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I. Literary.

PASTORAL VISITING.*

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WHILE preaching is the chief work, it is by no means the only work of the ministerial office. In order to perform the duties of his calling with any measure of fidelity, the pastor must come near to his people—nearer than he can get in the pulpit. It is the “house-to-house” part of his work that brings him and his message into closest contact with them. Not only does pulpit work need to be supplemented by personal work, but his intercourse with his people in their varied and often striking experiences develops to the pastor’s view innumerable applications of divine truth, sometimes new and surprising; the experimental knowledge thus acquired he carries back with him to his study and his closet, and subjecting it to the crucible of his own thoughts, he seems to get a new message from on high; then carries that message into the pulpit, prepared to preach with unwonted appropriateness to their real necessities. The best sermons are not manufactured in the study; they are born amid the throes of pastoral sympathy.

The pastor must know his people—know them all, old and young; and there is no way in which this can be done so well as seeing them in their homes. He must cultivate their affections, drawing them to himself, that thereby he may draw them to Christ. He should feel, and lead them to feel, that he is one with them in heart, and in those great interests of the soul which bind men closest together—one with them not only in church

*Part of an address to the students of Union Theological Seminary, May 28, 1899.

VI. Criticisms and Reviews.

MY LIFE AND TIMES, 1810-1899. By John B. Adger, D. D. One vol., 8vo., pp. 681. Price, \$3.00. Richmond, Va.: Presbyterian Committee of Publication.

In the volume before us we have a partial but very interesting narrative of a long, laborious, useful, many-sided, humble, honored and blessed life; and we have the revelation of an honest, manly, noble, Christian character, expanding and strengthening amidst toils and vicissitudes manifold and of varying degrees. In it we have, also, numerous and important digressions on subjects in which the author has taken a heart interest. Some of these digressions will have the value of mines for the future students of the history of certain phases of the life of our beloved Southern Zion; and this relatively incidental value of the book will perhaps prove its greatest value.

In the first chapter, which is entitled, "Our Ancestry," we felt no very great interest. It is tediously written. The truth might be clearly told in three or four pages of text, with a few footnotes, for the curious and the personal friends. But when the author passes to "My Childhood and Early Youth," a charm begins to discover itself—the charm of simplicity and straightforwardness, of independence and conscientiousness of character. This charm grows during the chapters, "Academy and College Life" and "Theological Seminary Life; Our Marriage and Sailing to Smyrna." These chapters are enlivened, too, by keen and sagacious if always kindly judgments of many men of distinguished reputation, whose lives impinged during this period on the life of young Adger. Take this estimate of Dr. Charles Hodge and of Dr. Thornwell in part, "Dr. Hodge was a great theologian. His three ponderous volumes on *Systematic Theology* are a treasure to any of the thousand ministers who were his students while he lived, and should be his students now that he is dead. But Dr. Hodge never studied the church polity of Presbyterianism. He never understood the subject. His debate with Thornwell in the Assembly at Rochester, the last one where the South and North portions of the church met together, exhibited this deficiency on the part of the great teacher. Much more apparent he made it when he undertook to discuss that debate in the *Princeton Review*; and when Dr. Thornwell replied to him in the *Southern Presbyterian Review* it became palpable." (Page 77.)

His twelve years' work among the Armenians in the city of Smyrna proved to be but a very useful episode in his life. He went out under the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. As Abolitionism grew in the North, the management came to feel embarrassed

at having in Mr. Adger a missionary who was a slave-owner. On occasion of a visit to America he was not encouraged by the secretaries to return to the foreign field, albeit he had done eminently efficient work. Moved still by the missionary impulse, he began his self-sacrificing but much blessed work of preaching to the negro slaves in Charleston, S. C.

