

The Sin of Paying Preachers.

Judging from the writings of some of our gray headed fathers in Israel some would come to the conclusion that it is exceedingly sinful for the Gospel preacher to receive anything as a remuneration for time and labor spent in preaching. Since a boy we have heard the cry from those of our preaching brethren against paying the preacher, and the preacher that received a small competence for labor and time thus spent was anathematized and denounced as a "hireling." The preacher is reminded that the pioneers "went forth on their own resources, at their own expenses, trusting in God for their support, while they left their dear companions at home to labor and toil to support their family," etc.

If it is the Lord's order that the preacher should go at "his own charges" and at his own expenses, "leaving his dear companion at home" to redouble her labor and turmoil, to clothe, feed and educate her and his children, we certainly will be willing as soon as fully apprised of it, to cease to receive contributions from the brethren that are cognizant of the necessities of the poor preacher (as but few of them are otherwise) who are striving with their means to hold up his hands and enable him to preach the word to the multitudes that are perishing for the bread of life. It is quite an easy work for the preacher to travel among the brethren and preach, faring sumptuously, "receiving souls for their hire," and his family suffering for the necessary comforts of life.

But what says the great apostle. "But if any provide not for his own and especially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith and is worse than an infidel." 1 Tim. v. 8. Certainly the brethren want no preaching from a man that is worse than infidel.

A preacher once told me, "Bro. Morgan, I have even forsaken home and sacrificed my family for the sake of preaching the Gospel." But what says the great apostle. "Who goeth to warfare any time at his own charges? Who planteth a vineyard and eateth not of the fruit thereof, or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock. Say I these things as a man? or saith not the law the same also. For it is written in the law of Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn." *

Do you know that they which minister about holy things, live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar, are partakers with the altar? Even so, hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel. 1 Cor. ix.

Again, "Let him that is taught in the word, communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things." Gal. iv. 6.

How, in the face of the above plain declarations from heaven, our good old brethren in the Lord continue to lift up their voices against the brethren in possession of the abundance of this world's goods, lending a helping hand to forward the glorious Gospel by helping the poor preacher, in furnishing him a meagre support is passingly strange. The earnest God fearing preacher that has preached for nothing until he is driven to poverty in a great measure is denounced as a "hireling" because he receives a small pittance for time and labor spent in the cause lying nearest his heart.

Not many years ago the writer was laboring for a small pittance some forty-five miles from his family, and often traveled without dinner in order to spare a little pocket change to buy a feed of oats for his horse at noon, and during said time a good old brother visited and taught those brethren that it was wrong to pay preachers, and as he was about leaving said brethren, very willingly received from them a contribution (as I have

been credibly informed) in necessaries and money, amounting to some \$15.

And again, not many months ago, a certain very good and able preaching brother was called away from his family to a distance of about fifty miles to preach a funeral sermon. Being without funds at the time he was necessitated to borrow enough money to pay his fair on the train to said place. He was their choice, and did his duty, was absent from home several days; but those brethren had been taught that it was wrong to pay preachers, and acted upon it, consequently said preacher was compelled to get home the best he could, which he did by walking some 25 miles! Why? because it was wrong to pay preachers.

How often are appeals made in behalf of our superannuated preachers that have preached for nothing and taught the brethren that it was wrong to pay the preacher, and have come to extremity and an object of poverty.

We are not an advocate for exorbitant salaries, nor for making preachers rich, but I verily believe it is the Lord's order that their precious time be employed in laboring for the salvation of the multitudes that are posting the broad road to eternal ruin, and if he is compelled to employ himself in secular pursuits for a support his work of usefulness is very materially retarded. It is easy for the good old brother that has no family, with plenty of money and surrounded by friends to look after his material wants to lift up his voice against affording the preacher the wherewithal to keep his little ones from suffering while he is spending and being spent in preaching Christ, warning sinners and pointing them to the blessed Savior.

In love to all,
T. M. MORGAN.

Amusement.

It is not possible, in the short space assigned us, to view the subject of our theme on every side; nor to consider the many sources of entertainment open to persons of refinement and culture, which may be indulged in as a recreation, nor to discuss the kinds of amusement—if any—which are harmless, or otherwise; but to glance for a moment at the evils resulting from making the gratification of the senses our aim in life. That many do live almost entirely in an atmosphere of frivolous excitement, we have not to go far to prove.

Whether the love of amusement is a natural propensity, implanted in our being, or is the result of habit, certain it is that the desire is strong within us. That which gratifies this tendency differs with the education of the individuals seeking diversion.

