should not forget that there is a great and glorious world around us, of matter and of mind, while the past has furnished us with records of men and events, worthy of the most careful examination. General knowledge enlarges the field of vision, expands and invigorates the intellect, furnishes large resources for

illustration and argument, and is thus preparation for the pulpit. Its acquisition may be so arranged as to become a real relaxation from the more severe researches which form the staple of ministerial study. Moreover, the pastor is a member of society, and is justly expected to contribute his share to the entertainment, as well as the instruction of those with whom he is brought in contact. And finally, who can question that the works and ways of God, as Creator, and Lord of Providence, demand some notice from him who would exhibit his claims to the love and homage of men. Not that we should seek to be adepts in science, but to keep abreast of the great stream of advancing knowledge.

The most eminent of the servants of Christ have not been wanting here. Moses was "learned" in all the learning of the Egyptians. Paul was trained in the literature of the Grecian schools. Augustine was a finished scholar. Bayle affirms that Calvin was, at an early age, the most learned man in Europe. Passing over crowds of names, French, German, &c., let us come to the land of our forefathers. Knox was a man of high mark in public affairs all his life. Andrew Melville, the most accomplished classical teacher of his time and country. Henderson, Gillespie, and even the heavenly-minded Rutherford, were all thoroughly conversant with the learning of their day, and deeply interested in all public movements. Is there one name standing high on the roll of the church's great and heroic men, whose mind was not stored, in some good measure, with general knowledge? It may be said, "Is not the knowledge of the Bible enough?" It is, and it is not. It is *not*, if this knowledge is to exclude all inquiries into the wonders of God's workings, or even into the experience and the doings of our fellow men. It is, provided we remember that he who knows the Bible thoroughly, even as *we* may know it, must know also much of science, and of literature—of history especially, as helps to comprehend its meaning: and of the events of the times, that he may know how to apply the teachings of the Bible to the institutions and movements of his own day.

A decided taste for general knowledge does not necessarily accompany even the diligent pursuit of the learning of the schools, either literary or theological. It needs culture, and it is well if it has its beginnings in an early training in an intelligent household. Here, as in nearly all else that contributes to usefulness and happiness in life, much depends upon the father and the mother of the future scholar. It is possible—it not rarely occurs, that even untoward early influences may not succeed in repressing this taste for solid acquisition. It may be too strong naturally, or it may derive strength from every additional acquirement in the learning of the schools, as well as from the scenes in the heavens above and on the earth beneath, which meet the eye, even from infancy; or it may be brought out and cultivated by the seen and felt activities of social, and business, and political life, in a land like ours. But in every case it implies choice and effort. The student in a theological seminary may not have leisure, while actually prosecuting

his prescribed course, to look much abroad, or to fill his mind with this general knowledge, but it must not be overlooked. There are intervals in every course of study; and even in seasons of much pressing occupation in the routine of a theological course it is not impracticable to redeem time enough to learn something of God's doings, besides those which claim the more earnest attention and effort.

3. The minister and the student *should meditate and ponder much*. He should endeavor to make all that he learns his own. All subjects to which his studies are directed should be passed through the crucible of his own mind. Truth of all kinds should be incorporated with his own mental constitution—become a part of himself. What is learned from books, or from the teacher, should be employed as material for thought, not rested in as ultimate acquirements. This habit of meditation is invaluable, even to the private Christian. It is precisely analogous to the process of digestion, which prepares our food that it may be taken up by the organs of assimilation, and so become truly nutritive. Truth received into the memory is as the food received into the stomach. It is not yet in the body. Truth brought under the operation of the judgment, or of the taste, or of the heart, and held there by a mental effort, is truth digested, and thus appropriated as our own possession. A measure of this process is absolutely indispensable to all real mental or spiritual growth. And, beyond question, the lack of this among Christians is one of the main reasons of the slow and unsatisfactory progress in the Christian life, of which we so often and justly complain. Truth is apprehended by the intellect, laid up in the memory, but is not brought out and kept in its position—in presence of heart and conscience—until it is seen in its true relations and effects its intended work.

