

CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE.



THE FLOWERS COLLECTION

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For the N. C. Christian Advocate.
Proselytism and Proselyters.

NUMBER II.

MR. EDITOR:—The importance of the subject in hand, made such by the almost uniform conduct of those *Successors* and *Immersions*, who have entered upon a crusade—not against the "powers of darkness," but other sister churches, calls for and justifies an effort to expose, and, if possible, arrest the injurious war that is thus carried on. In order to effect the object in view, I will, with your permission, proceed to examine some of the most prominent evils which proselytism involves.

I. The proselyter places himself in a doubtful or unfriendly attitude towards those churches whose fields of labor he seeks to invade and enter.

There are some timid souls who may consider the above postulate very strong, while others may regard it as wanting in charity; but let them bear before they condemn, and, after weighing the arguments in favor of it, they find them unanswerable, then let them pass the sentence of condemnation upon me. If this conviction, I will add the verdict.

I have assumed as a fact that proselytism is a common custom among the churches referred to. No argument is called for to sustain the truth here affirmed; since almost every minister in the land can, and, if called upon, will, sustain the allegation. This being the case, argument on this point, would be wholly out of place.

The first point in the above proposition is this—He who seeks to proselyte the members of another minister's charge, maintains a doubtful attitude. This point is predicated on the fact, that the proselyter wears the garb of friendship—professes to desire and seek friendly relations. Now, I take it for granted, that a true friend will not knowingly and intentionally invade the rights of his friend—who will not seek to injure him in his reputation, condition or person; and, if such invasion is made by one professing friendship, his profession will be justly stigmatized as hypocrisy; he is a deceiver.

Whenever a minister is called by the voice of the people, or appointed by "the powers that be" to the supervision of a church or congregation, he is thereby placed in a position of personal and official relationship which identifies him with the people of his charge, and gives him the right of spiritual government over, as well as a claim to the support, the cooperation and the encouragement of his charge. He is, by right of his office, their shepherd; and they are his flock. The church and congregation, or congregations, are the vineyard, and he is the husbandman. His work, his responsibilities, and his privileges are all clearly defined by the Divine directory. Says a certain writer—*"The pastor should be regarded as a potent power; and, after weighing the arguments in favor of it, they find them unanswerable, then let them pass the sentence of condemnation upon me."*

As to the obligations imposed on him, he is neither less nor more than his Master. Hence no man, or set of men, may lawfully invade his field, or interfere with his work, without violating his rights, and doing him great injustice. If, therefore, another minister, professing friendly relationship, shall seek to draw away from him the members of his church and congregation, does he not, in the very act, give the falsehood to his professions, and commit an act of the grossest injustice?

That such a course of conduct is deceitful, may be demonstrated by the manner in which the proselyter proceeds. His ungentle words, his bold, or interfering with his friend—the man he presumes to call "brother," of his designs? Not he. He greets the brother, whose field has attracted his cupidity, with the smile of friendship; gazes his hand with well disguised warmth, and inquires, with the semblance of concern, after his welfare, his family, and the prosperity of his charge; and yet, as soon as his back is turned—while the unsuspecting man of God is pursuing his work of love, the pretended friend creeps into the house of such as he terms a church, and, about the Church, succession or immersion, as the case may be; offers to lend, or unsolicited leaves books and tracts on those subjects; invites them to come to his Church, and professes a degree of regard that often borders on the grossest flattery. This done, he sallies forth in quest of others, and possibly, ere he reaches his home, meets his brother minister, and repeats his assurances of love and good will. Is not such a course deceitful, hypocritical? If not, pray what is it? It certainly cannot be considered Christianlike or gentlemanly.

ing" may flee from the storm which resistance will invoke, but the "good shepherd" will, if necessary, "lay down his life for the sheep." I remark,

The proselyter imposes on the kindness and confidence of those whom he seeks to convert over to his party. It would be superfluous to remind any one acquainted with refined society, that the laws of hospitality, as well as the instinctive dictates of good breeding, impose the observance of certain regulations and observances in our intercourse with our fellow men; and, among the most prominent of these is respect for the religious opinions and habits of others. We are bound to believe every intelligent, upright Christian, as he is in his profession and professions as ourselves; and, consequently, entitled to all the respect and consideration which we claim for ourselves. Moreover, we should take it for granted, that the ecclesiastical connection of every such Christian is the result of an enlightened conscience, and a matter of moral principle. This much we are bound to regard; to withhold it would be an act of injustice which would reflect alike on the suspected and ourselves. It would reflect injuriously on the party suspected, by believing him capable of taking the most solemn and important step in life in the absence of an enlightened conscience, and religious principle; and it would subject those who could entertain such a suspicion, to the charge of seeking to convert to their party, a man destitute of religious sensibility and moral principle. And such is true of the most of those who are proselyted.

