

the time will have arrived for dealing summarily with this matter; till then, we contend that we have no right to break the engagement we have made because we may be unjustly called upon to fulfil another into which we have never entered.

CONDITION OF PROTESTANT MINISTERS IN THE UNITED STATES.

(From the Home Journal.)

To one who regards appearances only, the position of the pastor of the influential church seems to be one of a truly enviable nature. He is loved by the ladies, and admired by men. Multitudes hang upon his eloquent lips. Wherever he goes, he is an oracle. He sits in the chief seat at banquets, and is the technical first person in society. Spacious is his house, and splendid his furniture, and richly provided his library. His admiring people crowd his hall with presents. Children are named after him, books are dedicated to him, and delegations wait upon him. The great contention is, who shall know him most intimately, and have him oftenest to tea. His nod is a compliment, his bow a thing to be mentioned at dinner-time. Who would not be a clergyman?—What guest at the banquet of Macbeth, splendid and sumptuous as it was, would not have gladly changed places with the king who gave it? while Macbeth was hoarsely muttering, "To be thus is nothing; but to be safely thus?"

There is the weak point in the clergyman's lot—its insecurity. The voluntary system reduces him to the condition of a player. While he "draws," all is well. No, all is not well; for, in order to "draw," he is obliged to tax his powers to such a degree that they must depreciate, or his constitution break down. Yet, while he does continue "popular," he is tolerably safe in his position. But old age comes prematurely on, and great gaps in the congregation begin to yawn; a more attractive preacher has a church near by; and then, how is it? If his church maintains him in his old age, it is from charity; and charity is worse than starvation. Even now, the papers are praising the congregation of Mr. Albert Barnes, who has worn out his eyes in its service, because it "generously" concedes to him the means of living, though he can no longer preach. I know another church in Philadelphia, which, a few years ago, got rid of its aged and venerable pastor, solely because the debts of the church were pressing, and a younger clergyman was needed to "draw the money." One of the party for dismissal was a man who could have paid off the whole debt from his year's income, and have enough left over for the support of his family. Such a fate threatens all clergymen who outlive their popularity. Are men so situated likely to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth? For my own part, I can declare this: I have been intimate with many clergymen, and I never have known one who did not habitually modify his preaching, conceal opinions, and avoid subjects, for fear of offending the powerful men who hold his living in their hands. No, not one; not even a member of the noble army of martyrs, whom I once knew. He was a Baptist minister, in a country town—the ablest and worst-paid minister in the country. His congregation was pretty large, though composed mostly of poor people. The pecuniary pillar of the church was a rich, wrong-headed-deacon, the whole force of whose religion—such as he had—was concentrated in the strange dogma that it is a sin of the deepest dye to partake of the communion with any one who has not been immersed. The pastor had been educated in the same opinion, but had seen reason to renounce it. Long he kept back from his people what he thought to be the truth on the subject, because his children's bread would have been endangered by its expression. But at length he prepared a masterly discourse, in which he demonstrated the groundlessness and absurdity of that belief. He read it to me the evening before he delivered it; and I thought I had never heard anything more convincing, more charitable, more beautiful, than that sermon. It was preached on a Sunday evening. The very next morning his bigoted parishioner, from whom half his small salary was derived, sent a man to the church to remove the cushions from his pew. He never set foot in that church again. It lingered a year or two, and was then broken up, and the pastor became a wanderer and a mendicant. If it were proper, I could narrate circumstances in the history of clergymen, whose names are known to every reader, which would painfully illustrate the maxim that a dependent, unprotected hireling can hardly be a faithful guide in matters pertaining to the soul. Such a man is a kind of spiritual cook. He must make his productions palatable though ever so unwholesome, and garnish them prettily, even if with leaves of poison.

I do not know a better sign of the times, just now, than that public attention is awakening to this deeply important subject. I have before me quite a heap of recent newspaper articles, which prove that many minds are pondering it. I will quote a few passages from some of them. One writer—"The old man of the Mountains"—in the New-York Observer, thus alludes to a standing grievance of the country clergyman. The minister wants money, and the people are backward in paying their subscriptions; "then," adds this writer, "several of his farmer parishioners urge him to take such produce as they can spare, in payment of their taxes; and if he takes them, (and how can he refuse?) it must be at their own price, by an order on the treasury. He can neither beat them down nor wait for a better opportunity, for fear of giving offence. Nor; if he finds he has been wronged in price or quality, can he make a word of complaint, because they are his parishioners, and perhaps complain that he has too large a salary. So, in one way and another, he has to turn and shift, and take everything at such a disadvantage, that his nominal five hundred dollars is scarcely worth four hundred, if he had the cash in hand for all his purchases. The only relief that a pastor can get, when he has been cheated once, is not to want anything of the same man afterwards." Now, the point of this passage is, not that the pastor's salary is small, but that his position is of such a nature that he cannot boldly claim his rights. A lawyer can sue, a storekeeper can seize, a tradesman can dm, but the pastor, who is poorer than either, and probably worthier than either, has no resource but "not to want anything of the same man afterwards." This is not the pastor's fault; it arises simply from the insecurity of his position. As a clergyman once said to me, in a bitter moment, "I am the HEAD PAUPER of the place, and must set an example of submission."

