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MEMOIR OF REV. JAMES GALLAHER.

THAT "the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance," is among the great and precious promises contained in God's holy word. The redemption of this promise, if viewed in the light of its own history, inspired or uninspired, can never be regarded either as unimportant in its bearings, or as a matter of small moment in the estimation of its Author. Its influence, within the limits contemplated in its provision, has always been salutary, and its redemption invariably certain. There is, perhaps, nothing about which a good man may have so little solicitude—nothing which, with so much safety, he may banish from the entire range of his thoughts—as his reputation; his name while living, his memory when dead. Of character—what he is and what he ought to be—and how such character may be developed;—in reference to these, much care and much labor may be employed, for here he is an important agent; but over his memory Providence asserts a jurisdiction that is exclusive, and a jurisdiction so peculiar, that the more it is forgotten by its subject, the more certainty will attach to the fact that it will be perpetuated. Abraham may leave his "kindred" and his "father's house," and wander for seventy years over a land in which he is an entire stranger; Moses, "choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season," may turn his back upon the court of Pharaoh, and seek for forty years to hide himself amid the valleys and mountains of Midia; Judson, animated with a burning desire to preach the gospel to perishing heathens, may break away from the endearments of home and native land, and, plunging into the deepest darkness of Burmah, may seek by every effort, as has been intimated by his biographer, to cover forever his footsteps from the gaze of earthly history; but the eye of the Omniscient watches the pathway of such men, and often, by a providence as singular as it is unexpected, throws a stream of light along their entire extent, illustrating steps which at their taking they may have supposed would never be known on earth, save by themselves and their God. The biography of such men is too valuable to be lost. It is the property of the Church, and should be so treasured up and appropriated, as to be productive of the greatest good; for "the memory of the just shall be blessed."

Walking in the light of this truth, and guided by such example, it is our purpose presenting, through the pages of the Recorder, a synopsis of the life and labors of the late Rev. James Gallaher. Before entering more directly, however, upon this work, it may be well to

remark that such a synopsis, if it would correspond to what is supposed to be the wishes of the editors of this periodical in reference to all such sketches, must be brief, and, by reason of its brevity, generalizing and condensing such eventful and protracted labors into so small a space, it will necessarily be devoid of that minuteness of detail and fulness of circumstantial incident, which gives to portraiture its life and power, and throws around it all that interest which is peculiarly its own. It is not that the subject of a memoir was born at such a time, graduated at such an institution, was licensed to preach the gospel by such a presbytery, and for so long labored in such a church—it is not a general statement of items such as these that we either expect or desire in biography. These, of themselves, are as the body without the soul. They are but the outer walls of the building, and if our object is to know its character, we are never satisfied without entering and surveying its inner apartments. In biography we desire individuality; and we wish the subject to be so presented to us that we can, under the given circumstances, hear him speak, see him act, read his motives, and from these form our own judgment of his character, and be able to determine for ourselves how he would probably act under any other circumstances in which we may imagine him to be placed. This is the perfection of biography; but it can never be attained without minuteness and fulness of detail. Such, however, is not our present purpose. It is our object merely to form a skeleton of dates and general labors, leaving to other hands the more difficult and important work of clothing it with flesh and life, and thus making it “a living soul.”

James Gallaher was born in Washington county, in what is now the State of Tennessee, on the 8th day of October, 1792. His grandfather, James Gallaher, with a family of seven sons and two daughters, had immigrated to this place from Cumberland county, Pennsylvania, about the year 1779, a short time previous to the battle of King's Mount. His grandfather was of Scotch-Irish descent, and lived but a short time after his arrival in his new and wilderness home. His father, Thomas Gallaher, was born on the 19th of February, 1764, and was married to Miss Mary Greene, daughter of William Greene, on the 9th of October, 1787, with whom he lived for more than fifty-four years, surviving her death by less than a year. The fruits of this marriage were twelve children, five sons and seven daughters, ten of whom reached the age of maturity, and three of whom were ministers of the gospel—James, Allen, and William. Allen, the older of the two last named, is now living in Ralls county, Missouri, and William near Jacksonville, Illinois. James was the eldest son and the second child.

Of the early life of James Gallaher but little is known. His father, when he was quite young, removed from Washington county to Blount county, and afterward to Roan.* Roan embraced a portion of the ter-

* A correspondent, speaking of the condition of Eastern Tennessee at its early settlement, says: “Between 1779 and 1792 was a time of incessant

ritory purchased by the United States from the Cherokee Indians, in the year 1798. Here his father purchased and improved a farm, on which James labored till the fall of 1811, when he was sent to Washington College, then under the control of Rev. Samuel Doak. James was now nineteen years of age, and his opportunities for mental improvement had thus far been extremely limited. The country had but recently been reclaimed from the savage, and the attention of the settlers was mainly directed to the improvement of their farms, and to the erection of comfortable dwellings. A correspondent, who perhaps knows more of James' early history than any one now living, speaking of this period of his life, says: "There being no post-office within less than twelve miles, no periodical was taken by the family, and the opportunities for common school education were little more than nominal."