If this be important for all, much more for him whose special office it is to teach, illustrate, establish, apply and enforce the precious truths of the gospel and of the holy and good law of Christ. It is a frequent complaint, that the exhibitions of the pulpit are dry, do not touch the heart, or even awaken any intellectual interest. The main reason of all this is: the utterances of the pulpit are too often mere readings from memory—not the living, gushing effusions of the mind, and heart, and soul of the speaker; or, they are exhibitions of truth, perhaps most important truth, but not seen in its relations to man, to social interest, to the active movements and workings of the souls of those to whom it is addressed—so uttered that it seems to the hearer as a thing afar off—not the exhibition of what belongs to him: his thoughts and ways, and hopes, and duties. The cause of all this lies partly, I admit, not exclusively, in the fact that what is thus presented does not wear a human aspect; and in the deeper fact, that he, by whom it is presented, is not revealing himself, either intellect or heart, to the hearers before him; and in the still remoter fact that what he speaks has not received the hue of his own mind and heart by frequent and profound meditation. We feel at once, almost as soon

as a speaker opens his mouth, whether he is a thinker, or a mere retailer of other men's thoughts. I might insist upon this on other grounds. In no other way is any object of intellectual perception clearly perceived, particularly in its relations to other truths, but by this process of mental digestion; and by this only does it really become part of our stock of available and profitable knowledge. In a word, what we learn is, or ought to be, but the seed of which the mind, by its own workings, develops the life and advances the growth, until it gives a rich harvest of other intellectual, moral and spiritual truths and results.

4. That all these may not be ineffective, and consequently profitable for little, *the student and the pastor should pay due regard to the preservation of physical health and vigor.* The life of the Christian minister is a life of intellectual effort. His chief work lies among books and principles, and general facts regarding human nature in its highest duties and responsibilities, its trials and its conflicts, its deeper miseries, and its truest and most living blessednesses. The soul and mind that God has given him are the implements with which he works. But he has a body, too, and—I speak from no little painful experience—he had better take good care of it. If not so valuable as his soul, it is not, therefore, without great value. All genuine students require some admonition, some warning, on this subject. It is apt to be forgotten, that mental labor is supremely exhausting. Every thought, every movement of feeling, consumes a portion of the nervous tissue. Close and continuous thought wears more rapidly than even physical effort. And hence, while educated men are, as a rule, longer lived than others, a very large proportion of them live a sort of dying life. Organic disease may not fasten upon them so frequently or so fatally as upon men of active physical habits, but they are none the less sufferers. They are pained and enfeebled by some one or other of the protean forms of functional disorder, induced by the enfeebled, or unduly excited, condition of their mysterious nervous system.

The origin of this will often be found in the efforts of mind required of the boy even in very early years, continued throughout the entire course of preparatory and collegiate training, and, it may be, prolonged into the course of immediate preparation for the work of the ministry. It is then carried into the pastoral life, with the results to which I have just referred. That there are idle ministers, indeed, is a notorious fact: men who spend their time, certainly enough of it, in the open air; men who fail to stir up the gift that is in them; who need no advice to take good care of their bodily health, but rather to give attention to reading, that their profiting in study may appear to all. But multitudes, especially in cities and in towns, err on the other side—an error not upon the whole to be severely blamed, but yet imperatively requiring correction.

But what must be done? (1.) And particularly, as already urged, regard must be had to the proper allotment of days and hours, so that duty may occupy its proper and leading place. (2.) A

due amount of out door exercise should be taken as regularly as possible. Walking and gymnastic exercises, in cities especially, and this not merely as necessary in the discharge of pastoral duties, but for the direct purpose of recreation. And what is better, if it can be had, riding, either in carriage or on horse-back—the latter far the best. Some have recommended, instead, some manual employment. This may be well enough in some instances, but few care to resort to this, and they are not much to be blamed. The fact is, what is needed is not so much work as a kind of play of muscle and of mind. (3.) Society—free, merry, if you please—under proper restrictions. (4.) Whatever the mode adopted, let there be an entire forsaking, for the time, of the routine of daily labor. Let the mind and, as far as may be, the heart be turned from the usual track, to take a freer course. Some have endeavored to combine work and recreation; they have walked or rode, but with book in hand, and have been held as wonders of wisdom, as most conscientious men, who would not lose a fraction of time, being accountable for every moment. Anything more absurd than this can hardly be imagined. All such plans are very good ones for taking exercise without recreating, and for studying without profit: for throwing two stones, and not even hitting one bird. What the student needs is both physical and mental refreshment—the latter for the sake of the former, the former for the sake of the latter. Endeavor, my young friends, to preserve the *sana mens in corpore sano*. You will thus do far more in the end, and do it better, as well as more happily; and now is the time to make this a habit, as much as a rule of your lives.

To be continued.

AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION.

