

BY GEORGE W. WYLLIE.

The following poem has been pronounced to be unequalled in its peculiar style, in the English language:

I am dying, Egypt, dying;
Ere the crimson life-life fast;
And the dark, Phoenician shadows
Gather on the evening blast.

Let thine arms, O Queen, unfold me;
Hush thy sighs and bow thine ear;
Listen to the great heart's secret;
Thou, and thou alone, shalt hear.

Thou my sacred and veteran legion
Bear thy eagle high no more,
And my wrecked and shattered galleys
Strew dark Actium's fatal shore.

Though no glittering gleams surround me,
Proud to do thy master's will,
I must perish like a Roman—
Die the great Triumvir's ill!

Let not Caesar's servile minions
Mark the lion that laid low;
'Twas no Roman's arm that foiled him,
'Twas the eagle's talon that flew.

Thou, who, pillowed on thy bosom,
Turned aside from glory's ray—
Who, drunk with thy conqueror's wine,
Madly threw a world away!

Should the base, plebeian rabble
Dare assail my name at Rome,
Where the public square, Octavia,
Weeps within her widow's home.

Seek her; say the gold-bear witness—
Alas, she grieves, she sobs, she weeps;
Yet shall none molest the throne of kings.

And for thee, star-eyed Egyptian!
Flourish scepter of the Nile;
Light the path to Egyptian honors,
With the splendor of thy smile.

Let the "Cesar crown" and arches,
Let his brow the laurel twine,
I can watch the Phœnix triumph,
Triumphing in love like thine!

I am dying, Egypt, dying—
Mark thy "insulting" woman's cry;
They are coming, quick, my falcons—
Let me front them with my eye!

Ah, no more amid the battle
Shall my heart, awfully, well;
I'm and Cleopatra, Rome, farewell!

POLITICAL PREACHING—ABLE LETTER FROM HON. J. S. BLACK.

To the Rev. Alfred Neen, D. D., My Dear Sir—Your letter addressed to me through the Philadelphia Evening Bulletin disappoints me; because I did not expect it to come in that way, and because it does not cover the subject in relation to me.

But if I am silent your friends will with some show of truth, and with authority, vindicate "Political Preaching" as an infidelity that all opposition is confounded. I must therefore speak freely in reply.

In doing so, I mean to say nothing inconsistent with my great respect for your high character in the church and in the world. The admirable style and temper of your own communication deserve to be imitated.

I fully concede the right you claim for clergymen to select their own themes and handle them as they please. You say truly that neither lawyer, nor physician, nor any other order of men, have the authority to control you in these particulars.

But you will not deny that this is a privilege which may be abused; you expressly admit that some clergymen have abused it, and in doing so did more than any other class of men to compromise and confuse the relation.

While, therefore, we can assert no power to dictate your conduct, much less to force you, we are surely not wrong when we entreat you to impose upon yourselves those restraints which are necessary for the good of the church and the safety of your communion as a broad one.

You must declare the whole counsel of God, to the end that sinners may be convinced and converts built up in their most holy faith. Truth, justice, temperance, humility, mercy, pity, brotherly kindness, charity—the whole circle of the christian virtues—must be as conspicuously taught to your hearers; and if any of you are inclined to the opposite view, you are to denounce them without fear, by private admonition, by open rebuke, or by a general delivery of the law which condemns them.

You are not bound to the law, but the commandment of this day because it may offend a powerful ruler or a strong political party. Nor should you shrink from it when bad men, for their own purposes, approve what you do.

Elevate the moral character, enlighten the darkness, and purify the hearts of those who are under your spiritual charge, at all hazards; for this is the work which your great Taskmaster has given you to do; he will admit no excuse for neglecting it.

But this is precisely what the political preacher is not in the habit of doing. He directs the attention of his hearers away from their own souls to the sins, real or imputed, of other people.