The proselyter received into the houses of other professors of religion with the conviction that he understands, subscribes to, and is governed by the afore-said rules of good breeding, and, consequently, they would accuse themselves of uncharitable suspicion were they to mistreat his motives. They consider him, for he professes himself such, a friend, a gentleman, a Christian, and a minister; and, as such, welcome him to the hospitalities of their houses and the confidence of their hearts. His professions and office inspire not only a just suspicion, but to inspire respect and reliance. Should a more observant friend intimate that there is a hidden design in the attentions of the man, the intimation is frequently regarded as ungenerous and unkind. No, it cannot be so; he is a good man and friendly; he is a gentleman and minister, and a minister, in his religious opinion and church connection. This confidence, they suspect nothing, fear no sinister motive. True, he is very attentive, remarkably polite; but it is only the result of his generous feeling, the out-flowing of his Christian heart. He has invited them to his house; he has made appointments to call for, and escort them to hear him preach, and very modestly left a book or tract for them to read. Still, there can be no harm in all this, since it is the mere promptings of his pure good will, the workings of his generous nature. And, then, he speaks so kindly of our minister; takes such pleasure in his company, and so ardently desires free Christian communion. How cruel to abuse such confidence!

What an imposition is practiced upon them, when the man who had been regarded with such a friendly eye, and treated with so much attention, discovers his true design, stands forth in his real character as a *stouthearted proselyter*? I have in my mind's eye one of those clerical hypocrites, who for years has been engaged in this base business of proselyting. With the blandest smile, he will greet the ministers of other denominations, and yet, obtrude himself into every house where there is the faintest prospect of gaining "a convert to his party," and by the most particular attentions, by unwearied devotion, ingratiate himself into the favor of unsuspecting females—so win upon their regard, as to blind them to his ulterior designs. Thus he has succeeded in drawing off members from other churches to his own; has gone into families, led away the children, and divided houses that had been before united. This man is but the type of many others who infest the Zion of God.

I contend, Mr. Editor, that when a minister, or layman, betrays the confidence reposed in him by those of other churches; or converts at confidence into a means of dividing families of proselyting some of the members from the church in which they were reared, or into which they have voluntarily attached themselves, he forfeits the respect due to his office or standing, and richly merits the scorn of those so cruelly imposed upon, as well as the contempt of every calm, dispassionate, independent mind. In my very heart I loath the proselyter. EPISTOLEUS.

For the N. C. Christian Advocate.
Remembered Hours of Gladness.

"Still o'er these scenes my memory wakes,
And fondly broods with miser care;
Time but the impression deeper makes,
As streams their channels deeper wear."
—BURNS.

A traveller, who is led by a love of adventure, or by a sense of duty, on by the iron dominion of necessity, to be much on the road, is subjected to a multitude of inconveniences and to a great variety of feelings, produced by the diversified scenes through which he passes, the character of his companions in travel, and the vicissitudes of the weather. Now he is benumbed with cold, drenched with rain, or compelled to labor along roads rendered almost impassable by snow; and then he is comfortably sheltered at a pleasant abode; seated by a blazing fire, with a good supply of refreshments for body, mind and heart. Again he is on the road, making his way with difficulty, through mud and mire, through a country, which to his desponding eye appears a waste howling wilderness, and as he slowly works his way, he sadly exclaims:

"Ere long I'll be lost and lone!
With fainting steps and slow,
Where wilds unmeasured spread,
Whom lengthening as I go."

But anon, he comes to a scene that fills his heart with joy. The smiling hills and valleys are clothed with beauty; the air is loaded with balmy earth's lap is filled with plenty; the cheerful song of the husbandman, the merry laugh of childhood, the melodious warbling of the tenants of the groves, and other sounds of gladness, fall upon his ears; and while he regales himself with the bounties of Providence, his bosom swells into rapture; but urged on by something that he cannot or dare not control, he leaves the charming spot and travels on. Again, we see him laboriously working his way along heavily laden, matted, scorched, and almost suffocated beneath the rays of a vertical sun, and nearly blinded by the dust, and tormented by swarms of gnats, flies, and mosquitoes, until he once more arrives at the end of his journey, and finds blissful sensations in rest, to which he would have been a stranger, if he had not undertaken the journey. He then takes a retrospective glance, and sees some spots of unusual brightness and beauty held up to his view, by memory, the enclaves, which will not allow him to lose sight of the happy hours which have gladdened the past.

