

The Christian Messenger.

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POETRY.

Dweller in Heaven.

Dweller in heaven high! Ruler below!
Pain would I know Thee, yet tremble to
know!
How can a mortal deem, how it may be,
That being can ne'er be but present
with Thee?
Is it true that thou sawest me ere I saw
morn?
Is it true that Thou knewest me before
I was born?
That nature must live in the light of
Thine eye?
This knowledge for me is too great and
too high.
That fly I to noon-day, or fly I to night,
To shroud me in darkness, or bathe me
in light,
The light and the darkness to These are
the same,
And still in Thy presence of wonder I
am!
Should I with the dove to the desert
repair,
Or dwell with the eagle in cleugh of the
air;
In the desert afar—on the mountain's
wild brink—
From the eye of Omniscience still must
I shrink!
Or, mount I on wings of the morning,
away,
To caves of the ocean, unseen by the day,
And hide in the uttermost parts of the
sea,
Even there to be living and moving in
Thee!
Nay, scale I the clouds, in the heaven to
dwell,
Or make I my bed in the chambers of
hell,
Can science expound, or humanity frame,
That still Thou art present, and all are
the same?
—James Hogg.

RELIGIOUS.

Pecuniary Support of Ministers.

BY REV. A. J. FURMAN.

The ministry of reconciliation is of divine appointment. That it may accomplish the purpose for which it was ordained it must have a competent financial support. Without such support, its usefulness will be greatly crippled. Here we meet an objection: "Many of our pioneer ministers received little or no compensation for their labor and yet led many souls to Christ." We are well aware of the fact. We also know that many of our oldest churches are monuments of their zeal for God. We thank the Lord for what they have done. "Their works do follow them." But these same men could have been abundantly more useful had they received sufficient remuneration to enable them to devote their whole time and best energies to the Master's service. All the powers of mind a man has are needed here. A pastor cannot care for his flock, successfully discharge all the duties of his office, and at the same time be compelled to devise ways and means to keep soul and body together. Success in any enterprise depends, humanly speaking, upon an earnest and intelligent devotion to the work in hand. A man cannot succeed in anything when everything is undertaken. When too many irons are in the fire some will burn. The minister of Jesus is engaged in the noblest calling among men. He should be supported in his work. A minister that is interlaced with two or three other occupations will be a long time in carrying the gospel around the world. Men will not, as a rule, follow any profitless business. But we are told there are scores of men in the ministry who have but a meagre support. Granted; but they go stumbling along at a sorrowful rate. Many of them have great worth, but feel that they must preach the gospel even in destitute places. They believe with Paul: "Woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel." The responsibility of caring for the ministry rests with the churches. In this they should be instructed. If ministers do not teach liberality and that "it is more blessed to give than to

receive," they not only do wrong, but even they may suffer for this neglect. The ministry of one generation should care for that of the next by educating the churches in this regard. There are many churches in our land that are victims of covetousness, starving for the bread of life, while neither they nor their teachers will use the right means to obtain it. A ministry that is extemporized simply to meet the wants of sluggish communities or covetous churches, devoting to them only such time as can be snatched from other pursuits, cannot keep pace with the progress of the age, and must shrink in the presence of learned skepticism.

2. The Scriptures are very explicit in requiring a competent pecuniary support for ministers of the gospel. The priests of Judaism were the ministers of the Temple service, and by it they were maintained. They had a tenth for an inheritance. An apostle asks: "Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live of the temple, and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar?" Would God make less provision for ministers of the New Testament than for those of the Temple?

When our Lord sent forth the twelve on their mission of love to man, he said: "Provide neither gold nor silver nor brass in your purses, nor scrip for your journey; for the workman is worthy of his hire." Again, "If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?" "Who goeth a warfare at his own charges?" It is not too much, then, for the minister of Jesus to expect that their temporal wants will be supplied by those for whom they labor.

In another place the same apostle, quoting from the Old Testament, exposes the injustice of neglecting those who give themselves for the good of others: "Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn." "Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel shall live of the gospel." These instructions are too plain to be misunderstood.

3. The relation between a competent pecuniary support and an efficient ministry is very important. Poverty discourages a minister. By it his spirit is depressed. His mind is not free, and he cannot engage in his work with a heartiness that betokens success. For want of financial support many a minister finds that his life has been less useful than he desired, and his character has often been defamed. Frequently he is forced to run in debt for the necessities of life, on the strength of salary due. But if it fails to come in, people are apt to call him dishonest, or a bad financier, till the community lose confidence in him; then his work is done, and "he must leave." In many instances this is the reason for short pastorates, and the sin lies at the door of the church. Again; the church will not prosper. Absenteeism is increased. Those who do not support their pastor are not likely to go where their privileges will suggest their negligence. They will shun him. If the pastor's salary is in arrears, the other finances of the church will also run behind, all things will be in confusion, and piety will flag. Those members who are in arrears will be cold, critical, and sluggish in all religious exercises. Somebody will think "a change" will benefit the church, and soon the pastor is gone; exemplifying the fact that with deficient salary, there can be no permanent ministry.

