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SERMONIERS.

We have long since concluded that there is no creature in our world that is not of some use to man, either directly or indirectly.

Rats too—those princes of impudent knavery—have tried to gnaw through our theory, just as they have gnawed through our barrel of flour; but we set our wits to work, and devised a tin-covered barrel, which protected our flour, and at the same time defended our theory.

Another creature of almost the same size, with the last mentioned, and whose name is equally contraband in refined society, has given our theory some heavy blows.

Our object in this paper is to defend a certain class of people against whom a vast deal of odium theologium is continually poured forth from press and pulpit, and whose varied and valuable good traits have been singularly ignored.

In the first place: A man who goes to sleep, will most probably not interrupt the preacher and congregation by getting up deliberately, in the midst of the services, and walking out.

In the second place: A man never defiles the floor, or the carpet, of a church with tobacco juice while he is asleep.

Thirdly: A sleeper never disturbs the worship by whispering to the people about him. He commonly keeps still, and this is a great point gained.

Fourthly: A sleeper does not turn his head to stare at the folks who come in late. The stagers at church are great nuisances. We never knew anybody to stare about him while asleep.

Fifthly: A sleeper is pretty certain not to interrupt the preacher and congregation, by crying out, shouting, clapping the hands, and making strange, wild noises. We have known some very honest wide-awake people do this; but we never saw anybody do it while asleep.

Sixthly: Sleepers are not apt to make ill-natured remarks about the sermon. They are apt to be lenient critics. Almost any preacher who does not disturb their nap, is a "good, sound, safe preacher."

But all these good qualities are negative, says the objector. True, but they

are none the less valuable on that account. Besides, we have yet to present the positive side, and we feel that it is very important. Indeed, the chief use of sleepers in church, consists in their value as sermonizers.

Now, we have some capital sermonizers in our church. Indeed, it would be difficult to devise a better test of the value of a sermon, as delivered in our church, than is furnished to our hand by some of our sleepers.

Now, from long and regular practice, we have learned to graduate these instruments with an accuracy which is abundantly sufficient for all practical purposes. Our two sermonizers generally vary from 100 degrees to zero; but we feel pretty certain that we have seen them fall some degrees below zero, when we have felt that we should have done better had we not preached at all.

After this attempt of ours, to defend an ill-used, long-suffering and valuable class of our church-going population, we trust that we shall not be obliged to change our opinion as to their effectiveness in their peculiar sphere. It may be admitted, however, that we have one sleeper in our church who is of not the slightest value as a sermonizer, because he always goes to sleep before the sermon begins.

But it is now Saturday; and we feel that we are not so well prepared for the pulpit as we might be; and as we have no disposition to see our sermonizers run down to zero to-morrow morning, we must close this article with one of the profound sayings of the son of Sirach: (Ecclesiasticus xlii: 24.) "All things are double one against the other, and God hath made nothing imperfect."

Poverty in itself, is not a crime, but it is often the cause of crime, and sometimes its result.

For the Recorder.

WHAT'S THE MATTER?

"The progressive form in the Active voice has its corresponding progressive form in the Passive voice."—Clarke's English Grammar.

Very well; let's try it: Corn is selling—was selling—has been selling—had been selling—may be selling—would have been selling, &c. Now for the Passive form: Corn is being sold—was being sold—will this do? But we'll go farther. Corn has been being sold—had been being sold—may be being sold—would have been being sold. All wrong! Wrong!

Is the rule wrong, then? What's the matter? J. T. A. Mr. Olive, N. C., Oct. 16th, 1873.

We should retain the remembrance of faults we have once forgiven.

DISTINGUISHED BAPTIST MINISTER WHO WAS BORN IN NORTH CAROLINA BUT LIVED AND LABORED IN OTHER STATES.

REV. W. T. BRANTLY, D. D.

After my last article on Dr. Brantly was written, I encountered two letters, one from Dr. Basil Manly, the other from Richard Fuller, addressed to Dr. Wm. B. Sprague, author of "Annals of American Baptist Pulpit," which are of unusual interest, and I know will be read with profit by the friends of the Recorder.

