

OUR CONTRIBUTORS.

THE PULPIT VS. THE BAR.

BY KNOXONION.

Why don't our ministers drop their stiff, professional style of preaching and speak more like members of the Bar? Why don't they hold the attention of their hearers as counsel do the attention of jurors? The story of King Charles and the egg comes in here. As a matter of fact some lawyers *do* speak in as stiff and stilted a style as ever grated on the ear of a long-suffering pew-holder. As a matter of fact counsel do *not* always hold the attention of jurors. Just the other day a prisoner in one of our courts, when asked to give reasons why sentence should not be passed upon him, complained that two or three of the jurors who had found him guilty were sound asleep during his trial. We have even heard of a learned judge who takes an occasional nap during the delivery of long addresses by counsel.

But supposing it were true that gentlemen of the long robe were able in all their efforts to keep the court and jury spell-bound by their eloquence, it would not even then follow that the oratory of the bar is superior to that of the pulpit. The work of the preacher is so utterly unlike that of the pleader that no analogy will hold. To begin with, the lawyer's audience take a solemn oath to hear all that he has got to say, and to come to some conclusion about the merits of the case immediately after the case has been heard. They have a judge set over them who may rebuke and punish anything like marked inattention on the part of a juror, if noticed. If a congregation could be sworn at the beginning of each service to listen to the sermon and "a true deliverance make" concerning it, probably a very small number of them would be inattentive. There is no precedent, however, for "swearing in" a congregation, and we are not aware that any ecclesiastical reformer is taking steps in that direction. As long as jurors are sworn to attend to a case, and hearers can do as they please about attending to sermons, lawyers will always have the advantage in this regard. There are other circumstances too in favour of the lawyer. The jurors who listen to him do not probably serve more than once or twice in five years. His task is simply to address them at intervals of several years in connection with certain matters which they are sworn to investigate. The preacher often addresses the same people one hundred and fifty times a year, and continues at his work for twenty years. Assuming that he preaches twice every Sabbath and conducts a weekly meeting and remains in his congregation twenty years, he addresses the same people 3,000 times! During these twenty years a barrister practising in the same town would not in all probability address the same jurors more than a dozen times. Let the average lawyer address the same jury three times a week on the same case for twenty years, and both he and they would most likely die of sheer weariness before half the time had expired. Holding the attention of the jurors for 3,000 addresses on the same case, however, is a small matter compared with some other things which must be done to make the work of the preacher and the pleader anything like analagous. The preacher's audience come voluntarily. The lawyer's are summoned by the sheriff and fined if they don't attend. To make both alike in this regard jurors must be allowed to remain away if they wish so to do, or congregations must be fined for not attending church. The preacher's audience have to pay his salary. How would a lawyer get on if he had to "dun" the jury for his fees? The preacher's audience build the church and keep it in repair. What would the gentlemen of the long robe think if in every town they were charged with the duty of collecting money from jurors to build a court house? The preacher's audience are asked to give liberal collections for various objects during the year. Would it not interfere slightly with the effect of the most brilliant effort ever made at the bar if the orator had to close his address by taking up a collection from the jurors on behalf of the Law Society or some other institution? When we find a lawyer whose jury voluntarily attend court, and who addresses them three times a week with a reasonable degree of interest for ten or fifteen years—who induces them to contribute towards his fees with a reasonable amount of liberality—who gets them to build and keep in repair a court house, and

who asks a special collection from them at the close of every court, then we will admit that there is some analogy between the work of *that* lawyer and the work done by many of our ministers.

We have not alluded to the fact that the preacher has often to address his hearers on subjects that are most distasteful to them, while the lawyer is never put to any such serious disadvantage. Nor have we said anything about the fact that the faithful discharge of pastoral duty and the administration of discipline often put the preacher at a great disadvantage with some of his hearers. Enough, however, has been said to convince any reasonable man that the talk which we occasionally hear about superiority of lawyers over clergymen as public speakers is unmitigated rubbish. Law is a noble profession, and some of the most brilliant statesmen and purest patriots the world ever saw have been lawyers; and some of the best citizens Canada ever saw have been members of the bar.

We have no sympathy with the vulgar cry, about the dishonesty of lawyers, often raised by men who never saw as much money in their lives as many a lawyer could make by betraying his trust once. We have just as little sympathy, however, with the thoughtless ignoramus who goes away from listening to a first-class special spread himself for half an hour in good style under the stimulus of a hundred dollar fee, asking "why don't our ministers speak like that?" All lawyers are not "specials." There is only one Blake at the Equity bar, and there is perhaps not a common law lawyer in Ontario who has not his peer in some pulpit within a mile of him. As an effective speaker the average Presbyterian minister is head and shoulders over the average lawyer, and we cannot think of a locality in Ontario in which there is not a Presbyterian minister quite the equal, as a public speaker, if not greatly the superior of the best of his legal neighbours.

THE VIRTUE OF CONCEALING.

BY REV. J. HASTIE, LINDSAY.

