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THE KING'S HIGHWAY.

RELATION OF THE PASTOR TO FORMER FIELDS AND TO HIS MINISTERIAL SUCCESSOR.

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This subject is twofold, double-barreled. It has respect to former fields, that is, to the church in the mass. Therefore the laity, the church membership, is involved. The church members have rights; they ought to be considered. They have ideas, too; they must be respected. Yet the fact that the church members are involved in this discussion complicates matters to the last degree; because they do not see that their relation to their pastor, or to their former pastor, is at all affected by the existence of a very delicate relation between these two brethren themselves. I am not going to discuss whether the ministry is a profession or not. But it has a professional side, as nice as that which exists between doctors or lawyers, and it should be recognized. For this reason the work of the ministry must be conducted in a becoming way. Whatever the problems may be in the question that is before us, they may be adjusted in any case by the adoption of the fourfold bases: Be a gentleman; remember the Golden Rule; exercise common sense; crucify the flesh.

I.—As to former fields.

1. When you resign, resign. Don't resign unless you intend to leave. Don't resign to test the feeling of your church. You might get disappointed.

2. When you leave, quit. Leave the church, leave it alone. Remember, you have no claim on that church when you cease to be its pastor. When I resigned my last charge, I said: "Do not send for me to marry anybody or to bury anybody after I leave you, unless you have no pastor. If you have no pastor, I shall be glad to serve you. If you have a pastor, these occasions are his opportunity to get on the inner side of your lives. Do not rob him of it." For the same reason I hold that a funeral service should be given to the pastor, and not dissipated among three or four preachers who have had the civility and the kindness to inquire about the welfare of the family in time of distress.

When you resign, resign. When you leave quit. No analogy is perfect; no illustration ought to be made to walk on all fours. The pastoral relation is in one sense a marriage. A flirtation before marriage between a prospective pastor and a church (or any other kind) is a pitiful thing. But for a parson to flirt with his former field, after another pastor has taken charge, is like a man flirting with his divorced wife after she has married again. It is a proceeding that is apt to give offence, and which might be attended with serious consequences. So I would sum up the first relationship by saying when you resign, resign. When you leave, quit.

II. As to your successor.

1. Give him a good send-off when you leave. Say all the nice things you can about him. Prepare the people for his coming—and his success; the more he has of it, the more glory is reflected. Remember he is building on the foundation that you laid.

2. Give him a complete list of the members with their addresses. That will help him wonderfully in his pastoral work.

3. Pray for him.

4. Leave him alone.

5. Don't—(a) give him advice, unless he asks for it. (b) Criticize him; he had enough in the field that he came from; probably he has as much sense as you have, so that is super-

fluous. (c) Don't visit his field (your old one) for a long, long time; not until he settles down; not until he has had time to remedy your mistakes and do a little constructive work himself. Then if the church, or the pastor, invite you, go; go modestly; go appreciatively; go see how an artist can work, and may you learn your lesson, get your blessing, and confer one.

It is very flattering to one's vanity to go back to a former field and receive the ovation. But crucify the flesh and refrain from going.

It appeals to our innate love of praise to hear ourselves favorably compared to another. But do unto others as you would have others do unto you, and do not place yourself where there will be opportunity to hear it.

It is easy to criticize, but forbear; be the gentleman.

The probability is that your successor has his weak points and his strong ones, as you have; that his gifts and yours differ; that his average is as high as yours. Exercise common sense.

These are my sentiments. These are my theses. I am ready to nail them on the door of any church, or pastor's study, or meeting place of any pulpit committee. I am ready to defend them in the face of pope, prince or pastors' parliament until I shall myself have become a diet for worms.—*The Religious Herald*.

Note.—An address delivered before the Pastors' Parliament of the General Association of Virginia.

MY CREED.

Do not keep the alabaster boxes of your love and tenderness sealed up until your friends are dead. Fill their lives with sweetness. Speak approving, cheering words while their ears can hear them, and while their hearts can be thrilled and made happier by them; the kind things you mean to say when they are gone, say before they go. The flowers you mean to send for their coffins, send to brighten and sweeten their homes before they leave them.

If my friends have alabaster boxes laid away full of fragrant perfumes of sympathy and affection, which they intend to break over my dead body, I would rather they would bring them out in my wearied and troubled hours and open them, that I may be refreshed and cheered by them while I need them. I would rather have a plain coffin without a flower, a funeral without a eulogy, than a life without the sweetness of love and sympathy.

Let us learn to anoint our friends beforehand for their burial. Post mortem kindness does not cheer the troubled spirit. Flowers on the coffin cast no fragrance backward over life's weary way.—*W. D. Boyce*.

WHAT HOME MEANS.

That word "home" always seems like poetry to me. It rings like a peal of bells at a wedding, only more soft and sweet; and it chimes deeper into the ears of my heart. It does not matter whether it means thatched cottage or manor house, home is home; be it ever so homely, there is no place on earth like it. Sweetly the sparrows chirrup and the swallows twitter around the chosen spot which is my joy and rest.

Every bird loves its own nest; the owl thinks the old ruins the fairest spot under the moon and the fox is of the opinion that his hole in the hill is remarkably cosy. When my master nag knows that his head is toward home he wants no whip but thinks it best to put on full

speed; and I am always of the same mind, for the way home to me is the best bit of road in the country. I like to see the smoke out of my own chimney better than the fire on another man's hearth; there's something so beautiful in the way it curls up among the trees. Cold potatoes on my own table taste better than roast meat on my neighbor's, and the honeysuckle at my own door is the sweetest I ever smell. When you are out, friends do their best, but still it is not home. "Make yourself at home," they say, because everybody knows that to feel at home is to feel at ease.

East and west,

Home is best.

Why, at home you are at home, and what more do you want? Nobody grudges you what ever your appetite may be, and you don't get put into a damp bed. Safe in his own castle like a king in his palace, a man feels himself somebody, and is not afraid of being thought proud for thinking so.—*From "John Ploughman's Talk," by Charles H. Spurgeon.*

THE SECRET PLACE.

In the secret of His presence, how my soul delights to hide!

O how precious are the lessons which I learn at Jesus' side!

Earthly care can never vex me, neither trials lay me low,

For when Satan comes to tempt me, to the secret place I go.

When my soul is faint and thirsty, 'neath the shadow of His wing

There is cool and pleasant shelter, and a fresh and crystal spring;

And my Saviour rests beside me as we hold communion sweet—

If I tried I could not utter what He says when thus we meet.

The Upward Leading.

The Wesleyan Methodist says: "A gospel which does not save from sin does not have enough power in it to keep this world from going at a headlong pace to destruction. The reforms so much advocated by radical men will utterly fail in the end if the gospel of holiness is not preached. We believe without a moment's hesitation in the political doctrine of the absolute prohibition of the liquor traffic and other crimes, but we do not expect any other kind of rescue work accomplished more than temporary relief until the gospel of holiness shall be preached and accepted and lived in this world. Much may be done to suppress the white slave trade, to produce better relations between capital and labor, to correct the abominable wickedness of commercialism, but none of these evils will be destroyed except by the gospel of holiness." If the men are right who believe that the ultimate redemption of this world is in the second coming of the Lord, we are still right, for it will be the gospel of holiness which will be preached then and which will be the power of God in the salvation of mankind. If the men are right who believe that preaching the gospel as it is now preached will gradually bring the world back to God, we are still correct, for it is only the gospel of holiness which saves.

Job was the only man of his time that God could trust to illustrate the power of divine grace to uphold men who trusted God. God told the devil that there were none like Job. He was in a class by himself.