By teaching his congregation that they are better than other men he fills their hearts with self conceit, bigotry, spiritual pride, envy, hatred, malice and all uncharitableness.

Instead of the exhortation, which they need, to take the beam out of their own eye he incites them to pluck the mote from the eye of their brother's. He does not tell them what they shall do to be saved, but he instructs them very carefully how they shall not for the destruction of others.

He accuses and encourages to the utmost of his ability, those brutal passions which are the source of bloodshed, apostasy, civil war and general corruption of morals.

You commit a grievous error in supposing that politics and religion are so mingled together that you cannot preach one without introducing the other. Christ and his apostles kept them perfectly separate.

They announced the great facts of the Gospel to each individual which they addressed. When these were accepted the believers were baptized, and were afterwards to regulate his own life by the rules of a pure and perfect morality.

They expressed no preference for one form of government over another, they proposed no political revolutions, and they proposed no legal reforms.

If they had done so they would have flatly contradicted the declaration that Christ's Kingdom was not of this world, and Christianity itself would have died out in a century.

They treated human law and exhorted their disciples to discharge faithfully the duties which arose out of them. Through the law which defined the authority of husbands, parents, magistrates and magistrates were as bad as much reverence could make them.

They early Christians contented themselves with teaching moderation in the exercise of legal power, and uniformly inculcated the virtues of obedience and fidelity upon their slaves and subjects.

They joined no clamors for or against any administration, but simply testified against sin before the only tribunal which Christ ever erected on earth; that is to say the conscience of the sinner himself. The view of political preaching was wholly unknown to the primitive church.

It is true that Paul counseled obedience to the government of Nero; and I am aware that modern clergymen interpret his words as a justification of the doctrine that support of an existing administration is "part of their allegiance to God." Several Synods and other ecclesiastical bodies have solemnly resolved something to that effect.

But they forget that Paul advised no simple submission, not active assistance, to Nero. The Christians of that day did not endorse his atrocities merely because he was "the

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administration daily placed in power. They did not go to him in the theatre, applaud his singing, or praise him in the churches when he kidnaped their brethren, set fire to a city, or desolated a province. Nor did they assist at his apotheosis after his death, or pronounce funeral sermons to show that he was greater than Sappho, more virtuous than Cato, and more eloquent than Cicero. Political preachers did no such thing, but Paul and Peter did no such thing.

There is nothing in the Scriptures to justify the Church in applying its discipline to any member for offenses purely political. Much less for his mere opinions or feelings on public affairs. The clergy are without authority, as they are often without fitness, to decide for their congregations what is right or what is wrong in the legislation of the country. They are not called on to propagate any kind of political doctrine. The Church and the State are entirely separate, and distinct in their origin, their object, and the sphere of their action; inasmuch that the organization of one can never be used for any purpose of the other without injury to both.

Do I therefore say that the Christian religion is to have no influence on the political destiny of man? Far from it. Notwithstanding the unfaithfulness of many professors, it has already changed the face of human society; and it will yet accomplish its mission by spreading peace, independence, truth, justice, and liberty regulated by law. From the sea to the uttermost ends of the earth. But this will be accomplished only by reforming and elevating the individuals of whose society it is composed; not by concentrating clamors against each other, by an alliance with the governments of the world; not by any vulgar partnership with politicians to kill and plunder their enemies.

