

THE BIBLICAL RECORDER.

J. J. JAMES, Editor.

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THE BIBLICAL RECORDER,

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From the Southern Weekly Baptist.

Methodist Episcopacy—Interior View by

Master Artists—Reply to the Rev. Mr. Hamill's fourth Letter.

"As certain as of your own poets have said."

Acta 27ii, 28.

Religious controversy, conducted in an elevated tone of Christian principle and candor, ever has and ever will be a most prolific source of blessing to the Church and to the world.

For the time being, it may create an undue and even unpleasant excitement; but the permanent good it accomplishes, far outweighs its temporary evils. So long as truth is held to be dear to its votaries, so long will its maintenance devolve upon them the arduous, and often unwelcome task of defending it against all the conflicting claims of error. Indeed, truth and error must, in their very nature, forever antagonize. "I have come," says Christ, "to set fire upon the earth; and what will I if it be already kindled?" And again: "Every plant that my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be plucked up." The truth is, God himself proclaimed war against sin and error in the very instant of their introduction to this world: "I will put enmity between thy seed and her seed." And this war has been going on ever since, and will continue until one party or the other shall be totally exterminated. It will be a sad day for truth, when its friends, out of complaisance to popular opinion, or out of a sickly, sentimental catholicity, can quietly see its virgin form hewed in pieces, and perverted to purposes alien to its original intention, and never lift their voices in its defence. And when error shall assume the sacred vestments and symbols of religion, and come to us habited "as an angel of light," beseeching us to accept of its protection and patronage, it were treason against the throne of Omnipotence to yield to its overtures. Then the Christian—who loves God better than man—ought to grasp the sword of the Spirit, and pierce the "stolen livery" with as little compunction of conscience, as if it were furnished from the wardrobe of perdition.

Thus much, then, in regard to religious controversy in general. We have already stated, in reference to the subject under immediate discussion, that we are contending with no man or set of men, as such. We are fighting a principle, upon which we cannot detect the divine signature—a principle which transfers into episcopal hands the rights and privileges of the Churches of Jesus Christ—which reverses the whole governmental economy of the Kingdom of Christ, by making the Churches the servants of the ministers instead of the ministers the servants of the Churches—and which, if unrestricted by other modifying agencies, will go on accumulating, until the history of episcopacy in America will be but too faithful an echo of its history in the old world. We challenge any man to show a solitary instance in which such unlimited, supreme and irresponsible power has been claimed by the clergy in any period of ecclesiastical history, where it has not ended in corruption, intolerance and unrelenting persecution—where it has not ultimately become the right arm of political tyranny. We care not how pious, honest, numerous and formidable, the present friends and apologists of episcopacy may be in this country. It is all the more dangerous for this. We claim it upon the house-top—we nail the thesis to the door of each and every of its adherents, to be numbered by thousands, millions or hundreds of millions—That the history of Episcopacy, up to the period of its establishment in this country, is written in carnage and blood. And when such a system of intolerance, bigotry and persecution rears its head in this happy land of freedom, religious and political, we care not how its lineaments may be softened by the pencil of artists—we care not with what meekness and discretion its mitre may be worn by its present dignitaries—it is an assumption of power which God has never delegated even to angels. And we proclaim eternal hostility to such an unwarrantable assumption of power on the part of any set of men, however wise their heads, or good their hearts. Said an intelligent and well read member of the Methodist Episcopal Church to us not a year ago, in urging the importance of there being a variety of seats in the world, "the tendency of ecclesiastical power ever has been, and ever will be to corruption."

We have been, up to this time, attempting to delineate the exterior of Methodist Episcopacy—occupying the attention of the reader with such views of it as would naturally strike the attention of the casual observer.

We now propose entering within the veil, taking with us two artists of established reputation, whose names will impart a value to their picture, which will not only give it a place in every Methodist parlor; but also in the parlor of every well-wisher to Church and State. We mean BISHOP BASCOM, and HAMLIN.

The first shall sketch the *back-ground*—the second shall sketch the *convivants*.