One of the most obvious effects of the present system is, that it deters young men of spirit from enter-

ing the ministry, and thus tends to lower the quality of pulpit instruction. "Young men," says the Independent, reason thus: "I can serve God in a commercial life; devoting my gains to the cause of Christianity, and exhibiting in all my dealings such honorable integrity, a conscience so void of offence, that Christ shall be honored. I can serve Christ as a lawyer; defending righteousness protecting the innocent, bringing the guilty to punishment, fulfilling all my offices for the good of men and the glory of the Master.—And in either of these departments of life I shall be free to hold and express my own sentiments; free to advance whatever is right without the dread of alienating friends and dividing a society. In either of these I can, with industry and frugality, acquire a competence, and leave my family well-settled and in comfort.—How is it in the ministry? There I am almost certain never to have more than a bare support for my family and myself. Even this is precarious, and dependent entirely on my health, and on my continued powers to win and hold attention. In the pulpit, I must live and die poor. In the pulpit, I must move, too, within a limited range of topics, and must express opinions accordant, to the utmost stretch of possibility, with those which prevail in the congregation; else there will be dissensions, cold looks, doubts about my further ability to do good."

THE EXODUS.

(From the London Times.)

There are marvels of history as well as of nature and of art. Twenty years ago the ancient migrations from the forests and snows of the north to the sunny peninsulas of southern Europe, if not wholly incredible, were at least beyond the reach of modern ideas. Twenty years have made the early history of Europe neither incredible nor strange. Emigration has ceased to be a desperate, foolish, and discreditable act. It is no longer the resource of the criminal and the outcast. Twenty years ago the son of even a numerous family, did he but breathe a wish to emigrate, was placed under the ban of suspicion and contempt, regarded as one born to break his mother's heart, and nevertheless forbidden, under the sternest maledictions, to persevere in his unnatural scheme. So great is the change that now the accomplished, the high-minded, the wealthy, the comfortable, are often the first to emigrate; and it is the common remark of emigrants that almost anywhere in an Australian colony, they will meet with better society than in the cramped and narrow-minded circle of an English country town. Indolence and stupidity are left behind to settle on their lees and finish out those vulgar quarrels which form so large a part of middle-class life in this country. Genius and nobility of mind are winging their flight to a freer and more genial atmosphere.

The Irish emigration is not only of the character we have described, but has other and still more honorable qualities. All that strength of affection, and those domestic virtues, which distinguished that unfortunate race, and which have made them hug their poverty with too fatal a grasp, are now exerted in augmenting and dignifying the tide of adventurers. But a few years ago the members of a family used to club their scanty means to enable some one to go as the precursor of the rest. That vanguard has now secured the ground, and draws the rest of the column after it with increasing momentum. "Every American post," we are told by a Galway journal, "brings its supply of remittances, upon the receipt of which crowds of emigrants hurry away, with scarce a moment's delay or preparation. It seldom fails that a letter from an Irish emigrant in America is followed by the departure of one, two, three, or more of the relations at home." They are described as no longer broken-down tenants, but persons well enough to do in this world, whom the success of their friends in a strange land stimulates to follow. "The most remarkable instance of this change of feeling and of altered circumstances has been afforded this very day in an extensive emigration from the Island of Arran. Seven years ago, even while famine scoured them from a wretched home, to part from their native islands would have been a second death to these primitive and secluded people. Now, when they are in comparative affluence, able to satisfy all their moderate wants in a home hallowed by many sacred traditions, a departure to a distant land causes them little or no emotion. To leave their home for ever seems to give them as little concern as a visit a few years ago to a fair in Galway, where some change of weather might possibly detain them some two or three days. Some thirty or forty of them, who have left this town to-day on their way to America, seemed quite unconcerned at their expatriation. They were fine young men and women—admirable specimens of the Irish peasant before famine had bowed his frame, or crushed his spirit." The Emigration Fund used to be the savings of many years, and too often what was due to the landlord. It is now, in the majority of cases, supplied either as we have described, or by those who having received assistance even from strangers at home, now return it with interest, and the repayment of such loans amount, we are told, to many thousands. Such a migration it might be expected, would find its own level—that is, when the diminished numbers left behind found they had no longer too many rivals in the quest of employment. But thus far the end seems farther off than ever. "The Mars steamer," says a Waterford paper of last Saturday, "left our quay yesterday, taking with her 320 of our fellow-countrymen, all bound for the United States and Australia. To judge from appearances, the majority of them were comfortable at home, but seeing no prospect of advancing, they have made the far West the land of their adoption." A Clonmel paper assures us that whole parishes are preparing to leave that part of the country. "Within the last ten days upwards of 150 persons of both sexes left Clonmel upon Bianconi's long cars to Waterford; and when we add to these, if in our power to do so, the numbers which have passed in either their own or hired cars or drays, the amount would be incredible. Such it is, however, and where it will end no one can tell. The numbers of letters from all parts of the States, passing through the Post-office here, and dispersed all over the country, is amazing, and it is calculated that 95 at least out of every 100 contain remittances to pay the passage of either one, two, or even three out of every family. Spring work is very brisk, and better wages are giving, and the result is, that from the flight of the people, the scarcity of laborers, and the advance in the labor markets, neither her Majesty's recruiting officer nor the sergeant of the Hon. East India Company, though the latter have lowered the standard, can do business. No idlers, and therefore no recruits."

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