Thus it is with regard to the whole journey of life. While with regard to the great mass of the time past, we may say, it is blank as far as our recollections are concerned, and even with regard to what we do remember there is much that we would bury in the tomb of oblivion, if we could, on the other hand we can call to mind many days and hours of enjoyment, of pleasures that have left no sting behind, and which will never be forgotten while reason maintains her throne.

It is in such an hour as this with the philosopher, when he discerns some great truth, previously unknown to mankind; with the patriot mariner, when he succeeds in liberating his country from a foreign yoke which he is delivered from, or when he is delivered from his oppressor, and with the benevolent man, when he succeeds in his efforts to do good.

I have sometimes asked persons, which were the happiest hours they had ever spent; and waited for the answer, as an indication of that person's mental and moral character.

If we are asked, "How do you call to mind seasons when we have been unusually blest at the family altar, in the sanctuary of God, and in our places of private prayer. Sometimes while reading the Bible or meditating on its sublime teachings, the truth has flashed upon the soul like an electric shock, and diffused its light with such brilliancy and power, that for many days afterward we have seemed to be walking in the vestibule of heaven. With an earnest desire to do good, we have labored a long time apparently in vain; and then when cast down to despondency and gloom, we have received a letter filled with glad tidings which was as a draught of cool spring water to a weary and fainting traveller; or we have met one whom we have not seen for many years, who with tearful eyes has blessed us for the good derived from our ministry; or we have read in the obituary notices of the religious press, that a certain dear friend had died in the faith, confessing in the hour of death that our unworthy ministry had been honored as an instrument in his conversion; and then we have wept tears of joy, and called from the records of the past, the scenes of that gracious revival season. Thus we are encouraged to toil on in the hope that we may be successful again, and that we may at last meet the loved ones who have gone before us, in the land of everlasting life. JNO. BAYLEY.
Virginia, Sept. 22, 1857.

"One evening, several persons at our house, were repeating anecdotes of what different men in different ages had regarded as the highest type of sensual enjoyment; that is enjoyment derived from outward circumstances. 'Push!' said Mr. Judson; 'these men were not qualified to judge. I know of a much higher pleasure than that. What do you think of floating down the Trawar, on a cool moonlight evening, with your wife by your side, and your baby in your arms, free—all free? But you cannot understand it, either; it needs a twenty-one month's qualification; and I can never regret my twenty-one months of misery, when I recall that one delicious thrill. I think I have had a better appreciation of what heaven may be since. And so I have no doubt he had.' Wayland's Memoir of Dr. Judson, Vol. I, page 395.

For the N. C. Christian Advocate.
MEMORABILIA.

I well remember the first time I was ever present at a Methodist Class Meeting. It was held at Ebenezer meeting house, in Halifax county, by old brother Thomas R. Brame, who was that year, preacher in charge of Roanoke circuit. It was customary in those days for the preachers to hold class meetings every round, unless some extraordinary circumstance prevented.

and especially as the Editor made similar remarks in regard to the case; and the excluded member calls for the publication of the Church proceedings, and lest any remark of mine should prevent that, I have concluded to say nothing more in regard to it, at present.

The object of my former article was to show the sad effects of Graves and Howell, whose works are endorsed. The Newberne Baptist church, I guess, fully endorses them, for the pastor sent for a supply of the Iron Wheel for their Fair last year; so a member informed me.

I should be grieved to know that any act of mine should disturb the 'long sought rest' the Baptist church in Newberne may be enjoying—for she needs repose and quiet that her spiritual strength may be renewed, and her energies re-baptized. May God revive His work in her midst, and may His saints shout for joy, in the sincere prayer of

Rest, N. C.
For the N. C. Christian Advocate.
Little River Association.

MR. EDITOR: The Hard Shell denomination have just closed their 'Annual Association for the Little River District.' It was held at the cross roads, in Johnston county.

It would be too tedious to mention all the particulars connected with the Association. Suffice it to say, that there was some pretty tall preaching, delivered by the Reverend gentlemen present, on the occasion.

Among them, were Messrs. Croom, Davis, and Newton; all of which are noted for their love of the faith, that was once delivered to the saints. Mr. Croom made several assaults on the 'Armenian' forces, in real battle order. But, he is a sorry marksman, and did but little damage, considering the noise that he made, and the powder that he burnt. He said, the 'Armenians' and the devil had the poor sprinkling of this world on a rail. The 'Armenian' forces at one end, and the devil and his angels at the other; and the one that pulled the strongest got them. I was forced to exclaim, 'voz, et preterea nihil.'

