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THE Presbyterian Quarterly.

No. 47--JANUARY, 1899.

I. THE PRESBYTERIAN BULWARKS OF LIBERTY AND LAW.

It is a striking and memorable coincidence that while in the City of Philadelphia the Presbyterian Synod of New York and Philadelphia, in 1787, was discussing and amending the report of Witherspoon and his associates, and seeking the best possible embodiment of Presbyterianism as an organized, representative and constitutional government, the Constitutional Convention was also at the same time, in that same city, debating and determining the best form of government for the new Nation. Led by Witherspoon, whose blood still tingled with the thrill of the hour when he signed the Declaration of Independence, the Synod took the Confession of Faith in hand, and without any scrupulosities of reverence for it as a venerable symbol, and in absolute indifference to possibilities of patch-work, stripped it of every vestige of Erastianism, and ordered a thousand copies of the Plan as thus amended, printed for distribution among the Presbyteries, "for their consideration, and the consideration of the churches under their care." In the next Synod, 1788, after further amendment and full discussion, the whole Plan was finally adopted as "The Constitu-

ence such a discovery would exert in the decision of the question as against the present Holy Sepulchre. To say the least it is very remarkable in connection with the skull place, its near neighbor, and supports very strongly the contention that the Skull Hill was the scene of the crucifixion. The only objection advanced against this spot is that Christ was probably hurried to the scene, and if the route lay by the Damascus Gate, it would have been much too long, and would have taken the procession through the most crowded portion of the city. But this is not of force, when we remember that the Skull Hill, before the Quarry work was done there, was easily accessible from Herod's Gate, just in the rear of Antonia and the Roman quarter of the city. And the Damascus Gate is also reached by another and secluded path. Christ's being a notable execution must have taken place at the stated spot. And what other could have been more appropriate than this so near, resorted to by Jews and Gentiles alike.

I leave the reader to decide as to this question, viewing the place, its character and associations, its position with respect to roads, the city, its sepulchre and especially its position with regard to the ancient wall.

Clifton Forge, Va.

E. W. McCORKLE.

The following authorities have been consulted and bring us under obligation to them :

Thomson's Land and the Book.

Stanley's Sinai and Palestine.

The Fifth Gospel.—Otts.

Recent Palestine Explorations.

MINISTERIAL RESTLESSNESS.

In one of those inimitable creations of his genius with which Mr. Addison has enriched the pages of the *Spectator*, he recalls for us a reverie into which he was led by meditating upon Horace's famous satire on the discontent of mankind with their appointed lot. He imagines a proclamation to have been issued by Jupiter designating a spot in the centre of a great plain to which every one who has a burden that he thinks more grievous than that of others around him, may come and lay his grievance down, with the view of taking that of some other, less unfortunate than himself. The essayist looks on with increasing interest as the crowds press in from every side, each man adding his sorrowful contribution, until the pile in the centre of the plain has grown to a great "mountain of miseries."

A second order then comes from the father of the gods. Every man who has thrown his burden on the pile, is to select in its place that of some other, and having taken that up is to depart with it to his home. Mr. Addison describes with matchless vividness the appearance of a poor hunch-back, who, casting a look of relief at the humps that had so long disfigured him, selects a stone in the bladder, and with erect form and graceful carriage makes his way out through the crowd, whilst the

poor sufferer, to whom that stone in the bladder had given many nights of sleeplessness, and days of agony, is but too happy to take up in its stead the humps that the hunch-back has thrown down. In the blissful consciousness of relief from suffering, he is for the time being quite indifferent to the astonished look of his friends and lady admirers, as he passes them with the two great humps looking over his shoulders.

This mutual contentment does not however last long. It takes but a few sharp twinges of the calculus, to make the man who had so congratulated himself upon escaping bodily disfigurement realize that he has purchased pulchritude of form at too great a price, and that his former affliction was much more tolerable than the one he has chosen in exchange. On the other hand, the man who had purchased relief from the calculus by consenting to wear the hunches, under the constant humiliation which his sensitive nature experiences in the consciousness of his deformity, secretly rues his bargain, and berates himself for his mistake.

It is a happy experience with both these men, when Jupiter, moved to anger by the complaints that have increased rather than diminished under his beneficent provision for exchange, orders that every man shall take up again his original burden, that which has been wisely allotted to him, and to which his shoulders have become inured by the discipline of time.

No better service, perhaps, could be rendered to the Church by some man of means at the present time, than by issuing an edition in tract form of this essay of Mr. Addison, and placing a copy in the hands of every minister throughout the land. These are times of almost unprecedented restlessness in pastoral relations. A vacancy recently occurred in one of our churches of moderate prominence and size. The writer was invited by the Session to visit the church and confer with them as to the proper steps to secure a pastor. On his arrival he found that already more than forty names had been presented for the vacant pastorate, quite a number of them the names of pastors of much stronger churches—churches that the pastor who had just retired would have been only too glad to accept in exchange for the one these brethren were now seeking.

