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PERMANENCY OF THE PASTORAL RELATION.

AN ESSAY,

READ BY APPOINTMENT BEFORE THE

CHICAGO PRESBYTERY,

AT ITS MEETING IN

THE THIRD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

IN

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ESSAY.

THE word Pastor is only one of the terms now, and of old in use, to designate the relation which the minister of Christ sustains to his Church. In much of the earlier history of the church indeed, it was less employed than several others: but in our day, it is perhaps, more common than any, especially when applied to one who sustains a permanent relation to a particular church. It is nearly synonymous with Shepherd, and had its origin among a people widely engaged in the keeping of flocks. It means literally, a *Feeder*, since the chief concern of the keeper of a flock is the provision of its food.

The language of a people, I may remark, is always expressive of their common occupation; and the phrases of their daily life are applied to whatever subjects come within the compass of their thoughts. Hence these words and phrases will often be carried far from their sources, and become the every day language of a scheme of science, or morals, or religion, in no wise related to the simple and distant employ, in which they had their origin. Their inner meaning, nevertheless, will more easily be discovered by a recurrence to the circumstances in which they had their rise. As the people among whom the church had its beginning, were flock-keepers, the church itself became a "flock," and its spiritual leaders became Shepherds or Pastors. "I am the good Shepherd," said the first great Pastor. More than a thousand years before this, had the sweet singer of Israel, fresh from the flocks which whitened the hills of Judea, uttered a tantamount expression:

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"The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures, He leadeth me beside the still waters."

It may be further remarked, that the business of the shepherd was not only to provide food for his flock, but to remain with it, and guard it from the beasts which would destroy its members; to protect those members from wandering away from the main body, by which their loss would be endangered; to aid the sick or the weakly, and in fine to have the charge and oversight of all that related to its safety, its necessities, its thrift, and its profit to the master. He entered upon its duties for life. He knew each individual of his flock, and could call each by its name. Its successive generations passed away in his care, till his own turn came to lay down his life and be buried in the soil where the survivors still fed. The Great Shepherd alluded to well-known facts, therefore, as well as his coming sacrifice, when HE said, "I lay down my life for the sheep."

From these preliminary remarks, it will be apparent that the phrase "Pastoral Relation," expresses as its proper idea, the connection of an individual minister, with an individual church, or "flock," as its spiritual guide, feeder, and protector, till death or the Providence of God shall separate them; and this, I believe to be, as already remarked, in accordance with our common use of the phrase.

Nevertheless a more particular examination of the Scripture authority on which the relation rests, may seem desirable. The Scriptures afford us full and specific directions in all that concerns the ministry so far as certain of its relations to the church are in question. We are not left in doubt as to its design and use, its rights and authority, its required qualifications, nor as to what ordinary specific duties it shall perform. Its permanency as an institution in the church is everywhere either directly or indirectly taught. But as to the question in hand—the matter of permanency in the individual relation of pastor to church—our specific authority grows dim. Indeed, we can find no text of Scripture which directly asserts any thing concerning it. We are left to incidental directions; to

inferences from certain facts which they furnish us, and to such decisions formed in the light of general principles as the experience of the church shall find necessary or superior.

We have nevertheless reasons for believing that a consistent and nearly uniform practice prevailed from the earliest times. It would seem likely from the general silence of the Scriptures concerning the matter, together with some incidental hints, that some of the Apostles themselves, confined the greater part of their work to settled pastoral effort. Paul, Peter, and some others performed a great amount of missionary work, such as forbade a long residence in a particular place. But that they did not expect their successors, nor their fellow laborers generally to follow their example seems evident. It is said in Acts that "they ordained them elders in every church." Paul writing to Titus says also, that he left him in Crete that, among other things, he might "ordain elders in every city as he had appointed him." Now if these "elders," as is not by us doubted were, some of them at least, ministers of the Word, there is no proof or even probability that as a general thing they performed a missionary or itinerating work. There may, to be sure, be a doubt as to how far at first they assumed all the duties which properly belong to the pastoral office, but as to this point the history of a period but little later is sufficiently luminous.

We must suppose that from the first, the business of these elders was to teach in the particular church where they were appointed. Peter leaves us in do doubt on this subject; for he writes to some of them on this wise; "The elders which are among you, I exhort, who am also an elder, Feed the flock of God, which is among you, taking the oversight thereof"—using the pastoral phraseology already noticed.