From the Rev. H. Manly, D. D., UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA, March 6th, 1848.

Rev. and Dear Sir: At length, amid the press of business, I snatch the brief intervals of comparative leisure, for giving some reminiscences of the late Dr. Brantly. I do it informally, supposing this to be more in accordance with what you wish and expect from me.

My first distinct knowledge of Dr. Brantly was in my early boyhood, and when he had just completed his College course. It was in the meeting-house of the old Fork Church, in Chatham County, N. C. He was then of very youthful appearance, and attracted my attention partly by his fact, and partly by his exceedingly fine person and voice. Though little qualified to judge, yet from the effect of his discourse on myself and others, remembered long afterward, I should judge that he had not then laid aside the starchness of the College, nor acquired that ease, pungency, and force, which afterward distinguished him. For several years I saw him not again; until, visiting his parents, with the first Mrs. Brantly and her elder children, he came to his native county. Then he shone conspicuously, and made an impression on the minds of those who had known him from his childhood, which will never be forgotten.

Under an aspect and mien unusually commanding, he cherished a spirit of kind condescension. When the poor and wretched came in his way, he ever had a heart to pity, and a hand to relieve. To young men of modest merit he was singularly attached. Such seemed to have a special attraction for him: his eye often detected them in a crowd; and he would follow them, and seek them out; nor did he ever seem so interested or so happy as when directing and assisting such to aspire after usefulness and honor.

He had a clear and accurate judgment, and an abundant fund of common sense. This was seen in the facility with which he would adapt himself to every person or occasion, and meet the demands of every case. He could awe or attract, repulse or win, with equal readiness and self-possession, as he saw most fit. He had no freaks or whims; he was steady under the influence of principles well understood, so as to give a consistency to his character, which left no one in doubt where to find him. He was ever like himself, both in his excitements and relaxations, and always dignified and commanding. The following incident may illustrate several of the points at which I have glanced.

No one accustomed to be with him in private, could have doubted the sincerity and vigor of his piety. His prayers, both in the family and in public, were ever remarkable for their simple fervor and appropriateness. They were always plain, yet not commonplace; comprehensive, yet brief; apparently unstudied, yet reading every devout worshipper through the circles of his own words, in sentences so distinct, yet varied, as if each single case had been alone under his eye. Although his life was a constant scene of bustle and toil, this never seemed to diminish or unfit him for devotion. The prayer-meetings of his church he uniformly attended with alacrity and delight; and although he always was oppressed with the recent wear and vexation of the school room, with scarcely an interval to snatch a hasty repast, certainly none for retirement,—yet, to the surprise of all, he ever seemed to come as if fresh from the closet, and from communion with his Savior, as though his devotion had been mellowed and enriched amid hours spent by the

still waters of prayerful seclusion. Beside the Scriptures, he made frequent use of such works as Bishop Hall's Contemplations, and Adam's Private Thoughts. Of the latter work he once made this remark to me: "Some may doubt the propriety of a good man's disclosing so much secret impurity remaining in himself. But that writer exposes to me my own heart—his experience is mine; and while I do not hate impurity any the less because a good man has gowned under it, I confess that this fact helps me to take a little sinner's hold of the hope that, impure and vile as I am, I am not quite forsaken of God."

What I shall say of the amitties of his intellect must be especially meagre, for the simple reason that a mind like his, which is elevated and grand, majestic yet well balanced, presents so many points for contemplation, and each so extended, as to require rather a separate treatise for each than a hasty glance at the whole. That which struck me most, however, was the readiness with which he could turn the whole vigor of his thoughts on any subject at will, together with his power of comprehension and analysis. Being often in his study when he was preparing for the pulpit, he has seemed to me to make a sermon, complete, in a time not much longer than it has required to write the paragraph. I have then gone with him to church, and heard him preach those sermons, the skeletons of which I took down, and have preserved to this time; and, on every review of them, they surprise me by the justness of their distributions, and the rich veins of well-elaborated thought to which they lead. Imagery and illustration he had very aptly at command. His great master, in such matters, among unlearned men, was Jeremy Taylor; whose sermons he considered equal to Homer's.