Every time you reform a bad man and bring his character up to the standard of a Christian morality, you make an addition, greater or less, to that righteousness which exalts a nation, and subverts an equalism from the in which is a reproach to any people. Sometimes a single conversion is as important in its immediate effect upon the public interest, as a nation. No doubt the acceptance of the Gospel by Diogenes the Areopagite had a great influence in moulding the subsequent laws and customs of Athens. The conversion of Constantine was followed by the instant abolition of all laws which fettered the conscience. In the reign of Theodosius the people of Thessalonica rose against the Roman garrison and the Emperor decreed against them the curio of an indiscriminate war in which the guilty and the innocent were confounded together in one general slaughter. His spiritual "gale, philosopher, and friend" at the time was Ambrose, the Archbishop of Milan, who boldly denounced his cruelty, refused to give him the Sacrament, or even to administer it in his presence, compelled him to take his seat among the penitents on the portico of the church and induced him to humble his divinity in the dust for eight months in succession. The conscience of the Emperor was thoroughly awakened; his subsequent reign was distinguished by justice and mercy, the integrity of the empire was preserved in peace, and the great "Theodosian code" the product of that latter repentance is still read and quoted for its admirable union of humanity and policy. Ambrose produced these consequences by acting in the true capacity of a Christian minister; for he recovered the criminal by a direct appeal to his own heart. A political preacher in the same circumstances would have inflamed the sanguinary passions of the monarch by exaggerating the treason of the Thessalonians and counselling the misty execution of all who presumed to sympathize in their sufferings.

You will not deny, I think, the distinction I will make. A gospel preacher addresses the conscience of his hearers for the honest purpose of converting them from the error of their ways, a political preacher speaks to one community, one party or one sect, and his theme is the wickedness of another. The latter officiates religious purpose whatever, but the former is ninety-nine in a hundred that he extorts the bad passions of those who are present, while he slanders the absent and unfed. Both classes of preachers frequently speak upon the same or similar objects, but they do so with different objects and aims.

I will make my meaning more clear by taking you my own illustration. You believe in the Sabbath, and you believe in the duty of unbendingly to exert all persons under your charge to observe it strictly; but you have no right to preach a crusade against the Jews, and denounce their Magists, to get intolerant laws enacted against them for keeping Saturday as a day of rest. If drunkenness be a sin which easily besets your congregation you may warn them against it, and inasmuch as abstinence is always easier than moderation, you should advise them to taste not, touch not, handle not, but your position gives you no authority to proceed with hostilities against tavern keepers, liquor dealers or distillers. If any of your hearers be ignorant or careless enough so desire more wives than one piece, you should certainly teach them that polygamy is the worst feature of Asiatic manners, inconsistent with Christianity and dangerous to domestic happiness; but you cannot lawfully urge them to carry fire and sword into the territory of the Mormons merely because, some of the Mormons are in their respect less holy than you. If the holding of slaves or bond servants be a practical question among the members of your church, I know of nothing which forbids you to teach whatever you conscientiously believe to be true on that subject. But in a community where slavery is not only unknown but impossible, why should any preacher make it the subject of his weekly veneration? You do not improve the religion of the slave-holder by traducing his character or mending the political condition of your own people by making them thirst for the blood of their fellow men.

If any person, to whom the service of an existing administration is "part of their allegiance to God," several Synods and other ecclesiastical bodies have solemnly resolved something to that effect. But they forget that Paul advised no simple submission, not active assistance, to Nero. The Christians of that day did not endorse his atrocities merely because he was "the

and precept. In dealing with such a person you may go much further than you own conscientious interpretation of the Bible will carry you. If you are sure that the divine law, does, under all circumstances, make the mere existence of such a relation sinful on the part of the master you should induce him to dissolve it by the immediate emancipation of his slaves; for that is truth to you which you believe to be true. But where is the authority for preaching hatred of those who understand the scriptures differently? What privilege can you show for exciting servile insurrections? Who gave you the right to say that John Brown was better than any other thief or murderer, merely because his crimes were committed against pro slavery men?

I think the minister, in his pulpit discourse, is forbidden to touch at all upon political class of subjects which are purely political; for instance as the banking law, tariff, rail road charters, state rights, the nullification laws and negro suffrage. These are questions of mere political expediency; religion takes no cognizance of them; they come within the sole jurisdiction of the statesman; and the church has no more right to take sides upon them than the civil government has to use its legislative, judicial or executive power for the purpose of enforcing principles wholly religious.

