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LIBBRIA FIRRALD.

From the Christian Advocate and Journal.

PLAGIARISM.

standard work, common honesty requires a gener-

al credit to be given to the real author.

Rev. John B. Pinney, Gen. Agt. Philadelphia, Rev. W. MYLNE, W. De LASY Esq. Win. CRANE, " Rev. J. M. ALLEN, Rev. S. H. CONE, Dr. A. PROUDEIT,

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sion; and that this deception may be, either by him, through the misconception of the people. | plain Gospel of Jesus Christ. In the mean time. the knowledge that it is made, and yet without | close it, he feels a shame and degradation which | human body can subsist on succetments alone.

which I wish to draw from it.

the charge of "stealing." And it remains to be | those who do so, as regards the act itself? Cer- | tion. shown that stealing sermons is a less offense, in tainly to convey the impression, that they are But, again, this practice tends to weaken a the law of conscience and truth, than stealing | preaching their own sermons, while, in fact, they | man's conscience, and destroy his judgment of been called, which has a very material bearing | not his own?

is yet, I fear, a growing evil among us. I am | gically shown in the preceding remarks, "Brother C, I heard that same ser- | ists should express their opinions on questions aware that the practice to which I have refer- if you please, into the following mon, or one exactly like it, from brother E ? of doctrine, or discipline, either in public or in ence exists in other Churches besides the Meth- | syllogism:

own branch of the Church. vey a wrong impression, by word or act, or the | that E. should have access to the same source | for themselves,) their sentiments concess with I refer to plagiarism in our ministry; the prac- making of such an impression knowingly, with- from which he himself borrowed the sermon. | the authority of great men. And thus the prectice with some of our preachers of taking the out the effort or desire to correct it. These supposed cases are not purely imagin- | ple are in danger of being misled, through the

committing them to memory, and reciting them tions, as their own, the compositions of other ces have occurred more than once. No one, for not much confidence is to be placed in the crito the people, to all appearance, as their own. men, do intend to convey a wrong impression | accustomed to observe these things, can fail to | ginal sentiments of those who are not in the habit I do not mean to allude to a practice which ex- on their hearers; or, at least, knowing them to see that such instances must frequently occur, of thinking for themselves. ists, more or less, with all ministers, of taking be misled, make no effort to correct them, but in which exposure or equivocation are the only And how, under such circumstances, is plain the same general views of the leading doctrines | suffer them to regard these efforts as their own, | alternatives The practice of plagiarism thus | truth, from plain original men, to have its legitiof our holy religion, as those set forth by Wes- and to give them credit for them

by Builer, Paley, Blair, and others, not belong- giarise are actually quilty of deception.

minent and essential doctrines of Christianity. | common consent, society may yield, or withhold, | brother Henry Smith's Narrative.) Indeed, a careful reading of the Scriptures, and at pleasure. Now, I assert, that while society (2) Again, the injurious effects of plagiarism | I am aware that in presenting these views I of these writings, would show, that views wide- has, by common consent, admitted, that to a on others are equally obvious; and first, as re- may appear to be casting a reflection on the inly different from, and opposite to theirs, would certain extent ideas become common property, gards those of the people who detect the impo- telligence and good sense of our people. All be unscriptural; and to treat of them in an en- after the lapse of some time from their publica- sition Birds that went borrowed plumage gen- I have to say to this is, that if saying that peotirely different manner, would, in general, be to | tion, society never has, by common or partial | erally put on peacock's feathers. Plain feathers | ple may be misled by popular men is reflecting depart from the natural order and arrangement of consent, admitted that men's compositions are they have of their own, and there is no occasion upon their intelligence. I plead "grilly." the subjects contemplated. And though I would | common property. On the contrary, those who | to borrow sermons bor- | have no honeyed word for the people of ny ov n Justify no man in committing to memory and re- do appropriate to their own use the compositions | row such as are calculated to be popular. Those | Church, or any other, except so far as "smeeth citing the compositions of these men, yet I would of other men, not only violate the rights of the plagiarism, select, generally, if | words and true" may be spoken at the same une. restrict no minister from using the substance of real authors, but most egregiously violate a law | not universally, those passages for recitation | When not, I have none to utter. I am effect the these standards works, as occasion offered, of society establishing individual rights, which which are the most beautiful in style and lan- | truth. knowing, that if any man pretended, at this day, have never been surrendered. So much for the | guage, richest in imagery, most tingling on the | to a new and original system of faith, he would nature of the thing itself. Does it not resemble | ear of the auditor—those calculated to make the | evil may be remedied: be departing from the Scriptures. And even "stealing?" If not, will any man say that it is impression of a beautiful and splendid speech, here I hold, that where a view or argument is not "borrowing," without asking permission, or rather than a sound and practical sermon. For this respect examine their own hearts, in since rentirely borrowed, in substance, even from a giving credit.

