

Revelation we find this same rider upon the white horse—now, with blood-stained vesture, but with regal titles. He is called “Faithful and True,” “the Word of God.” His head is adorned with many crowns, and he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS !

Amen ! Even so, come, Lord Jesus !

ARTICLE II.

PASTORS AND EVANGELISTS VERSUS STATED
SUPPLIES.

We rejoice that the employment of evangelists on the part of our presbyteries is becoming the rule; and the omission, the exception. We are fully persuaded this is as it should be. But we are likewise fully persuaded that the views of the majority of our people, and of elders and ministers as well, are yet very crude upon this whole subject. An earnest discussion of a matter of so much importance is greatly needed. Great good must follow the adoption of clear and definite views. The views presented on this subject several years since by that beloved and venerated man of God, James H. Thornwell, did much to awaken attention. The writer of these lines must at all events testify that the first ideas, having any definiteness in them as to the true position and work of the evangelist in the Church at the present day, were obtained from him. But these views have been of slow growth in the Church. The idea in its scriptural simplicity and force has taken root, however; and is now, year by year, growing with more and more rapidity. Our prayer is, that it may continue to grow until the evangelist occupies a clear, distinct, and well defined place in our ecclesiastical system.

It has been obvious for many years that something was wanting to give proper efficiency to our presbyterial system. It has been plain that there was a screw loose some where—not of course in the system, but in our notion and application of it. There is plainly a failure in nurturing feeble churches and carrying

the gospel to destitute neighborhoods within the limits of organised presbyteries. In foreign countries, amongst the heathen, and in regions in this country beyond organised churches, missionaries have been sent who are true evangelists. But, within the territorial limits of a regularly organised Church, with its presbyteries, synods, etc., an anomalous system has grown up—a sort of hybrid—neither fish, flesh, nor fowl—we might almost say a “*monstrum horrendum*.” What it is, no one seems able to tell; and what it is not, seems equally difficult to tell. It is however *a something*, and as such it must have a designation; and by a sort of tacit consent, it has come to be known as “*stated supply*.” By some, war has been declared upon it. They have determined to kill it, if possible. If they could have their way, it would at once be banged up by the neck until it was dead. On the other hand, some have regarded it as greatly persecuted, and hence have rallied to its defence. This is in accordance with one of the amiable and redeeming qualities of human nature, which always has its sympathies awakened for the persecuted, if not belonging to the number of the persecutors.

In truth, much can be said in defence of “*stated supply*.” It has not been an unmitigated evil. It has not been ONLY evil, and that continually. But yet, with whatever of good, it has been a continued evil, and is rapidly becoming a greater one, inasmuch as it is rapidly superseding the pastoral relation on the one hand, and the true evangelist on the other. It is neither one nor the other of these, and hence has no place in our system, or in the divine plan. The attempt has been made to defend the “*stated supply*” as virtually the evangelist. But is this notion correct? We shall inquire as to this presently.

Our system gives great prominence to the pastoral relation, and it does so wisely. It contemplates the settlement of a minister over a particular congregation to continue for life, or at least for a long period of time. This is certainly contemplated in all the forms that are required before the relation is consummated. Time is required, so that deliberation may be had. Opportunity is given for a most deliberate selection of a suitable

minister for the particular field. Not only the congregation and minister must agree, but the presbytery must agree likewise, that the proposed connection is wise and likely to be for the good of the Church and the promotion of God's glory.

The Presbyterian system evidently presupposes that every organised congregation should have its own pastor to devote himself exclusively to its spiritual interests. This is not only desirable, but necessary to proper Christian growth. Almost invariably as soon as a congregation loses its undershepherd, the flock begins to wander. Those congregations which have never enjoyed the labors of a faithful pastor, *as a pastor*, are generally marked with great inefficiency in some directions, if not in every direction. Then, without going more into detail, we say emphatically, that our system gives, and rightly gives, the first place to the pastoral relation.

But, while the obvious and right theory of our system is for every congregation to have its own pastor, this has been found in practical working to be an impossibility. Some may be disposed to question this admission; for we have heard it contended, that if each congregation *ought* to have a pastor, then this *ought* could surely be carried out. If there is only a will, there will be a way. But we shall not pause to discuss this further, except to remark, that with a great many congregations the excuse "*can not*" is not true. The real difficulty is "*will not*." But candor must admit, that not a few of our congregations are so weak in numbers, and so limited in means, that we cannot but excuse them for not attempting to support a pastor. In such cases, two or more congregations should unite in a joint pastorate. This is plainly recognised and contemplated in our system in the case of very small congregations. If so small, no pastor might attend to two or more by diligence.

It was just here that the seed of "stated supply" was deposited; and, verily, it has taken root and grown and become a great tree, and the branches thereof well nigh overshadow our beloved Zion. Here began the anomaly of a class of ministers, *neither pastors nor evangelists*, but nondescripts. These "*stated supplies*" are now perhaps the majority of our ministers, out-

numbering pastors, evangelists proper, foreign missionaries, and those in institutions of learning, placed there by the Church itself to train our youth.