Art. 84. Where all the power and forms of government are held and managed by a few, who are without delegated rights by consent of

the people, the authority of the rulers is absolute, and the people are disfranchised of all right, in the various relations existing between them, as subjects, and those who hold the reins of government. Such a government must always lead to mental debility, will depress the moral vigor of a people, and necessarily abridge the liberty of reasoning and investigation. In all governments of this kind, right is the creature of fortune, and the slave of caprice.—Those who live under a government, which denies to the people the right of representation, blindly engage to submit to the will of others, right or wrong, and must continue to do so, or else deprive themselves of all the advantages of the community in which they live, in order to get rid of its evils. The enactment of all laws and rules, therefore, should be with and by the consent of the people, and their execution strictly under their control."

No contemptible lumner, this Henry B. Bascomb. But now for the portraiture. We quote from the "Debates in the General Conference," held in the city of New York, 1844," pages 128-29.

"Mr. Hamline said— . . . The class-leader, by mere eccentricity, becomes unpopular in his class. The pastor at discretion removes him from his office. The exhorter or unordained local preacher proves unacceptable, and a quarterly conference refuses to renew his license. The itinerant pastor is not useful in his charge and the bishop or the presiding elder deposes him from his charge or from the pastoral office, and makes him an assistant. The presiding elder impairs his usefulness on a district, not by gross malfeasance, but by a slight misfeasance; or oftener still because "he is not popular;" and the bishop removes him to a station or a circuit, and perhaps makes him an assistant. I speak not now of annual appointments, when the term of the itinerant expires by limitation, but removals by the bishops or the presiding elder in the intervals of conference, which always imply a deposing from office, as well as a stationing act. In all these instances the manner of removing from office is peculiar. First, it is *summary*, without accusation, trial, or formal sentence. It is a ministerial, rather than a judicial act. Second, it is for no crime, and generally for no misdeed, but for being "unacceptable." Third, most of these removals from office are by a sole agent, namely, by a bishop or preacher, whose will is omnipotent in the premises. Fourth, the removing officer is not legally obliged to assign any cause for deposing. If he do so, it is through courtesy, and not as of right. Fifth, the deposed officer has no appeal. If indiscreetly or unnecessarily removed, he must submit; for there is no tribunal authorized to cure the error, or to rectify the wrong. But we believe that there are good and sufficient reasons for granting this high power of removal to those who exercise it. It promotes religion. It binds the Church in a strong and almost indissoluble unity. It quickens the communication of healing influences to the infested and the enfeebled parts of the body ecclesiastical. In a word, it is a system of surpassing energy," and "is worthy of all eulogy."

Mr. Hamline was elevated to the rank of Bishop after making the speech from which we have taken the foregoing extracts, and at the very same Conference. So that we may regard his exposition of Methodist Episcopacy, as having been endorsed by the General Conference of the United States.

Now, reader, it becomes us to speak in a serious tone. Here is an embodiment of ecclesiastical power, growing up under the boughs of the tree of liberty, assuming to do what? Look at it sternly in the face. Ye cannot plead that an intervening veil obscures the picture. Methodists! look at it and we have mistaken your allegiance to the King of kings, and Lord of lords, as well as your love of liberty, civil and religious, if, after steadfastly gazing upon it long enough to comprehend its outlines, you do not feel an honest indignation rise in your bosoms at such despotic assumptions on the part of your Bishops and clergy. You cannot plead ignorance of the existence of this unbridled, unlimited supremacy of your Episcopacy, for we have dragged it to the light of day, and exposed it to your view. Again we ask what do these Bishops in general conference assembled assume? Listen ye who are charmed with the "democratic element" in this system of spiritual despotism:

