

Pastor and People.

The World's Creed.

Returning to the city a few night's since, I found two young men seated behind me, whose conversation I was compelled to overhear, by snatches, as they did not attempt to soften their tones.

Shortly put, thought I to myself; but does it not sum the creed of about half the world around us? I could not help analyzing it, in order to see how safe a platform it would turn out to be.

1. First of all it struck me that the party who set it forth, did not have entire confidence in it; for they, in a single breath shifted the ground of their hope from the justice of God to His mercy.

2. It seemed to me that the province of mercy was so distinct from that of justice, that one would like to know whether the two jurisdictions were accurately adjusted.

3. Then, the plea is absolutely cut off. Who that lives can venture to say that he does the best he can? Whence, then, all these fierce accusations of conscience, and these fearful forebodings of the wrath to come?

4. I could not help asking further, whether God had given any warrant for this plan of salvation. It has been the business of my life to study His word, not superficially, but carefully collating its testimonies, and I could not remember a single line in which God had ever proposed to us this method of reconciliation.

5. Last of all, it was a serious objection that this platform made no provision for change of character and a meanness for heaven. The young stranger's religion did not have in it even the element of repentance.

So I concluded that I would not risk that platform, but would continue to stand upon the plan of the gospel which is safe, and that for several reasons:

1. It gives infinite scope to God's infinite compassion of grace. It had its birth in the divine love: "God so loved the world."

2. Mercy is not seen wrangling with justice and covering it up from sight. Rather justice smites with mercy in laying down a complete satisfaction for sin, whereby "the law is magnified and made honorable."

3. Then we have God's testimony that this is His plan. He proposes it, not we; and with Him the final decision must rest.

4. It provides for personal holiness—beginning with the new birth, continued in progressive sanctification, and culminating in glory everlasting.

5. All reader, upon what platform do you stand? Look carefully at its under-pinnings, and be sure that it is safe, for the interests which you risk upon it are immense!—Rev. B. M. Palmer, D.D., in South Western Presbyterian.

A Peaceful Life.

Unless the heart be kept peaceable, the life will not be happy. If calm does not reign over that inner lake within the soul, which feeds the rivers of our life, the rivers themselves will always be in storm.

Listeners.

Good listeners are quite as needful to the success of preaching as good preachers. Careless sitters whose faces are a blank, whose eyes wander like the fool's eyes to the ends of the earth, and whose heads turn upon their shoulders like tops, are the bane of any public speaker.

Yet there are times when all eyes are riveted, and all ears attentive, and all souls are swayed by the magnet power of the preacher. Better still, there are periods of deep religious interest when great masses of hungrily and thirsting souls so crave the pure Word of God that the plainest truths of the Gospel are welcomed from the lips of unlearned but warm-hearted men.

Effect of Prayer.

I have been much impressed by an account in the "Philosophy of the Plan of Salvation," of a converted atheist. He was an old man, who unhesitatingly expressed his unbelief of the existence of a God.

The old man had been for years the subject of special prayer on the part of his pious daughter and his son-in-law; and he was finally persuaded by them to attend a season of religious worship in the church of which they were members.

One of the first things which he did after his conversion was to love, in a practical manner, his worst enemy; he sought him out, asked his forgiveness, and endeavored to benefit him, by bringing him under the influence of the truth.

After his conversion he ceased not to do good, as he had an opportunity. Although he had heard of no such thing having been done by others, he made out a list of his old associates then living within reach of his influence, and for the conversion of these he determined to labor as he had an opportunity, and pray daily.

Within two years from the period of the old man's conversion, one hundred of these individuals had made a profession of religion.

Soul Rest.

True faith produces an immediate rest of soul from all carefulness and anxiety, and settles it in great peace. This state of freedom from carefulness and anxiety will be as broad as the intelligence of him who exercises faith.

The Prize Home Missionary Hymn.

[82, 76, AND 4.]

