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I.—LITERARY.

CONDITIONS OF SUCCESS IN THE GOSPEL
MINISTRY.*

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PREACHING, which is the prime function of the ministry, has been aptly and tersely defined as "Truth through Personality."

The other departments of instruction in this institution have to do mainly with the truth—a fixed and unvarying element. This department, however, more especially in one of its branches, has to do with the ever-varying element of *personality*—the medium through which the truth is conveyed.

The burning question here is not, "What is truth?" but rather, "How can the truth be brought into saving contact with a perishing world?"

Whilst there are many and divergent views as to what constitutes that truth which is committed to the ministry, there are no less divergent views as to the nature and functions of the ministry; views, perhaps not so obtrusively heterodox, but none the less pernicious in their influence.

In view of the practical importance of the subject, and without apology for introducing to your attention so trite a theme, let us consider briefly and simply some, at least, of the conditions of success in the gospel ministry.

Where shall we find our model minister? the ideal pastor? What constitutes the highest excellence in this calling? One instinctively points to the great "Shepherd of the sheep," as being the archetypal "teacher sent from God," the very incar-

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REMINISCENCES OF JOHN RANDOLPH.

When I settled in Prince Edward county in 1853, I formed intimate friendships with three men who had been contemporaries and constituents of John Randolph: Henry E. Watkins, Esq., Dr. Wm. Morton, and Rev. Drury Lacy. The statements derived from the last named were published by him in a series of delightful letters in the *Central Presbyterian*. I cannot recall the date, but it must have been before Dr. Lacy's retirement from public life. They should be recovered, for they are very valuable.

Dr. Wm. Morton was the son of old Maj. James Morton, of Willington—"Old Solid Column," whom Randolph greatly admired for his steady integrity. This regard for the father combined with a certain sympathy of classical tastes, to make the young Doctor a favorite with Randolph. One day he received a note from him, written in terms of exquisite courtesy and elegance, inviting him to visit Roanoke. The note stated that his adopted son, Dr. Dudley, and one of the young Bryans were there; that as his own health was very bad he feared the two young men were having but a dull time, and he wished Dr. Morton to come up and assist him in entertaining them. He accepted the invitation. He found Mr. Randolph an invalid from his old chronic diarrhoea, and occupying the small two-roomed cottage. The young men slept and had their meals in the new library building. One morning the black valet, John, came in as they were finishing their breakfast and said his master sent him to invite them, if they felt inclined, to join him in the little house in his family prayers. Of course the young men went over. They found Mr. Randolph looking feeble and languid, sitting in his large padded arm-chair, wearing the dressing gown which he had on at his duel with Henry Clay, and still showing the two bullet holes made by Clay's bullet. He invited the young men to seats and said: "I hope my domestics, young gentlemen, attend to all your wants and have given you a comfortable breakfast. I have taken the only breakfast my bad health allows me, my crackers and cup of black tea, and as this is the time for our family prayers, I am glad that you join me in them." He had at his elbow a little

stand supporting the family Bible and prayer-book, and the domestics about the place had taken their places. Dr. Morton said that he read the Scriptures and prayers with all the propriety and solemnity which would have been shown by old Dr. Moses Hoge, or Dr. Alexander. The young men then made motions to leave the room, when Mr. Randolph said to them: "My young friends, I know the society of a sick old man may not be very attractive, but if you have time to sit awhile, you will really do me a favor, as I am not well enough to do any study." They resumed their seats, of course, hoping to hear much of his brilliant and instructive conversation. But he seemed languid, and disinclined to talk. The young men had to make conversation in which he took but small part. After a time one of them mentioned a recent escapade of Wm. M. Watkins, of Mossing Ford, who then took occasional but terrible sprees. It was reported in one of these he had recently become so violent towards his wife that she felt constrained to flee from her own house at a dead hour of the night in her sleeping apparel, and take refuge in the overseer's house. Dr. Dudley commented on this with severity, remarking that Mrs. Watkins was a lady of high-family, of exemplary virtues and piety, and a faithful wife and mother of his numerous children. Dudley said that the husband who could maltreat his own wife under these circumstances was a monster, and hanging was too good for him. Here Mr. Randolph checked him, and with all the gravity of the most saintly pastor, addressed him about as follows: "Oh, my young friend, do not be severe, remember the good rule, 'Judge not, that ye be not judged.' Doubtless the wise Being who uttered this had a far tenderer conscience than any of us, and a far keener disapprobation of all sin, yet he enjoined this as the rule of charity for us towards our fellow sinners. You think you see the grossness of Capt. Watkins' fault, but probably you do not know his temptations nor the depth of his repentance." This pious rebuke of course damped the conversation a little. After awhile Mr. Randolph said in a weak and weary tone: "My infirmities are so extreme that they constrain me to expedients which I greatly dislike. Without some stimulant, my weakness becomes a burden greater than I can bear. John, you will have to give me a glass of that old Madeira." The servant took down a bottle of wine from a shelf, and a straw-stem wine glass, and placed them on the stand beside him. Mr. Randolph slowly sipped