Here, then, are a majority of our ministers occupying a position unknown to our standards. Is it not time, then, for us to pause and consider? And the evil we fear is still on the increase. At all events, the causes out of which this anomalous state of things arose are still in full force. It is easy to see what they were and are. The fault is partly with the ministers, and partly with the churches. As to the minister, he finds himself in a field of labor too extensive to permit of the proper discharge of pastoral duties, and hence he feels a natural and perhaps proper unwillingness to engage to perform them; and also his salary is inadequate, and he cannot give all his time to the work. In such a state of things he naturally wishes to be as free as possible to take another field if offered, or to engage in such other employment as his necessities may require. Hence it is no wonder that he prefers to remain a stated supply. And then as to the churches, the fault is, they find by experience that a stated supply can be obtained at less cost than a pastor, and also that it is so much easier to make a change whenever desired. Our system contemplates permanency between minister and people, and wisely endeavors to restrain "*itching ears*" or the love of change. The stated supply system *encourages* this.

We have said that one ground of defence of the stated supply is, that he is virtually an evangelist; and if so, what is the use of stickling about a name? But is it true? It might with equal truth be said, the stated supply is virtually a pastor, and if so, what is the use of contending for a name and a form? The truth is obvious. They are neither pastors nor evangelists. Here and there one may be found who approaches very near to the one or the other. But yet they are neither. We submit that a large number of stated supplies are nearer being pastors than evangelists. They labor for years in the same prescribed field, and perform the identical work they would do if pastors, and yet they are not pastors in fact. If "*virtually*" is just as good, and the very same as "*in fact*," then let us at once amend our

Book and our ways, and dispense with all the forms of a *call*, installation, etc. Let us at once proclaim the broadest independency, and tell our ministers one and all, Go where you please, and when you please; and to the congregations, Get any one you can, and do with him as seems good in your own eyes, and ask no odds of Presbytery or any one else.

The stated supply system is taking the whole control of the connections and relations of ministers and congregations out of the hands of the Presbytery. It is true, that sometimes a congregation asks permission of Presbytery to employ a certain minister or some one else; and a minister asks to be permitted to supply a certain field or any place he may find. But even these forms are frequently omitted, and sometimes declared to be meaningless and useless. If Presbytery rightly and wisely should have control in these matters, let it be maintained. If not, let it be abandoned. We do not like *shams*, about such things at least. We do not like “*virtually*” any more than we like “*ipso facto*.”

Let us then dispense with stated supplies; and let us, in accordance with our system, which is, as we hold, by divine right, require of every one of our ministers who is able to work, that he work under the immediate direction and control of the Church. Let such as are necessary to instruct in theology, and to conduct the great schemes of the Church, be appointed to their positions, and then controlled by the Church; and let us require all others to be either pastors or evangelists; not neither one nor the other, but one or the other. When the pastoral relation is practicable, let it be required; when it is not, let the *Presbytery* appoint evangelists and control them as such.

Here let us notice one of the common errors associated with the term *evangelist*. The common notion has been that an evangelist is a minister who wanders about hither and thither, yonder and every where, preaching the gospel, and whose sole object and business is to wake up sleepy Christians and convert sinners. A glorious work, you will say; and so it is—a most glorious work. We make no objection to this work, but we do object to limiting the term evangelist to such only. An evangelist is one commis-

sioned and sent forth into a small or a large field to do any *ministerial* work which cannot be done by him in that field as a pastor. The work assigned him may be just that indicated above. All ministerial work has and must have those great ends in view. But the immediate work assigned him may be more limited. He may be sent forth to gather up the scattered ones and organise them into congregations, or to urge "stated supply" churches to seek the pastoral relation, or to urge them and instruct them in some great Christian duty which has fallen into neglect. Or he may be sent to a definite and limited field to perform all the duties of a pastor to certain feeble flocks. A minister sent forth by the authority of the Church to do all these, or more specifically any one of them, or perhaps other, like work, is an evangelist as distinguished from the settled pastor.

Now, it has happened that some of our presbyteries have commissioned a minister and called him an *evangelist* and sent him forth to do just one or more of the things above specified. As he was called an evangelist, the people have expected that he would come and preach to them some great rousing sermons, and "get up a revival." They did not want to hear anything about foreign or domestic missions, or education for the ministry, or any thing else that hinted at money. An evangelist should say nothing about covetousness, drunkenness, Sabbath-breaking, and the like. A pastor might do so, but an evangelist never. If he does, they are offended and cry him down. Now all will admit that a pastor ought to preach about these things when there is good cause; and why not an evangelist? To be more specific, ought not a pastor to instruct his flock in the great Christian duty of entire personal consecration to the Lord Jesus, and this to include the unreserved consecration of their property? Surely none will object. Now it too often happens that the very reason why certain congregations have no pastor, and hence the necessity of sending them an evangelist, is the fact that they are utterly deficient in the grace of giving; and hence here is the strongest of reasons for pressing this very duty upon them. But these very people will cry out, An evangelist should not handle

such subjects. Our position, then, is this: that the whole work of gathering into and building up the kingdom of Christ here on earth, so far as preaching is concerned, (and this is the chief instrumentality,) falls under the duties of a pastor or an evangelist, and hence there is no place for stated supplies, either in our received system, or the word of God on which we found it. Stated supply can be (may we not say is, at least sometimes?) made a cloak by both ministers and congregations to try to get rid of responsibility and shirk duty.