During the period immediately succeeding the Apostles, ecclesiastical history informs us that *each minister was ordained to some special charge.* And it was required of such that *each remain in the diocese over which it was ordained.* The exceptions to this were against the decided senti-

ments of the church, and are pointedly condemned by the ancient canons as well as by the early ecclesiastical writers.* From that period to this, through all the branches of the church in all phases of its history, this, with but few exceptions, has been the common practice.

What then is the precise difficulty to be met in this discussion? So far as I apprehend the case it is this. In our day, from various causes which I have no time to examine, there has grown up a *custom*—for a system it cannot be called—of *hiring* the minister for a limited period—six months or a year as the case may be—and then renewing or extending the bargain at the close of the term with the same or another. It is analogous to the practice in agricultural life, where a farm being to be cultivated, men are found and employed for the season, to be succeeded by others as the case shall require. This practice, having been adopted at first in particular facts from necessity, is continued from custom, till it begins to find advocates as a permanent arrangement.

We have seen what the Scriptures and ecclesiastical history teach on the subject. Let us see what experience and reason have to say. But we will first understand the limits of our question.

It is not to be affirmed that every individual upon whom hands have been laid, is of course to assume the pastoral relation. For God hath set, says the Apostle, some in the church: first Apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, helps, etc. Guided by this we may assume that division of labor in the church of Christ may have some regard to the state of the world and the necessities of the case. Our later Christianity has devised various schemes of benevolent effort, which call for agencies, missionary labor, teaching, editing, and the like, most are all of which are best performed by ministers. These are exceptions and there may be others. I will say too that concerning a system of itinerancy in another branch of the church—I have little here to offer directly; nor as to the proposal of some to introduce a like sys-

* See Coleman's Ancient Christianity,

tem among us, in some special cases, where work of a missionary character solely is possible, will I offer any opinion, provided such be treated as exceptional cases, to be ended with the first opportunity.

After throwing out all these, I maintain that a permanent settlement of one pastor over one church till death or the providence of God shall terminate it, is demanded for the following reasons:

The Spiritual influence and usefulness of the Pastor demand it.

The Spiritual influence of the Pastor constitutes his power to do good. It is that by which he successfully warns the wicked from his wickedness, and by which he confirms and guides believers in the way of holiness. It is the result of many things; such as his power in the pulpit, in his personal intercourse, and in the councils of the church. It is increased by many things not precisely definable, but which accumulate and strengthen from period to period as his faculties mature and his character ripens under the systematic study of his great profession and the practice of his ministerial labors. The man who can stamp himself upon others at once, is an exception to common cases: and styles of character which constitute exceptions to the mass of men, are not as a rule to be desired in the ministry. That profession demands men substantially like, in natural qualities, the body of those whom they are to influence. Now a thing that is to be permanent, needs time to mature the elements of permanency. The whole analogy of Nature teaches this. The tree increases in size, and strength, and beauty by virtue of its permanent fixture in a certain soil. Its growth is thereupon not spent in repairing the damages of removal, but is added year by year, to previous accumulations. The more of growth it has, the more power of production it possesses: on the principle that to him that hath, shall be given. The channels of spiritual influence, like those of the waters, become deeper and broader by the continued action of the currents within them.

The minister who lives and grows with one community gradually es-

establishes himself in it. He becomes more widely known to its people. The aged come to his acquaintance and the children grow up to reverence him. He gradually becomes stronger against the foes of his person—if he has them—and of his religion. Men will not lightly believe ought to the injury of one whom they have long, well, and favorably known and whose truth is established in the community. The “words of gentleness and grace,” from the lips of one known to a whole city or settlement to be above guile, fall on the ear of the scoffer even, with an unction second only in its irresistableness to those of his Master. Your man of a day may be a good man and preach like Apollos, yet, but a portion of his hearers will delay their criticisms of his person, or his manner, or his matter to consider and apply what he says: and even of these, a portion will suspend their judgment to examine the correspondence between his life and teachings. It is a law of this world that what is new shall be examined, while the old, though full of wonder, passes of course.

Suppose then, your church to be the theatre of the successive efforts of new men. The story of Sisyphus with his stone rolled almost to the hill top to be tumbled backwards and to be never ceasingly rolled upwards again, was a fable there, but it becomes a fact here.