Saints of God! the dawn is brightening, Token of our coming Lord; O'er the earth the field is whitening; Louder rings the Master's word,— "Pray for reapers In the harvest of the Lord."

Feebly now they toil in sadness, Weeping o'er the waste around, Slowly gathering grains of gladness, While their echoing cries resound, "Pray that reapers In God's harvest may abound."

Now, O Lord! fulfil thy pleasure; Breathe upon thy chosen band, And, with pentecostal measure, Lead forth reapers o'er our land,— Faithful reapers, Gathering sheaves for thy right hand.

Ocean calloth unto ocean, Spirits speed from shore to shore, Heralding the world's commotion; Hear the conflict at our door,— Mighty conflict— Satan's death-cry on our shore!

Broad the shadow of our nation, Enagor millions hither roam; Let thy wait for thy salvation; Come, Lord Jesus! quickly come! By thy Spirit, Bring thy ransomed people home.

Soon shall end the time of weeping, Soon the reaping time will come,— Heaven and earth! together keeping God's eternal Harvest Home; Saints and angels! Shout the world's great Harvest Home.

—Rocky Mountain Presbyterian.

How Jesus Draws Man.

Dr. Payson once, in the process of a revival at Portland, gave notice that he would be glad to see any young person who did not intend to seek religion. Any one would be surprised to hear that about thirty or forty came.

The Best Time.

A very dear only daughter lay dying. She had been a very thoughtful, praying child, having professed religion at twelve years of age, and lived a devoted and useful life. Now she was only waiting a few hours to go home.

How to Keep the Sabbath.

I have often thought it would be a grand scheme—a beautiful and Christian doing—to provide at least one decent and comfortable diet for our poor brethren and sisters in Christ on the Lord's day.

Don't Think.

We often do and say unwise and sinful things through thoughtlessness. We do not mean to be wicked, but we are thoughtless. When expostulated with, or reproved, our apology is, "I didn't think."

Correspondence.

Constitution of the General Assembly.

EDITOR BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

SIR,—Perhaps you will allow me, through your columns, to offer a few remarks on the above subject for the consideration of members of presbyteries.

The draft of a constitution sent down to presbytery by last Assembly is satisfactory in its general outline, but might admit of improvement in some points. Should an amendment, on a matter of detail, meet with the approval of a majority of presbyteries, it might be accepted and carried into effect by next Assembly.

1. The basis of representation, according to the proposed plan, is the number of ministers on the rolls of presbyteries. This a presbytery with twenty ministers on the roll will send to the Assembly five ministers and five elders.

2. The representation of any fractional surplus that may remain after dividing by four, by one minister and one elder, is a clumsy expedient, the practical effect of which is to give a larger proportional representation to small than to large presbyteries.

3. The question remains, whether representation should be given to the theological institutions of the church. On this subject we naturally look to Scotland for precedents.

Each of the universities sends a commissioner to the Assembly of the Established Church. The Free Church has, curiously enough, gone from one extreme to the other.

4. The representation of its theological colleges was formerly excessive, and is now inadequate. Each college was formerly allowed two commissioners, whilst the professors also took their turn in the ordinary course of rotation as members of presbytery.

5. It is probable that presbyteries having colleges within their bounds make a point of sending at least one professor to the Assembly each year; but if they do, it is only as a matter of courtesy.

6. It is a matter of course that a pastor charge and from other professorships—be recognized as equivalent to a pastoral charge, every two professorships will be entitled to a representation, and an institution with three professors will be entitled to an additional representation every second year.

7. It will be objected that as theological professors are all ministers, the Assembly will contain more ministers than elders. The fear of a clerical majority is a ridiculous bugbear; two-thirds of the hard work of the Assembly is done, and always will be done, by ministers.

8. The objection is out of place. For a professor, qua professor, is just as little a pastor as an elder. He is tertium quid. His office is that of a teacher.