For the same purpose also he thoroughly studied Milton, and the graver poets. But whatever was the basis of his composition of a sermon, or the sublimity with which an illustration or argument was suggested, his audience could not be aware of it by any seeming want of familiarity or comprehension. On one occasion, when preparing a sermon for the afternoon, the bell struck, denoting the hour of service. "Ah," said he, smiling, as he rose from his paper on which he had hastily dashed off a dozen lines in large misshapen letters, "my sermon is like a half formed insect on the banks of the Nile, part out, part in."

I walked with him to the house of worship, and never heard him more fully in command of his subject, or of the minds and feelings of his audience. The secret of this was, he elaborated ideas, not particular sermons. Fragments of time were all he had for study. These he improved with singular industry and perseverance. His mind was over on the stretch. Whatever were his theme at the moment, he instantly brought his whole powers to bear on it, and dispatched it soon. This it was not unusual for him to be substantially prepared with a sermon before he had his text. His style was very carefully modelled after the classic authors; perhaps, for some years, it had a little too close resemblance to the rotund and sonorous Latin of Cicero. He had a clear and accurate judgment, and an abundant fund of common sense. This was seen in the facility with which he would adapt himself to every person or occasion, and meet the demands of every case.

He had no freaks or whims; he was steady under the influence of principles well understood, so as to give a consistency to his character, which left no one in doubt where to find him. He was ever like himself, both in his excitements and relaxations, and always dignified and commanding. The following incident may illustrate several of the points at which I have glanced. While residing in Augusta, between 1810 and 1826, he was one of a Committee, sent by the Georgia Association to another body of the same kind, to labor, "to restore common views and feelings between the two Associations on the subject of Missions, and perhaps other points of difference."

On this errand, after explaining himself with great patience and kindness to his brethren, the Association took the mortifying and repulsive ground of refusing to receive him, and the other messengers of the Georgia Association. He submitted to this discourtesy in a quiet humor. The public feeling of the congregation, however, required that he should preach on the Sabbath. In presence of the body that had rejected him, on the day before, he rose and announced his text, Job xxxvi: 2, "Suffer me a little, and I will show thee that I have yet to speak on God's behalf." From this starting point, he poured forth the Divine message of grace to guilty men, in a strain so grand, subduing and attractive, that, though no visible manifestation of Deity was given, and the Almighty answered not out of the whirlwind, the stricken multitude could scarcely have been more affected and overwhelmed, had such really been the case. By an action not uncommon among the Southern Churches, while he was yet speaking, he came down from the platform, and nearly the whole assembly rushed forward to meet him. Down they fell upon their knees, many at once asking him to pray for them, while the big tears in profusion coursed down his manly face. Such was the sequel of prayer and love which followed the rejection of his mission on the day before.

That period of his ministry in which I heard him oftener, and knew him best, was the last year of his residence in Beaufort, S. C., and shortly after the death of his incomparable wife. The aged, judicious, and spiritual-minded people who formed a rare cluster of intelligence and piety in that church, at that time, used to speak to me with great emotion of the sanctified effect of this affliction, of the richness and savor

which it had imparted to the ministry of his Pastor. Certain it is that, both then and since, I must regard him as the most uniformly engaging, instructive, inspiring preacher that has ever been my good fortune to hear. If he did not often electrify by some astounding effort, he never failed to meet the demands of an occasion, and never fell below himself. His sermons were not all equally interesting, of course; but I do not remember that I ever heard a remark fall from him, which I considered commonplace, or feeble, or said merely to fill out the time. The volume of sermons, published near the close of his residence in Philadelphia, was written amid as heavy a press of affairs as he ever encountered. I was in his house during that period, and he told me that he had tasked himself to write one sermon a week, of a series, besides his other duties. These discourses are certainly not better than the average of his ordinary ministrations.