When the pastor is well supported, he loves his work, and labors for the sake of doing good. Then he is happy and cheerful. He enjoys the society of his brethren, feeling that his labors are appreciated. Pastor and people then work together. They are co-workers with God, and working in harmony with his will they may justly look for prosperity.

The question of pecuniary support has a marked effect on the rising ministry. A dread of coming to want keeps many out of the pulpit, and drives

some from it. While some are halting between the ministry and some secular calling, that decides the case and they turn away from the sacred calling. It is vain to object that they were not "called," or that they "lacked faith in God;" for even little faith when encouraged becomes valiant for the truth. On the other hand we believe that an assurance of a comfortable livelihood would bring many more useful men into the ministerial ranks.

These remarks suggest a very important practical problem: "What provision shall be made for supernumerated ministers?" The least that our churches can do is to have a fund for the support of disabled ministers and their widows. But this will never be large enough to meet the demands. We suggest a better plan: Let every minister receive something more than enough to sustain life, and if he and his are frugal, as they should be, the question is solved. But if they are not sparing of their means, they alone must bear the responsibility—it certainly cannot be laid on the church. Till the grade of salaries, in many cases, is raised, we must, by voluntary contributions, look after the temporal interests of worn-out ministers. Heaven's blessing cannot rest on us if we neglect those who have faithfully served their generation in watching for souls.

4. Ministers' salaries should be paid promptly, like any other debt. It is the sustenance of him who labors for the welfare of men. That man has the lowest idea of responsibility who will not pay his pastor nor make a benevolent contribution till waited on by an authorized collector. As well might he refuse to pay his merchant or physician till he send an agent for the money. Church members should discharge their duties to the church and the great Head of the church, regardless of likes or dislikes, never asking what others have done, never waiting for a solicitor. When we come up to the New Testament idea of contributing for church work and pastors' salaries, we will have no solicitors, committees nor agents, but every one will give as God hath prospered him. Every believer should honor the Lord with his substance, and lay voluntary offerings upon his altar. "Freely ye have received, freely give."

The Woman's Argument.

Her argument is, the little dog eats the crumbs of the children's bread with the child's full consent. When a child has its little dog to play with while he is eating, what does the child do? Why, of course, it gives a little bit to the dog every now and again, and the doggie himself takes great liberties and helps himself as much as he dares. When a little dog is with the children at meal-time, it is sure to get a crumb from one or other of its playmates; and none will object to it eating what it can get. So the woman seems to say, "Lord, here are the children, thy disciples; they do not treat me very well; little children do not treat little dogs always so kindly as they might; but still, Lord, they are quite willing that I should have the blessing I am seeking. They have a full portion in thee; they have thy presence; they have thy word; they sit at thy feet; they have obtained all sorts of spiritual blessings; I am sure they cannot grudge me so much less a boon; they are willing that I should have the devil cast out of my daughter, for that blessing compared with what they have is but a crumb, and they are content that I should have it. So, Lord, I answer thine argument. Thou sayest it is not meet, until the children are filled, to give bread to dogs; but, Lord, the children are filled, and are quite willing to let me have my portion; they consent to allow me the crumbs; wilt thou not give them to me?"—Spurgeon.

Those men who destroy a healthful constitution of the body by intemperance and an irregular life, do as manifestly kill themselves as those who hang, poison, or drown themselves.

A School that is a School.

The Bethany Sunday school (Presbyterian) has a national reputation. It is one of the "sights" now at Philadelphia. A correspondent of *The Congregationalist* writes thus of a recent visit to the school:

On Sunday by means of a ticket, I secured admission to the famous Bethany Sunday school, of which Mr. John Wanamaker has charge. The hour for commencing 2½ o'clock, but on coming in sight of the church a little past two, there was a crowd extending across the street. By means of the ticket, I got in at a side entrance. The room is a model one for Sunday school purposes. The pastor's class of two to three hundred was on the platform and its gallery, which was shut off from the rest of the room by letting down a glass partition when the hour came for recitation; and so were other class-rooms all round the main room, thus preventing classes from interrupting one another. The introductory exercises occupied a full half-hour, and embraced a great variety of responsive reading and singing, including largely the element of worship. Among the exercises was the repetition of the Apostles' Creed, the chanting of the Lord's Prayer, etc. There were a great number of strangers present, seated mostly in two narrow galleries, one above another, and running nearly around the room, and the total attendance could hardly have been less than one thousand persons.