There is one species of education, however—an education, too, to which he was indebted for that which afterward pre-eminently characterized him as a minister of the gospel—the foundations of which are supposed to have been laid during this period. *This was an intimate acquaintance with the Sacred Scriptures, and an ability to present their truth in original and attractive forms.* There is, perhaps, no feature of society more alarming at the present time, and none that promises such fearful results in the future of this country, as the banishment of the Bible from our common schools. It was the privilege of the writer, a few years since, to be present at the dedication of a beautiful edifice in the northern part of St. Louis; an edifice in which many hundreds of youthful minds are now being moulded—moulded for time and moulded for eternity! Several citizens, more immediately connected with the interests of education in the city, occupied the platform, and among them was one who, every Sabbath, clothed himself with the habiliments of the sacred desk. But there was no Bible there. That blessed Book, the repository of infinite wisdom, and the magna charta of all our liberties, civil and religious, had no place assigned to it where it might rest. And what to a stranger would have been scarcely less remarkable, was that those who were present had become so accustomed to its absence, that no allusion was made to it, and no inquiry in reference to the cause.

"Wherefore cometh not the Son of Jesse to meat, neither yesterday, nor to-day?" was the inquiry of an enemy when he saw that David's

trouble with the Indians; and Thomas Gallaher, the father, went out on as many as three campaigns against them, under Col. Sevier. Soon after the birth of James, his father removed to Blount county, there to be annoyed incessantly by the Creek, and especially the Cherokee Indians. For several years the people lived in block houses, and cultivated their little farms, some plowing, while others stood guard, and keeping guard much of the time at night." When James was perhaps six months old, an incident occurred in one of these block houses that had well nigh terminated his earthly being. A large feather bed had been placed by some of the inmates of the fort upon the pallet or bed where the child was sleeping, and was not discovered by the mother till life was nearly extinct. But Moses must not perish amid the waters of the Nile; John Wesley must not be consumed by the flames as they wildly rage through his father's dwelling; and James Gallaher, a helpless infant, gasping for breath, is to be relieved by a thoughtful mother in the very last extremity. What momentous results may hang upon the smallest incidents!

place was "empty" at the feast of the New-Moon. And has it come to pass that the people of this highly-favored land, this Christian land, this Bible land, feel less interest in God's holy word, and that they are less disposed to inquire about its absence from places of honor and influence, than was felt by Saul for the youthful champion of Elah? "*Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon; lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice; lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph.*" O, my country! what will become of thee when the salt of heavenly truth shall be excluded from all these fountains of influence, these popular institutions, in which are moulded the mind and the heart of the nation? The writer left the place referred to, hoping that it might never again be his lot to witness another such dedication—the dedication of a beautiful school house without a *prayer*, and without a *Bible*.

Now, this feature, so prominent and so odious in our present system of education, had no place at the time and in the section of country of which we have been speaking. In obedience to the spirit of the Divine direction, as given in the eleventh chapter of Deuteronomy, the Bible then had its place in the common school, and almost the earliest efforts of reading were associated in the youthful mind with its heavenly pages. We cannot, perhaps, better exhibit the condition of the country referred to, and the taste and habits of her people, during the period in which the character of the subject of this memoir was being formed, than by transferring to these pages a short extract from his own writings. As an introduction to a brief portraiture of one of his earlier friends, in his Sketch Book, he says: "When the red man, retreating before the face of his white brother, forsook those romantic and beautiful regions that are watered by the Holstein and the Tennessee, Divine Providence planted a people there, remarkable for their attachment to the Bible. Bible history, Bible doctrines, and Bible religion were 'the joy of their heart and the boast of their tongue' Divine truth, revealed in the word of God, was 'their meat and their drink.' It was their daily study. It was their literature. It was the theme of their social intercourse. It was the source of their consolations on earth, and the foundation of their hopes for immortality! The learned theologian, who chanced to pass that way, was delighted and surprised to find, in a new and comparatively rough country, among a plain, unostentatious people, views of Divine truth clearer than the crystal streams that flowed among their towering hills, and sweeter than the salubrious breezes that fanned their mountain country."

Such was the character of the people, and such the genius of those infant institutions, in the midst of which was nurtured and matured the character of one, of whom it may be said, with perhaps more truthfulness than of any other under whose ministry it has ever been our privilege to sit, *that he was "mighty in the Scriptures;" that he wielded the "sword of the Spirit" with a master hand.*

During this period it would seem that James was the subject of deep religious impressions, and that he had clear and very strong convictions of sin. His father and mother, and an elder sister had been visited in mercy during the early part of the great revival of 1800, and from