The class-leader may be removed from his office at the discretion of the pastor—the pastor may be removed at the discretion of the bishop or presiding elder—the local preacher may be suspended at the discretion of the quarterly conference—the presiding elder may be removed at the discretion of the Bishops. Now let it be distinctly noted that every step of this disciplinary process, the very existence of the Church is utterly ignored. It is not even recognized as an advisory council. The constituents who have to bear the burdens, and who are the parties immediately interested in these removals, are not so much consulted in their removal. But then look at the manner in which such removal proceeds. "In all these instances," (specified above) "the manner of removing from office is peculiar. 1st. It is *summary*, without accusation, trial, or formal sentence. 2d. It is for no crime, and generally for no misdeed, but for being "unacceptable." 3d. Most of the removals are by a sole agent, namely, by a bishop or preacher whose WILL IS OMNIPOTENT IN THE PREMISES. 4th. The removing officer is not legally obliged to assign any cause for deposing. If he do so, it is through courtesy and not as of right. 5th. The deposed officer has no appeal. If indiscreetly or unnecessarily removed, HE MUST SUBMIT, for there is no tribunal authorized to cure the error or rectify the wrong." Let us condense it all into a single sentence: The manner of removing from office is summary, without trial or accusation—in for no crime, only for being unacceptable—mostly by a sole agent, a bishop or preacher, whose will is omnipotent in the premises, and who is not bound even to give any reason for his act—and the victim of his tyranny has no appeal; whether justly or unjustly treated, he must submit! For there is no tribunal to rectify the wrong!"

All this was solemnly set forth before the General Conference of the United States, as an exposition of Melancthon's view, and the author of it was immovably stationed to the rank of a Bishop!

And we are required to believe that this "peculiar" "system of surpassing energy" is "worthy of all eulogy!"—That it beautifully harmonizes with American democracy! and that he who cannot see the "democratic element" in this system, must possess a "judgment overpowered by a strange prejudice!" There are some draughts upon human credulity that cannot well be honored. Now in regard to the dogmas of transubstantiation, when a Catholic priest gravely assures us, that the priest of bread he holds in his hand, has been transubstantiated by some strange spiritual *hococus pocus*, into the veritable flesh of a body that was crucified eighteen hundred years ago, our eyes, touch, taste, and smell to the contrary notwithstanding, it strikes us that it would be perfectly respectful to decline the honor of implicit faith. Or in regard to baptismal regeneration; if an Episcopalian priest or bishop should dip his hand in water and sprinkle a few drops in the face of an unconscious child, and pronounce meanwhile the solemn baptismal formula, and then gravely beseech us to believe that that child, although the instant before this ceremony was beyond the covenant of mercy, is now "regenerated and grafted into Christ,"—without intending the slightest disrespect to his reverence, we should persist in saying, *Non ego credulus illi*—we have not been able to see where the Divine Being has assigned to a few drops of water an agency, which is uniformly ascribed to the Holy Spirit. And when a Methodist Episcopal clergyman entrusts us to believe, that a governmental economy, in which a million and a half of subjects, (we take the reputed membership of that Church,) have no more voice in its legislative or administrative polity, than the subjects of the Czar except the bare privilege of submission—an economy in which the will of its self-constituted rulers "is omnipotent in the premises," there being no "tribunal" "to rectify the wrong,"—all we have to say is, "pardon us if we know no such" DEMOCRACY, "if we comprehend no such" REPUBLICANISM.

And that our Methodist brethren may see that we are not alone in this matter—that they may know what their Presbyterian brethren think of this "peculiar" "democratic element" in their church organization—we will close this part of our argument by introducing a short extract from an article in the "Calvinistic Magazine," written we believe by its then editor, Rev. F. A. Ross, now pastor of the Presbyterian Church in the city of Huntsville in this State. If they complain at what a Baptist editor has written, what will they say when they read the following from a Presbyterian editor:—Referring to the aforesaid exposition of Methodism by Mr. Hamline, he says: "Look at it, ye members of the Methodist Church. Look at it. What! A system, 'worthy of all eulogy!' What say you, ye gurus of America? She answers, 'The Methodist system is death to all the institutions for which Washington fought and freedom died!'" What says the Gospel? The Gospel tells us, 'The Methodist system is ANTI-CHRIST—for it is the very identical priestly power which has crushed and trodden under foot the liberty wherewith Christ doth make free in every age of the world!'"

(To be continued.)

Tip-Top Disciples.

