

member of Parliament. This has its advantages, but it has also its disadvantages.

One, two, three moneyed men, if so disposed, can bring on a financial crisis in a few months which must of necessity empty the pulpit. Starting in some insignificant quarter, seemingly, disaffection may spread to more influential persons, and even well-disposed minds may become poisoned, and wrong triumph for the nonce. Church courts too often can do but little in the premises. The evil is so subtle in its operation, it consists of so many minute constituents, that it seems too diminutive to be assailed in formal fight; yet like dryrot in wood, it will destroy the whole ecclesiastical fabric by and by.

The remedy. What is the remedy?

The prime remedy is the grace of God in the heart, the spirit of Christ within, restraining, constraining, sanctifying, making Christ-like. But what should be is, alas, too often wanting. Another remedy, however, an auxiliary, is available and easy of application, to wit, genuine brotherliness between minister and minister in the whole round of opportunity.

The forms it may take are manifold. Now, the form of kindly intercourse between brethren living in near proximity. Now, the form of generous and enthusiastic appreciation of each other's excellences and achievements. But especially will it take the form of a jealous care over the good name of every faithful preacher of the Word. No countenance will be given to evil reports, come whence they may, unless the truth of the statement be clear as noonday. In a way not to be mistaken, the talebearer will be shown that his fruit is not credited, while himself is looked upon with more than suspicion. Every opportunity will be seized to speak a good word for the unjustly assailed, and for

every word of detraction spoken, ten words of defence and commendation will be returned. Each will make his brother's case his own, and will count every unjust charge and base insinuation against another as a blow aimed at himself. Such is the brotherliness here pleaded for, and, pray, is there not only too much need for the plea? For, since the days that tongues culminated in the crucifixion of Christ, and in the martyrdom of Stephen (John ii., 19-21, xix. 7; Acts vi. 11-14), when was there greater danger to ministers of the gospel than at the present time?

Secularism is creeping into the very heart and core of our Zion. The money-power is accorded, in too many congregations, a place and a homage which God never intended it to possess. The notion is spreading in every direction that the minister is but the "hired man" who must please his employer—the money-power—or his services will be dispensed with. The pastoral relationship is being stripped of its sacredness and authority, and the temptation to some is almost irresistible to pander to popular favour, and to sell the truth practically to retain stipend.

Let every minister, therefore, and every candidate for the ministry, constitute himself a vigilance committee of one for the defence of ministerial character, and for the maintenance of faithful, fearless, unfavouring administration of word and ordinances, whatever dislikes may be taken, or whatever personal hardships may betide in the discharge of duty. *Clerical brotherliness for mutual defence and encouragement*, this is the need of the hour. Come, then, brother, your name and your service!

BIRDS are seldom taken in their flight; the more we are on the wing of heavenly thoughts, the more we escape snares.—*Anton.*