THE Address of the Committee appointed by the Convention which met in Pittsburgh, July 4th, 1863, in reference to the amendment of the Constitution of the United States, appeared in our last number. With the general scope and purpose of this paper we find no fault. It is designed to call public attention to a subject of immediate and momentous interest. It brings before the churches the claims of God Most High upon this nation; urges the insertion, in the preamble of the constitution, of an express recognition of his being, attributes and supremacy; ascribes the fearful judgment which has fallen from heaven, upon this land, to the fact that it has not given to God the glory due to his name, in our national constitution; refers to the Mediator by the quotation of passages of Scripture which demand of rulers submission to his authority.

So far it merits our approbation. With many of its statements and arguments we are highly pleased, and we hope it will contribute to the awakening of the Christian sense of this nation to the

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THE MINISTRY—THEIR HABITS AND Demeanor.

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II. Some elements of ministerial character and life that are more directly moral—that may be regarded as more immediately dutiful, and so indirectly prudential, also ; and,

1. *The Christian minister should regard himself as entitled to respect, not so much because he holds an official position, as because he is a man fulfilling the duties of his place and all his duties, with diligence and integrity.* There is here a wide distinction. It is no unusual thing—has not been, in the history of the world—to find the mere possession of office and rank put forward as the main title to honor and regard ; and nowhere has this been presented and insisted upon more offensively than in the church. It began early. It is precisely “the mystery of iniquity” that began to work in the apostolic age. It grew rapidly. The clergy soon came to be regarded, and to regard themselves, as a class separated by a broad line of demarcation from their fellow-christians ; as invested with peculiar sacredness ; as nearer to God ; as the especial favorites of Heaven. As knowledge and piety declined, these notions gained ground. New claims were put in. The clergy became mediating priests, whose great office it was to dispense the regenerating and sanctifying grace of God, through the sacramental mysteries. Soon the man was lost in the minister, and the human family might have been classified as men, women and ministers ; and, finally, the thing culminated in the creation of that “man of sin,” whom Papists have styled “our Lord God, the Pope.”

This notion still exists very extensively—partly as a feeling, partly as a principle ; the latter, in all prelatic churches. For example : in the Church of England there have been many, and still are some, who, having gone through the regular form of investiture, by the laying on of the bishop’s hands, are “patronized” by the gift of a benefice, or more than one. They provide a substitute, who, for a small pittance out of a large income, performs all the duties, while this exalted dignitary lives in elegant or learned

leisure, remote from the flock of which he has professed to take the oversight; demanding, all the while, the high regards of all men, as a veritable priest in the tabernacle of the Lord. Still more. This "idol shepherd," who seeks the fleece, not the flock, this thief and robber, this unmitigated traitor to all that is sacred and honest, consigns the humble, and laborious, and self-sacrificing, and, because all this, true minister of Christ—if a dissenter—to the uncovenanted mercies of God!

Nor is this notion entirely confined to prelatical limits. There is more or less of it everywhere. An idea that the minister should be looked upon, judged of, and prized, not simply as a man, devoted to an excellent calling, the highest on earth, and actually engaged in it, working for his Master; but as one who has received imposition of hands, and thus lifted above other men, or, at least, transferred, in some mysterious way, to a different class. Hence we find men, healthy and robust, fixed in some place of agency about books or tracts—perhaps Bibles, in which the whole work is secular; or rambling about the country on some such business, who claim to be ministers of Christ. They wear the prefix, "Rev.;" now and then, they may occupy a pulpit, in a business way; they take their seats in the courts of the church, and are allowed in the church and in society, the high honor of being "ambassadors for Christ." I do not now enter upon the inquiry as to what is really the meaning, and import, and effect of ordination; but of this I am sure, it was never designed to obliterate the man, nor does it add anything to him, either intellectually, or morally, or spiritually. He is himself just what he was before, and no more. He has, however, a recognized place and prescribed functions to perform; and he is the same man, and has lost none of his rights, or privileges, as a man, a citizen, or a patriot.

I allude to these things, not to discuss them doctrinally or controversially; but solely with reference to the hurtful effect that these mistaken notions may have in society, and chiefly upon the minister himself. For with such views, he is tempted to regard himself as a very dignified being indeed; to rest his claims to the attention and respect of other men, not so much upon what he really is, and what he does, as teacher, preacher, pastor, philanthropist, for the welfare and salvation of his fellow sinners, as upon his being a minister, a kind of representative of Christ; a sort of sacred personage. Just so soon as a man—a young man particularly—begins to turn his eyes often in this direction, he is in peril. This danger begins just when he severs himself, in any measure, from his fellow-christians, and fellow-sinners, as one more deserving of honor and regard. "Esteem them" that have the rule over you, "highly for their *work's sake*." "He that will be the greatest among you, let him be the *servant of all*." In short, let the minister of Christ think of himself as a *man*; with all the infirmities, the duties, the rights of a man; differing from others only as grace has made him to differ in spirit, in purpose, in love to Christ and souls; in knowledge and experience of the grace of God in the bet-

ter opportunities and greater leisure he enjoys for prosecuting the work to which the goodness of God has assigned him, and so the more imperatively bound to work for Him who has so furnished and endowed him.