the day of their espousal to God the candle of the Divine presence had shone brightly in their dwelling. The family altar was at once erected ; catechetical instruction, which from the force of early education had, perhaps, never been entirely abandoned, was entered upon with renewed vigor, and the house of God, when within reach of the family, was always attended. And it was no uncommon thing for families to go thirty and even forty miles to attend a sacramental meeting, and rarely were such meetings held without visible tokens of the Divine presence. The entire country seemed to be shaken with the power of truth, and thousands of precious souls were born into the kingdom of grace. It was a time that will long be remembered as a time of the "right hand of the Most High." Now, during all this season of mercy, which continued from 1800 to 1810, James was the subject of deep religious impressions. His conscience was greatly troubled, and the burden and guilt of sin rested heavy upon his soul. He often spoke, in after life, of his feelings when he saw his father and mother, and sister, rising up in the great congregation and gathering around the table of the Lord. "He could hardly have felt more solemn had the 'great white throne' been set in the heavens, and the peals of the 'last trump' been sounding in his ears." And yet there was no hope in Christ. No sweet promise was whispered in accents of love and mercy to his troubled soul ; nothing but a "fearful looking-for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." Such was the condition of his mind for ten years. Now, it would seem that, by means of this severe and protracted experience, God was preparing him for enlarged future usefulness. When Whitefield first heard Gilbert Tennent, he noted in his journal the following testimony : "Never before heard I such a searching sermon. * * He convinced me more and more that we can preach the Gospel of Christ no further than we have experienced the power of it in our hearts." It has often been remarked that persons whom God designs to call to great usefulness in his church, have given to them, ordinarily, a deep religious experience, and sometimes a protracted one. He permits them long to stand beneath the angry summit of Sinai, until the "terrors of death compass them, and the pains of hell take hold upon them," in order that their deliverance may thereby be magnified, that their salvation may be the more precious, and that in its delineation to others they may be able to dwell upon it with a deeper and more touching pathos. If it behoved God, "in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings," who can tell but that the ambassador of Christ, if he would be thoroughly prepared for his work, must pass through an ordeal, in some respects, similar ; that he should taste the bitterness of sin, that he may know the sweetness of pardon ; that he should be able, as from the living portraiture of his own soul, "to point the dying sinner, with one hand, to Sinai wrapped in smoke and flashing out the terrors of a violated law, and with the other hand to point him away to Calvary, bathed in tears, drenched with blood, and echoing the groans of the dying Savior?" Ebal and Gerizim, Sinai and Calvary ; these are the mountains that should be distinctly sketched upon the soul of the

champion of the cross. Such was the experience of the subject of this memoir, and to it was doubtless attributable much of the success that crowned his ministry during a period of nearly forty years.

We have already said that in the fall of 1811, James was sent by his father to Washington College, then under the Presidency of Rev. Samuel Doak, afterward D. D. Of his stay at College we know nothing, except that he went through the entire course in four sessions of five months each, and left the institution with his diploma in the fall of 1813. In the spring of 1814, he opened a high school in Knoxville, and taught one session of five months. It is said that during this time, owing to his associating intimately with some of the members of the bar, he was strongly inclined to the study of the law. His father, however, remonstrated, and, after much and prayerful reflection, he made up his mind fully to preach the gospel. It is believed that he never after regretted his choice, or wavered in its prosecution. The sacrifice of earthly fame that may have been made in this choice we may never know. As an evidence, however, that, in the opinion of some, it did involve such a sacrifice—a great sacrifice—we beg leave to record upon these pages part of a conversation that was held by some of his friends shortly after his decease. The substance of this conversation we remember with great distinctness, and shall endeavor to give that *part* of it bearing upon our present purpose as near as possible in the *precise language* in which it was originally couched. It was in the fall of '53, shortly after intelligence had been received of Mr. Gallaher's death, that the writer of this memoir was in the study of John W. Hall, D. D., then Pastor of the Pine street Church, St. Louis, and now President of Miami University, Ohio. He had been there but a few moments when the Rev. James Lyon, since D. D., entered, and the conversation immediately turned upon the subject of the deceased. After various inquiries in reference to his illness and the circumstances of his death, Dr. Hall remarked as follows: "Well, Jemmy Gallaher has gone, and he has not left behind him twenty men in the Presbyterian Church who were better preachers than himself."

After some further remarks, indicating their long and intimate acquaintance, and touching upon some of his more prominent traits of character, Dr. Lyon proceeded to confirm the testimony that had been given in regard to the pulpit power of the deceased, in something like the following language:

"No man made a deeper impression in Eastern Tennessee than did Mr. Gallaher. He has left his tracks in her glens and upon her mountain tops, that will remain while those mountains stand. What a fine politician he would have made! His size, and humor, and wit, and tact, all combined to have made him one of the finest electioneering characters this country has ever produced. Had James Gallaher entered the political arena at the time when he began to preach the gospel in Tennessee, he would have been President of the United States before to-day." Such was the spontaneous testimony of two gentlemen, who had long been associated with him in ministerial labors, and whose judgment of his character rested upon an intimate and confi-

dential acquaintance. Both of them had labored for several years in the early part of their ministry, in Tennessee, and Dr. Lyon was his successor in the church in Rogersville. He had, therefore, the very best opportunity of knowing the impression which he had made upon those in the midst of whom he had lived and labored for fourteen years. Whether Dr. Lyon knew, at the time this remark was made, that there had once been a severe conflict in the mind of Mr. Gallaher in reference to entering the political arena, we are unable to say. As we contemplate this fact, however, we are reminded of the momentous results that may hang upon a single decision, and how widely separated may be the termini of two diverging paths of life. Had James Gallaher entered the political arena at the time referred to, a brilliant career might have awaited him. His name might have been associated prominently with the legislative history of the greatest and noblest people on earth, and the praises of that name, floated upon the pæans of an admiring people while he was living, might, when life had terminated, have changed into the deep and solemn tones of Israel's inspired bard, as, standing by the bier of smitten Abner, he called his subjects "to know that, that day, a great man and a prince had fallen in Israel." But a different choice was his—a choice of less distinction, but of much greater usefulness. And if he never regretted that choice on earth, much less may we suppose that he regrets it now. Oh! as from the window of his Father's house he looks down upon his earthly pilgrimage, and surveys those streams of influence issuing from his wide-spread labors—streams of whose existence he had no knowledge when here—how must his soul swell with gratitude to God, that He ever "counted him faithful, putting him into the ministry!"