As a Pastor, he was exemplary and truly affectionate toward his people. If asked what was most remarkable of him in that relation, I should say it was the confidence he inspired. As a general thing, his people gave up their mind and feelings to him, without suspicion, or reserve, or uneasiness of any kind. When he approved, it was common for them to feel satisfied that all was right.

While walking together to the House of God, the venerable mother of Dr. Richard Fuller, of Baltimore, made his remark to me, evincive of her characteristic sagacity: "How pleasant it is to have a Pastor in whom we can thoroughly confide!" She added: "I can go to church under any circumstances, and carry my friend with me; and whatever turns up, I never feel any anxiety or uneasiness about what Mr. Brantly is going to say or do."

Such, my dear Sir, are a few imperfect hints of what Dr. Brantly was while I knew him. My admiration, affection, and gratitude are ever due to his memory. Very truly yours, B. MANLY.

State of the Church in Windsor—Condition of Colored Baptists—Remedy—Cumberland University, Where is it?—Question for Agriculturalists—Eucalyptus.

WINDSOR, N. C., Oct. 14, 1873.

Dear Recorder:—We are progressing pleasantly at old Cashie, although sadly disappointed that our good brethren refused to give us the next session of the Convention. Elder Jeremiah Bunch still serves us in spiritual things; at our last church meeting he stated that he felt duty to say that he could serve the church no longer. The church, he said, was abundantly able to have a pastor to go in and out before them every Lord's day; and the community required a preacher of superior abilities and better mental training. We are well pleased with Bro. Bunch, his modesty has endeared him still more to our hearts; members declared their unwillingness to part from him. His brief ministry has been a success, many valuable members have been brought into the church, and he leaves the church in a delightful frame.

On last Lord's day five were added to church, four by baptism, and one by letter; all in the bloom of life. The church will make an effort to call a pastor to serve us all the time. Elders Craig and Hanham were suggested as Elder Bunch's successor. Our church edifice, with its cross on the steeple, (so obnoxious to our good Bro. Egerton) is undergoing thorough repair. We have a noble band of young brethren, who love our Zion, and are willing to sacrifice their all to the blessed cause. At our last meeting it was stated, by a committee, that \$125 were needed and must be forthcoming. We had been pretty severely tested on a money matter just previously and there was a dead pause, no response to the appeal of the committee; members thought they had done all they could. A young brother arose and made a fervent appeal to the church in behalf of the committee, and some \$40 or more were subscribed or paid. The speaker then addressed the committee and urged them to go on, assuming the amount of the deficit himself. "Bro. Moderator," he continued, "I joined the church four years ago, and at that time I dedicated myself, my all to Jesus; when I subscribed to the fund for endowing Wake Forest College I gave all I could spare. I shall deny myself necessary comforts to aid this committee, and if that is not sufficient I give myself—I now redeem my baptismal vow, in doing it I never felt happier in my life." Powerful sensation among the young and old—church both in tears. There is hope among such a people.

The condition of our colored members is highly interesting. Something should be done. Their ministry seem disposed to do all in their power, they enforce discipline, but they are illiterate and see but dimly. Intemperance is their bane, and whiskey doggeries derive their greatest revenues from the poor negro; the church seems to exert no controlling influence on them. It has been suggested that a temperance organization of some kind would prove of great benefit. Your neighbor, the Sentinel, is advertising the "Cumberland University," where is it located? Is it intended for Columbian University?

Will our good friend Rev. Dr. Walters tell us what principle it is in the second cutting of clover that produces salivation in horses. Mercurials produce it in the human species, but clover does not contain that mineral, nor will mercury produce salivation in horses, that we are aware of. A friend of ours has a fine pasture of grass, but horses turned on it to graze are soon salivated as badly as on second cutting of clover. Why is it or what will prevent the salivation?

