

[From the Puritan Recorder.]

REV. DR. SNELL'S SPEECH.

We think that our readers will be interested in the following speech of Rev. Dr. Snell, of North Brookfield, who several years ago preached his semi-centennial sermon.

The following sentiment called up the Rev. Dr. Snell of North Brookfield, as the next speaker:

The Jubilant Patriots of the Brookfield Association; who of the sons shall catch a fallen mantle?

The Doctor replied:

Mr. Chairman, I cannot make a speech; but still I will give utterance to a few undigested thoughts.

Four things, Sir, I wonder at. I wonder that I have lived so long when so unprofitable, and when most of my contemporaries are in the grave, and the residue leaning upon their staves.

I wonder that I have lived to preach the Gospel more than fifty years, with so few and slight interruptions.

I wonder that I have continued the sole pastor and religious teacher of the same church and people more than half a century.

I wonder that three pastors who started in the ministry about the same time, located in three contiguous towns, have each continued to preach the Gospel half a century, and are still here present to-day; and what may well increase my wonder is, that they are all now living with the companions of their youth. It is presumed that another such an instance cannot be found in the United States. Not, however, that I would ascribe it to their superior wisdom; but to the kind providence of God, who holds all hearts and events in his all-controlling hand.

A greater permanency in the pastoral office appears very desirable, whether we consider the item of expense, the solicitude and danger of church and people, or the moral and religious influence of a long and faithful ministry. More than fifty pastors have been settled and dismissed within the present limits of the Brookfield Association since my ordination in 1793; and but one has died in office.

How such increased permanency can be given to the pastoral relation, is no easy question to solve. But, Mr. Chairman, were I allowed to throw myself back half a century, and begin anew, I will tell you some things I should attempt to do which might have an influence in my own particular case.

One is, I would attempt to marry the very best young woman I could find in the community—a person possessed of a good share of common sense, with a good English education, without the fripperies of the age—one acquainted with domestic concerns, and that understands the principles of economy—one who knows how to treat all sorts of company, and would overcome evil with good, by her propriety of conduct, and by her decision and consistency in religion, would secure the respect and favor of all.

About the time I commenced housekeeping, some restless sceptics attempted to raise a commotion. One of the deacons of my church said to me, "I hope you will bring a lady amongst us that will unite us all"—and I believe she has done her part in the good work of union and peace, and may have done more in continuing my pastorate than myself.

Another thing I would do is, I would acquaint myself with all my people, and treat every person as my friend and acquaintance without any crustiness.

Another thing, I would belong to every generation as they rise up around me,—to the aged—to the active—to the young and to the children—in a sense I would be the old man, the man of business, the young man, and the child; that none of them may grow away from my acquaintance. And I would notice little children, because of their prospective worth, and to secure their affection and confidence.—Mothers, too, love to have their children noticed, and fathers have no serious objection to it.

Another thing: I would punctually attend all my appointments and fulfil all my little money and business promises, and thus keep good my credit, and let people know on what they can depend.

Another thing, Mr. Chairman, for I know not when I shall get through; I would visit the sick and afflicted according to my acquaintance with their wants and circumstances, without a formal message or special request. I would bring forth to my people studied sermons, unless I should be compelled, from scan-

tinuity of support, to spend a large portion of my time and energies to study how I should live.

One thing more—I would endeavor to secure the favor, respect and confidence of the female part of the community. My Theological Instructor said to me as I left his domicile, "If you secure the favor of the women, you need not trouble yourself much about what the men will do; for the women by their silent influence govern the world." And they do in fact possess more influence than the gentlemen, let them rise to what elevation in office they may.

Another thing I would do is, I would be in no haste to leave my people—it is indeed a very serious affair—a measure that has many solemn bearings—deserving much consideration and most grave reflection, and may occasion many painful regrets. I would not be scared away—would not flee and leave the field through cowardice; but, for a reasonable time, stand my ground and bear some blame and endure some straitness, before I would leave my first adopted people. Nor would I leave a small place for a large one till I had actually filled the first, and, like the unhatched chick, had burst the shell to find enlargement.

One other thing I must not suppress; I would patronize regularly bred physicians;—men of good common sense, of good character, and well acquainted with their profession. It is perfectly preposterous to suppose that those who never made the human system and diseases, and medicine their study, should better know what ails the patient, and what treatment his case under all the circumstances requires, than those who have devoted years to medical study, and observation, and practice. Health and life are too precious to be sacrificed on the shrine of ignorance. I would have no fellowship with ulanism, humbuggery, quackery, mesmerism and mysterious knockings—all of a sort—the plague of wise men, and the idols of fools.