In short, if I am not entirely mistaken, a Christian minister has no authority to preach upon any subject except those which divine revelation has given him an infallible rule of faith and precept; and, even upon them, he must speak always for the edification of his own hearers, "rightly dividing the word of truth," so as to lead the soul to God, and not to any other end. He does not mean to go beyond his commission, he becomes a merely political and his influence is altogether pernicious.

The use of the clerical office for the purpose of propagating political doctrines under any circumstances, or with any excuse, is in my judgment not only without authority, but it is the highest crime that can be committed against the government of God. "Persecution" ought not to make this broad assertion without giving some additional reasons for it.

In the first place it is grossly dishonest to employ you as a minister, to give you confidence in your religious doctrine. But you may be at the same time wholly unfit for your political leader. Now you are guilty of a base fraud upon me, if, instead of preaching religion, you take advantage of the position I have given you to propagate your crude and ignorant notions on State affairs. I have asked for bread and you give me a stone, instead of the fish I bargained for, you put into my hand a serpent that stings and poisons me.

It destroys the unity of the church. There is no room for a minister to give a general account of the Christian religion, but men will never agree upon political subjects, for both your verities is at best but a compromise of selfish interests and conflicting passions. When you mix the two together you break the church into fragments, and in stead of "one Lord, one faith and one baptism" you create a "hundred warring sects," and substitute the proverbial bitterness of theological theologism for the charity which thinketh no evil.

No one will deny that a union of church and state is always the cause of bad government, perverted religion, corrupt morals, and a general degeneracy of the human mind. I do not mean to say that a union which exists in European countries. That is bad enough; but you have less common sense than I give you credit for, if you do not see that this adulterous connection assumes its most polluting form when the church is voluntarily prostituted by her own ministers to a political party in a popular government.

The evil influence of such connections upon Church and State is easily accounted for. Both of them in combination will do what either would rarely do if standing alone. A political party backed by the clergy to sustain him can safely defy honesty and trample upon law, for do what he may, he is assured of clerical support here and hereafter. The clergy on the other hand and those who are under their influence easily acquire the habit of praising indiscriminately whatever is done by their number. Acting and reacting on one another they go down together in the direction of the pit that is bottomless; and both are found to have "a strange alacrity in sinking."

No man can serve two masters faithfully; he must love either the law or the other. A minister who admires and follows such men as those who have lately ruined and ruined the country must necessarily disguise the character of Christ if he glorifies the cruelty, rapacity and falsehood of his party leaders he is compelled by an insupportable law of human nature to "deny the Lord who bought him."

The experience of fifteen centuries proves that political preachers are the great cause of the world. More than half the bloody wars which at different periods have been waged in Christendom, were produced by their direct instigation; and wherever they have thrust themselves into a contest commenced by others, they always have envenomed the strife and made it more cruel, savage and uncompromising. The religious wars, so-called, had nothing religious about them, except that they were raised up by the clergy.

Look back and see if this be true. The Arian controversy (the first great schism) was followed by wars in which millions of lives were lost—Do you suppose the real quarrel was for the insertion or omission of *Alogos* in that part of the creed which describes the procession of the Holy Ghost? Had a *Azovian* slaughter his brother because he was a *Azovian*? No, it was not the difference of a diphthong, but the plunder of an empire that they fought for. It was the politics of the church, not her religion, that infuriated the parties and converted men into demons.

The Thirty Years War in Germany is often supposed to have been a fair stand up fight between the two leading forms of Christianity. It was not so. The religious difference was a false pretense of the political preachers for the promotion of their own schemes. There was not a sane man on all that continent who would have felt himself impelled by motives merely religious to murder his neighbor for believing or disbelieving in transubstantiation. If proof of this were wanting, it might be

found in the fact, that long before the war ended, the religious cries were abandoned, and Catholics, as well as Protestants, were fighting on both sides.

