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## EDITORIAL NOTES.

Character is not thrust upon us against our will. It is not merely an inheritance, although tendencies toward certain characteristics are undoubtedly passed from parent to child. Character is developed in the life through obedience to God's eternal laws. With many persons this development is made unconsciously. Each act, each thought, each aspiration, each dream of larger things has some power in the development of character. Even our mistakes and failures tend to develop character when we recognize them as failures and mistakes and vigorously seek to overcome them in our lives. But the greatest of all helps toward the development of character is the presence in the life of the Holy Spirit, and the help He gives us is the real secret of a strong and sturdy character.

Receipts for Christian Education and Ministerial Relief for the year ending March 31, 1917, amounted to \$285,465.57, an increase over the preceding year of \$167,862.07. This very large increase was due to the special campaign to increase the Endowment Fund for Ministerial Relief. During the year there was added to the endowment fund the sum of \$193,891.62. The number of beneficiaries of the Ministerial Relief Fund was very greatly increased last year and the urgent need of the candidates for the ministry made it necessary to overdraw the current account fund to the amount of \$12,500. This must be paid and the first quarterly payment of \$13,000 to ministers, widows and orphans on the roll of Ministerial Relief must be provided. April is the month assigned to this cause. The Executive Secretary presents a condensed statement of receipts on page 14.

Receipts for Assembly's Home Missions for the year ending March 31, 1917, show an increase over the previous year of \$16,982.03. The Executive Committee has been able to reduce its bank obligations to \$10,000. This would have been reduced more, but for the fact that a large number of special contributions were made which could not be used for this purpose. Total contributions were \$193,363.48; while in the preceding year they amounted to \$176,381.45. Rev. S. L. Morris, D. D., Executive Secretary of Home Missions, reports that there were 5,624 additions on profession of faith in Assembly's Home Mission fields, a gain of twenty-two per cent. over last year.

"Christian Stewardship" is the theme uppermost in the minds of the members of our Church at the present time. The General Assembly's Campaign Committee on Stewardship is conducting a contest, to close May 1, in which substantial rewards are offered to men, women and children for the best articles on any phase of Christian Stewardship. Rev. R. L. Walkup, of Jackson, Mississippi, Secretary of the Campaign Committee will furnish detailed information to any one who desires to enter the contest. The Committee is arranging for a ten days' summer school on Christian Stewardship to be held next summer at Montreat, North Carolina, led by the most competent instructors. Presbyteries and Synodical Auxiliaries are asked to arrange to

send the chairmen of their Systematic Beneficence committees to this summer school. It is hoped that they can arrange to pay the expenses of those who will attend as their representatives. These chairmen have done faithful work during the year, in most cases without any financial appropriation and with much personal sacrifice. If they have been faithful, they deserve the trip and will be helped by the opportunities offered in this summer school. If they have been negligent, they will need the instruction and inspiration that such a gathering will bring to them.

The Church owes a duty to provide copies of the Word of God for the thousands of men who are being called from their homes to defend the honor and integrity of their country against the unlawful, unwarranted and unrestricted warfare that Germany is waging in violation of all international law. The American Bible Society is gladly undertaking to furnish Testaments and Bibles to the soldiers and sailors of the United States wherever they may be needed. To meet this unusual demand the Society asks for at least \$20,000 additional from the Churches. Contributions should be sent to William Foulke, treasurer, Bible House, New York City.

Freedom of religious belief throughout Russia has been proclaimed by the Provisional Government. Last week the Government repealed all laws actually in force limiting the rights of Russian citizens regarding creeds and religions. This is one of the most remarkable features of the Russian revolution. It will mean the liberation from religious persecution of all sects in Russia. It will affect particularly the Jews, against whom many volumes of restrictive laws have been aimed. Among the notorious restrictive laws in force in the past have been those limiting the percentage of Jewish children in a school, without regard to the percentage of population of Jews in that district; a law restricting the Jews to a segregated district known as "The Pale;" and a law barring Jews from practicing law and denying to them the right to engage in certain trades and arts.