An honest believer in Bible ethics rejoices in the vindication of the moral propriety of the relations of slavery, which, largely as constructed by Dr. Thornwell, Dr. Adger has embodied in his book in connection with this part of his life. And the true son of the South's best past rejoices in this old hero's testimony to the elevating effect of Southern slavery on African savages forced for so many years into our bounds by sea-going New England. He says (page 162), "Now, it is true, and will forever remain true, that our Southern slavery was just a grand civilizing and Christianizing school, providentially prepared to train thousands of negro slaves, brought hither from Africa by other people against our protest, some two hundred years ago. Never was any statement more absurdly false than that slavery degraded the negroes of the South from a higher to a lower position. The truth is, that all the good there ever was arising out of the presence of these people in this country was due to the fact, that coming hither as slaves, they were permitted to remain a long time at the school of slavery, to receive there a most valuable education. All this is true, and the Southern people and their children's children owe it to themselves and to their forefathers to maintain forever these truths against all opponents. The negroes were brought to us naked savages; many of them, perhaps most of them, had been slaves in their own country: of the rest, some had been cannibals. They were just the same sort of people with which missionaries to Africa now make us familiar in their letters. Whenever necessary, as in the case of cannibals and other ferocious negroes, the discipline of the school which slavery kept was severe. They had to be subjugated by their masters, or their presence would have been intolerable. But, for the most part, these poor Africans were, as they now are, as reported by missionaries, a gentle and docile people. It followed that the discipline of the school had no need to be otherwise than kind and gentle. Accordingly, down to the period of emancipation, the relation betwixt master and slave in these Southern States was, on both sides, generally a kind one. This no one can deny who was acquainted with the system. . . . In the great and good school of slavery, then, our slaves were receiving the most needful and valuable education for this life, and very many of them for the life to come. The two races were steadily and constantly marching onwards and upwards together. Hence, when emancipation was suddenly forced upon us it found a good many pupils in the school of slavery who were ready to be graduated, while it found all of them considerably educated."

We have in the ninth chapter an epitome with criticisms of the *Fourth Book of Calvin's Institutes*. The criticism occupies relatively small space, and some critics seem to regard the introduction of this matter as that of something foreign and extraneous. We don't jump

with these critics. We believe Dr. Adger has put into his biography in this abridgement of the ecclesiology of Calvin a part of his own life, his own view of the church, his own teaching concerning the church for years, and that view of the church to which his heart returned in his old days. And for ourselves, we are glad to have his discussion of Calvin's doctrine of the Lord's Supper and his able and correct criticism of Dr. Charles Hodge's attempted exposition of Calvin's doctrine. We have been glad to see that Dr. Adger understands Calvin's doctrine of the Lord's Supper as we ourselves do; and to learn from his pen that Dr. Thornwell took the same view of it. Dr. Adger tells us, indeed, that it was at Dr. Thornwell's insistence that he began to teach the Fourth Book of the Institutes, and that amongst the arguments Thornwell used when advising that text-book was Calvin's view of the Lord's Supper.

In the chapter entitled, "The Controversies of My Times," there is a good outline discussion of the controversy between the new and old school, with references to fuller and more adequate treatments of the subject. This is a controversy which, however unfortunate in some of its incidental features, should never be forgotten. We are glad, therefore, that so fair and candid a man as Dr. Adger has given a clear summary account of it in his life.

We have here, too, fine accounts of the *Elder Controversy* and of the controversy over *Boards*. There are passages in the account of the *Elder* controversy that we could wish burned into the mind of every elder of our church, whether teaching or ruling. Such as this, on page 401, "In the church, the representative government is not, as in the State, even ultimately the creature of the people; it is the direct appointment of Christ, and the powers and duties of ecclesiastical representatives are prescribed and defined in the word of God, the real constitution of the church. They are represented as rulers, and not as tools; they are to study and administer the laws of the Saviour, and not to bend to the caprices of the people; and they are to listen to no authoritative instructions but those which have proceeded from the throne of God."

Dr. Adger has laboriously compiled about 250 pages of matter concerning the Woodrow Evolution controversy. He has gathered materials together for which future historians of the church will bless him. He had strong sympathy for his old colleague. He has nevertheless labored hard to present a fair account. It seems to us that the result is a picture of a great deal of talent and learning, of science and pseudo-science, of dialectical ability and merciless polemical temper, on one side, and, on the other, a great deal of bungling and impotence, united with intolerance, for the teachings and charity for the teacher.

The book is well gotten up mechanically. It is in every way worth several times its cost. We advise every man who is interested in our church and God's truth to get it and read it.

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21st Dec., '99, Union Seminary, Richmond, Va.