A quaint writer in the N. Y. Evangelist who seems much interested in the natural history of Disciples—having furnished descriptions of several species belonging to the general class—devotes a brief chapter to what he terms "Tip-Top Disciples." Our readers may be interested in the description, and not unlikely, they may fancy that they have seen the original. If they should seem to recognize any of their own lineaments, we commend to their notice the "words of exhortation" at the close:

"TIP-TOP DISCIPLES." "That is about the last name I should think of, applied in this manner." Well, if the thing were to be dropped, I would be very glad to drop the name. Let them both sink together. But since the one will swim, we can't help letting the other too. "But the name is never used in the Bible." No; but the thing is there; and the above unclerical, but truth-speaking appellation, is just simply the condensed description of a Bible-recorded disciple. "Diotrophes, who loveth to have the pre-eminence?" Pre-eminence, pretty well up. And to tip-top it is to get as high as you can. And just what Diotrophes loved is very dear now to some in Zion.

Now, there would be no difficulty in all this if the disciples, who want to be top, would but get on top of something, that had a real and valuable eminence. But they don't take wing in the right direction. They would rise and soar on eagle's flight upward; but what a bubble they spread their wings to attain.

Now see. To their opinions, on all subjects, others must yield. They must decide and have their own way in the choice of the minister, the amount of his salary, the nature of his labors. The minister's choice about his house, his politics, and who he shall have for his wife even, must be in submission to that of brother Diotrophes. And that dear brother must have all due deference paid him in the administration of all church and society affairs. How, in the creation, can they be right and safe unless his decision carries the day. This is what he thinks, and that is what he thinks; and it is utterly amazing to him that all other opinions do not wheel into the ranks, and let him be captain! He is the cleverest brother in the church, and his smiles the brightest sunshine—only let him be top. But put a feather's weight on his soaring wings, and he comes down upon us as an eagle that hatched in his prey. Pat him and pat him, and let him have his way, giving him a little of the sweet incense of flattery, and let it be understood that all things are done, and to be done according to his blessed will, he having and enjoying the pre-eminence, and his face shall beam with benignant complacency, and all about him cannot but be witnesses of his bliss.

But if dear brother is frustrated, and his wings are not strong enough to bear him above all opposition; if other men will have their opinions, and can carry their counsels, and the top is reached and held by a more fortunate rival, then the sunny smiles of Jesus retire from his countenance, and the sullen, chilly scowl of dark and comfortless November is there.

Suffer now a few words of exhortation, brother Tip-Top. Do try to be content with a position a little this side of the top, for a few reasons like these:

1. Because the principle that you would stand on can hold only one at a time, and therefore your chance, there being many competitors, is small as to getting there at all.

2. Fire-rate authority has put the safest and most honorable place far enough from the top. "He that is greatest among you, let him be your servant." Before honor is humility.

3. All tip-top articles, brother, are exposed to danger. Trees on mountain-tops are roughly handled by the storms. You will be rudely policed by all sorts of missiles, if you get up where you want to be. All eminences, like that you seek, expose the occupant to envy and jealousy. It may gratify your vanity to get there, at the expense, however, of your wisdom.

Our exhortation endeth, brother, this—Do this: Gratify your upward propensities by getting a-top of all those sinful passions and grovelling propensities which have been a-top of you. Having been ridden, now turn rider. Be it written of you, "He loveth the pre-eminence," but only in all that elevates and beautifies the character. Paul was a tip-top disciple in this sense. To a glorious pinnacle he rose. And, by all the beauty of his example, and all the energy of his words, are we called upon to follow him.

Speak Kindly.

In our daily intercourse with those we love—in our family relations as husbands and wives, parents and children, brothers and sisters—a constant watchfulness ought to be maintained over our words and actions, in order to avoid inflicting unnecessary pain. How frequently does it occur that a word unkindly said to those we once loved, but who have since been removed from us by the hand of death, will haunt our memory long afterwards, like an avenging demon, causing us poignant and vain regrets! Years after the circumstance has passed out of our minds and the mind of the friend we may have grieved or wronged, if some sudden calamity befalls him, or some unexpected summons calls him away from earth, and removes him from the scope of our ability to make redress, will the awakened memory of the unkind act or word cloud the melancholy reflections arising when we have parted in kindness from some one connected with us by the tenderest ties; and then no opportunity occurs to effect a reconciliation, the person we have injured is removed from us suddenly by death. Then comes the period of vain regrets and unavailing self-reproach. What would we give for a moment of time to ask and obtain one word of forgiveness from that loved one we have wronged? But alas! too late—too late!