not refer to the above practice; but I mean the it. A habit of this kind must be injurious indeed | coming "popular" for their pretty sermons, soon | istry, let them abandon for ever this slavish dehabit of committing to memory, and reciting to to the mind of any one who practices it. No ingratiate themselves into the favor of at least | pendence on other men's labors, and hereafter the people, to all intents and purposes as origi- I man can be an independent thinker who habit- a portion of the people before they are detected. be honest, and preach their own sern cas; and nal, entire paragraphs, essays, sketches, discour- ually depends on other men's thoughts; and this | And by the time the imposition is discovered, | if they cannot do that, adopt some other calling; ses or sermons of other men. In this respect I habitual dependence must weaken the intellect the popular taste has often been vitiated, and the for, let them be assured, they have thrust themmake no difference, whether the matter consists | tual energies of any man. For no man can ha- popular judgment perverted, on a question of selves into the vineyard, uncalled. in using entire discourses, or different passages, bitually rely on the mental labors of other men, morals. I have often heard this sentiment from 2. Let the people, instead of countenancing carefully selected and patched together-flow- without becoming mentally imbecile. The man some of our people : "They say that brother A. and apologizing for this abomination, frown up-

disastrous to the intellect, its influences on a preach his eloquent sermons, even if borrowed, I am thus particular in defining what I mean, | m n's conscience, and whole moral character, are | than hear others preach inferior sermons, though but that there may be no possibility of evading | are noble and generous products of grace in the | stealing sermons! I solemnly protest against any p ople among whom it is practiced. greater men, obtaining and wearing the honor of fearful sta e of things in some parts of the Church Methodist Episcopal Church. He accuses them | spirit of the teachings of the Bible on this head | follows, that the minister of the Gospel who even of "stealing." It is true he means stealing Now, apart from the general motive which habitually plagiarises must feel that he is thus sermons only, and sometimes he calls it "bor | may prompt men to pass off others' productions | constantly deceiving the public, and must, in

any thing else. For my part, I would as soon are preaching the thoughts and compositions of right and wrong. The plagiarist is almost contake a man's coat, or money, as I would his ser- other men. At best, they suffer the people to stantly in some embarrassing position or other. mons, without permission, or credit. Now, this be deceived, and to give them credit for what is lite not only lives under one general and contin- in the case of those who do not know the impois a most serious charge; and I propose, with | not theirs, without making any effort, or indulg- | nous equivocation, but must frequently be so | sition. In this respect, the main evil lies here; your permission, to examine it, and see its ing a desire, that they be undeceived. That this bemmed in that he is compelled, either directly that it gives a man an influence in the Church is the object and wish of those who do thus pla- to equivocate, or shamefully to expose himself. | which his talents and character do not merit. It is my privilege to be a lay-member of the giarise is evident, from the fact, that they not not be a sermon. B. hears | None but a man of inferior intellect would habit-Methodist Episcopal Church To Methodism, er do, nor would publish from the pulpit, that him, and is delighted; goes to A., and expres | ually practice plagiarism. Now, every man has under God, I owe much. I aidently love the they are delivering borrowed sermons. Let any ses his delight. A. produces, by request, his his influence. And no man ought to have an institutions of the Church, and yield to no one, one of these men look into his own heart, and allows him to influence beyond what is due to his real inpreacher or layman, in an anxious desire to pro- himself, whether, under any circumstances, he read the same, word for word, as delivered. B. | trinsic merits. But the man who constantly apmote her interests, and keep her lorders pure | would have the impression generally made on | returns home, opens a volume, and reads the | pears in the garb of greater men acquires, with from all error and evil. Allow me, then, through his hearers, that he borrows those efforts by identical discourse, verbatim et lireratim! he many, the character of a great man. Who does the A lyocate, to say a few plain things to the | which his audience are sometimes so enraptur- | finds that A's. manuscript is a mere transcript! | not see the evils to which this may lead? I lainministers and members of the Methodist Church, ed! Would be be willing, after preaching one of Has not B. been deceived—grossly & intention- | er men, of better judgment, and more intrinsic on an evil to which my attention has frequently | these sermons, publicy to acknowledge it was | ally deceived? Anorher case: C. preaches a ser- | weight, have less influence than such men, Lemon in the hearing of D. When D. next meets | cause they scorn to appear in any other cress on the vital interests of our m nistry, and which I regard plagiarism, therefore, as deception, lo- him, he expresses his delight with the sermon, than their own. Suppose these popular plagiar-"Ah, indeed," replies C., "why that's strange!" | private, among the members of the Church, (cr.d) olist, but I have now to do especially with our 1. Deception consists in an intention to con- while the man knows in his heart it is not strange it is not denied that these men do sometimes this k