The House of Romanoff, represented by the deposed Emperor Nicholas, of Russia, was largely responsible for the persecution of the Jews, because the Jews have always stood for revolution and progress. The Russian people generally have had great sympathy with the Jews, and the repeal of all laws limiting religious rights indicates that the Russian people at last are giving to Jews, as well as to all other religious bodies, the right to which all people are entitled—the right to worship God according to the dictates of their own conscience. The whole world will rejoice at this splendid result of the revolution in Russia. For many years the United States has sought without success to induce Russia to alleviate the condition of the persecuted Jews, to thousands of whom it has furnished a grateful asylum. God's providence is working in a marvelous way for the advancement of His own Kingdom among the nations of the world, through the unprecedented events of the world war during the past few months.

Four hundred and forty-four "Student Volunteers," not before reported, were added, during 1916, to the list of those who have reached their mission fields in foreign lands—a larger number than has been reported in any previous year. This is a remarkable record in view of world conditions and indicates a splendid, heroic spirit on the part of those who have volunteered.

For the Christian Observer.

## The Deacon's First Responsibility.

BY PAUL M. PENICK.

All the work of our Church, as far as human agencies are concerned, is dependent upon our faithful ministers who are leading and directing it, and the deacon's first responsibility is to see that his pastor, the one indispensable man in his church, is provided with a fair living, so that he can do his work free from care and anxiety about the daily bread of himself and his dear ones.

There is an occasional person who claims to hold the opinion that, as salvation is free, ministers should not be paid for preaching. The answer to this is that the minister does not preach because he is paid for it, but because he is called of God. No man would be so foolish as to go into the ministry because of the money that is in it. God's Holy Word, however, very clearly teaches us that they which preach the Gospel should live by the Gospel. I quote from a leaflet sent out by the Committee on Ministerial Relief: "The Church has called them from the sources of worldly gain and has said, 'You minister to us in spiritual things, and we will provide for you the material things of life,'" and this is the essence of the contract between the minister and his church.

We expect a great deal of our preachers. Several years ago I happened to be a member of a committee of the board of trustees of Washington and Lee University to look up and recommend to the board a man for president of the institution, which place was then vacant. While this was pending, a friend of mine who is an elder in one of our country churches told me he was chairman of a committee from his church to get a preacher, and asked me to help him find a good man. I asked him what qualifications they required for their preacher. He said their church was a small country church and he knew they could not expect a first grade man, as they paid a salary of only \$800, but they wanted to get the best man they could. He must be first of all a pious, consecrated man. And then he must be the right age. They didn't want just a youth raw from the Seminary, but he must be old enough to have had some experience in life, not old enough, however, to be hurt by age. They did not want to have an old, worn out man unloaded on them. He must be a good speaker able to attract and hold attention by his sermons; he must be a good man to collect and handle money, and know how to raise money from his people for the Church causes. He wanted, too, a man of energy and good common sense, and he must be tactful so that he will know how to handle people, and keep out of church rows. And then he would like to have a man of fine personality, neat and attractive in his appearance, so that when he is sent off to church meetings he will do credit to the church. And all this perfection, mind you, for \$800 a year.

I told him that he had certainly painted a picture of a perfect man, and I hoped he would be able to find him, but if I located him I would try to get him first, as he was just the man we wanted for president of Washington and Lee University, and we expected to pay a salary of \$5,000. This illustrates the attitude a great many people hold towards this question.

Dr. Harris E. Kirk, pastor of the Franklin Street Presbyterian church, of Baltimore, in an admirable address on the subject of the "Old Minister," says: "Ministers are rarely influenced by monetary considerations beyond the following legitimate reasons: A reasonable living, the education of children, the care of infirm dependents, the necessity of providing for old age, and the desire to exercise a larger stewardship through charitable works. I know of no minister of our Church who lives in luxury; I know hundreds who are living under cramped conditions without complaint. It is a man's duty to provide for his family, to edu-

