

PAUL AND THE CLERGY.

The Apostle was not a clergyman. The chief-est of the apostles was wholly unlike the modern priest or bi-shop. He was simply a good man, touching society on every side, not separating himself either from the "laity" in the church, or the people of the world, by any artificial pretensions or appearances. He was educated for a literary man, but, like all the Jews, had also learned a useful trade—the art of tent making. At Corinth Paul wrought in his occupation with Aquila, because he was anxious to compel the Corinthians to believe in the truth of Christianity, through the disinterestedness of its messengers. If you had entered the workshop you would have seen Paul and Aquila busy at the fashioning of poles and pegs, and Priscilla sitting on the ground stitching at the canvass, with as much skill and sense as other workpeople, and making their calculations for sale so as to "minister a profit for 'their necessities.'" But Paul, although a manufacturer, was an example that he had an object in life beyond his tent-making—a world beyond the world. Tent-making occupied his mind. He made tents in order that he might build temples. Here is the test of a man—what ideas has he bound his daily industry? There are many of whom you never think except in the character of their earthly functions. You mention their profession or trade—they are lawyers, doctors, grocers, tailors, and that is all. No part of their life is devoted to the advancement of the heavenly plan—to the destruction of evil—to the relief of misery—to the diffusion of truth. They are like salt without savour, and "good for nothing" is the epitaph which God writes upon their foreheads when they are dead. But think of Paul as a tent-maker now? Thus let us also strive to do everlasting work amidst the transient occupations of time.—*Christian Spectator*.

"GOD GAVE THE INCREASE."

"Apollon watered, but God gave the increase."

The Corinthians were divided in attachment to their various teachers, and the Apostle wishes to reconcile and unite them. How he does he proceed? By setting forth the true relation and office of the teacher, and also the superior relation which God sustains to the work of their salvation. The preacher is a mere laborer in the vineyard—God secures the efficiency and prosperity of the whole. He is all in all. We should be grateful to the farmer, who labors for us and provides us with food; but are we to forget Him who stands far above the farmer? Should we not feel much more gratitude toward Him who sends the earlier and the later rains—who blesses the farmer's labors, and gives increase to the seed sown? In like manner, then, are we to look upon apostles, prophets, and teachers as benefactors; but only in a subordinate degree to Him from whom cometh every

good and perfect gift. The *scope and design* of the passage, then, is to impress upon their minds a sense of obligation to God, so deep and fervent that human leaders could only be recognized in their true relation as laborers in the vineyard of Jesus—as workmen and builders in the temple of God.

As the seed scattered by the farmer falls into the earth, so the truths preached by the Apostles find lodgment in the hearts of men. The field is the world, in the broad sense; but subordinate portions of the field compose subordinate fields. The Corinthians were God's field, *georgion*, verse 9. It is translated *husbandry*, but its primary and common signification is *field*, and it is so translated by many. It was on this field that Paul had labored in sowing the seed. Doubtless this field, like the one spoken of by the Saviour in the parable of the sower, might be composed of several kinds of soil. There were the good, the thorny, the wayside, and the rocky ground. These different kinds of soil would most undoubtedly produce different results, though the preacher and the truth preached were the same in every case.

God gives the increase. This is as true in the spiritual as in the natural world. The Apostle here asserts nothing in regard to the *mode* in which the increase is given in either case. There is no direct allusion to mode. If we learn anything in regard to it here, it must be by tracing out the analogy between natural and spiritual vegetation indicated in this and other passages. Let us, however, keep to the figure. Many of the fanciful theories on this subject would find no countenance in this passage, if the analogy was not departed from, and something else substituted in its stead. God gives increase, or causes things to grow, in the natural world. "God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him and to every seed his own body." Does God cause seeds to grow through the operation of natural laws and secondary causes or does he do it by a direct and supernatural interposition? The Scriptures say that "earth brings forth fruit of herself"—some translate it *spontaneously*. That is, God has endowed the elements with certain inherent properties, which, when acting in conjunction with the vital qualities of seeds, cause germination and growth. It does not concern us now to inquire into the manner in which these powers and properties of nature are upheld by God—whether by an incessant radiation of upholding power from Deity, as our image in the glass is upheld by an incessant radiation of light from ourselves; or whether God has endowed each property of nature with an inherent quality of constancy as a mode of its existence. Into these questions we are not called upon to enter. We are content to know that the earth brings forth fruits of herself, through the operations of natural properties and powers, which become secondary causes. There is no supernatural interposition of divine power in the process in causing the truth to grow, from a passage of Scriptures which compares the growth of truth to that of seeds? Can we sup-