one glass, and in a few minutes it produced a change in him. A faint color came to his palid cheeks, his wonderful eyes kindled, he sat more erect in his chair, his voice lost its languor, and he showed a disposition to take interest in the conversation. The young men were only too glad to give him the lead. He became animated and fluent. One racy incident or witticism followed another while he filled another glass of wine and drank it. This continued till he had taken about half a dozen, and Dr. Morton felt sure that he was as unconscious of doing so as the habitual snuff taker is of the number of pinches he inhales while his mind is absorbed. Mr. Randolph became first animated, then brilliant, and then bitter and profane. His talk returned to Capt. Watkins' treatment of his wife, when, forgetting his own rebuke of Dr. Dudley, he denounced him as a monster who should be burned alive. Dr. Morton's explanation was that his digestive organs were so enfeebled by disease, and so sensitive that a small portion of wine such as would have been entirely temperate for him when in health, produced at first a mental intoxication under which he at once lost his self-control and almost consciousness of his own actions.

Mr. Randolph was very instrumental in securing the election of Andrew Jackson to the Presidency, as representative of the Republican States' Rights party. Jackson professed to reward him with the mission to St. Petersburg. The very one which Mr. Randolph did not desire and which was utterly unsuited to his health and tastes. He resigned it pretty soon and retired with broken health to private life. Not long after came about the contest between Jackson and the State of South Carolina, concerning the reserved rights of the States. Jackson induced congress to pass a Force Bill, issued his famous proclamation, and prepared for war against the State. In this proclamation he rejected the vital principle of the party which made him President and clearly asserted the very principles of the old usurping consolidation party which had misnamed itself the Federal Party, and which had been denounced and overthrown by Jefferson and Madison. Jackson had been inclined to this political apostasy by his personal hatred of Mr. Calhoun and by the adroit flatteries of Martin Van Buren, who wished to thrust Mr. Calhoun, then the ablest and foremost Republican Statesman in America, from his path to the Presidency. Virginia prevented for a time an armed collision by her mediation between the parties. But Jackson's ill-starred measure

permanently divided the old Republican party. Its best and most enlightened members went into opposition. Among these was Mr. Randolph, who immediately emerged from his retirement and exposed the dangerous nature of the President's doctrine. But a large part of the Jackson party in Virginia, headed by Thos. Ritchie, editor of the *Richmond Enquirer*, styled the "Napoleon of the Press," adhered to Jackson and Van Buren, and, discarding the time honored name of the Constitutional party, dubbed themselves the "National Democracy," while they villified their late comrades as Federalists and Whigs. Mr. Randolph, though not a candidate, met and addressed his constituents in most of the counties of his old district, expounding with great earnestness the true doctrine of the Constitution, and the defection of the Jackson party. Among other places, he spoke at Cumberland Court. The court-house was packed with people. Mr. Randolph's health was extremely bad, and his appearance ghastly. He was too feeble to stand during the whole of his long speech. He requested some one of his friends to stay beside him on the judge's platform. After standing until he was fatigued, he continued his discourse sitting, and then, availing himself of the help of his friend's arm, rose again. Mr. Randolph had been standing and speaking for a time with much animation, when he closed that part of his address in about this way:—"Fellow citizens, the inconsistency of these pretended Republicans is so glaring, in thus deserting the constitution in favor of the imperious leader of their faction, that I hear many sensible persons ask whether they are not venal and wholly without principle. No, my friends, they have principles of their own. Yes, they have seven of them. Those seven, namely, which induced the mercenary Jews to follow the Savior of mankind across the sea of Galilee after the miraculous feeding of the multitude, the five loaves and the two fishes." He then paused in his discourse, sank into the chair by him, and bowed his head with exhaustion. Mr. Watkins, who stood by him, told me that there was a pause of two or three seconds, during which there was dead silence, while the point of the satire was finding its way to the people's minds. Then there was a perfect burst of applause and laughter. Mr. Randolph seemed startled, lifted his drooping head, and pulling Mr. Watkins down by the sleeve, asked in a whisper: "What is the matter? Did I utter some folly?" Mr. Watkins replied, "No indeed,