It is strictly impossible to believe that the clergy of England and Scotland, if they had not been politicians, would have thought of waging bloody wars in settlement of election and reprobation, false, for knowledge free will, and other points of metaphysical theology. Nor would they speak for their politics, have encouraged and committed the other horrid crimes of which they were guilty in the name of religion.

Can you think that the Irish were invaded, and conquered, and oppressed, merely because the English loved and believed in the Protestant religion? I suppose you know that those brutal atrocities were carried on for the purpose of giving to political preachers in England possession of the churches, cathedrals, glebe lands and tithes which belonged to the Irish Catholics. The soldier was also rewarded by confiscations and plunder. The church and the state lusted in couples, and Ireland was the prey which they ran down together.

Coming to our own country you find Mr. Jackson and Mr. Van Buren in colonial times under the sole domination of political preachers. Their teachings were upon the Indian for purposes wholly mercenary, their enslaving of white persons, and their selling them abroad, or "wrapping them for blacksmokers;" their whipping, imprisoning and killing Quakers and Baptists; for their conscientious opinions; and their base treatment of such men as Roger Williams and his friends, will mark their government through all time as one of the cruellest and meanest that ever existed.

SOLILOQUY OF THE POOR FARMER.

As "BLACK POWERTY" "Breadth!" "What?" "Let us stop here and rest under the shade of this tree for the old horse is tired. This is a beautiful home—just in the edge of the city. The grounds are clean, and the grass is kept cropped like the face of a new shaven man. And look you, Maggy, how thickly the trees are. And how many flowers there are all about the yard. Let us stand up in the wagon—the horse is not so tired for he is poor and tired to run. Look at the roses, and the verbena, and the evergreens, and dahlia, and the fruit trees, and the stately, and the nicely grained walks, and the broad steps, and the double-hung, and the masting before the door, and the fancy stained glass by the side, and the silver bell-pull, and the rosewood door. And, ah, look what a fine lawn. And what a height, pretty carriage. And how sleek the horses look. And how gay the driver is, with his uniform on. I tell you, Maggy, that man is rich."

Ah, here he comes, staid up on the seat of the wagon, Maggy. He is an old settler, with an old blanket—but it will hold you. I can see down here. He comes out with his gun. Here comes his wife. And they dressed neat. And here comes their son, a daughter on horseback. They are going out for a ride. Ah! they have started. See how the horses dance down the drive to the road—and see how quick that little boy runs to open the gate.

"What are you waiting for?" "Please sir, we were looking, and didn't know but you would like to buy some butter, eggs, vegetables, chickens, berries, flowers or something of that sort."

"All right. Sit down, Maggy. We will go to market. We can sell anything except at market, for we have no house, and it would take all we have to buy a house. We would get more each load of our produce to peddle it out, but it's against the law, so we'll do for what we'll give us why have a license to sell?"

"Why is that?" "Ah, Maggy, I don't know. I wish I did. How the dust flies in my eyes, as Mr. Bond says for that is his name, dashes by with his heavy family. I give it a shove, we're gone. You know, Maggy, I want to have five years ago. Then owned fifty acres of land on the creek and there wasn't a dollar to pay on it. I went to save the Union. Mr. Bond paid me two hundred dollars to take his place, and go to war."

"You know, Maggy, how you used when I went, but like a brave soldier that you are, you died your years, filled my pockets with pins, needles and threads—my eyes with tears, my mouth with bread, so I could not speak and tell me to go and care, the two hundred dollars, and keep out of temptation, and come back—And then, Maggy, you ran into my little bed-room where Johnny and little Maggy were born, and hid yourself, and cried, so that I could not see you when we all went marching by."

"Don't talk so." "But, Maggy, I was thinking. And you know I had two good arms. And I used to hold you in them, Maggy—to hold you in my honest heart, and say, God bless you, darling! And you used to sleep in them happy moments."