The Eucalyptus tree, a native of Australia, is producing quite a sensation in the country; we are trying to introduce it into Bertie. It is a beautiful shade tree, grows with astonishing rapidity, a powerful absorber of moisture, planted in swamps, they soon become dry and arable land. Its chief value, however, consists in its anti-malarial properties. Neither Ague and Fever nor Bilious Fever can exist in its vicinity; its leaves are said to possess the antiperiodic qualities of quinine. If so, the introduction of the Eucalyptus will bring down the price of quinine within the reach of the poor man.

The Helianthus (common sunflower) is said to keep off ague and fever if planted around our dwellings. Those of your readers who have visited the National Observatory, near Washington City, are aware that it is near the low wet grounds of a marsh, and consequently was at one time the means of diffusing ague and fever among those in charge of the Observatory. Professor Maury, while in charge of the Observatory, suffered from the malaria in his own person and in that of others. He procured seeds of the sunflower, planted them freely and never suffered from fall fevers afterwards. Seeds of the sunflower yield abundantly a delightful oil, superior to sweet oil and is used by the Russians as a substitute for butter.

Yours in a better hope, S. J. WHEELER.

P. S. Some of my neighbors have put up stacks of crop grass for hay, a better article than that we import from the North. Our old friend Dr. Phillips, of the Southern Farmer, and Professor in the University of Mississippi, calls it Crab-Grass. How is it, Dr. Walters? W.

The following article was published not long since in the Religious Herald; and, as we have been called upon (through the columns of the RECORDER) to furnish it for republication in this paper, and as the subject is one of very great importance, as well as one upon which we feel the need of further light, we cheerfully comply with the request. We propose to discuss the subject further in a series of articles in the RECORDER, and hope that the discussion may be attended with some fruit in the way of disciplinary reform.

Looseness of Discipline.

IS THERE ANY REMEDY?

Some years ago, at a Baptist State Convention, or at some similar gathering, I remember hearing one speaker (a city pastor) say, that he believed that one-fourth of the Baptist communicants in the State were utterly worthless, or worse than worthless as church members, and ought to be excluded. Another speaker followed. He was the pastor of the largest and, perhaps, the most influential city church in the State; and he quoted the estimate of the first speaker, and said, very emphatically, "He has put it too low; there are thirty-three and a third per cent. of our membership who are utterly worthless, and who ought to be excluded." The last speaker was one of the most genial, kind-hearted, loving and lovely men that I have ever known, and one of the very last men in the denomination to indulge in harsh judgments of his brethren, or to take gloomy views of our condition. That this estimate of the man is correct, will be admitted at once by every Baptist who happens to have the pleasure of a personal acquaintance with Thomas H. Pritchard, the Bishop of the Baptist Church in Raleigh, N. C.

Now, so far as I am advised, there is no reason to believe that such looseness of discipline is more extensively prevalent among our Baptist brotherhood in North Carolina, than among the Baptist churches in other sections of country; and yet what are we doing, or attempting to do, in the way of improvement? Who ever preaches a sermon on church discipline? How many articles on it do we ever read in our religious papers? Who has ever known of three churches in the land—nay, who has known of one church—from which worthless members, or even careless members, could generally be excluded? I am glad to be able to say that I know of one church, which recently excluded one member for covetousness, and another for "general worthlessness;" and I do not hesitate to say that I regard these two exclusions as unusually promising signs of a revival—may, further, that I feel every confidence that a revival spirit is already in existence in any church that can rise up to such a view of its responsibility as is involved in such action. The ordinary, current view on the subject of church discipline seems to be, that the exclusion of a member ought to take place only when the member has committed some heinous offence against the ordinary laws of morality, or against what we are pleased to call "church or-

der," or "gospel order." It seems, too, to be commonly believed that, even in these cases, the offender should give evidence of being incorrigible, before the church is justified in resorting to exclusion. The idea that worthless members should be excluded—that utter worthlessness is one of the most heinous of all offences against "gospel order"—seems scarcely to have entered the heads of even the pastors, to say nothing of the average members of our churches.