Mr. Randolph, you have uttered a witticism which shall live as long as the English language is spoken." This is the true origin of the famous sarcasm about men's going for the loaves and the fishes, and Mr. Watkins' prediction will prove correct.

I suppose that the testimony taken in the famous Randolph will case proved that Mr. Randolph's infirmities of health at one time resulted in mental alienation. At such times he perpetrated some of those eccentric things of which so many were imputed to him. One of these was related to me by Mr. Henry Carrington, of Ingleside, but not as an eye witness. It is well known that after Mr. Randolph's religious impressions began, he was zealous for the Christian instruction of his negroes. There was a large room near his cottage where he assembled them for worship and where he often read the Scriptures to them and instructed them himself. After his health declined he made contract with some respectable Christian minister to give his people an afternoon service. At one time he had such an engagement with the Rev. Abner Clopton, an excellent Baptist divine of Charlotte county. Mr. Carrington's statement to me was that Mr. Clopton himself related the following incident. He went to Roanoke from his morning appointment near Scuffletown and dined with Mr. Randolph, as he was accustomed on the days of his appointment. After dinner Mr. Randolph accompanied him to the log chapel and they found it full of negroes. Mr. Clopton said that he behaved with all the seriousness of a Presbyterian elder. Knowing the weakness of the negroes for a religion more emotional than sanctifying, he aimed his sermon strongly against the antinomian abuse of the Gospel. When the services were about to end, Mr. Randolph rose and spoke in substance thus: Rev. Sir, I crave your permission to add my poor word of confirmation to the excellent instructions you have given these people. My excuse must be my great solicitude for the welfare of the souls of these dependents of mine. Mr. Clopton told him that certainly he should feel at liberty to instruct his servants, for nobody had a better right to do it than the master. Mr. Randolph then arose and began with great point and in most excellent scriptural language to enforce the doctrine that the faith which did not produce good works could not justify. From being solemn and emphatic he grew excited and then sarcastic. He described the type of religion too current among negroes, which made them sing and bow and shout and weep in their meetings but

which failed to restrain them from gross immoralities. This spurious fanaticism he scathed with the keenest sarcasm. At last he evidently lost control of himself: singling out a young buck negro on the third bench from the front who had been very emphatic in his *amens* and such like manifestations of piety, he shook his long fore-finger at him and said: "Here is this fellow Phil. In the meeting on Sunday he is the foremost man to sing and shout and get happy, and on Sunday night he is the first man to steal his master's shoats—the damned rascal!" Mr. Clopton laid his hand on his arm in protest saying, "Mr. Randolph, Mr. Randolph!" He instantly stopped in the most deferential manner and asked Mr. Clopton what correction he had to offer. He replied: He thought it his duty to protest against the terms which Mr. Randolph was employing. "What terms?" "Why those in which you have just addressed that man Phil. It can never be proper in teaching God's truth to use any profanity, seeing God has forbidden it." Randolph replied: "Sir, you both astonish and mortify me. I had hoped that if my credit as a Christian was so poor (and I know that I am but a sorry Christian) as not to save me from the imputation of profanity, my credit as a gentleman should have done so. I had flattered myself that I should be judged incapable of insulting a minister of our holy religion while my own guest by using profanity in his presence." This view of the matter rather provoked Mr. Clopton, and he insisted that the terms in which he had rebuked the negro were not only cruelly severe but distinctly profane, and that in the midst of a religious service. "What then did I say to him that was so bad?" "Why, Sir, you called him in expressed words 'a damned rascal.'" "And you misunderstood that as an intentional profanity? You fill me with equal surprise and mortification. I considered myself as only stating a theological truth in terms of faithful plainness. Do not the Sacred Scriptures say that thieves are liable to the condemnation of the Divine Judge? And is not this just the meaning of the term which you say I used?" Mr. Clopton said this turn quite took his breath away and he thought it best not to continue the discussion.