The best members even of a church may make continual transfer of their good wishes from one to another but not of their love. Love is stronger than any, if not every element in a pastor's spiritual influence; but it is in such cases often of slow growth. Yet till a pastor be loved by his people, though he may be *hired* he is not *settled*. The true Pastor is to his people more than another man. The seal of the Great Pastor is upon him and he comes to them not merely as the preacher but as the dispenser in some sense, of the blessings which a dying Savior purchased. He bears a reflection of the sacredness of his Master's person; and if he becomes to them as another, it is by his or their fault, or by his or their omission.

But again. Sobriety and staidness of Christian character in the church demand permanency in the Pastoral office.

Who can fail to see that a fickle pastorate will beget a fickle people. The multitude will not ordinarily, be much wiser or more exemplary than their teachers. It cannot be denied that the religion of our day is extensively fickle in character, unsymmetrical in development and greatly wanting in weight and persistency. It cannot be overlooked that there is a wide fondness for teachers having "itching ears." It reminds one of those Athenians who spent their time in nothing else but to see or hear some new thing. It demands novelty, and the appetite for it, grows with what it feeds upon. Can a migratory pastorate ever remedy such an evil? Then may one and the same thing be both a cause and a cure. It is impossible that such a ministry should produce other than a shallow Christianity, bubbling and brawling over the stones which line the latitudinous bed of its channel, and drying up with every summer's heat and every winter's frost. It is impossible but that parasitic underbrush and hideous weeds should spring up all along the mud of its neglected corners, and multiply their encroachments till the sunlight is shut out, and foul miasms are bred to choke the lungs of healthful activity. A herd of ministers roaming loose over the land may seem—and really may, in cases convert men, but much of their work will remind one of strolling reapers, who go about slashing down the grain, to be shelled and perish for want of the after care of the patient husbandman. Are we, for instance, to think that such as lose their piety in crossing a wide lake or a wide prairie are converted men? If they are, something is obviously the matter with that conversion. If they are not, how have they been so deceived? In either case, can it be that there is not a responsibility resting on their supposed spiritual fathers. It is plain that a permanently migratory and unsettled ministry should be associated with a doctrine which allows of "falling from grace," as it is called: since such a practice will have need of such a theology.

Again, a Pastor's habits of study demand permanency of settlement.

There is a proverb to the effect that the product of nothing is nothing. It is as true in its application to the phenomena of the human mind as to any other. Study is the first work of the pastor. But how can the comer and goer find time to push his researches into the domains of sacred truth? He has neither time nor opportunity to get beyond the common places of his profession, and can never obey the Scripture which enjoins upon him the production of things from the treasury, *new* as well as *old*. The permanent Pastor not only has a chance to study, but he must study. Neither self-respect nor fidelity to his Master allow him contentment in one beaten round of travel. He saves besides a great amount of labor which the itinerant must of necessity undergo. In each new field the same repetition of preliminaries must be attended to, in the way of making acquaintances, exploring peculiar necessities, and studying peculiar temperaments. Those who are tied to this work, and harrassed with the cares of migration, can scarcely reach the upper walks of the profession at all; they must spend their lives in doing a work which ought to be done once for all. Besides none can know the difficulty of retaining the means of study in a series of transitions but those who have tried them. Even if the roving preacher finds it possible to obtain books, he can scarcely carry them with him as he goes. Their sale must help out his slender means of flight, and that always at a loss.

The moral disasters which result from a ministry for whom there is no study are, however, far greater than the pecuniary. Whence are the half formed isms, and the fiery extremes of our day; and whence do they get their nourishment but from those with whom study does not impart symmetry of views and consistency of purpose. A partially educated mind full of busy thoughts, but with no solid and substantial ailment to sustain it, is the sure nidus of extravagant fancies and impracticable schemings. Such men infect the churches, and the churches infect their successors, till a pure Gospel finds few proclaimers and weary hearers.

Again, Pecuniary Reasons demand Permanency.

In these days, when the whole earth has need of the Gospel, and is open and opening to it, at once, the church has no money to throw away on the aimless roving of its ministers. After husbanding its resources it will fall short of its object.

Waste attends removal. The proverb likens it with justice to a fire. In the decisions of political economy frequent or long carriage of commodities is the surest drain on their value, and conduces less to the thrift of a people than any other branch of employ.