They invited some of their friends of the 'Shell party,' home with them, (some went without being invited) and entertained them as well as they conveniently could, through the night; and next day, they went to hear them preach, and 'got rode on a rail' for their trouble.

Thus time passed off very smoothly. 'The Shell party' had them a barrel of '—' of the 'R. G. brand,' hid off just at a convenient distance.

The closing scene on Sunday evening, 'begged all description.' Some of the rowdies got to the good critter, and 'pitched in.' The consequence was, they came out 'ficked,' and went home with a *humped eye* and a *big nose*.

Mr. Editor, do not be surprised, when I tell you that there is one dark spot in North Carolina—a place where the 'Shell party' has reigned for years; a place that is shadowed by the dark wing of superstition. But the glorious sun of civilization has shed its light into the hearts of most of the people, and already superstition has poised her dark wings, preparatory to her flight from our happy land.

The little band of Methodists in Boon Hill, are building a neat, two story church. They have a Sunday School in operation, which is well attended, and will, no doubt, be of much benefit to the community at large.

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plain language, in *courting the girls*. That you had no such end in view, was implied in your elevation to your present position. We would have you to be polite and gentlemanly in your intercourse with the ladies; and when they need attention, and circumstances show that you should bestow that attention, it is your duty to give it. But, for the Lord's sake, for Zion's sake, for the sake of dearthless souls,—soul committed to your care,—do not seek to *make circumstances press you into ladies' service*.

When we hear of our young preachers, or see them with our own eyes, *pitching about*, with heads up, like a dog in high stubble, when in chase of the hare, trying to catch a glimpse of some fair one, whom they *lugged away their time with*, in going to church, we feel like such thoughtless youngsters ought to be sent home, to plow and court, at their leisure! When the young preacher so far forgets, or disregards, as the case may be, his appropriate work, as to take great pains to walk or ride with the young ladies to and from church, becomes the rival of the sons of the farmer and mechanic,—as good as he, if not better,—or is being solicitous to give the fair damsel a chat in the parlor, with the *'old folks'* out of the way, we think much that is not favorable to such a preacher, and almost involuntarily exclaim, 'Lord save the church from such a cure!' He that is charmed by every pretty face, and seeks to spend his time with fair ones, when he ought to be at his books and prayers, may expect blasting and midew upon his heart, as well as upon his work, and all his ministrations will be hollow-hearted and unclean. Too much female society steals away the unction—the soul of preaching; and revival influences come not with the pulpit efforts of such as court a continual feast of female beauty and charms.

We know that we are writing plain things; but we are a plain man, and say what we believe to be needed; and could we hear throughout our entire Zion, we would lift our voice, and say to the young preachers,—*Bys!* let the girls alone; and it might not be amiss, to say another thing, for the young ladies,—*Girls, let our young preachers alone; they have been sent out to preach to sinners; not to court and flatter you.*

We have said enough on this point. Let the guilty take the hint, and the innocent say, *Amen*.

MARRIAGE.—We believe that Methodist travelling preachers have a right to marry, and that at a proper time, they ought to take them a wife from among the daughters of Eve. But as we oppose early courtships, among our preachers, we also oppose the practice of forming matrimonial alliances before the preacher has acquired any experience in his work, learned to preach, or formed a ministerial character.—There are on this, as on other subjects two extremes. We have no fondness for bachelorism, in any class,—not even among young preachers,—and we are equally impatient of early marriages among those who are sent out by our Conferences to call sinners to God.

Bless you, brother, you need not think you will ever see the like again, if you should turn away from me, my face! Oh, but she loves me! Well, that is a hard case; but you had no business to steal her heart; and besides, if you do your duty, you can find others to love you, when you will be more worthy of being loved.

We might say much more on the subject of marriage, but we forbear.—We have spoken out our honest convictions; and now a *truce* to our young brethren! If we have gotten on the toes of any, our only regret is that we could not get on their hearts, by the power of truth, so as to profit them; for their profit has been our object.

God bless you, brethren! And, in the mean time, we desire you to show this number of the Herald to all the ladies in your charge, and go off and pray while they read it; then return and ask them to subscribe for it. If they laugh, and say 'I will,' send on their names; but, if they frown, and turn up their lip, get away from them as soon as you can—*there is danger there!*—Herald of Truth.

The Gospel Doctrines.