I do not ignore the fact that Christ has sent the minister to do his work—nor that, as a matter of order in the church, he is authorized to perform certain acts which the private Christian may not do; and, especially, that he does, in Christ's name, extend to sinners overtures of life and salvation; but I do utterly and heartily repudiate all false inferences from these facts; and, above all, that they sever the minister from those around him and in the church, and give him any reason whatever to become "puffed up," or set himself above others, as if he were a being of superior order. But why dwell upon this? Is not the ministry too lightly regarded already? Why insist upon the manhood—the Christian manhood of the ministry? I answer, because what I have presented is the truth; because the false grounds on which the claims of the ministry have been made to rest have wrought most disastrously to the church and to the world; because they place the ministry and the people in a false relation to each other; because they induce opinions most injurious to the interests of religion, as if it were more the business of the ministry than of other men; because they tend to weaken in the minds of private Christians the feeling of their obligation to work for Christ as well as for themselves—and if they have leisure and ability, as much, in their way, as the minister; because they gender the notion that the minister is not engaged in the pulpit, and elsewhere, in a work of love—a work done out of love to Christ and his fellow sinners, but as a mere routine of prescribed things; because, on grounds like these, the attempt has been made, and with great success, to exclude the Christian minister from taking any active part in the great movements of human society into which any political element enters—movements of humanity and philanthropy, into which he has just as much right to enter as the lawyer, or the physician, or even the business man—a right only limited by the conditions that he do so wisely, and neglect none of his own proper duties; because these notions degrade the institution of the ministry, as if it were no better, nor higher, nor holier, than the men who perform its functions; because in their false light the minister is seen, not as a man of like passions with others, subject to the same trials, and pain, and sorrow, needing the help of the same hopes and joys, the same warnings and admonitions, bound to the same duties and encouragements, and held by the same obligations.

I would have the minister assert his claims to be a man, a member of society, a patriot—anything that another man may be lawfully; and to do what other men may do, (under the proper conditions) and to magnify his office by diligence in study, and in pastoral duty; by his earnestness and zeal, by his holy and prayerful life. Things are tending this way, and while I am well aware that some of my views may be regarded as radical, I do not regret

these tendencies. Some evil may arise in this connection, but I hesitate not to say, that the result will be a good one for the community, and for the ministry, and for the kingdom of Christ.

I make a 2d statement: *Strictly and invariably honorable conduct in all pecuniary and business matters.* That there is occasion for, at least, a passing reference to this topic, will not, I presume, be questioned. For it is a fact that the character, and, of course, the influence of the ministry, has, at times, to say no more, suffered not a little in this quarter, and yet the guilt perhaps not chargeable mainly upon the immediate sufferer. Much, unquestionably, is due to the notorious fact that the ministry is the worst paid of any class of men in the community. The iniquitous principle appears to be—I may say *is*—adopted by some churches, that no more should be promised to the pastor, when called to take charge of a congregation, than just enough to furnish the scantiest kind of support. There are exceptions, but these are mostly found in the cities and great towns of the country. In rural districts, and often in those teeming with wealth, a few hundred dollars are regarded as ample for the maintenance of a minister's household; in many instances, not up to the amount of salary of a mechanic, and, in some cases, not more than the dollar a day of the ordinary unskilled laborer. Nor are the occupants of city pulpits always, or in the majority of instances, exceptions. They—very many of them—are obliged to live, and maintain, and educate families, on smaller salaries than the thrifty merchant pays his book-keeper and his salesmen, and even his clerks. And, if we penetrate further, and ascertain the apologies sometimes offered for this state of things, it is hard to restrain our deepest indignation. They are, (1.) That larger salaries would render the ministry covetous and worldly, inattentive to their duties, fond of the pleasures of life, &c. &c. A man—often a young man—who can multiply and divide, and add up with rapidity and accuracy a column of figures, turn over the leaves of huge folios, and write a legible hand, may secure his thousand, fifteen hundred, or even two thousand dollars per annum. Ah! “he is doing well.” “He gets a very good salary.” “He will, in all probability, thrive and be a rich man yet.” Such are the comments upon cases like this. No one thinks that he is to be puffed up beyond measure, or lose his religion, or become a drone. But give a minister of the gospel, who can expound the Word of God, divide rightly the word of truth, multiply exhortations as well as instructions, for the saving of the soul, and add to all this, wise, and tender, and moving counsels, and consolations, publicly and privately—give to such a man the salary which buys the services of the book-keeper in a large mercantile establishment, and you turn his face from the land of Beulah to the city of destruction! This is a most abominable slander and devilish imputation upon the character of the whole ministry of Christ. (2.) It is said again: The minister does not seek pecuniary reward—he has his reward in heaven. True. He must be a great fool if he sought the ministry to get rich by it. He should have betaken