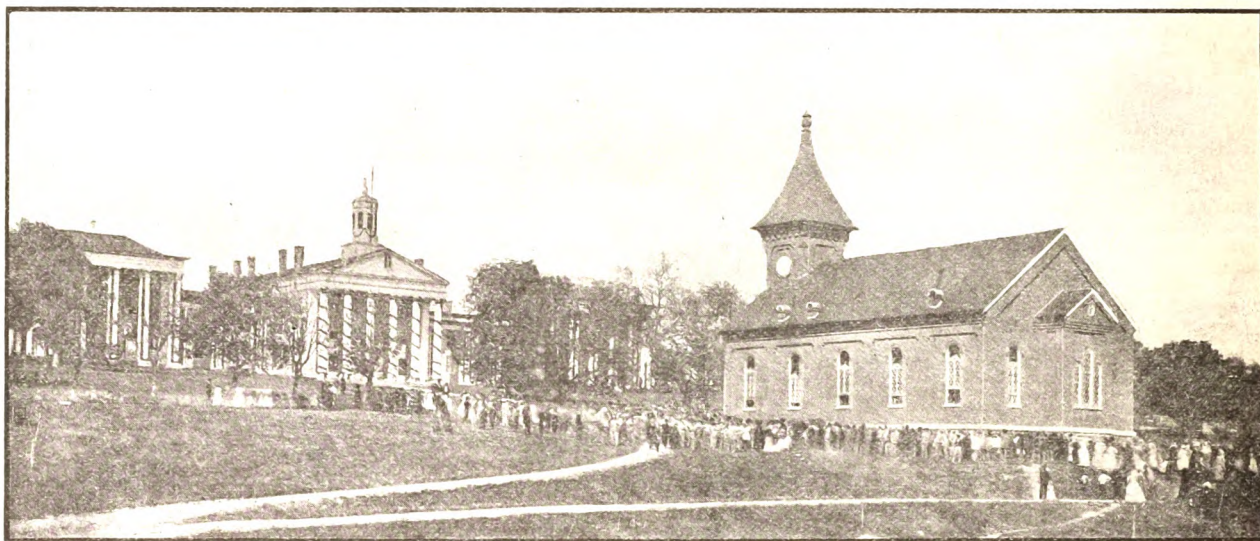
cate his children, to provide for infirm dependents and care for his old age. When he becomes a minister, he does not cease to be a man with a man's duties and responsibilities."

Our Church has before it many pressing problems to solve. The most important and pressing of them, I would say, is the question of our churches providing a fair and proper support for our ministers. The high cost of living that we hear and read

ten days, a railway conductor for about two weeks, and will not hire even a brakeman for over three weeks. Think of it—having to support your family, educate your children, provide for infirm dependents, pay your life insurance, join in the benevolent work of our Church and in all the charities of your community all for \$78 per month. I defy any financier in the world, outside of the ministry, to do it.

The education of a Presbyterian minister is long and expensive. Seven years of grammar school, four years of high school, four years at college and three in the theological seminary, make a total of eighteen years of preparation. In addition to being highly edu-

(3) Unless you have increased the salary of your minister in the last two years, you may be reasonably sure that it should be increased. Excepting only men who, like ministers, are on fixed salaries, all farmers, stock men and business men generally, who are successful at all, are earning more money now than they did two years ago, so that our churches have more paying ability. The bank deposits in the villages and towns show that our people are accumulating money faster than they ever did before. And we all know that more money is absolutely required by our pastors to buy everything that goes to make up a living than was required two years ago.



VIEW OF WASHINGTON COLLEGE, AND "LEE CHAPEL" AT LEXINGTON, VA., BENEATH WHICH GENERAL ROBERT E. LEE IS BURIED.

The photograph was taken at the time of the funeral obsequies, October 13, 1870. Copyrighted reproduction on postcard can be secured from Mrs. M. S. Smith, Moundsville, W. Va., by whose kind permission this scene is reproduced.

about every day makes it imperative that we face this duty now. It is a duty that we are apt to forget and neglect because we do not hear much about it. Our ministers are uncomplaining, and, with their delicacy of feeling, they rarely touch upon this question. We hear a great deal from the pulpit about Bible cause, the orphanages, Belgian relief, Armenian relief, Publication and Sunday school, French orphans, foreign missions, home missions (three kinds), but never a word about the wholly insufficient salary of the man who presents so eloquently the merits of our various benevolences. This very reluctance that our ministers have about referring to this subject should not prejudice them, but should stimulate us all to make sure that we do our full duty to these faithful men.

It is peculiarly our duty to see to it that our ministers are fairly treated by our churches in this matter. I have great faith in the fairness and liberality of Presbyterians, and am sure that none of our churches would fail to furnish its pastor with reasonable support after the matter is called to the attention of its congregation. In all other matters relating to our churches we depend upon our ministers for information and guidance. In this, however, the deacons must take the lead.