It is not, however, the church alone which suffers. Poverty to the minister himself is a sore evil. I know that in our day, there is an impression abroad that he is under vows which bind him to it, which forbid his owning any property, or even his living in comfort. He should, according to this notion, practice an ascetic mode of life in some sense akin to that so long crystalized in the papal church. I find no Scriptural injunction of this kind, but the testimony is that the laborer is worthy of his hire, and that he who preaches the Gospel should live of the Gospel. A wealthy and of course secular ministry is to be deprecated; but experience and common sense both teach that a symmetrical, sound minded pastor, is one who is pecuniarily above harrassing cares, or in general, the necessity of secular labors. He should not be tempted or driven to a breach of the Savior's injunction, to take no thought of the morrow, what he shall eat, nor to be of doubtful mind.

The mere money spent in removal does not by any means cover the waste of it. Almost every man in a fixed condition in life accumulates about him some little property, or at least some home comforts—useful not only to himself but adjutant to the general weal. These are dissipated by migration.

Again, The Pastor's Family demands Permanency.

We take for granted that the Pastor is ordinarily to have a family. Celibacy is not a doctrine of the Bible. Let the bishop, says the Apos-

tle, be the husband of one wife. I have yet to learn that any particular emphasis is to be put upon the word *one*, as distinguished from several, since polygamy had already died out of the church. It were easy to show, from the reasons of the case, that he who is to be the teacher, the pastor of a people made up of all sexes, ages and conditions in life, should himself understand these relations as he can only do by the experiences of the husband and the father. But a doubt must be indulged, if the ministry is to be migratory, whether marriage is desirable. The frequent removal of families is not only difficult but hazardous. The example of Paul is in point here. As his life was spent in the travels incident to a missionary work, he did not take upon himself the family relation.

The minister's family need, not only on their own account, but for the relations they sustain to the people of his charge, the benefits of a *home*. Home is the best earthly type of heaven. But the home in its completeness is not merely the assemblage of a few persons of different ages and sexes together. It supposes a locality to which we become accustomed—a dwelling whose features are embalmed in our associations—a garden mayhap or orchard where we strayed to love the flowers and gather the fruits, and to whose paths and nooks our feet and our memories have alike become adjusted. It supposes companions of our youth, village or settlement associations, whose "sweet counsel" has become a part of us. It supposes a place in the house of prayer, where weekly worship and Sabbath school employ have made walls, ceilings, and seats redolent of holy thoughts and impulses; and suggestive of God and his word, and its eternal awards. Can these associations be formed, preserved, and made to meet their life long uses, when all the subjects of them are changed year by year? I will not insult common sense with an answer. A roving youth learns to *love* nothing; the place of love is supplied by a restless desire of novelty and a vacant habit of life is established full of valueless or poisonous fruits. Can the church thus afford to sacrifice the minister's family?

Again, The History of the Church has found Permanency to be beneficial.

A comparison of the past with the present would show, that in respect to stability and consistency of Christian character, the piety of our day must suffer. There is, however, not time here for the comparison.

In one of the New England States there was settled, within the recollection of the writer, in three towns contiguous to each other, three pastors who served their churches for terms respectively of about 46, 50, and 60 years. One of them is still living, at an age of near 100, among the people of his former charge. Those three towns were remarkable beyond example for their morality, their proportion of people professing religion, the power of piety in the lives of its professors, and in the number of men furnished to the Gospel ministry. Neither of these three pastors were remarkable for mental vigor, educational accomplishments, or ability in the pulpit or pastoral office. Does any one fancy who will step into an assembly of the ministers of our day and mark their angular features, the paleness of their countenances, the nervousness of their step, and their anxiety of expression, that he can often detect the probability of a life that will afford fifty, forty, or even thirty years of ministerial labor? They may do more work in the same time than their fathers, but they will waste more of their labor, and after deducting as truth requires, it is doubted if in a given time they can show even equal results.

Again, Permanency makes provision for the Aged.

It is safe to say that its opposite makes none. It is not certain indeed, that it contemplates the existence of age in the ministry at all. Certain it is, that in our day there is a feeling abroad, that age has no business there; and it must be confessed, that a management is obtaining currency, which obviates the necessity of violence to the sentiment. A plentiful infusion of the ascetic element, a migratory course of labor, an absence of home affections, an exacting activity of brain, made empty from no op-