himself to mining, or to the iron business, or to merchandise, or, better than all, in these days, become a government contractor. Money is not his reward. True, also in the letter—the minister has his reward in heaven; but most infamous is the spirit in which this is often uttered. It is, indeed, a blessed hope, that every godly servant of Christ, in the glorious work of ministering salvation to sinful men, shall be amply—and how much more than amply—rewarded, in the kingdom of glory, for all his trials, privations and tears; but what right has the merchant, the farmer, or the manufacturer, who is amassing his gains and yet cherishes a hope of the same heavenly blessedness, to taunt this poor, struggling pastor—for it amounts to this—with such heartless utterances? Does he not need food and raiment, in the meantime, as much as his gold-seeking parishioner? And, besides this, what such men rarely have any regard for, a good library, and other helps to his great and beneficent work. It is not for those who screw the ministry to the merest pittance, or who approve of this iniquity, to impute it as a crime if he cannot always make the ends meet. The devil's hand has been in all this; his ultimate object being to weaken the influence of an institution the most hurtful to his kingdom of any on earth. His more immediate aim has been to prevent qualified young men from devoting themselves to this work. So far he has, in this, only partially succeeded. There have still been found not a few of the youth of the church endowed with talent and attainments, that would have made their fortunes in any other calling, ready to lay them all as offerings upon Christ's altar; ready to encounter all the Lord permits to befall them, that they may win souls to Christ. And very few, moreover, desert the ministry, to whatever temptations from this they may be subjected from this quarter. They live, and work on, and do good, notwithstanding. Perhaps he has hoped to reintroduce the celibacy of the clergy. If so, he has signally failed. The ministry, not to say students of theology, and the ladies too, have shown a very determined purpose to disappoint him in any such design. But let us not forget our statement: whatever the resources of a pastor, he must ever study to live honestly—honorably, as the word means—in the sight of all men. Better resort, if compelled to do so, and only if compelled, to some employment cognate to his special calling; better endure, and even suffer, than, by contracting debt recklessly, or failing to pay it when contracted, endanger his good name, and the good name of his Master, and his Master's cause, by any pecuniary delinquency. It is a noble sight—a man of learning and culture, toiling on as Christ's co-worker for the highest good of men, while he bears the heavy cross of narrow means, never “looking back” toward the treasures of the world—faint, yet pursuing—his heart constrained to his work by the love of Christ, and by a spirit such as Paul's; when he said, “I travail in birth” for you Galatians.

3. *Invariably polite and kindly demeanor.* Politeness is an affair of the heart. There are forms of polite manifestations, which prevail in certain circles of society; most of them good forms, founded