"It was not that, Maggy. When I came home, I came back rich. I found Mr. Bond had grown rich. He had contracts. His brother was in Congress. His uncle was a friend of Lincoln's. He made war speeches—filled homes, gave bounties, and with his stay-at-home neighbors won big bounties and escaped all the bills and the drafts. They gave town bonds. These bonds ran me in debt, for they were mortgaged on our little farm. They amounted to five hundred dollars. Three hundred more than I had bounty. I couldn't help for while I was in the army it was easy for me to do what I did not do, to mortgage my farm in that way."

I lost an arm. I earned less than I would at home. I returned—I am now working for my pay myself for going to war, for losing my arm. To keep Mr. Bond home so that he could play with his wife and babies, speculate and get a political influence while I was fighting—not to restore the Union, but to enrich him."

It is pretty hard, Maggy. I don't care so much for me, for I am growing old, and it is a little account of a poor man as dead as I am. But you, Maggy, you are as dear to me as Mrs. Bond is to him. Your lips are as sweet to me, your bosom is as sacred, your eyes are as deep, your voice is as sweet to me, your touch is as thrilling as it rests on my tired body, your kiss is as welcome to me as Mrs. Bond's kiss is to him. I know we can't wear a widow's veil—nor have a clean pair of underdressed stockings every day—nor clean white underclothes every day. Nor can we have such soft carpets—nor such costly dishes—nor such fine horses—nor such a fine house as Mr. Bond has. We listen to the robbers; they to the canny bird. They ride out with their children—we walk out to the grave where our sleep. We drink water—they drink wine."

And Maggy, your hands are hard with toil, but your heart is warmer, and dearer, than I think, Mrs. Bond's heart is; for you never stir your skirts in the faces of those who are still poorer than we are, and stick up your nose to disdain of poverty as Mrs. Bond does."

I didn't expect to get in an office when the war was over. I would have done me no good if I had, for of course when I was away I lost the run of public affairs, and was not fit when I came back, and I had no money to win my election, if I had been fit."

And so I must work. You and I must produce our own butter—our early chickens—fresh eggs, &c. &c. for these taxes must be paid. The tax gatherer does not stop at Mr. Bond's. He owns nothing but United

THE REALMS OF LONG AGO!

The day with its scandals dipped in red, Has passed through the evening's golden haze, And a single star in the cloudless blue Pings (ringing music in a silver wail) While the winds that sigh to the languid light, A lullaby breathe 'er the folded beds.

The lilies nod to the sound of the stream That winds along with a lulling flow, And other awake or half in a dream, As I pass through the realms of Long Ago, While faces peer, with many a smile, From the bowers of Memory's magic eye.

There are joys and sorrows, narrow and tears, And the path of life's April hours, And a longing wail for the coming years, The hope ever reaches with the fairest flowers: There are friendships gathered—love as bright, And pure as the stars in the hall of night.

There are when memories better pain, And buried hopes and a broken vow, And an aching heart by the restless main, And the sea breeze fanning a pallid brow, And a wailing cry that lingers in the air, Letching for voices that speak no more.

There are passions strong and ambitious wail, And the fierce desire to stand in the van Of the battle of life—and the heart of the child Is crushed in the breast of the struggling man. But the stars in the night are the stars of the past, And the heart of the man is the heart of the past.

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RADICAL CANDIDATE FOR CONGRESS.

The radical papers of this district announce themselves in favor of the nomination of Mr. Stephen F. Wilson, the present member, for re-election to Congress. Faintly once sworn he would not give a reason under compulsion even though they were as thick as blackberries. But our radical cotemporaries are more accommodating; they are more than willing to nominate Wilson for the comprehensive reason that they do not do anything else; Wilson will run whether he is nominated or not, and except for convenience he would find the nomination in the faces of the radicals of Union Centre and Lycoming. He is untriedly past in their faces two years ago, and when they nominated Armstrong first and Benson afterwards he most insultingly threw down his galleys war glove to the champions, defied their friends, and announced himself a candidate. 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