The experience of an acquaintance, related by himself not long since, illustrates most forcibly the above position. He had been living, he said, away from home for several months, on a visit of a week or two at his father's house. The father was a man of the most uncompromising integrity, and cherished strong, though honest, prejudice against all light or transient amusements. He had never allowed his children, while under his control, to attend dancing parties or shows, or to mingle in the sports which most men regard as unobjectionable, or at least not altogether to be condemned. The consequence was, that the children, as it usual under such circumstances, were fond of indulging in the interdicted pleasures, and were apt, when an opportunity did occur, to carry them too far. They felt their father was prompted by a sincere conviction, and a desire to discharge, the duties of a parent who feels the weight of his responsibility to God, but they felt also that he was unnecessarily stringent in his interpretations of what he considered right or wrong. As a consequence, they did not hesitate when circumstances favored it, to evade their father's mandates, to set them at defiance.

"I shall never forget," said the narrator, "nor cease to regret the incidents, of my last visit home during my father's life. There was to be a ball at a neighboring tavern—by no means a reputable place—and it was to come off the evening before I was to return to my employment in a distant town. Feeling my self emancipated from parental control, (for I had just reached my majority,) and priding myself upon the idea that I was now master of my own actions, I signified my intention to be present. My father, as usual, forbade my attendance. I answered him in anger, stating that his authority over me was henceforth ended; that he had treated me like a boy, and I had submitted like a boy until now; but since I had reached the age at which the law permitted me to think and act for myself, I was determined to assert my rights. I went even so far, and was so unjust to my father, as to intimate that a desire existed on his part to tyrannize over us; from a love of paternal authority. He was a man of strong and natural irritable feelings, and his motives were always of the purest kind; and my conscience smote me, as I uttered the sentiments which my pride would not permit me to recall.

"An angry blush passed over his countenance at such an unusual reception of his commands, but he checked himself instantaneously, and answered with unusual mildness. 'Charles, I may have erred in many points touching the government of my children, but I have endeavored to do my duty as a parent and as a man. The time may come when you may be sorry for what you have uttered to-day!'"

"And that time did come more speedily than even he anticipated. They were prophetic words, and even at this late day they haunt me in my dreams.

"I went to the ball, but I did not enjoy myself; I was jovial, and full of glee; my associates thought me in unusually good spirits, but it was all feigned and hollow-hearted as a soap-bubble. 'Charles, the time may come when you will be sorry for what you have uttered to-day!' rung in my ears.

"It was near morning when the party broke up, and I returned home, jaded in spirit, exhausted in physical energy, and worn down with excitement. I went to bed, and fell into a troubled sleep, which lasted till near noon. When I awoke a dizzy and pain in the head

incapacitated me from mental exertion; still I half resolved, ere I left home in the afternoon, to confess my fault to my father. I met him at the dinner table, but no allusion was made by either of us to the incident of the previous day; and when we arose from the table it was necessary for me to take the coach. I followed my father into our little parlor, whether he had gone, as if desirous of affording me an opportunity to speak with him alone, but was ashamed to confess that I was wrong, and merely said that I must bid him good-by, as the coach was coming.

"Have you nothing more to say, Charles?" he inquired.

"No," I answered, and we parted. I took the coach for the scene of my labors displeased and angry with myself, but not penitent; and for a week succeeding was industriously employed in my avocation, having allowed the unpleasant circumstances to pass out of my mind, when an express came requiring my immediate presence at home, for it was stated that my father, in a state of perfect and florid health, had been stricken down by an apoplexy.