The little child, whose heart is fresh and sweet as the opening rosebud, is delighted with the simple toy; and well would it be for his future if he were taught at this time of life to seek enjoyment in the paths of innocence; but, alas! unguided, too often, by over-indulgence, as his years increase, new desires awaken as past pleasures pall upon the sense, until, at length, he becomes the inert votary of the fickle goddess, who lures him from flower to flower with the delusive hope that pleasure brings happiness. At last, his years and strength wasted, wearied and disappointed, bankrupt in all that makes life valuable, he comes to the end of his allotted time on earth, bereft of the hope of a better life beyond.

Thus, we see, that even should it be claimed in behalf of amusement that it is part of that "good" of which we may "partake with moderation," it cannot be denied that the pursuit of pleasure is disastrous in consequences. How could it be otherwise when we look at the meaning attached to it by the philologist Crabb: "That which amuses, serves to kill time, to lull the faculties, and to banish reflection."

What an array is here! We stand aghast at the presumption of one who

inscribes such a motto on his banner and aims to shape his life accordingly.

What! fling back to his Maker those rich gifts, the proper rise of which raises him in the scale of being, and fits him to be the recipient of still greater benefits! Will he seek to slay time, each moment of which is a priceless gem in the circling years. Lull to slumber those faculties, which, quickened and expanded, sway the mighty scepter of intellect over the path of human progress. Banish reflection, the hand-maid of conscience, whose mission it is to hold the mirror of truth to the soul, that, seeing her blemishes, she may seek cleansing in the "Fountain of Life."

Pitiful indeed is the condition of one who has no higher aspiration than to sip the cup of pleasure; who will in the end drink to the dregs the wine of folly, and exclaim, as Byron did in bitterness of heart:

"While maddening pleasures round us thrill,
The heart, the head is lonely still."

"But," some one may mentally inquire, "What is all this to me? Surely, I am in no such danger!"

True, my friend, the safe shelter of a Christian home may guard you from such excess, but if we profess to belong to the great army of helpers, surely it becomes us to consider whether we cannot, by our example do something to point out to our fellow beings a surer way to the temple of peace.

In this "work-a-day" world of ours, where constant drains are being made upon our strength—physical, moral and mental—there is urgent need that some means be employed to replace that which is destroyed in the great battle of life.

We need rest for the toilworn body, support for the over-tasked mind, peace for the troubled heart. Can mere amusement supply these wants? If we turn to her will she not feed us upon husks?

Pleasure is not happiness. The former is obtained through the senses, the latter springs from within.

As our higher nature is developed, we are no longer satisfied with the bauble of earthly enjoyment, but the thirsty soul reaches for the water of life, and "stepping heavenward" sings as she journeys: "In thy presence is fullness of joy, and at thy right hand are pleasures forevermore."
S. A. HUTCHINSON.

Progress Through Struggle.

It is a good thing for a young man, or for an old one, to have a great deal to contend with. There is no real progress in this life except through struggle. Unless there were a hammer to swing and an anvil to strike, the blacksmith would never have the brawny arm which marks his power.

If there were no hills to climb and no storms to face, the sturdy mountaineer would show no such superior vigor as makes him another being from the ease-loving dweller in the vine-embowered valley. It is not the uniform and the parade which bring out the courage, and develop the highest manhood, of the enlisted soldier; but it is the march, the privation, and the battle, which transform him into the bronzed and ennobled veteran. Not the receiving of riches by inheritance, but the securing of them by unintermitted struggle, gives a capitalist the ability to be a leader in the world of wealth. It is rather the barriers of knowledge than the helps to them, that give the scholar his final pre-eminence in the field of letters. And the man of character is always the man who has made progress through struggle, who has had a great deal to contend with, and has contended successfully.

It is very natural for us to long for ease; but it is very well for us that we do not have ease. Ease is a good thing to look forward to; but we ought to thank God that there are so many streams to be crossed, and

thickets to be pressed through, and mountains to be clambered over, before the place of ease can possibly be reached by us. It is a cause for rejoicing rather than for regret, that our children take so much of our time just now, that our housekeeping cares are so absorbing, that we have so much trouble with the servants, that our business interests are so perplexing, that our personal health is so precarious, and that one or another of the family is always getting sick. It would be worse for us, rather than better, if we did not have quite so many difficulties in the way of carrying on our school, or our farm, or our factory, or our newspaper, or our parish. The truth is, we should not do so well in the very work where we now have these troubles, if we were without these troubles. If a minister, for example, seeks a new charge because he thinks that he can thereby get more time for reading and study, and for religious visiting, by using his old sermons without having to write new ones, it is commonly found that he gives no more time to either study or visiting than before, and that he simply ceases to grow in intellect or in spirituality. By the removal of the demand for his constant struggle to keep up, with his work, there has been an interruption of his progress in his work, and a lessening of his power to work. And it is not the housekeeper, or the teacher, or the business man, who has least to contend with, who fills his or her place best, or who gets on most successfully. Can you say that it is?