This great question having been settled, Mr. Gallaher entered at once upon the study of theology in the family and under the instruction of Rev. Edward Crawford. In the course of his preparation he spent some time, also, in the family of Rev. Stephen Bovell, afterward D. D. Both these gentlemen resided in Washington county, Virginia, and both were prominent and useful ministers of the gospel. The former was a graduate of Princeton College during the Presidency of Dr. Witherspoon, and was long a "burning and shining light" among the churches of the West. He had labored abundantly in the great revival of 1800, and his views of that revival appear to have been very distinctly impressed upon the mind of his student. He always regarded it as a great and precious visitation of mercy, and contended that even its peculiar phase, the bodily exercise, had many analogies in the recorded "experience of Bible saints." He would quote the text where Abraham fell on his face before the Lord "and laughed." (Gen., xvii. 17.) He would point to the soldiers of King Saul, and the case of Saul himself, (1 Sam. xix. 18-24,) and to David dancing and shouting before the ark of the Lord. (2 Sam. vi. 14-15.) He would refer also to the scenes described, Nehemiah viii. 9-11, where it required all the authority of Nehemiah, Ezra and the Levites to "still the people." So overwhelming were their emotions when they "understood the words

of the law." He would repeat the language of Christ, (Luke, vi. 23,) "Rejoice ye in that day and leap for joy; for behold, your reward is great in heaven." Mr. Crawford would illustrate and confirm his opinion of the bodily agitations which attended that revival, by reference to the scenes on the day of Pentecost, the conversion of Saul of Tarsus, and the bodily prostration of both Daniel and St. John when blessed with visions of God.* How far these peculiar views of the preceptor may have been adopted by the student we know not, but with his judgment of the revival, in its main feature as a work of grace, Mr. Gallaher is known fully to have sympathized. He even regarded it as a time of the right hand of the Most High, a season of mercy that had few parallels since the days of the Apostles.

Of Mr. Gallaher's habits, while a student, little is known. From a remark once made by him to Daniel Baker, D. D., in the presence of the writer, touching upon what he regarded a prominent defect in the present system of theological training in seminaries, it is inferred that, in his own preparation, he had often been sent by his preceptor to conduct religious meetings, where in the form of exhortations he might present and apply portions of Divine truth that had been elaborated in the course of his regular study, and thus acquire a skill and facility in wielding the "sword of the Spirit," which otherwise he might never have possessed. In his preaching, Mr. Gallaher was eminently practical, and perhaps few persons ever heard him without being struck with the appropriateness and power of his illustrations. He possessed the rare capacity of threading truths that were very diverse and very remotely situated with reference to each other, and so presenting them that the mind would rest upon what was, perhaps, the only point of analogy between them; a point of analogy, too, which, however beautiful when discovered, would ordinarily be entirely overlooked by those whose minds were not directed to both at the same time. One object that seems to have been prominent before his mind, in all his reading, was the pulpit—the presentation of Divine truth; and he endeavored so to present that truth, that the attention of men might be *arrested*, and deep impressions made. It mattered very little, therefore, what part of the great field of truth he was exploring—whether walking in the store-house of history, or luxuriating amid the beauty of the English classics; whether tracing out the footsteps of Abraham, and Moses, and David on the sacred page, or perusing the story of John Gilpin, or calling to mind the songs of Robin Hood, which he had learned from the lips of a family servant in his father's sugar camp—wherever he was *in his study*, his eye was always fixed upon the *pulpit*. Here his intellectual stores were all to be emptied, and with reference to this it is believed they were all collected. In this respect he resembled the farmer, who gathers sheaves from every field, that his wife and children may rejoice in sight of well-filled granaries. Or, perhaps, a better illustration would be that of a pioneer, with axe in hand, going forth into the forest to build him a house. As his eye rests upon the trees around him, differing so much

* Sketch Book, page 51.

in size, and shape, and quality, he selects from all such as will best answer his purpose with reference to his intended building. Of one he can make a sill, of another a sleeper, of a third a joist—selecting and measuring each stick, however, with reference to its exact position in the building. Now, how far this habit, with Mr. Gallaher, may have been formed in his early training—his being called to use his knowledge, in the form of brief paraphrases and exhortations, as he acquired it—we may not know. His judgment was, that if our “schools of the prophets” could adopt this plan upon an enlarged and permanent basis, they would become centers of increased light and influence; that their sons would then go forth, not only knowing how to thrust in the sickle and gather sheaves unto eternal life, but that their usefulness would date with their entrance into the seminary.