"Although still alive when the messenger left, he was insensible, and was not expected to survive. Then, indeed, I felt the full force of the ominous prediction, 'the time may come when you will feel sorry for what you have uttered to-day.' I hastened home, full of anxiety and grief, only to find my father at the point of death. He never gave a token of recognition of my presence, and resigned his spirit into the hands of God, amid the grief of a sorrowing household, of whom mine was infinitely the most bitter. Once, indeed, before my arrival, he rallied sufficiently to inquire if I had come, and on being answered in the negative, relapsed into a state of insensibility, and never spoke again. As I stood beside his bed, and gazed upon the lifeless features of one of the best of fathers, whose every command it was my duty to have obeyed, (and which, as a general thing, I did obey,) the thought of the last act of disobedience and unkindness tortured me like an avenging fiend; and I felt as if a word of forgiveness from those cold lips would have been received more joyfully than a welcome admission to the bliss of heaven."

The Greatness of Little Things.

In Lieut. Maury's recent work on the Physical Geography of the Sea, he gives the result of microscopic examinations of some shells drawn up from the bottom of the Atlantic ocean, where it is more than two miles in depth.—These shells are so minute that to the naked eye they appear like common dust or clay, although not a grain of sand is among them; and yet are so preserved that their most delicate edges are all perfect. It would require a larger globe to hold all the coal insects of the world than all the elephants. The small tenants of the ocean, not the largest, are its most important occupants, and the microscopic shellfish create more important changes than the whales.

It has been the great error of historians, statesmen and politicians to lose sight of this truth. They look only at the whales, the big fish, and seem to consider these as the monarchs of the deep sea of politics, and they alone have the right to swim there. If the French emperor flounders, or the Russian autocrat turns over on his side and dies, each contention is duly chronicled. But in the meantime, what do we hear of the progress of the people, the industrious classes, the small fish? They are the true monarchs of this great and wide sea of politics, after all. They form the strata by which the geologists of history will hereafter mark the progress of this age, and classify all its products; and upon the basis of which all future society will develop itself. Take care of the poor, and the rich will take care of themselves. Educate the masses, and there will arise from the number a sufficiently large class to generalize their ideas, and carry out their principles. Reform the people, make them temperate, truthful and virtuous, for they give tone and temper to the age and to the country, determining the character of its leaders far more than the leaders that of the masses.

And so in individual life and character. It is little things that make and unmake us all.—There are thousands of young men of genius and enterprise at this moment, who dream of fame and distinction, and who, if only required some great act of daring or sacrifice within the scope of human possibility, to become distinguished, would be heroes; but because true eminence is only to be attained by a persevering application in a number of daily virtues, are constantly at war with the whole scheme of things, and esteem it a very badly governed world in which they find no higher place.

It is a man's habits of dress, demeanor and conversation that make or unmake the friends on which his success and happiness in life depend. It is on a man's little habits of eating and drinking, of loitering over trifles, or knowing how to brush them aside, that his character for idleness or industry, and the occupation of the largest part of his time depend. It is the way in which a man takes care of the pennies in his pecuniary transactions that determines whether he will ever take care of pounds.

Little habits drive nails into our coffins.—They more than make up by their number, what they seem to lack in individual importance. They are true seeds of character. We might as well plant acorns, and not expect them to grow, as cherish small vices and not calculate on their increase; or as reasonably hope to see the firm and noble oak where no acorns were ever planted, as true greatness and success in life, where the seedlings of a thousand little habits of industry and virtue had not been first carefully cherished.

In a word, character is the sum of little things, rather than great ones. The true estimate of an individual is not ascertained by his accidental or occasional achievements, but his every-day habits. A nation's character is not determined by its famous men, but by the habits of its masses, and the character of the age by the virtues or vices that were so inherent as to be unnoticed.—Philip Ledger.

Swearing.

The absurdity and utter folly of swearing is admirably set forth in the following anecdote of Beescheub and his lumps. The latter went out

in the morning each to command his set of men, one the murderer, another the liar, and another the swearer, &c., &c. At evening they stopped at the mouth of a cave. The question arose who commanded the meanest set of men. The subject was debated at length, but without coming to a decision. Finally his Satanic Majesty was called upon to decide the matter in dispute. Whereupon he said: "The murderer got something for killing, the thief for stealing, the liar for lying, but the swearer was the meanest of all, he served without pay.—They were his majesty's best subjects; for while they were costless, their names were legion, and presented the largest division in his (Satan's) employ."