on some good reason. To be acquainted with them is of advantage in all conditions of life, in all kinds of society; in some, it is of no inconsiderable importance. But they are not indispensable. They are never to be despised; they are worth all the attention necessary to become familiar with them. But of themselves, they contribute absolutely nothing to the promotion of gentlemanly character and spirit. Many—multitudes who claim to belong to polite society—are the veriest boors within; outwardly, fair in seeming, as the whited sepulchre; within, full of all uncleannesses. The nabobs of the slave States claim to be the gentlemen of this country; but we now know *all*, as some of us knew long ago, that they are the gentlemen—I speak of the great mass of them—gentlemen of the lash, and the bowie knife, and the pistol—whose pride and boast it is, that they live only upon the hard, unpaid toil of the poor slave. True politeness is a thing of a far different quality. It consists in a sincere disposition to promote the comfort of all with whom we come in contact, in matters great and small. It has as its sources, and its constituents, kindness of heart, due respect to the feelings of all with whom one has to do; in sympathy for the poor, the ignorant, the miserable; in gentleness of speech, where severity would unnecessarily wound; in a readiness to perform minor good offices. It is especially exhibited toward inferiors in means, in station, in acquirements; in the treatment of servants and dependents, and such as are under our authority. In a word, a Christian grace. It is found, in its genuine character, where the spirit of Christ dwells. The true gentleman is the same everywhere, to all; not gentle among his equals or his superiors only; the same in the parlor, and if found there, in the hovel. Politeness is one form in which that love shows itself which is “kind, envieth not, vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up; seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked; beareth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.” The true Christian—not your mere nominal Christian—is a gentleman, because he has a gentle heart. What a magnificent specimen of a man truly polite was the patriarch Abraham! How polished in manner was Paul, the ardent apostle of the Gentiles! with his vast intellectual power, and intense feeling and burning zeal; and notwithstanding his life, so toilsome and so tried, ever the same, considerate, and tender, and full of sympathy for all men. How lenient in judgment; how ready to praise; how loathe to rebuke! No assumption; no loftiness; no putting on of airs. That spirit, whose symbol is the dove, dwelt richly in Abraham and in Paul. To turn to another and very different example, one which you may all recognize as true from your own observation among Christian men and women. One of the most genuine ladies that I have ever known—and gentleman or lady, it is the same thing—is one who was born in a very humble station; her life has been spent in very lowly toil; she has never more than touched the precincts of that society which often claims to comprise all gentility; and yet none can fail, at once, to see and feel that she is a lady to her heart’s core. Her Christian

instincts far more than supply the place of any mere outside culture. This is but one instance. I could adduce many. We all know gentlemen and ladies, made so by the truth and grace of God, by kind and loving hearts. In short, let it be remembered, that while forms and modes are not without their value, and should not be overlooked by the minister of Christ, who must needs come in contact with those who place a high estimate upon them, the main thing is to cherish a loving and lowly heart—a heart that despises none, that overlooks none, that condescends to none, regarding all as fellow-sinners or fellow-heirs of the grace of God. Condescension belongs to God only. You will not misunderstand me. Politeness and suavity are not opposed to Christian and ministerial fidelity. The rule of polite life may be questioned, that prescribes all rebuke of sin in the social circle, gathered together for purposes of social recreation. Open and flagrant error and sin should be ever frowned upon by the Christian, and the minister of Christ, above all. Certainly no such rule can be allowed to enter the pulpit, or to govern the daily intercourse of Christ's ambassador. Who more severe than Paul, when severity was demanded? Who argues so vehemently? or denounces more boldly and unsparingly, the vicious, the hypocritical, the formal and the apostate? It is true kindness to use, if necessary, the language of severity, and even indignant severity, "pulling them out of the fire." But even in this there is room and call for a gentle and feeling spirit. You remember the anecdote of the saintly M'Cheyne, who, when told by a brother minister that he had just preached on the subject of final damnation, inquired in suppressed tones, "Did you do it gently?"

4. *Great circumspection in social life, and even in pastoral, in all that belongs to social intercourse with the other sex.* There are some topics acknowledged, in private conference, to be of no minor importance, which are almost ignored in the pulpit and in public addresses. I mean those which relate to the conduct of the sexes toward each other. It seems to be taken for granted, moreover, that any exhortations or warnings on this subject are uncalled for, as a part of the training of young men for the ministry, or for pastors engaged in their daily work. There is, in all this, a great mistake. A topic so important—a matter in which so many perils do actually surround the young in the outset of their career, and even their elders in it, ought not to be avoided as too delicate to be handled in public. There are too many facts, that clearly demonstrate that the course so generally—almost universally—pursued regarding it, is not the wisest; can hardly be at all justified. The Christian minister, and the student of theology, are trusted more—I may say without presumption—than any other class of men. This confidence reposed in them, gives them great advantages in reference to the formation of matrimonial alliances, and advantages equally great, which, if so disposed, they may wickedly abuse. They are freely admitted to the house of friends and parishioners. They are regarded as the watchmen who need no watching. Their calling is their guarantee. They