Having completed his course of study, he was licensed to preach the gospel, by the Presbytery of Abington, on or near the 15th of December, 1815, and immediately after, was invited by the church of New Providence, in Hawkins county, Tennessee, and by the *people* of Rogersville, to become their pastor. In a few months after, a call having been laid before Presbytery and accepted, he was ordained to the office of the gospel ministry, and entered at once upon the broad field of labor thus spread out before him. His call to Rogersville was dated the 10th of June, 1816, and was signed by fourteen persons.* It was contemplated that he would preach one-half of his time in Rogersville, and the other half at New Providence, twelve miles distant, for which he was to receive \$400 a year, \$200 from each church. Mr. Gallaher lived in Rogersville, and continued in charge of these churches, for fourteen years.

And here it may be well for us to pause a moment, and take a brief survey of the face of society, in the section of country and at the time of which we are speaking,—to bring before our minds as distinctly as may be its grades of intelligence, its tone of religious sentiment, and to notice particularly some things that will probably be like “Bozez” and “Seneh” in the pathway of this youthful champion of the cross.

Rogersville, in the early settlement of the Western country, occupied quite a central position between the East and the West, the North and the South. Persons emigrating from the Middle and Southern Atlantic States to Middle and Western Tennessee, to Kentucky, to Missouri, and to the States and Territories north of the Ohio, would make it an intermediate point; and here their line would be intersected by others coming from the more northern States, and bearing toward the mouth of the Great River. Owing, in part, to this, its central position, it early drew to itself and retained a measure of business, and enterprise, and intelligence that would compare favorably with any other Western town. The first newspaper issued from Tennessee had been published here, and some of the most prominent citizens of the State had selected

* Wm. Simpson, P. Parsons, George Kernes, jr., L. Power, John A. Rogers, George White, Jacob Hackney, Samuel Neill, J. N. Fain, John A. McKinney, Edmond Mooney, Wm. Messeck, George Mooney, Richard Mitchell.

it as their place of permanent residence. At the time of which we are now speaking there were a number of gentlemen at the bar, and in the practice of medicine, who had received a liberal education; some, perhaps, from Pennsylvania, some from Virginia, and some from *Chapel Hill*—that little College, in North Carolina, which has already given one President to the Union, and which is likely to share the honor with *Grape Hill* in giving her another.

But the tone of *religious* sentiment was not so high. In the early part of 1816, there was no church of any denomination in Rogersville, and perhaps not five persons who retained a living and consistent relationship with churches located elsewhere. There was occasionally preaching in the court house, but the nearest place where there was regular religious service was a small Baptist church, some three miles from town, occupied by the Rev. Daniel Howry. Mr. Howry had preached there for many years previous to 1816, and continued to preach there for many years after—numbering, perhaps, thirty years in all. He is said to have been a good man, though he would give his own interpretation to the advice of Paul to Timothy, (1 Tim., v. 23,) and sometimes would follow that interpretation a little to *closely*. We would do great injustice, however, to the memory of this good man, who has long since entered upon the rewards of his labor, should we present him as an isolated example of this great evil. It was the sin of the *age* and the *country*, and the sin of the *whole country*. The great temperance reformation, which afterward stood like a new and beautiful luminary in “mid heavens,” had not then risen. Beecher’s six sermons had not then been published, and the author of the famous “ox-law sermon,” issued from Urbana, Ohio, was then a school-boy in some Eastern village, learning to conjugate his *amo*, or tracing out the various branchings of some obsolete Greek root. In the year 1816, a good man, who, at the advanced age of nearly fourscore years, has recently ended his earthly pilgrimage at Terre Haute, Indiana, was pastor of a Presbyterian church on Dick’s Creek, Warren county, Ohio. The writer of this sketch has often heard it said by those who then sat under his ministry, that if Matthew S. Wallace, in his pastoral visits among his own people, had failed to see the decanter placed upon the sideboard, he would have regarded it either as an intentional slight, or as indubitable evidence of the fact that the “*cruse*” had “*failed*.” In the latter case an apology was always expected, and was certain to be given. Indeed, it was regarded by the country generally as a necessary article for family use—as much so as it was by the bare-footed soldiers of Morgan, when fleeing before Cornwallis after the battle of the Cowpens. “The times of this ignorance,” we may hope, “God winked at.” Now, this practice of drinking, so common over the whole country, prevailed to a very alarming extent in Rogersville, “and in all the coasts thereof,” at the time of which we are speaking. Its first settler, said to have been a very honest man, though somewhat eccentric, for twenty years regarded his bar as perhaps the most essential part of his tavern; and it is believed that he was much less troubled at waiting upon the same person half a dozen times, than he afterwards

was, when he discovered the sad fact that he had been doing it every time for the same 'coon-skin. Many of the citizens of Rogersville drank to excess, and there were, perhaps, few whose consciences greatly troubled them in reference to its moderate use. It is said that for many years one of the elders of the New Providence church was engaged in manufacturing it.