In view, then, of these things, it would seem that every Presbytery ought to lay hold of and set to work every one of its ministers able to work, who is not already in a field assigned him by the Church; and also lay hold of every congregation under its care and require such as can to seek for a pastor, and not permit them to have stated supplies. Such churches as cannot, it should group in proper fields and send them an evangelist. If so sent to do the work of a minister, he will be an evangelist, whether his field is large or small.

The question will at once be asked, How are these evangelists to be supported? We answer: If presbyteries will be in earnest, most of the support can be obtained from the fields occupied; its to the remainder, we refer to the able articles of J. O. L., in the *Southern Presbyterian and Index*, entitled "Preaching the Gospel to the Poor," in which is set forth the duty of the stronger to help the weaker. Let the true idea of the evangelist be received, and let the presbyteries not only appoint them, but see by a strict oversight that they do the work assigned them, and one great difficulty in the way of inducing the larger congregations to help will be removed. Let it be seen that presbyteries are determined to require full work of their ministers, or call them to account, and let it also be seen that the fields into which they are sent are not able to afford a support, and we believe help will be given.

The writer has had some little experience in the Domestic Missionary cause, and he has found one of the great difficulties in getting hold of the hearts and reaching down into the pockets of Christian people, to be this: That some of those who are Do-

mestic Missionaries are not fit for the work. They lack zeal, or energy, or something, and, in one word, are *inefficient*. No wonder objection is made to contributing for the support of such. We have known of cases just like this: a minister has tried several fields and failed in every one—failed, too, just where efficiency on his part would have secured a support. But he has failed in his work, and hence the people have failed to sustain him. By-and-by, out of employment, he makes application to some missionary committee for employment. They need men to do the work which they have been appointed to supervise. The right sort of men are hard to be found, yet they hesitate. They fear the appointment will not be for good, but they deeply sympathise with the brother in his need. There is also outside pressure brought to bear upon them thus: Do give him a place if you can. The appointment is reluctantly made, and proves a failure; and much injury to the cause in several ways is the inevitable result. Hence we say again, that every Presbytery should take a firm stand and require of each of its ministers faithful work—should make it its business to see that every minister has a fair field and a fair support, and is earnestly doing the work assigned him. If presbyteries will take control and see to the work, as to both quantity and quality, we do not think they will find the item of support so very difficult. It will need careful and earnest attention, but will not be found so utterly unmanageable as now.

In our judgment the most pressing necessity in many of our presbyteries, is to select one of their very best men and send him throughout their bounds for the specific purpose of stirring up the weaker churches, and especially the stated supply ones, to a much more earnest effort to help themselves, and also the stronger ones to aid the weaker in cases of plain need. This one thing wisely and efficiently done would add much to immediate prosperity, and in the future its results would be incalculable. We would commend to the reader the views and facts presented in the pages of this REVIEW on the conduct of Domestic Missions in the number for January, 1870.

ARTICLE III.

THE RELIGIOUS PRINCIPLE THE LIFE OF THE NATION.

This subject, embracing principles of great and practical utility, addresses itself more urgently every day to the attention of the wise-hearted of the land.

That we may escape the common vagaries which so often, and with so much danger to the moral and political welfare of the nation, accompany the excited passions engendered by the discussion of politico-religious principles, it is proper that we define the sense in which the word religion is used in this paper.

We do not confine ourselves to the philological meaning given Cicero, from *relego*, to read again; nor of Lactantius, from *relego*, to bind back; but we take the lexicographical, and the clearly defined ecclesiastical meaning, which is: "An acknowledgment of our obligation to God as our Creator, with a feeling of reverence and love, and consequent obedience to him. Such religion will engender piety, and embrace a faith, which, like a thread of gold, will be worked into the web of life, and bind together the entire moral, social, and civil fabric. "The most profound political speculations, however, the most refined theories of government, though they establish the fame of their authors, will be found perhaps to have had very little influence on the happiness of nations. As the art of criticism never made an orator or a poet-though it enables us to judge of their merits-so the comprehensive speculation of modern times, which has reviewed and compared the manners and institutions of every age and country, has never formed a wise government or a happy people. It arrives too late for that purpose, since it owes its existence to an extensive survey of mankind, under a variety of forms, though all those periods of national improvement and decay in which the happiest efforts of wisdom

and policy have been already made. The welfare of a nation depends much less on the refined wisdom of the few, than on the manners and character of the many; and as moral and religious