portunity for study, a never ceasing round of pulpit efforts, an amount of compensation just sufficient to keep the machinery of life in motion, fitfully if not grudgingly doled out,—what can a union of these effect but to make life short enough to prevent the necessity of supporting an aged ministry. It is true that under this system there will be no lack of men who will live long enough to outlast the demand for them. Nor need there be any surprise to see men of good abilities, mentally stocked with abundant furniture for long and useful labor thrown upon an old age of 30 years prematurity, whose experience shall recal the case of the pauper whose life like theirs has been a series of removals, till no place will own him for lack of residence established within it. But can the church afford to dispense with an aged ministry? I know of no blessing to a people like the residence among them of a pastor, familiar with all their public and personal history, too old to bear the heat and burden of the day, yet not too old to have a word of aid and comfort for the acting Christian, a word of warning for impenitence; a counsel and consolation for the sick or the dying and a blessing for childhood. The presence of such an one is redolent of rich remembrances and shining with the light of his Master's countenance. In the household, in the solemn assembly, in the councils of his brethren, the Aaronic perfume envelops him, and diffuses a fragrance over all like the breath of the heavenly hills. Yet in our day, I blush to write it, if such are not widely esteemed a burden, then is there a false witness abroad. If the church will not learn anything more on this subject, the Lord help us all.

We know, that in the newer settlements of the West, composed in a large degree, of young persons, and where there has been a general breaking up of established ideas, it is natural there should be a call for young men; but the evil we speak of is not confined to the West. It is true of the old as of the new sections of our Zion. Such a state of things exists, that it might be thought that youth, and not years bring wisdom. With a permanent pastorate there is no difficulty, in providing

both a suitable employ and a competent support for the aged but indigent minister.

Again, a Permanent Ministry has attractions for the young.

A system which makes no provision for its own existence dies of course. The ministry is made permanent by inducing the young to join its ranks. Christianity supplies a motive power sufficient to overcome all necessary difficulties; and the sacred ministry will never lack candidates if obstacles which do not belong in the way are not thrown there. You cannot make men believe, in our protestant days, that they ought to become monks in order to preach the gospel, but you may keep them out of it by trying so to convince them. A Christian ministry making its appeal for recruits in the attitude which Christ demands will always find answers in youthful hearts where his love dwells.

But a roving, migratory life does not answer the native yearnings of the human soul. Special circumstances may demand such and special persons will be found to supply the want. But God has planted a love of home among the ineradicable affections which grow deepest in our undying natures. Can you wonder that the young man hesitates and the maiden shrinks back when you urge them to a profession, the highest which this earth gives scope for, when you clog it with conditions which they feel in their inmost souls that God has not ordained.

Finally, our day and generation demands such a style of effort and character, as, on the whole, can be secured only by permanency in the Pastoral relation.

Our religion must be so propagated as to hold what it gets. Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he reap. A fickle, roving, transitory ministry will as surely produce a shallow, fickle, evanescent piety as face will answer to face in water; or as a man will come in character to resemble, in degree, the God whom he worships. An *itinerating system* complete in its parts, with suitable compensatory provisions, has some advantages for some sorts of work; but alone, it can never stem the tide of worldli-

tness, and Papacy, and sin which are sweeping down the face of the world in our day. Poland, it is said, was destroyed because it had no infantry in its army; its military force being wholly a splendid body of cavalry.—We want an infantry in the church of Christ—a body of Christians who can stand, shoulder to shoulder, dying if need be in their places, but never yielding an inch of ground, though the world, the flesh, and the Devil sweep the field with fire and iron hail as a besom. Such a body is the sure droduct of a Calvinistic theology, taught and applied by an educated, permanently settled ministry.

A consideration of these evils seems to call for the notice of some remedies for their removal. In an office whose relations are so manifold as are those of the Christian ministry, these must of necessity, regard a great number of particulars, only a few of which can be mentioned here.

It does not fall within the scope of this essay to consider those qualifications which must of course, lie at the basis of all ministerial success.—I allude to those which belong to it in any condition; such as piety, fair talents and a fitting education. It deserves, nevertheless, to be said, that the last of these is an essential of a *settled* ministry; since though a poorly educated man, may succeed as a member of an itineracy, yet as a settled Pastor, even in a poorly educated community, his success will be utterly doubtful. Education furnishes the power of progress over the field of sacred studies; it enables its possessor not only to understand, but to *unfold* subjects,—powers essential to him who is to be the permanent teacher of a particular people. Mental poverty, however powerful in muscle, must of necessity revolve in a circle of common-places with which all classes of people soon fail to be instructed.

It must also be said that an order of talent somewhat higher will be needed for a permanent work than can be usefully employed in many conditions in which permanency with the same people is not required.