Another feature of society at this time, which it may be proper here to mention, was a certain form of amusement—the same form of amusement that was once so captivating to “Herod the Tetrarch,” (Matthew xiv. 6,) and which resulted as the cost of his entertainment in the loss of a good man’s head. It might appear to some that it would be unnecessary, after what has been said, to individualize this feature; that it flows so obviously from the condition of things as already described, that the mind would naturally supply it. It cannot be denied that the connection between drinking and dancing is a very intimate one, and it may be that there is between them a species of dependency. It will generally be found that in those sections of the country where there is a good deal of drinking there will also be a good deal of dancing. The same thing will perhaps be found true if applied to nations. No one will doubt but that the French people and the Germans, if they would drink less, would very soon dance less. They sit “down to eat and drink,” and rise up “to play,” *i. e.*, to dance. The lawfulness and propriety of dancing has been much discussed, and in reference to it various and conflicting opinions have been entertained. It has been thought by some, however, that an instructive lesson on this subject may be drawn from the order in which it stood in the mind of an inspired apostle, in reference to some other things which are acknowledged to be sinful. Paul, in the 10th chapter of his 1st Epistle to the Corinthians, in lifting a warning voice against idolatry, of which, in its mode, dancing formed a prominent part, uses this language: “Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, the people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.” And then, in the very next verse, adds, “Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand.” Whether there be any force in this reference we may not determine; but if there is—if these two things were connected in the mind of the apostle, as antecedent and consequent, as cause and effect, so that the mention of the one immediately suggested the other—then, in the settlement of the question whether it is proper to dance as a form of amusement, it would be well to hear the voice of *fatherless children*. Surely they would be most eloquent pleaders in the premises, though their appearance at the bar would doubtless be a very unwelcome sight, much more so than was the head of John the Baptist to the daughter of Herodias. Oh! how the blood would tinge the cheek of that beautiful and thoughtless young girl, as she yields her person to the embrace of her partner, in a modern waltz, could she but see the *cunas*, with its sleeping tenant—sleeping now in blissful unconsciousness, but destined to wake up some future time to a realization

of the sad truth, that it had no *legal father*.* Now, this form of dissipation, so generally discountenanced by the wise and good, by those who have had the most extensive opportunities of observing its tendencies, prevailed to a much greater degree forty years ago than at present. And though we may not be authorized to say that it prevailed in Rogersville over and above all other places, yet we know that it prevailed there to an extent that made it the occasion of much injury to the church, crippling her energies and retarding her progress. Against this practice Mr. Gallaher set his face "like a flint." He discouraged it in his social intercourse. He denounced it from the pulpit. And though he met with much opposition from the world, and much from the church, yet he receded not from the high position he had taken. One of the elders of his church, a few years after his settlement, was expelled, because he had a ball at his house, and justified himself in so doing. It is believed, however, that he eventually succeeded in establishing it as an admitted truth, that, however it might be with the world, it comported better with the solemn professions of a member of the church, and ought to be more in harmony with his own feelings, to be engaged in a prayer meeting than to be seen in a ball room.

There are two other features of Western society at the period of which we are speaking, that must not be omitted, if we would have before our minds a picture at all approximating to accuracy and fullness. The first of these features was scepticism. And the second was a wrong judgment of the qualifications necessary for a gospel minister. In reference to the first feature, it may be said to have been prominent, though not so prominent as it had been some fifteen years earlier.

Toward the close of the eighteenth century, extending from the "treaty of peace with Great Britain in 1783 to 1800," there was a heavy tide of emigration westward. This tide, "rising from the Atlantic states," swelled "over the comb of the Alleghanies," and rushing down spread itself over the rich virgin plains of Kentucky, and Tennessee and Ohio. Many of these families had been blessed in their former homes with the sanctifying influences of the gospel, and the stated means of grace, and many of them had brought with them to their new homes their Bibles, their family altars, and their holy Sabbaths. The means of grace at that early day being, however, very limited, there being but few pastors, and but few places where there was regular religious service, and those "far between," these families soon found themselves wandering like "sheep without a shepherd." The candle of the Divine presence, which had once shone so bright in their dwellings, gradually grew dim and still dimmer, until its feeble flicker-

* The following note is found in the Comprehensive Commentary, 1 Cor. x. 7: "Play.] The Gr. has here a general notion (as in Herod.) 9, 11, 1 Chr. 15. 29, Esdr. 5, 3, which includes leaping, dancing, singing, and all other kinds of festal sport, not excluding lasciviousness; since, probably, like most oriental dances, these were very indecent. Idolatry, connected as it was with gluttony, and inebriety, necessarily led [by exciting a proximate propensity] to fornication, v. 8."—*Bloomf.*