are set apart from other men to the special business of going about and doing good. They are not rarely highly prized as friends, and as to pastors, as counselors, also. I am happy to believe and say, that in comparatively few instances is this confidence misplaced—this trust betrayed. But even this is possible. Young men and young ministers—a few of whom reach their work unmarried and unengaged—unless habitually circumspect, may themselves be led into entanglements or engagements which they would gladly, at a future time, annul, and which it might be well for both parties were they annulled. This is one peril. Another and very serious danger is, that their social calls and interviews, and personal attentions, may be so managed as to awaken expectations, and even more, which there is no purpose either to awaken or meet; that have no real foundation in any intention on the man's part, but which are not unreasonable, in view of all the facts. I shall not consider the case in which this much may be designed, and nothing more, while the victim of this baseness is led to believe that an ultimate alliance is in view. Such instances I have heard of. I need hardly add, that one who can be guilty of conduct like this, is a low and base scoundrel, whose proper place is the penitentiary, not the pulpit; base in any one, doubly so in him who is under the highest obligations to be a model of truth and purity. Second only to this is the breach of plighted troth. Such an act, by whomsoever wilfully committed, and without due cause, should exclude the perpetrator from the church, and from society, until he regain—and much time will be required to do it—his reputation as a man in whom any confidence may be placed. I admit that even these, the most solemn of all promises, which have earthly things for their object, are not to be fulfilled absolutely, and in all cases; but if not withdrawn by a mutual understanding, there should be reasons which would furnish, in any fair court of inquiry, a most ample justification.

But there is another peril. The Christian ministry may so use, even unintentionally, their freedom of access to ladies' society, and the confidence reposed in them, as to endanger their own good name, by exposing themselves to the charge of levity, or something worse—if not to their personal injury, to the injury of others. There is, at least, some truth in the following on this subject from the pen of an acute observer, and good writer, and religious man: "We have had, within the last ten years, too many notable instances of falls from virtue among the clergy, and every fall has been like an avalanche. They come from a point so near to heaven, and fall so far, that mountain-sides are scarred, and whole communities whelmed by the calamity. It takes often many years for the villages that lie at their feet to smile again. All Christendom feels the shock, and mourns with down-cast eyes, the consequences. I freely grant, that as a class, the American clergy, of all denominations, are the purest and best men whom I know; but I cannot resist the conviction that there are many of them who forget what the responsibility is that rests upon them. It was the remark of

an aged clergyman, retired from pulpit duties, that if he were a layman he should watch with more anxiety and carefulness than laymen do, the relations that exist between pastors and the women of their flocks. I do not understand this as a statement that there is any general looseness of conduct among the clergy at all; but as one which covers a kind of impropriety, for which there is no name or punishment. There are women whose affection for their husbands is uprooted through their intercourse with their pastors. There shall never be an improper word spoken; there shall never be a deed committed, that would bring a blush to the most sensitive cheek; yet a susceptible woman in the society of a minister, of strong and magnetic sympathies, may become as passive as a babe. Led toward him by her religious nature; attracted and held by his intellectual power and the grace of his language; yielding to him her confidence; it is not strange that, before she is aware, she is a captive without a captor; a victim without an enemy; a wreck without a destroyer." Such cases may be less numerous than this writer supposes; but if they exist at all, it is warrant enough for making some allusion to them. I do not feel that I owe any apology for introducing this subject. I repeat, its importance is acknowledged privately, while it is rarely brought forward as it deserves to be. Circumspection in all things—most vigilant circumspection in all that relates to this kind of social intercourse.

5. *Kindly interest in the members, labors, and successes of other Evangelical Churches.* The relations of the different denominations of evangelical Christians furnish a topic of important and interesting inquiry. They cannot entirely ignore each others existence. Some, perhaps, might think it enough to stand off from all others as far as possible, and only notice them for the purpose of controverting their errors, or rebuking their sins. This would, indeed, be very easy. It makes short work of a very large subject. But it is open to very serious objections; and among these is this, that it would amount, in fact, to denying their membership in the family of Christ. For if, in any sense, and to any extent, brethren, there is imperative call for more than mere testimony against them. That error and sin should be reproved, wherever they exist, is an indisputable Christian duty; "warning every man." And, again, "Thou shalt not suffer sin upon the brother," a rule that holds equally in cases of personal and social character, either in faith or morals. I have no sympathy—not an atom—with the notion, so common now, that it is uncharitable to make mention of errors and evils, as found in other churches, and sanctioned by them. Whereas, charity to our more immediate brethren, and to these churches themselves, demands that they should be exhibited on proper occasions; but ever in a proper spirit. I sum up the leading duties of the ministry among us—of members also—to Christians around us, in three things: (1.) Recognizing their excellencies, denominational and personal; not as some, perhaps, would have us, mark their defects, or the evils in them, and no more. If this be utterly unjust in the case of private persons, surely it is