Some time ago, the pastor of one of our city churches was visiting one of his flock at her house. She had been a member of the church for years; yet the pastor had never seen her face, except when he visited her at her own house, or met her on the street, or at a neighbor's house. As the pastor was leaving the house, she said to him, "Bro. H., I am so glad that they have got me up, or are going to have me up, before the church. Can you tell me what it is for? I don't know why they should have me up; for I haven't done anything." "Well, madam," said the pastor, "that is precisely the charge against you; you haven't done anything; and the church is disposed to maintain the view which the New Testament certainly teaches, namely, that a church member must do something." The member continued to be guiltless of "doing anything," and was excluded.

Now, to many persons, this will seem severe. Indeed, the action of the church in this case was condemned by some good people in the community; and yet it will, perhaps, be difficult to give any sound reason for such condemnation. Years ago I knew a member of a city church in Virginia, who would not attend preaching in his own church; would do nothing and give nothing for the support of the gospel; said he did not want to be in the church; and indicated that he ought not to be. One Sunday afternoon, the pastor and one of the deacons were going into the country to attend a meeting, and they met this man coming out of the woods with a gun on his shoulder. He had spent the day in the swamps with his gun. He was somewhat notorious, I believe, as a frequenter of grog-shops. It took a year's hard work, on the part of the pastor, to get this man out of the church.

Another member of the same church flatly refused to attend any of its services; became notorious as an opponent of the church; would have nothing to do with it in any way whatever; denounced its members and its action; said she did not wish to be a member; she did not consider herself one; and yet the pastor had probably eighteen months' hard work to get rid of her. Still another member of the same church, a woman old enough to have grandchildren, insisted that she did not wish to be considered a member; said she would attend dancing parties, which promise she frequently fulfilled, dancing with distinguished agility for a grandmother in Israel; could not be prevailed upon to attend church with any sort of regularity; and yet the pastor, after two years' hard work, found her still on his roll, and left her name on the roll, I believe, when he resigned the pastorate in 1868.

A deacon of another church, in the same city, became dissatisfied with the church for some cause (I never learned what), and one night offered a resolution at church conference, and threatened the church that unless this resolution passed he would at once withdraw all his influence and support from church and pastor. The resolution was carried! Does any sensible person believe that this man retained any respect for the church after this action, even supposing (a violent supposition) that he had any before? Now these cases do not stand alone. Many others could be given. For instance, one of the best and most vigorous churches that I ever knew, in spite of the earnest and persistently repeated remonstrances of the pastor, retained on its roll the name of a member who was not only utterly worthless, but a notorious and incorrigible swindler. Every member who knew him, knew that he would lie and cheat. He had no conscience about the thing. He swindled his brother members notoriously and infamously. He could not be trusted for twenty-five cents, and his word was utterly unworthy of credit. When arraigned before the church, he made vague statements which were utterly untrue, and which nobody believed; and yet it was only after twelve months' hard and intensely disagreeable work that the pastor could manage to get him excluded.

The same pastor had to labor for some months to get rid of a member who was notorious for her unbecomingly liar, and, I believe, terribly profane, though a woman!

The cases here cited are not matters of mere rumor. The present writer happens to have a personal acquaintance of long standing with each of the churches here referred to, and he is familiar with the facts, as well as acquainted with the persons that have here come under notice. He does not believe that his own experience and observation in this direction have been exceptional or peculiar; but he does believe, that nearly every observant pastor, who has had ten years' experience in the pastorate—especially among city churches of any considerable membership—can relate some such instances as are here recorded.

Now the simple fact that such cases do, or can, exist at all, is certainly very significant. There must be utterly a fault among us, when it can be doubted whether such cases are very few, or very extraordinary. To many persons, perhaps, they will appear extravagant; but this is not the fault of the writer. My design is to call attention to what I honestly believe to be a serious fault among our people. It argues nothing to say that the Methodists are just as loose as we are, and the Episcopalians more so; for we are not Methodists nor Episcopalians, and we are not responsible for their discipline, while we are for our own. J. O. HINES.