When I was a boy my father had a neighbor in Louisa Co. named William Cole Dickinson, who was a horse breeder I heard my father relate Dickinson's account of a visit he had paid Roanoke at the time Mr. Randolph was selling off his

racing stock, with a view of purchasing some of his young horses. Dickinson said that he spent the night by Mr. Randolph's invitation. After supper John came in and said to his master, "The people are ready, Sir." Randolph said to his guest: "My servants are expecting of me this evening the performance of a duty which is very important and interesting to them. I make it a matter of conscience not to disappoint them. It is the distribution of the annual supply of blankets for the plantation. I must, therefore, beg you to excuse me for an hour and to amuse yourself with the books and newspapers. Or, if you prefer to accompany me, I shall be glad to have you witness the proceeding." Dickinson said that he was eager to see all he could of this strange and famous man, and so he eagerly chose the latter proposal. They went to the preaching house where a large number of negroes were present, and John and others brought in large rolls of stout English blankets (Mr. Randolph had so strong a sense of the injustice of the protective tariffs that he refused on principle to buy anything of Yankee manufacture which shared this iniquitous plunder. His great tobacco crops were shipped to London and sold there on his own account, and he bought there everything needed for his plantations). He then began to call the roll of the adult servants. Each one as he came forward was required to exhibit the blankets which he already possessed. Some prudent ones exhibited four and received four new ones in addition; some presented two, and received two new ones; some one, and received one. Some careless fellows had none to show and were sent away without any, receiving a pretty keen rebuke instead. When it was over Mr. Dickinson remarked to him that the principle of distribution seemed a very strange one, since those who needed new blankets the least got the most, and those who needed them most got none. Randolph answered, "No, Sir, the Bible rule is mine, 'He that hath to him shall be given that he may have more abundance, and from him that hath not shall be taken away that which he seemeth to have.'" He then explained that his purpose was to give his servants an impressive object lesson upon the virtue of thrift. That those careless fellows who could present no blanket had traded off for whiskey what he had given them or had lazily allowed them to be burned or lost and their disappointment would teach them to be wiser in future.

During the evening Mr. Dickinson asserted that he could

tell the age of horses beyond nine years by the appearance of their teeth, and upon Mr. Randolph's doubting it he reaffirmed it and proposed that Mr. Randolph in the morning should have his horses brought up and let him try. Randolph answered, "Well, Sir, you must excuse me for saying so to a guest in my own house, but I am still a Thomas Didymus." Dickinson claimed that the next morning the horses were driven up and Mr. Randolph went out with his herd book under his arm, in which the birthday of each member of the equine aristocracy was set down and that he convinced Mr. Randolph by telling him the ages of the young and the old.

I have heard two of Randolph's repartees which are good examples of his stinging flashes of sudden wit. He was at the Long Island races when a stranger insisted upon making a bet with Mr. Randolph against a young horse which the latter was admiring. Randolph excused himself coldly, saying that he was a stranger there and had no friend to hold the stakes. The jockey replied, "There is *my* friend Esq. Jenkins; he will hold the stakes for us." "Aye, Sir, but who will hold Squire Jenkins?"

When John Hampden Pleasants, in the *Richmond Whig*, forsook the Republican faith, of which his father, Governor James Pleasants, had been an ornament, John Randolph said of him publicly that he was "the degenerate son of a noble father." This made him excessively angry. Mr. Randolph being in Richmond, Pleasants saw him advancing along the side walk, and took the middle of it in a hostile attitude and said, "I never give the side walk to a d——d rascal." Randolph instantly stepped to one side with much politeness saying, "I always do, Sir."

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