Looking at this side of the truth

what have you most reason to be grateful for, when you awake in the morning, and think of the duties before you for the day? Why, that you have so much to contend with; that there are so many difficulties in your way; that you are beset before and behind and on either hand, and that you cannot move in any direction without a struggle. Even your very pains and aches ought to be a comfort to you. And what a satisfaction there may be in the thought of that stupid servant, and that disagreeable neighbor, and that unfair business rival! Really, there are obstacles enough in your path to be very encouraging. What cause you have for thankfulness!

In the formation of personal character, even more than in material interests and in things external to one's self, progress is made only through struggle. It is what one has to contend with, rather than what is favoring and helpful, that gives the opportunity of soul growth. When we see one who commands respect and admiration by the character in his very look and bearing, we are sure that that character represents struggle and endurance—

"As if the man had fixed his face,
In many a solitary place,
Against the wind and open sky."

Lines of character in the countenance are "service chevrons," showing the campaigns of the veteran in the warfare of actual life. They cannot be won except through soldierly daring and doing. The bravest soldier shrinks from battle before he enters it; but when it is upon him, all his energies are aroused to fight it through to the end; and he knows, when that battle is over with, that he is more of a man than he could have been without the struggle it involved to him. So it is that we are to pray continually, "Lead us not into temptation"—or trial; for trial and temptation are synonymous; and, at the same time, that we are to "count it all joy" when we "fall into divers temptations"—into many and strange trials which are upon us without our choice—"knowing this, that the trial of our faith worketh patience,"—or endurance; and that by the struggles and endurance of that trial we can be advanced in personal character.

It is hard to be tempted; hard to be compelled to struggle day by day

with new temptations, and, what is still worse, with old ones that seem never to lose their power or their persistency; it is hard to be sometimes worsted in the struggle—for it is a rare campaign that knows never a temporary disaster or check to the soldiers who will have final victory; "But noble souls, through dust and heat, Rise from disaster and defeat.

The stronger,
And conscious still of the Divine
Within them, lie on earth supine
—No longer."

For our temptations, and our struggles with them, we have reason to be grateful to God. The very things that seem at this hour to be the great barriers to our progress in the Christian life are designed of God as means to our Christian progress. If they were removed, we should lose the struggle with them; and losing that we should lose the victory over them, with its spiritual uplifting to ourselves. Those barriers are, under God, a source of our hope for a higher and truer Christian manhood and womanhood. Let us rejoice in them now, because we shall rejoice over them by and by.

"Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is [still] to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you; but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings, that when his glory shall be revealed, ye [as conquerors through his grace over this trial] may be glad also with exceeding joy."
—S. S. Times.

Men and their Children.

Just at an age when a man begins to get himself well in hand, to grow broader in his views, sweeter in his temper, to lose the acidity, the positiveness, the inability of youth to generalize the detailed experience he has gained—to be fit, in a word, to accomplish the work he had planned to do in the world—he begins, if he is a father, to set himself wholly on one side for the sake of the future of the men and women about his table. His great picture is never painted, his epic is never written, the best work of which he is capable is never done; he gives himself up to pot-boilers in order to bring up another man, who perhaps may be inferior to himself. This is the work which has been going on since the beginning of the world. We make much of the pelican who robs her breast of a few drops of blood for her young, but the great rule of humanity has been that one generation of middle-aged people sacrificed their chances, their hopes, their work for the world, for their children. The great oak crumbles and dies that the ground may be richer for the sapling. It is a just sequence. But it may be carried too far, and is carried further in America than in other

countries. Fathers and mothers have a right of development which they themselves are bound to respect. A man will be the better to elevate his children if he stops his daily suicidal grind long enough to consider that he also is a human being, whose character and work in the world will probably be quite as helpful as the boy's for whom he is sacrificing all his time and opportunities. One is sometimes tempted to wonder whether in the lives to come there will not be some place where the ambitions and hopes and thwarted possibilities of the middle-aged may have the chances which here, fifty enough, are reserved for the young.—E.

—Dr. Talmage says: "In most of the churches we have three prayers—the invocation, the long prayer and the closing prayer. Some people spend the invocation in arranging their apparel after coming to church, the long prayer in wishing it were over, and the closing prayer in getting ready to start homeward."

"Whether we look, or whether we listen,
We hear life murmur, or see it glisten."