The doctrines of the gospel are to the weary and heavy-laden soft as the dew on tender herb, and refreshing as copious showers to the earth when parched with heat. They present, in the blood of Jesus, a balm that heals the wounded conscience, and that dispels all its anxious fears; that turns despondent into peace; that fills the soul with blooming hope, and with joy unspeakable. Ask that once disconsolate mourner, who saw himself exposed to the avenging hand of Heaven, who felt his sins a burden too heavy for him to bear, and whom law-terrors or Satan's fiery darts had driven almost, if not altogether, to the brink of despair; ask him, I say, what was it that made him the seat of tranquility and consolation, that changed the shadow of death into the light of the morning, and clothed him with the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; and he will

tell you that it was a sight of Jesus crucified revealed to the eye of faith. Beholding the hand-writing of the law nailed to the cross, and the sword of justice sheathed in the heart of Him who died on it as a surety; finding it written that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—that his blood cleanseth from all sin, and he will cast out none that come to him—the Lord gave him power to set his soul to the testimony; and he came with all his grief, and wants, and unworthiness, and he found Jesus true to his word, and mighty to save. He lives now a monument of his mercy, to proclaim the riches of his grace, and to declare to others that Christ crucified is all in all to them that believe.—*De Courcy.*

Young Theologians.

Young theologians, study set apart To learn the rules of theological art. A few brief words we address to you, I have the pulpit now, and you the pen; And call each one to single glowing pen. How seldom laymen get so good a chance, And Doctor Wayland, with his views of teaching, Would have some laymen take a hand at preaching.

Avoid, I pray you, all approach to rant, Or to that measure of abuses, cant. Thought, and not noise, is our understanding. It is the lightning and the thunder roll, And simple truth, in simple words express'd, Has been, is now, and ever will be best. Sermons, like wells should be small circumference sweep.

Be short in their discourse, and submission meek, And public prayer as the scriptures taught, Beyond a civil, always should be short. Had good St. Peter, in his hour of need, Stopped to recite the Calvinistic creed, As he was sinking through the yielding wave, The Galilean sex had been his grave. The royal crown we, but seldom touch, Quote the original text not overmuch; For with due deference and submission meek, We all prefer good English to poor Greek, Wade not long through shallow to begin, But over head and ears jump bravely in. Have but one faculty; let that come out; As soon as thought and feeling have run out; But 'finish' and in conclusion send, As was suggested to one common end. With your attainments, ever keep in view, That 'common people' know a thing or two. And can discern between those slops which group.

All of their wares upon the outside stop, And less pretentious ones, whose shelves are deep. Be chaste in manner, though you have run out; For, high sounding, and 'spread-eagle' style. Get wisdom, learning, all without pretence; And with your gattings, get good common sense. The broad beamed lever and the white cravat, G-d-headed hair, and such things as that, Have had their day; the people now will search For the true man, in Physic, Law, and Church.

But on your word more, and than my sermon's done. Before you preach, get married, ever one. (From Mr. Widder's Rochester Poem.)

Preachers has Riz.

The Nashville Whig says the following good thing conveys a practical lesson: HAWKESVILLE, KY., Sept. 2. MESSRS. EDITORS: The following amusing incident occurred in our town a few weeks since. It will apply to other localities as well as this: A short time since it became necessary to adopt measures to procure the services of a preacher for the African church in this place. Accordingly a committee was appointed to wait upon 'Bruder Pearce,' (who was generally acknowledged to be the most suitable personage to fill that high and honorable station,) and solicit him to accept the pastorate of their church. They were informed that he would undertake the laborious task for the very moderate sum of forty-five dollars per annum; but insignificant as the price might seem, his flock thought it exorbitant, and peremptorily refused to give it. Two or three weeks passed, and being unable to get another preacher, it was finally agreed to pay the stipend, and on the ensuing Sabbath the following took place: 'Bruder Pearce, we've eluded to gin you forty-five dollars to preach for us,' said a benevolent colored individual, whereupon our clerical friend rose and responded: 'Brethren, I can't preach for that price.'

'Why, you only asked forty-five,' cried half a dozen voices. 'Shore nuff I did, bredderen, but dat, you know, was tree weeks ago, and preachers has riz.'

Hon. Jas. C. Wilson.

This distinguished gentleman, who has been prominent before the country, through the interposition of his friends, for the office of United States Senator, and with flattering prospects of success, has published a letter in which he declines the candidacy, and retires altogether from political life. He intimates that a sense of duty induces him to this course. By private correspondence we learn that it is his determination to devote himself to the Methodist itinerant ministry. He recently assisted at a meeting at Gonzales, reported in another column. We rejoice at this determination, and especially in the excellency of the example it involves. Many men in all departments of life, are sinning against God and their own souls by refusing to obey the call to preach the gospel.—*Texas Christian Advocate.*