But, Mr. Chairman, time would fail to state all I now think that I would do to increase the permanency of my pastorate and the peace and honor of my people, could I step back one half century, and live and act again. But I will give place to others, who can from their full hearts speak more to the edification of the meeting.

Are not My Ways Equal?

The claims of his law are just. Their substance is that we love God supremely, and our fellow-men as ourselves. This for his glory, and our highest good. God is the only being worthy of supreme regard. His eternity, the infinity of his attributes, both natural and moral, eminently fit him to be the object of universal love—the great centre of all attraction with man. There is no Being possessing these qualifications for a Sovereign Ruler, and no other who can lay claim to our love and reverence.

There is also a fitness in the command to love our fellow-man. He is created our brother—he is our equal in natural goodness—he is equally a subject of the Divine sympathy, and is entitled to the same natural rights and privileges. He is therefore entitled to our love, and we to his. His rights—his interests—his feelings are as sacred as our own—are as worthy of regard and sympathy. We ought then to love our fellow-man. The claims of God's law, which require it, are just.

The penalty of God's law is just. That penalty is endless suffering. It is designed to prevent an infinite evil. Reason requires that it should correspond to the evil to be prevented, and the good to be secured by the law to which it is attached, and which it is designed to enforce. The evil to be prevented is sin, the results of which are as lasting as eternity; while the good to be promoted and secured is the welfare of immortal souls, destined to an endless existence. There can be no injustice, then, in a penalty which, in its duration and degree of suffering, only corresponds to the evil of sin.

God's ways are just, as manifested in his providential dealings with his creatures. They are frequently mysterious and afflictive, but we have no evidence that they are unjust. It does not follow that a providence is wrong, or even partial, because we cannot see the reason for it. God may have various reasons for his treatment of his fellow-creatures, which are not revealed to us, and which perhaps, we could not comprehend if they were. When we understand the results of afflictive providences, especially in connection with their

practical bearing upon our own hearts and lives, then we find a reason for them. Dark and mysterious as they may have been at the time, now we behold the hand of a Father in them, moving for our good—working out our highest welfare. God has not left himself without a witness of his goodness in the severest trial he visits upon his creatures.

The habitation of thy throne,

O God, is justice still;

While truth and goodness move the hand

That executes thy will.

God is just in his law—both its precept and penalty, and in its providences. Whatever he may do—however severely he may afflict, his ways are just, and all his judgments are done in truth.

Reader! is it in your heart to endorse the justice of God's ways? If so, happy are you in this world, and blessed shall it be with you when you have passed over Jordan.—*Evangelist.*

[From the New York Observer.]

The Secret of Danger.

The following extract from Archbishop Whately's Essay on the Errors of Romanism, in which he clearly demonstrates, "that her corruptions are such as human nature is prone to—that they are rather the cause, than the effect, of the system of the church—and that consequently, those out of her pale are not therefore safe from similar corruptions"—is so full of wholesome truth that I should be glad if you could find a place for it in your columns.

The church of Rome—was built by Apostles on Jesus Christ, the only true foundation; she was left by them with sound doctrine and pure christian worship; her members were cautioned by them not to be "high-minded, but fear;" not to rely on the divine favour as a reason for relaxing personal exertions, but as an encouragement to make them; or to exult in their deliverance from human superstition, and their adoption in the place of the disobedient, to be the people—the chosen people—of God, but to take warning from the example of his mercy combined with severity. But they were seduced from humble vigilance to a proud and careless reliance on the greatness of their privileges till they even lost the talent which they had neglected to employ.—Their minds were fixed on what was past—on what had been done for them, and withdrawn from a vigilant attention to the future—from diligence on their part to "make their calling and election sure." Confident in the titles of Christian—of Orthodox—of Catholic—of the Church of God—and careless of living "as becometh saints," they trusted that no deadly error could creep into so holy a community, and adopted, one by one, the very errors (under new names) of the Paganism which had been renounced: thanking God, like the Pharisee, that they were "not as other men are," they became gradually like their heathen ancestors, with the aggravation of having sinned against light, and abused their peculiar advantages. Idolatry of the grossest kind was gradually restored; the worshippers of the one true God manifested in Christ Jesus, paid, practically, their chief adoration to deified mortals; the Scriptures were secluded from the people under the veil of an unknown tongue, and their interpretation fettered, and their authority superseded, even with the learned, by a mass of traditions, which made the word of God of none effect; their sacraments became superstitious charms; their public worship a kind of magic incantation, muttered in a dead language; and Christian holiness of life was commuted for holy water—for fantastic penances, pilgrimages, amulets, pecuniary donations, and a whole train of superstitious observances worthy of Paganism in its worst forms. They trusted in privileges and names, till the privileges were lost, and the names became an empty sound. But still they are as proud of them as ever. Such monstrous corruptions could never have been introduced into any church by the arts of a worldly and ambitious hierarchy, had not the individual members of it been lulled into false security, by boastfully contemplating their christian privileges, instead of dwelling on the additional responsibility these privileges create by priding themselves on names, without bestowing a watchful attention on the things those names denote.