From the American Messenger.

Three Holy Labors.

Melancthon used to relate to his friends, with delight, an instance in which two or three poor but holy women rendered a most important service to the Reformation, at a crisis which was full of darkness and peril. The prince had ordered a council of the most eminent reformed ministers at Torgau, where the court was then held. Luther was there, with Melancthon and many others. The sword of the persecuter was at the throat of the church. The enemies of truth were bold and full of hope; her friends, many of them, timid and temporizing. Despotism power was measuring out "in goldsmith's scales," as one of the reformers expressed it, the peace and truth of the church of God.

Here then, "the little and feeble knots" of God's ministers came together, imploring, hoping, and awaiting help from God alone. After many prayers and long deliberations, Melancthon being called out by a messenger, rose up weary and sad, and left the council. "On his way back, he passed through a room in which the poor wives and little children of one of the ministers and two deacons were nursing their children and hearing them repeat their prayers. Philip stopped and listened with wonder and delight, as he always used to do, to the lisped prayers of little ones, remembering the word, "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger." What moved him particularly was the sight of one of the deacon's wives who was nursing an infant at her bosom, preparing with her hands a *paraphrase* for her husband's breakfast, and listening to another child repeating its prayers. "O," exclaimed Philip, "three holy labors at once, all well-pleasing to God!"

Strengthened and lifted up in spirit by this spectacle, he came back into the council with a joyful countenance. Luther observed the change. "Philip," said he, "wherefore dost thou return to us so joyful, who just now wentest out so sorrowful and anxious? What has happened to thee?" "Be not afraid, gentlemen," replied Melancthon, "for I have met with those who will fight for us and defend us, and stand unconquerable against all forces." "Who," inquired Luther, "are those brave generals and soldiers?" "The wives and little children of our ministers and deacons," answered Melancthon, "whose prayers I have just heard, and from which God will not turn away his ears. Even heretofore the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ hath not despised these prayers, and he will not, I am persuaded, despise these."

All who were in the council were moved by these words. With re-established faith and hope, they took such a stand as became firm and faithful ministers of the word of God.—The measures of that day were blessed to the churches, and God mercifully lightened the affliction of his people. J. P.

Popular Extravagance.

Our Christianity and our love of country should put us upon fitting remedies for some of the alarming habits of extravagance which prevail among us. One of the sources of this manifold evil has been fairly put in the following remarks of a wholesale merchant and importer, as given in the annual report of "The American Woman's Education Society":

"You have got hold of a great matter, sir. I hope you will succeed. The women are 'wrong' sir. They are not educated right.—They are going to bankrupt the country unless there is a change. More is thought of show than substance. We pay scores of millions annually for ladies' ornaments which are of no use. We cannot afford it. It is worse than sinking the gold in the sea! We are paying more duties on artificial flowers than on railroad iron! God help you to elevate the position and the aim of woman!"

The fact that a store in this city employed in the sale of lace and other superfluities in that line, pays a rent of ten thousand dollars a year, is a significant comment upon this speech. There is no cure for such an evil, though it threatens ruin to the country, and greater ruin to Christian character, but in something that shall divert the ambition of the female mind to something better worthy of rational and immortal beings, than this rivalry in expensive dress and outward show.

There is another form of extravagance to which public attention ought to be directed, for which the ladies are not so much responsible. It is seen in the present style of our public steamboats and hotels. It is neither necessary nor expedient for any of the substantial purposes of the traveling community, that our steamboats should be floating palaces, and that every person who dies at a hotel, should be made to pay for a sumptuous feast, involving all attainable luxuries whether he wishes them or not. It would be of great public advantage, if our hotels should adopt the European plan, of furnishing only what should be especially ordered. There is a manifest absurdity as will grant, in making every person who dies at a public table, pay for wine which he does not use; but no greater than in making every guest pay the cost of a sumptuous meal, while he partakes of only the plainest dishes and desires no other.

Another evil of this system is, that at these public tables, the example of luxury and extravagance is set, which promotes the same in private life. This is one of the many forms in which habits of luxury are gaining upon our people, and from which they must be reformed, or be ruined. The innocent in such a case