'Tis admitted that there are times when duty bids us bring to light the wrong doings of others, and however painful it may be, to mount the housetop and cry from thence the name of some transgressor. Paul "withstood" Peter "to the face" at Antioch, "because he was to be blamed," and he has proclaimed the fact into the ears of eighteen centuries since, (Gal. ii.).

But, the purpose of the present article is to emphasize the fact that there are times also when duty bids us *conceal*.

One of charity's chief purposes is to *hide* faults. Whose faults? The faults of ministers, suppose we say; or, to be more specific, the faults of ministers *without* charge.

It is a mystery to many a minister, and to his friends, why he is so unsuccessful as a candidate in vacancies. A good preacher he is, an earnest Christian, moral character blameless, and one who has already done much good work in the Church; and yet, to the surprise of all, he goes long and far ere he is called to a charge.

The reason why? That is what we want to find out.

Here it is:—The virtue of concealing is wanting. In some past time he offended some one in his congregation. To offend one was to offend a family circle. A relative or intimate of the offended party lives in some other congregation which may be a vacancy meantime. The candidate preaches there and stands not a whit behind any of his competitors, but rather in advance of all. Normally he should be called, and would but for one circumstance. Inquiry is made about him where he may have laboured some time before. The informant, unhappily, is not the voice of the whole congregation, nor the voice of the fifty or the hundred there who with gratitude to God remember the good received through his ministry; but the informant is some one who is smarting under some reproof justly merited, or has taken a dislike to the man in question.

"He's not the man for you at all." "He's —" etc. "He's —" etc. "He's —" etc.

That is enough. He is a spotted man. Let him preach excellently as he may, and be worthy as he may of another charge, he has no chance *there*. No inquiry is made into the grounds of the detraction. No account is taken of all the good features of the man. People are strangely oblivious to the fact that a man may have made some mistakes in one con-

gregation that will never be repeated in another. They forget that out and out fidelity to God may inevitably incur the ill-will of some parishioner. They proceed upon the strange fallacy that when all men speak well of a minister, necessarily *he* must be the best man to call. What then?

A double duty rests upon the readers of these lines: Let vacancies be very chary to believe any flying report unfavourable to a preacher of the Word.

And the offended ones. Let them put into practice the "virtue of concealing."

There is scope for the same virtue in another direction, viz.:—In the publication of the proceedings of Presbyteries.

I avoid all names and dates; but who cannot recall case after case that was given to the public through the press, which only could help Satan's cause. As a rule, things personal and unpleasant, petty quarrels between individuals, and not a few difficulties between pastor, and people, had much better not appear in print. What has the great constituency of a newspaper to do with these local feuds? What can such a jury do in the matter? Who is benefited by the unsavoury tidings?

But, the harm done! It is manifold. The parties exposed in this way are not humbled but hardened the more. A resentful spirit is provoked toward the prosecutor. To the world the Church presents the appearance of a house divided against itself.

It would be much better that only such proceedings of Presbytery should be published as lovers of peace would take pleasure in; while all else be kept out of the papers.

In this age of keen competition for the latest news—this age of interviewing—this age of printing a man's words almost before he has even thought them, there is special need that in the whole range of ministerial and ecclesiastical life the "virtue of concealing" have a prominent place given to it. "He that is of a faithful spirit concealeth the matter."—Proverbs.

ANGLO-ISRAEL.—NO. VIII.

"When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when He separated the sons of Adam, He set the *bounds* of the people (*i.e.*, of the Gentile nations) according to the *number* of the children of Israel. For the Lord's portion is *His people*. Jacob is the lot (cord, belt, girdle, or outside circle) of His inheritance." Deut. xxxii. 7-9.

The period at which this division of territory took place, as you are aware, was long anterior to the advent of Israel upon the earth. We read in Gen. x. 5, "By these (the grandsons of Noah) were the Isles of the Gentiles divided in their lands," etc., verse 25, "And unto Eber (the grandson of Shem the son of Noah) were born two sons, the name of the one was Peleg, for in his days was the earth divided." Also in the 32nd verse "These are the families of the sons of Noah, after their generations in their nations, and by these were the nations divided in the earth after the flood," therefore it is perfectly evident that it was the purpose of God long before the days of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to choose out of the nations this particular family, and to preserve them and to multiply them exceedingly, even making all the other nations of the world combined, of secondary importance as compared with them, predestinating them (as I hope to be able to show you before these papers are finished) to be the imperial race who should sway the sceptre of the world and fill the whole earth with the blessings of civilization and religion, as well as with its people.

It is not necessary for me to recapitulate by showing you proofs from Scripture, that for their idolatry, Israel of the Ten Tribes was banished from the Land of Palestine and carried by Shalmanezar into the land of Media. Did it ever occur to you that even in His dispensation of woe, and terrible punishment, God was simply weaving out the web of their glorious destiny, causing all things—even the terrible disasters that befel them—to work together for their good, resulting in the end in producing from what was to them, in those days, evil and only evil, to their posterity in these days, the highest of temporal and spiritual blessings? Even in pronouncing blessings upon our fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, God has clearly revealed to us His purpose of scattering the seed of Israel, and placing them in positions of power and importance in all the divisions of the earth, and though this scattering process when in progress, took the form of punishment for sin, it none the less carried out the in-