The Heart Surrendered.

We must yield to God, when he invites us to let him reign in our hearts. Did we deliberate so much, when the world invited us to

yield ourselves to be seduced by amusements and our passions? Did we then so hesitate? Have we as much resisted the evil, as we have the good? Did we ever seriously reflect when we strayed from the path of virtue, when we corrupted ourselves, when we acted contrary to the inward dictates of our hearts and reason, in quest of vanity, or sensual pleasure?

Do we consider, that it is an all-powerful hand that has made us? Do we make it our business to acknowledge that we owe all to him from whom we hold all, and that he has made us for himself alone? Instead of this, we are apt to waver, we deliberate, we raise doubts with regard to the clearest matters; we fear being too credulous: we are apprehensive of giving too much to him for whom all is not more than sufficient; we dare not let the world see that we are desirous of serving God, in a word, we are as timorous, irresolute, and uneasy with regard to virtue, as we have been presumptuous and inconsiderate in our irregular courses.

I desire but one thing of you, which is, to follow simply the bias that is in the bottom of your heart towards that which is good, as you have formerly followed the dictates of your passions towards that which is evil. As often as you examine the fundamentals of religion, you will readily acknowledge that there can be nothing solid objected to them, and that they who oppose them, only do so that they may not subject themselves to the restraints of virtue: thus they refuse to follow God only to please themselves. I would ask, What do we risk by serving God? We shall have nearly the same duties to perform, and the same pains patiently to suffer; but then we shall add to them the consolation of loving what is supremely amiable; of laboring and suffering to please our true and perfect friend, who keeps account of our smallest performances, and rewards them a hundred fold in this life, by that peace which he sheds in our hearts. Lastly, we shall add to them the blessed hope of everlasting life.

Ask your virtuous friends, of whose sincerity you have no doubt; ask them what it has cost them to serve God, whether they repent their being engaged in his service? They were once in the world like yourself; ask them, whether they regret their having forsaken it, or if the intoxication of Babylon is sweeter than the peace of Zion? They will say, whatever crosses we suffer in the Christian life, we never lose that peace of mind, in which we are content with all we suffer, and never desire those joys we are deprived of.—*Fenton.*

Renovating Power of the Bible.

The influence of the Bible upon the moral powers of man possesses ineffable value. Here the Bible acts with a sort of instantaneous impulse. It assumes an authority which supersedes every other law, and controuls every purpose of the will. Here it solves every moral doubt, not by the tardy process of reasoning, but by the speedy decision of a well-informed conscience. Here it exerts a power in determining the conduct from which there is no appeal, casting down vain imaginations, and communicating a holy energy to enfeebled or degenerate nature. In confirmation of this idea, I could refer to the records of piety in every age.

It has been my lot to occupy a section of country far removed from the seat of your benevolent operations. The South, on which the indulgence of Providence has conferred so many advantages of soil and climate, like other places, has felt the salutary influence of the Bible question. The increase of copies, has invited an increase of readers, and the reading has resulted in a melioration of morals. At a late anniversary which I there witnessed, when the annual report of one of your auxiliaries was exhibited, a gentleman who had exercised high judicial functions, and who had not at that time entertained much partiality for the Scriptures, stated, among other things which had come under his own observation, that the augmentation of Bibles in his circle of duty, had diminished the frequency of criminal cases, and penal inflictions.—That many places where he had been in the habit of administering justice, and where he had beheld the most debasing atrocities of immoral conduct, were so changed in the space of a few years, as to present a new moral aspect; that instead of outrage and profanation, he had seen the sobriety and uprightness which belong to good members of society and useful citizens.

Under the existing system of pious effort, the Bible travels with the hardy emigrant, who goes to explore the wilderness in quest of a