ings served but to make the surrounding darkness the more appalling. In a letter to the editors of *The New York Magazine*, the venerable Gideon Blackburn says, "About the years '98 and '99, the darkness was thick, like that in Egypt—a darkness which might 'be felt.' The few pious in the land were ready to cry out, 'Has God forgotten to be gracious? Are his mercies clean gone? Will he be favorable no more?'" In addition to this great want of religious privileges, there were also strong adverse influences brought to bear upon the country about the time of which we are speaking. The infidelity of France, "like a mighty gulf stream, had plowed its way" across the Atlantic, and many had drank of its deadly waters. Thomas Jefferson was known to sympathise with it, and many of the leading minds of the country had followed his example. There was much "spiritual wickedness in high places." "In the midst of this period of spiritual darkness Paine's 'Age of Reason' came forth. Paine was favorably known to the American people as a political writer during the conflict of the Revolution. His works, entitled 'Common Sense,' and 'The Rights of Man,' had secured for him a wide-spread reputation. And in the minds of the multitude he was strongly identified with American freedom. Rarely, in his assaults on the church of God, has that 'arch-angel ruined,' whose name is called Apollyon, been able to occupy such vantage-ground. The appeal to the American people was this: 'You have thrown off allegiance to the British king; now throw off the yoke of superstition, and be freemen indeed.' Paine scoffed at all that was sacred in religion—profanely mocked and blasphemed the ordinances of God. O, it was a tremendous eruption of the bottomless pit! The shock had well-nigh thrown down the hope of the church. The smoke that ascended filled all the air with blackness, and eclipsed the sun; while ashes, cinders, and lava came down, threatening to bury every vestige of good that yet remained in society."*

Such was the condition of Western society in the beginning of the 19th century. And though the great revival of 1800 had checked, and in many places dried up this wild tide of scepticism and infidelity, yet in many other places its advocates were only subdued, not exterminated, and when the day of God's powerful visitation had passed, they might be seen coming forth from their "holes" and mountain fastnesses, to repair the breaches of their deserted city. We have strong evidence that a spirit of scepticism prevailed widely in Eastern Tennessee in the fact that Dr. Nelson's "Cause and Cure of Infidelity" originated there. It was prepared and preached in the form of sermons and lectures in several places in Kentucky, Western Virginia and Tennessee before the author ever entertained a thought of publishing it. Now, Doctor Nelson was a man too well skilled in reading the symptoms of moral disease, to be mistaken on a great question like this, and he was too wise in the selection of his remedies, to apply one that was not demanded. The fact, therefore, that the "Cause and Cure of Infidelity" originated in Eastern Tennessee, is very strong evidence that the "Canaanites were still in the land." No one can read

* Gallaher's Western Sketch Book, pages 29, 30.

the different volumes of the Calvinistic Magazine, published in Rogersville by James Gallaher, Frederic Ross and David Nelson, without discovering that the meeting and removal of this prevailing spirit of scepticism was one of the prominent objects contemplated by its editors. Nor was this scepticism to be found merely or chiefly in the lower or middle classes of society. It came down like poisonous streams from the mountain top—from those who were high in position, and clothed with a weight of influence in society. The letter written to James Gallaher, in the first volume of the Calvinistic Magazine, and signed by "A Sceptic," was written by a citizen of Rogersville; a gentleman who for more than twenty years filled, with great acceptance, the office of Presiding Judge, and who was once honored with a seat in the Congress of the United States.

The other feature of Western society, to which reference has been made, was a low standard of qualifications for the office of the gospel ministry. We would desire not to be misunderstood here. We have already said that Rogersville, at the time of which we are speaking, contained an amount of enterprise and intelligence that would compare favorably with any other Western town, and we might, perhaps, have said with any other Eastern town either. There is a vigor of mind peculiar to a new country. There is, perhaps, no city in the world at this time that contains so much intelligence—that numbers, in proportion to its population, so many well-informed persons as that city which has recently sprung up, as by the power of magic, on the shores of the far-off Pacific. A new country, however, "is like unto a net that was cast into the sea and gathered of every kind." The extremes of society meet here, and there is a greater commingling of the waters of each in the formation of a character belonging exclusively neither to one extreme nor the other, than is to be found in older places, where the grades of society are more widely separated, and more visibly marked. Virtue and vice, intelligence and ignorance, are here brought in close contact, and as the popular will is the controlling power, it will often be seen that the prejudices of the ignorant are yielded to by the better informed. There are some persons who seem to think that while it is very desirable to have educated physicians, and educated lawyers, and educated merchants, it is not so important that there should be educated ministers. Now, we cannot, perhaps, better illustrate this sentiment, as it was entertained by a *portion* of the community in the region of country where Mr. Gallaher settled, than by transferring to these pages a communication written by himself, and published in the Presbyterian Witness a short time previous to his death. The piece is titled the "Droll Hymn Book," and we shall give it in his own language :

"THE DROLL HYMN BOOK."

BY REV. JAS. GALLAHER.

A certain class of our Western population entertained, from an early day, very strong prejudices against learned ministers. On account of her position

in relation to this matter, the Presbyterian Church has received many a sound drubbing from preachers, whose boast was, "that their backs had never been rubbed against the walls of a college." These men claimed a degree of inspiration, which, in their own estimation, and in that also of their admirers, placed them immeasurably above "mere book-learned men, whose preaching came from the head, and not from the heart." The Presbyterian Church, from the day on which she first set up her standard in the great west, took this ground, that while LEARNING ALONE is a poor outfit for a gospel minister, IGNORANCE ALONE is no better; that it is just as improper for one man to preach from his ignorance, as it is for another to preach from his learning; that those who preach the gospel should first be imbued with the Holy Spirit of the gospel; and that those who attempt to teach others should first be taught themselves. To the friends of an enlightened ministry, it is now gratifying to observe, how, at the present day, every branch of the great Christian family, is not only sanctioning, but each is emulous to occupy the noble position taken by the Presbyterian Church, when the west was but a wilderness; and on account of which, through a series of years, she was "every where spoken against." "Surely, there is no enchantment against Jacob, neither is there any divination against Israel."