In short, it must be obvious that to succeed as a Pastor, the minister must be fitted for pastoral labor in all those particulars which concern his

success, whether they be piety, talent, education, a mind to the work, and a suitable stability of character. When these are extensively lacking, their place can scarcely be supplied.

These things supposed, there are no obstacles to success, which may not be conceived to admit of a remedy in ordinary cases. And in the first place,

Permanency must be the aim of the ministry.

It is true of men as a rule, that they do that, which they steadily aim to accomplish. Obstacles in such cases give way and untoward events, gradually adjust themselves in subserviency to controlling principles of action.—Settled purposes of life affect the whole character and conduct and evince themselves to others. It may therefore and probably will, change the whole result of settlement, and the whole course of ministerial life, in a vast multitude of cases, if the aim be permanency in the beginning, rather than service for a term of months, or years.

Let the minister have this for his object, resolving to be turned from it only by uncontrollable necessity, and not only will his own habits of thought and action adjust themselves to it, but will make their impression on his congregation; and the tendency will be to its establishment as a rule.

Let it be understood that this is the settled policy of church and pastor, and criticism will cease one half its carpings, and that uneasy looking about for chances to better a settlement already well adjusted, which the expectation of change induces, will find its chief stimulant removed.

It is evident that the aim of which we speak is at present extensively lacking. With many who desire a permanent settlement, the hope of it is but dim, while many others have given it up, if they ever cherished it; and expect to float about wherever the Providence of God may cast their lot, till they find their labors unacceptable, when they will feel excused from further ministerial duty and betake themselves to secular employ. Their minds thus made up, there is no farther effort to attain that which they have ceased to expect, while under a regimen thus without object, the pe-

riod of their labor is shortened. Such forget that the Providences of God are, in a sense, within our control, and that it is not right to attribute to His ordination, that which is the result of a want of faith and effort on our own part.

Again, the efforts of the Pastor to be permanent must be ordered with system and steadiness.

Perhaps it is hardly proper that I should dwell on this topic, yet it is right to say, that some of the instances of unsettlement, known to the writer, have been the obvious result of desultory and aimless habits of ministerial labor. Every man will naturally order his work in accordance with his expectations, regarding the time in which it is to be done.

Permanency will naturally call for system, order, steadiness; and if I may use a somewhat abused term, *progress*. Under this well ordered application of his powers the Pastor will naturally and almost certainly grow, and his people will advance with him in Christian knowledge, and a maturing piety. Without it, the aims of the people may be ever so good and changes will be very sure to happen.

Again, the Pastor must be fitted to his place.

It is not sufficient that the minister be fitted to the ministry. He must be fitted to exercise it in the particular locality where he is called to labor. Two men in their natural and acquired abilities, may be equally adapted to the work of the ministry, yet it by no means follows that they are equally qualified to discharge it among the same people. One may bring to the Pastoral office qualities for which one place has no demand while in another they would constitute an important element of his strength and usefulness.

The world is made up of a great variety of people, and Christianity by no means obliterates the traits which constitute the staple of their dissimilarities. Christianity it is true, offers but one set of truths to all, but the fruits of it as grown on different samples of character, will exhibit an immense diversity in particular conformation, shape and coloring;

all useful in the world, and agreeable, we doubt not, to the Divine Master; even as the different varieties of the same species of fruit will exhibit an untold variety of shape, color and flavor, yet all excellent in their way and degree.

These varieties of people will demand a corresponding variety in ministerial character. To adjust them to their several and proper places will demand some skill and care, and possibly more time in deciding upon particular settlements than it has been customary in many cases to give, and it may be a modified return to the practices of olden times, when the settlement of a pastor was deemed a great work, and set about with much prayer, and a careful examination of candidates and places of settlement. Certain it is, that the Western idea of any man to any place, and any place to any man, which often obtains, must be changed. With the best and most careful attention which can be given to the subject, some mistakes may be expected to be made, which will render change unavoidable; but these should and may be the exceptions instead of the rule. And yet it must not be expected that the Pastor can, in all cases, satisfy every individual mind of his adaptedness to the work in a particular locality; nor must this idea be pressed too far. Disquietude in a church or congregation is sometimes chronic, and those affected with it, will lay hold of any pretence and among others of this to unsettle the Pastor. He may have a general and a fair degree of particular fitness for his place: it may be a matter of doubt if one with superior qualifications can be had in case of his removal: or the cause of present difficulty may soon pass away; in all of which cases changes should be avoided on the plea of particular inaptitude on the part of the pastor.