The case is exactly analogous to the one imagined by the critic of the *Spectator*. The grievance is a real one. It was no imaginary ill from which the victim of the calculus was suffering, no mere fanciful infirmity that wrought upon the sensitive nature of the hunch back. And so in these times of financial stringency, and of business depression, when salaries are sadly in arrears, when all benevolent causes languish, and when despite all the pastor's arduous and unremitting labors the church that he serves seems to be growing weaker rather than stronger, it does not require the magnifying glass of the airy-shaped gaily decked creature called Fancy, of whom Mr. Addison tells us, to make the burdens of the earnest and conscientious pastor seem heavy. We have no disposition to underestimate them, or to withhold our profound sym-

pathy from the men who are called upon to bear them. The pecuniary embarrassments of men whom the world expects to be more prompt than all other men in the payment of accounts; the unappreciated sacrifices of men who are wearing out their lives in incessant and unremitting toil for others; the intolerance of sound doctrine; the insubordination to all discipline; these things are enough to try the patience, depress the spirits, discourage the efforts of any but the most veritable Great-heart. Let us not wonder that men writhe and grow restless under the unhappy conditions in the midst of which they are called to labor.

The trouble is, however, that the brother who becomes restless, who is ready to resign, who eagerly covets another man's field, has not realized that these other men have difficulties and embarrassments as great as his own. Take for instance the matter of arrearage in salary. The church begins to fall behind; the deacons come to the pastor with the statement that the revenues are steadily declining; that the contributions are insufficient to meet the current expenses, that with their very best endeavors they will be compelled to leave him at the close of the year with a part of his salary unpaid. He has always been accustomed to look upon the prompt payment of salary as one of the best evidences of acceptability and usefulness in the pastorate. Now, that his salary falls into arrears, he begins to open his ear to a call from some other field. If he could only look over the Synod of which he is a member, or over the whole Church and see that more than half, in many cases largely more than half the ministers are in the same condition with himself, his ardor and enthusiasm for a change of field would greatly cool. If he could put himself for a little in the place of some brother, whose lot as compared with his own he has been disposed to envy, he would find himself like the man who exchanged his hunches for the stone in the bladder. He would find that this brother has trials in his work greater, if possible, than those he is seeking to flee.

In nothing is this more apparent than in the envy sometimes felt by the pastor of the country charge for the brother who has been called to a city pulpit. The salary of the country parson seems so insignificant by the side of that of the city pastor; his life seems so humdrum and monotonous as compared with the stirring, throbbing activities of a great city; his opportunities for making his mark in the world, and for acquiring influence and fame, seem relatively so small, that he wonders why the great Head of the Church has left him to walk those obscure paths and cultivate those stunted fields, whilst his more favored brother has "the candle of the Lord shining upon his head," "wastes his steps with butter" and has the rock to "pour him out rivers of oil."

But let this brother throw himself for a little time into the tumultuous torrent of the city pastor's life; let him see how, with the utmost economy, the thousands of the salary melt away faster than the hundreds in the country manse; how, with the unceasing drain of calls, committees, public meetings, extra services, and the thousand and one interruptions, the day is wasted away. and long after the country pastor

at night has evened up his work and is in refreshing sleep, his brother of the city is toiling under the midnight lamp, and with the sweat upon his brow to be ready for the next service, whilst his hungry eyes look upon the covers of books, that have lain long upon his table waiting in vain for some break in the current of that river of which the poet has said :

"Labitur et labetur in omne volubilis ænum."

The wisest course, and indeed the only true course is to recognize these trials as incident to the work to which as ministers we are called. "Even the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto but to minister." "It is enough for the disciple that he be as his Lord." If this article were written for one of our weekly newspapers, it might be an eminently fitting thing to upbraid the Church for allowing its faithful ministers to groan under privations, embarrassments, discouragements which it is in its power to obviate or remove. But the columns of the *QUARTERLY* have been purposely selected because it falls chiefly into the hands of ministers.

And in this kind of interlocutory meeting the writer would like to lift up his voice against this peripatetic spirit that is abroad amongst the ministry of the Church. It is doing incalculable injury to our ministers. This restlessness "grows by what it feeds on." Every change only enfeebles the power of patient endurance and aggravates the thirst for freedom from care ; whilst on the other hand a steady battling with adversity for Christ's sake brings out the highest elements of Christian manhood, and develops the maturest and richest fruits of Christian experience. This restlessness is doing incalculable damage to the churches. The congregation that has let a good pastor go, and then found difficulty in securing another, will be likely to make any reasonable sacrifice, rather than encounter vacancy again. But the congregation that, having set a good pastor adrift for want of a little sacrifice, finds a dozen or more men with the highest recommendations, eagerly knocking at its door, will be likely to become less liberal and more exacting, more self-indulgent and harder to please.

In every aspect in which we may view it, the demand of the times is that we shall make sacrifice, and if need be suffer, even though the churches we serve exact of us needless self-denial, and manifest no proper appreciation of the hardships which for Christ's sake, and for their sakes we undergo.

T. D. WITHERSPOON.

[Perhaps the last article that he wrote for the press. It is a timely message to his brethren.—ED.]