The following narrative will show how one family, at least, were cured of their prejudices against an educated ministry.

A young man, named McCann, (afterwards well known as Col. McCann,) near Rogersville, Tenn., had, by laudable exertions, procured quite a respectable family library. He carefully cultivated a taste for reading, and his family being small, he was able, from time to time, to add to the number of his books. Some of the works which he had collected were historical, some related to religion, some to law, and he had, moreover, a few volumes of what he regarded as standard poetry. Among these was a small edition of Burns' poems. This last book was the size, and had very much the external appearance of a pocket hymn-book; although, as the reader must know, *internally* quite another matter. The owner of the library and his wife were professors of religion, and were connected with a denomination, among whom there was, at the time a great outcry against book-learned ministers, and loud professions of preference for those who preached from inspiration.

Not far distant there was a young man who had lately commenced preaching. The capital on which he had undertaken to do business, was extremely limited. A partial acquaintance with the Spelling-book, the Columbian Orator, and, peradventure, Robinson Crusoe, had constituted about the entire encyclopædia of his learning; but recently he had professed conversion, and had begun to preach, and now he had formed some acquaintance with the Bible and the hymn-book.

On a certain evening the young preacher came to spend the night with the family of the library. When the hour for evening worship had come, the preacher was invited to lead in their devotions. The good lady had put down the Bible on the table, and, as she supposed, the hymn-book, though, in fact, she had inadvertently laid down the little copy of Burns. The preacher read a chapter after his own fashion, and then took up the hymn-book to select a suitable hymn. Here was

"Green grows the rushes, O!
Green grows the rushes, O!
The sweetest hours that e'er I spent," &c.

This appeared quite odd. And two difficulties presented themselves. 1st. He did not quite a tune that would exactly suit the measure. And 2d. The hymn did not promise to promote, in any high degree, the edification of the family, in case it should be sung. So he resolved to look further, and turning over the leaves, his eye was arrested by

"A guid new year, I wish thee, Maggie!
Hae, there's a rip for thy auld baggie!"

Perfectly balked again, the semi-inspired preacher closed the book, and looked with scrutinizing care and deliberation on the outside. But it was evidently a hymn-book. For what business had any book to have that size

and shape, unless it was a hymn-book? So he resolved to try again, and next encountered

"I am a son of Mars, who have been in many wars,
And show my cuts and scars wherever I come."

This will not do. So he turns to another page, and behold,

"Ha! where ye gaun, ye crawlin ferlie?
Your impudence protects you sairly;
I canna say but you strut rarely
Owre gauze and lace!"

This was absolutely out of the question. So our preacher turned to the lady of the house and said:

"Why, this is a *droll hymn-book*. It is the drollest I have ever seen."

The lady sprung to her feet, and went and looked, and behold, the supposed hymn-book was the little copy of Burns. She instantly removed it, and handed the genuine hymn-book to the minister. After this, their evening worship encountered no further interruption.

This incident, however, produced a lasting revolution in the opinions of that family, concerning the pretended inspiration of ignorant men. The matter was maturely considered and discussed among them. It appeared to them passing strange that the *inspiration* which superseded the necessity of all human learning, and qualified an ignorant man to teach the truths of the everlasting gospel, should not enable him to distinguish between a devotional hymn-book and the wild, hair-brained effusions of Robert Burns.

In a little time, this gentleman (Col. McCann) and his lady, applied for admission into the Presbyterian Church at Rogersville, East Tenn., in which communion he lived and died. The lady, I calculate, is living yet.—*N. Y. Evangelist.*

Such is a brief picture of the state of society in and around Rogersville in the beginning of 1816. Prejudice on the part of the more ignorant in reference to an educated ministry; scepticism, which like the giant oak had planted itself upon the most cultivated mind of the State, throwing its roots around all their reading, and intertwining itself in its deadly influence with all their habits of thought; dissipation and worldly pleasure, which, like a mighty tide, was sweeping over the entire community, closing the door to the entrance of the solemn and self-denying doctrines of the gospel, and in the exercise of an unchecked indulgence spreading mildew and moral death through every grade of society. Now the question arises, how is this prejudice to be overcome? How is this scepticism to be uprooted? How is this tide of dissipation to be stayed? And how is the church, now so feeble, to be strengthened and established so that it shall be like Mt. Zion, that cannot be moved. I say, how is this to be done, and who shall do it? Ah, my friends, the instrument is at hand. That same Divine Being that raised up David from the sheep-fold, that brought him to the army of Saul, and then armed him with a sling and five smooth stones to go forth against the proud giant of Gath, in the valley of Elah — that same God has prepared his instrument now. He is on the ground. His tall, commanding form is throwing its shadow upon the side walks of Rogersville, and his deep, tremulous tones are soon to be heard in her crowded court-house offering life and salvation to dying men. It is reserved for a future number of the Recorder to witness what impressions were made.

EZEL.

(To be continued.)