Again, The Ministry must be adequately supported.

It is utterly futile to talk of the Pastoral relation if the church cannot, or will not, supply the means of livelihood to those who assume its obligations. It is a question so plain that Common Sense refuses to hear it argued. Her voice decides it authoritatively and at once. The Pastor

who assumes the spiritual charge of a people for life, takes upon himself a work which will task all his energies and leave him no time nor ability for other employ to eke out his subsistence. He has done *his* duty when he has discharged the work of his profession; but his people have not done theirs till they have put him in possession of a livelihood for himself and his family. They wrong him greatly: they wrong themselves equally; and they wrong their Master more than either, if they subject him to harrassing care and anxieties in regard to temporal support.

It cannot be denied, that of late the rate of compensation to the ministry has become too low. In the general rise of property, and the enhancement of the cost of living consequent thereon, those dependant upon salaries are left behind to meet the new rates of obligation, with old means. In the times of financial depression the present rates of payment may have been generally sufficient; and yet we know that it has been for a long time true, that from their inadequacy in many cases and their uncertainty of payment in others, a large proportion of the migratory practice of which we complain, has arisen.

It has been sometimes suspected too, that some churches have avoided the pastoral relation on account of the increased expenses of it; preferring to hire while it is easy to pay, and to go without a spiritual guide while the church treasury is empty. Such a course ought not to be charged upon any without the clearest proof, and yet there have been cases which seemed to give color to such a suspicion.

Such a procedure may seem like economy: yet the case is not a whit wiser than that of him who starves for fear of the expense of eating. It is an effect of the law that like produces like, that the people who starve their minister, should themselves suffer a corresponding famine, as much more terrible than his, as spiritual hunger is more destructive than physical. Is it not only poor economy but a grievous sin to withhold the means of a permanent settlement when there is ability to give it.

The effects of penuriousness do not stop with its first operation. Fick-

leness on the part of the congregation toward the minister, is its twin sister, from which it will not be separated. A people which does not pay its pastor will never cease to discover his failings; for the consciousness of wrong always seeks, with a self-moving certainty, to justify itself, by attributing to its victim some quality or conduct which merits its treatment. "We hate whom we have injured," said Tacitus eighteen hundred years ago; and his aphorism has lost no particle of its truth in all that period, either in its full intent or its minor and incidental applications.

It is a proverb too, that what costs nothing, men will lightly esteem. They will be very certain to esteem lightly the pastor whom they have failed to pay. In short, when a competent support is withheld, whatever else may be in its favor, a permanent pastorate is out of the question.

Again, There must be a full recognition of the nature of the pastoral work on the part of pastor himself and of his congregation.

A low estimate of the duties and value of the pastoral office, will of course render it inefficient in operation, and insecure in its tenure. Men will make sacrifices to obtain and retain, that which they value. And here it must be said, that the estimation in which the pastoral office is held among a people, will depend in no small degree on the pastor himself. If he magnifies his office, or if he despises it, his people will be the first to perceive the either fact, and their own estimate will come in time to correspond with his. He is the *educator* and his congregation the *educated*. They will look to him for just views, on this, as on other topics, connected with the work of promoting the Kingdom of Christ in the world. Hence it will be necessary for him, on proper occasions, to enforce the truth on this, as well as on other subjects; and no sense of natural modesty, as being himself concerned, should withhold him from a proper expression in regard to that which is so vital to the prosperity of Christ's Kingdom.

The real interests of the pastor and his people are the same, and their

duties are correlative. Instruction in this regard is no more a private and personal matter, to be kept out of sight than any other. The wise pastor will of course, know how to choose his occasion for speaking of these mutual duties and relations, so as to forward and not hinder the object he has in view.

And finally, It must be always remembered that the Pastoral Office is a Divine Institution.

Christ himself, when on earth, gave the great commission, and his Apostles, and the church to this time have acted in obedience to it.— And though, as we have seen, he did not define the term of the Pastor's office with a particular people, yet we know that to be most pleasing to Him, which best secures the object in view. If permanency in the Pastoral office does in fact best accomplish the work for which the ministry, was instituted, is has not only the sanction of sound judgment, but of Christ's approval. This fact, more than all others, should secure the removal of all obstacles in its way as the general usage of the church.