none the less so—is it not more so?—in the case of those whom we own not only to be Christians, but churches of Christ. This recognition should be sincere, hearty and affectionate. (2.) Rejoicing in their success in diffusing the truths of the gospel, and in gathering in the sheep and the lambs of Christ. I feel assured that in this intelligent Covenanters do not fall behind any other body of professing Christians. Our comprehensive system of faith—I mean our peculiar doctrines—habituate us to taking large views of the kingdom of Christ, and so prepares us to rejoice in every triumph of His truth. And, besides, as our central doctrine is the universal, moral, as well as providential dominion of the Messiah, and as we know that every true Christian must love Christ, we rejoice when any soul is won from the kingdom of darkness—from Satan unto God. It is a fact, although it may not at once appear—the enlisting of another volunteer in the army that Christ is leading on to final victory and triumph. We would rather see him fully brought out to know, and advocate, and exemplify, the high claims of Christ to the allegiance of all men, and nations, but we are glad he is brought so far. (3.) Co-operate with them in all things and ways, so far as we can conscientiously. We have, already, in our published Testimony, affirmed, that we “cheerfully appreciate the talents and piety of our acquaintances, and, as opportunity may offer, commune with them as friends and as Christians.” In all Christian works of beneficence, in all matters of social and moral reform, as well as in the private walks of life, we may, and should “cheerfully” engage in friendly and Christian communion of spirit and of effort. And here is a wide field; large enough for the most extended benevolence; rich enough for very glorious results. In this field, the minister who takes his stand with us, in upholding the banner of Christ’s crown and covenant, will find himself helped and strengthened by the interchange of kindly sympathy and effort with his evangelical neighbors, both ministers and private Christians. And this none the less, because, in the language of our Testimony, he “cannot extend to any one the right hand of fellowship in the visible church, upon any other principles than those contained in their Declaration and Testimony; nor consistently join, either statedly or occasionally, in the communion of any other church, by waiting upon its ministry, either in word or sacraments, while they continue opposed to these declared sentiments.”

In conclusion, the topics to which I have here adverted are but a selection from a large number which have presented themselves before me, as belonging to the habits, spirit and demeanor of the pastor and the student of theology. And of these I have been able to offer but a running exhibition. Many of them, moreover, are appropriate—all of them, in some degree—to the private Christian also; but all especially incumbent upon ambassadors for Christ. They deserve, I know, some share of your earnest and devoted regards; for you are to occupy a high place. If I have repudiated some mistaken notions respecting the dignity of the minister,

let it not be imagined, for a moment, that I disparage the incomparable excellence of the ministry itself. It has been committed to frail men, but angels would be honored by taking part in it. It is through the ministry that the elect of God are gathered into his heavenly family, and prepared for the enjoyment of their inheritance in the heavens, blessed and eternal. Can any other argument be required to excite the youthful aspirant for so eminent a place and functions, to use every effort that he may attain every qualification—greater or less—for the honorable and successful discharge of so “high a calling;” nor need any be discouraged. The mark is elevated. It is beyond mere human power to reach it. But we have the promise, “my grace is sufficient for thee”—Christ is our helper. His spirit is the almighty Spirit. Our Master sees our toils; he takes pleasure in them. If we delight in his work, and seek his favor as our highest reward, he will not fail us. Step by step, we shall rise higher and higher, mounting up as on eagle’s wings, even to heaven and its ineffable and everlasting glory and felicity.

SCOTCH R. P. MAGAZINE.

IN the December number of this periodical there is a notice of a brief article in our October number, under the above heading. Convinced by the notice referred to, of the hopelessness of the task we then undertook “to make our brethren understand our position,” we give it up. What we propose now to do is not to enlighten ignorance, but to correct misrepresentations.

In our article we had special reference to a review of the proceedings of our Synod on the war question, in the September number of the Scotch magazine. We noticed some inaccuracies in the review, and pointed out one as a sample. The explanation given of this in the late notice, is amusing. It is alleged to be a small matter, and inasmuch as only a trifling mistake, and that doubtfully presented, was detected, the conclusion is confidently drawn that all else was correct.

Now we state that this is not the only inaccuracy in the review, nor is it one of little importance in its bearing on the subject the writer had before him. It was a misstatement that was vital to the point aimed at in the entire article. That misstatement is in substance that the report adopted by our Synod at its meeting last May, was the Report of the Committee appointed at its meeting the preceding year. The qualifying terms in which it is expressed, “The report of what we take to be this Committee,” afford the writer no relief; for he assumes throughout his article the truth of the statement which we assert is incorrect. In many supposable cases the error would be of little account; but in the present instance it is quite otherwise, furnishing, as it does, the opportunity of presenting the Synod in a light the very opposite of that in which a