Statistics published recently tell us that the cost of living has advanced in the United States 30 per cent. in the last four years, 19 per cent. of this advance being in the last year. According to the Minutes of our General Assembly \$820 was the average salary paid to our ministers for the year ending April 1, 1916. Four years ago the average was \$778. Here we have an advance in the cost of living of 30 per cent. and an advance in salaries of about 6 per cent.

The average salary of the minister in this Presbytery (Lexington), is \$940, which is \$120 above the average for our whole Church. This is about \$78 per month. This is a month's pay for a good stenographer, a capable store clerk, and a fair bookkeeper. It will not hire a first class bookkeeper. It will hire a carpenter for a month, but not a brick-layer, nor a first class plumber, nor a steam fitter. It will hire a locomotive engineer for about

cated, our ministers are high grade men in other respects. Any man who will attend a meeting of Lexington Presbytery, and see the men who gather there, and hear their deliberations, will appreciate this. For education and culture, high character and ability, and fine personality, there is not a like gathering of men from any occupation or profession which would not lose by being compared with the ministers of this or any of the other Presbyteries of our Church. And yet they do the most and the best work for the poorest pay of any set of men in the world. Poor pay, financially, I mean; for I am sure that our Heavenly Father rewards them richly with the joy of service done in His Name. Otherwise no man could bear the burdens and responsibilities of the ministry.

It should go without saying that we owe this duty of support to our minister whether we like him personally or not. You sometimes hear a member of the church say that he will contribute nothing to the salary because he does not like the preacher. The man who says this is generally not telling the truth. He does not contribute because he hates to give up the money. As long as the pastoral relation continues we cannot justify failure to provide proper support for the minister by saying that we do not like him or his sermons.

I would make three practical suggestions for doing something definite on this line.

(1) Keep yourselves informed about your preacher's salary, and talk about it at your deacons' meetings. Satisfy yourselves that the amount of salary promised is equal to the paying ability of your church, and be sure to see that what is promised is paid promptly.

(2) Press the every member canvass plan in your church as vigorously as you can. Make the canvass anew every year, and in making it, impress upon your members the spiritual side of the service of giving, and call their attention particularly to the pastor's salary, and urge them to provide him a liberal support. Urge them to make the tithe the minimum measure of their giving. If all of our members, or even a considerable proportion of them, would adopt tithing, all of our financial problems would be solved.

So putting the two together—more money in the hands of our people, and more need on the part of our ministers, the conclusion is irresistible that it is the duty of every church to increase the salary of its pastor at once, unless it has already done so.

"If any provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own house, he has denied the faith and is worse than an infidel." "Take heed to thyself that thou forsake not the Levite as long as thou livest upon the earth."

Fellow church officers, let us all carry this solemn obligation upon our consciences, and see to it that our churches do their full duty to these faithful and consecrated men who are spending their lives in preaching the glorious Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Lexington, Va.

For the Christian Observer.

### A QUESTION FOR "RIM-DWELLERS."

The "Christian Observer" of March 14 had an interesting article on "Rim-Dwellers." The facts mentioned are true in too many cases. But did "A Rim-dweller" give the pastors a square deal in laying the heavy end of the burden upon the pastors?

Does the rim-dweller visit the town on week days for business and social purposes? If so why not use the same method of transportation on Sunday that is used for business on other days of the week? Material things are necessary, but spiritual things are the most necessary of all things.

Is the pastor any better walker than the rim-dweller? Is it any further from the rim-dweller's home to the church than from the church to the rim-dweller's home? Few pastors living in the towns have any method of traveling other than to walk and if they do their regular work within the limits of the congregation they cannot dwell on the rim. As a matter of fact the average pastor does look after hub, spokes and rim.

If your pastor cannot get in all the time you think he needs on the rim, help get him an automobile or other means of traveling. In the meanwhile if you know any person who is being neglected drop a letter to the pastor and tell him. If I could point to a dozen homes within sight of my home into which no pastor had been for ten years or more, I would on next Sunday or before have a mission Sunday school agitated and more than likely organized.

Rim-dwellers, "Ye are the light of the world." "Ye are the salt of the earth." "Ye shall be witnesses unto Me."

"A Rim-dweller Hunting Pastor."