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be filled by Christian laymen. They are usually filled by ministers, because ministers are the best qualified to fill them. Laymen do not usually devote their lives to the prosecution of such studies.

To sum up: in the first two sections of the Draft Act I would substitute the following:—

1. The General Assembly shall consist of commissioners from presbyteries, commissioners from theological faculties, and such persons, whether agents of the Church, clerks of Assembly, or Foreign Missionaries, as may receive a place in the court by special enactment.

2. When the number of charges in a presbytery is not exactly divisible by four, the remainder after dividing shall be represented according to the following rule:—

(1.) A remainder of two shall be represented by one commissioner, who shall be a minister and an elder in alternate years.

(2.) A remainder of one shall be represented by a commissioner every second year, who shall be an elder and a minister alternately. A remainder of three shall be entitled to this representation in addition to that of a remainder of two.

When a theological faculty comprises an odd number of professorships, the odd unit shall be represented by a commissioner every second year? I am, yours truly, Dec. 28, 1875. A. MACKNIGHT.

The Bond of Union.

I once heard a father tell that when he removed his family to a new residence, where the accommodation was much more ample, and the substance much more rich and varied than that to which they had been previously accustomed, his youngest son, yet a lisping infant, ran around every room, and scanned every article with ecstasy, calling out in childish wonder at every new sight, "Is this ours, father? and is this ours?"

Such, I suppose, will be the surprise and joy and appropriating confidence with which the child of our Father's family will count all his own when he is removed from the comparatively mean condition of things present, and enters the infinite of things to come.

When the glories of heaven burst upon his view, he does not stand at a distance, like a stranger, saying, "O God, these are thine." He bounds forward to touch and taste every provision which these blessed mansions contain, exclaiming, as he looks in the Father's face, "Father, this and this is ours?"

The Father is glad of all the Father's riches, and the Father is gladder for his dear child's joy.

Random Readings.

Each Christian has his cross, and each has his cross-bearer.

Study Him that was bruised, study that which bruised Him, and study him that bruised Him.

Cunning conquers force; force can subdue numbers; intellect can master courage; but love subdues all.

We have victory by being shut in with God. He sweeps everything away that hinders the answer to our prayers.

The talent of success is nothing more than doing what you can do well, without the thought of fame.—Longfellow.

It is the absence of love to Christ, not its fulness, that makes us impatient of the weaknesses and inconsistencies of our Christian brethren.

Those who have passed under the fountain filled with blood are happier than the angels, for they know not the joy of being redeemed.

Faith addresses itself to man's whole being; it sounds every depth; it touches every spring; it calls back the soul from its weary search within itself, full of doubt and contradiction; it presents it with an object, implicit, absolute, greater than itself—"One that knoweth all things." It provides for every affliction, every want and aspiration.—The Patience of Hope.

Mr. Moody, in one of his addresses, a few days since, on "Excuses," referring to the excuse that some people in the church are no better than they should be, remarked that if one really wanted to get away from the company of hypocrites, let him become a Christian; not one hypocrite would be found at the marriage supper of the Lamb. For one hypocrite in the church he could find them one hundred in the world. He urged them to bundle up all their excuses and mark them as a pack of lies.

Augustine preached only eight minutes, and again eight hours. The homilies of the early fathers, as a rule, are short. The Christian duties were dispatched quickly; but when they came to the Pelagians they drew the long bow. Luther was sometimes long, then very short. Calvin rarely preached more than half an hour, often less. He took Paul to task for making his sermons too long. Whitefield declared that a man eloquent as an angel ought not to preach more than forty minutes.

Thou clouds hang heavy round my way, I cannot see; But through the darkness I believe God leadeth me. 'Tis sweet to keep my hand in His, While all is dim; To close my weary, aching eyes, And follow Him.

Through many a thorny path He leads My tired feet; Through many a path of tears I go, But it is sweet To know that He is close to me, My God, my Guide, He leadeth me, and so I walk Quite satisfied.

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