When the time for lessons came, Mr. Wanamaker went into the church adjoining, to teach his Bible-class, and I was surprised to find there, also, an attendance of about a thousand. What I wanted was to see a class of that size taught by question and answer but in this respect the exercise was a failure. A considerable part of those present were evidently strangers, and though Mr. Wanamaker started off with a few questions, the exercises soon degenerated into an address from the teacher, which is a much easier thing to do than to draw out answers from the class. But the school, as a whole, is evidently a grand success, and deserves its world-wide reputation.

The *Presbyterian* announces that last Sunday there were 3,316 visitors at the school.—*Examiner*.

A NEW COMMENTARY.—We are happy to state that Pres. Hovey, of Newton Theological Seminary, has at the request of the Board of the Publication Society, undertaken the supervision of a complete commentary on the Bible. He will have the co-operation of our ablest scholars, who will severally undertake different portions of Scripture. The work will embrace the latest revision of the text, and the most correct translation possible. It is probable that the new Revision now in progress under the auspices of the English committee will be out in time to be embraced in the work. Though scholarly, the commentary will also be level to the comprehension of every person possessed of common sense and of intelligence. It will not require a knowledge of the original tongues.

We need hardly say that the work will be executed with the single desire to make known what the Scriptures, fairly interpreted, teach. From all the circumstances of the origin of the work, we believe that the new commentary will be a blessing to the millions of Baptists and to all who want to see the truth of God's word illustrated. The commentary will be issued in twelve volumes (12mo), and will occupy five years in its issue.—*Nat. Baptist*.

AN INTERESTING ASSOCIATION.—The Baptist Choctaw and Chickasaw Association held its meeting this year at High Hill, Indian Territory. The church where the Association met "is a plain, square log-house, twenty by twenty-five feet in size, with a door, but no windows. Six small loop-holes and the door, when the latter is open, admit light and provide for ventilation. The plainest of pine benches afford seating capacity for perhaps seventy-five per-

sons, and the pulpit consists of three pine boards tacked together and braced, with a single ornament of a lone candle, without a candle-stick." Four new churches were received. There are two other Baptist Associations in the Indian Territory. The total number of churches is eighty, and of members upwards of 5,000. The Cherokee Indians, according to the *Standard*, "have a 'colour-line,' as well as the whites, and have separate schools for the negro children. Previous to the war they followed the fashion of the South, from whence they emigrated, and held quite a large number of slaves."—*Canadian Baptist*.

Cardinal Manning on Religious Toleration in Spain.

The following correspondence between the Rev. J. S. Withington and Cardinal Manning presents a curious apology for persecution in Roman Catholic countries. The 1st principle given by Cardinal Manning would warrant a repetition of all the atrocities of the Inquisition and bring back the dark ages into every country where Romanism largely prevails, and would also teach the duty of Protestants treating Roman Catholics in the same way, where Protestantism almost wholly prevails. If it would be right in a nation it could not be wrong in a smaller community:—

"MY LORD CARDINAL.—I am anxious to know whether the English Catholics have expostulated with the Government of Spain in reference to the prohibitory measures which are now being imposed on Protestants in that country. Full and toleration—say liberty—is very properly granted to Catholics in the British Empire; would it not be well for your Eminence, and those who act in concert with you, to try to secure for oppressed Protestants the same boon? I shall be gratified to learn that my countrymen professing the Catholic form of the Christian religion have done what they could in this laudable direction.

To be outspoken with your Eminence, it has been often said that the Catholics will get all they can in the way of privilege and gifts, and throw up their hats for liberty when they are in the minority, but when in the ascendant they persecute the Protestants. Certainly this is being now done in Spain, and the Government of that country are strictly Catholic. Your Eminence is an Englishman by birth and training, and I respectfully ask, Has anything been done by the British portion of the Catholic Church in the way of mediation, pointing out to the King and the General Executive of Spain a pacific, conciliatory, and liberal course, similar to the one observed in recent years in this country? While totally differing from your Eminence in faith and ceremony, as a lover of free thought and speech I humbly submit these questions, and beg the honor of reply, with a permission to publish.

Understanding that your Eminence would be the guest of the Marquis of Ripon during the present week, I have addressed this letter to Studley Royal.

I am,
My Lord Cardinal,
Your obedient servant,
J. SWANN WITHINGTON,
Minister of the United Methodist Free Church.

Harrowgate, Sept. 18, 1876.
(REPLY.)

"LEEDS, Sept. 21, 1876.

REV. SIR.—Your letter of the 18th reached me this morning. So far as I know, the English Catholics have made no representation to the Government of Spain in reference to the Protestants in that country. So far as I know, and I learn it also from the papers of to-day, the laws in Spain do not extend to the private conscience or belief of any one, but restrain only the public propagation of religious tenets or worship at variance with the religion of the Spanish people.