essays, discourses, or entire sermons of others, 2. Preachers who palm on their congrega- arv. Such, and still more embarrassing, instan- popularity of men who deserve no popularity; tends to weaken a man's sense of perfect honesty. | mane effect upon a people accustomed and deley, Watson, Fletcher, Carke, and others; or 3. Therefore, those preachers who do thus pla- 1 Indeed, the former of the cases supposed above lighted to listen to sweet songs, and there paid shows something more than a mere evasion of upon borrowed lyres! This practice of placian m ing to our Church. These master minds have This argument seems to me to be perfectly the truth to get out of a difficulty; it discovers thus materially interferes with the influence, taken the entire subject of doctrinal and experi- unanswerable. But there is another view which an acquired character comfort, and feelings of other brethren, equally mental religion, and set them forth in such a | may be taken of the subject, equally establishing | for preaching great sermons. And such is an- | worthy; and, moreover, it prevents plain nen strong, clear light, that all men have the right to the fact to be a violation of what is right. It is other of the fractice. of God from successfully preaching the plan use the result of their labors, by taking substan- this: There are certain rights enjoyed by society | But I have not room to pursue this point. (See, | Gospel of Christ to a people whose taste has I cen tially the same arguments in support of the pro- at large Among these are some which, by on this subject, some of the recent numbers of vitiated, and judgment perverted, by the influ-

the truth of these remarks, I refer to the exper- ity and with prayer, and see whether what I II. I proceed, in the second place, to consider | ience of every man guilty of the practice, and the | have written is not the truth. Above all, as they the influence and tendency of plagiarism; and observation of every other man. The conse- value their own intellectual improvement and When, therefore, I write of plagiarism, I do | (1) First, on the individual who perpetrates | quence is, that these "splendid" preachers, be- | growth in grace, and the usefulness of their min-

ers culled from every garden, and nicely tied up | who habitually declines to think and write for or brother B. borrows his sermons. I do not in one bouquet. Nor does it change the real himself loses not only the disposition, but the know; it may be so. But I have never read character of the practice, if occasionally the order power to do so. or the language is a little altered to prevent de- But if the effects of habitual plagiarism are so lighted with them. And I had rather hear him not only that there may be no misunderstanding, even more injurious. Humility and contrition original. What! justify a man in habitually the real question at issue, and the interences human heart. But there is such a thing as a such morality. The fact of plagiarism being adself-abasement which partakes of nothing of the mitted must stamp, as I have before shown, the I condemn plagiarism, then, as I have defin- | noble. Such is the degradation, in his own eyes, | act as downright positive deception. And I proed it; first, on account of the nature of the thing of the minister who knows that he is practicing, test against any practice, tending so far to peritself; and, secondly, on account of its injurious | de facto, a continual deception upon his hearers, | vert the judgment of the people, that they are influences on the person practicing it, and on the by preaching to them the sermons of other and willing to justify deception! In fact, there is a 1. As to the nature of the thing itself. I pro- preaching great sermons, and yet precluded, by in this respect. The state and judgment of the nounce it such an imposition on the public as | shame, or some other motive, from undeceiving | people have been peverted by an inflated style amounts to positive deception, and shall proceed them. A truly ingenuous man would not wear of speaking, which passes for elequent preaching, to prove it so. All who have written on the a borrowed dress, and receive honor and praise when in fact it is simply flowery speech-making; subject of moral conduct hold, that deception con- for it, and yet not desire to strip himself of what- until at last the people have a craving for pretty sists in intentionally conveying a wrong impres- ever honor was thus undeservedly bestowed on | speeches, and are almost unwilling to hear the a direct expression of what is false, or by acting | And if a man, with any of the elements of nobil- | Zion is not fed on the "bread of life," and is spirin such a way as to produce a wrong impression, | ity in him, habitually knows himself honored for | itually starving. The Church can no more sulwith the intention that it should be made, or others' labors, and yet cannot, or will not dis- sist on this kind of "fine preaching" than the Messrs. Editors,—Our venerable father Hen- any effort or desire to correct it. I may either no man can habitually feel without destroying | The cry, in both cases, is for "bread!" On the ry Smith, in several recent numbers of his in- | speak a falsehood. And this | the independence and generosity of his character. | other hand, too many of our preachers, instead teresting "Narrative," makes some very grave is not only the view taken of the matter of de- And when a man loses a sense of his own man of striving to correct this false taste, actually charges against some of the ministers of the ception by moral philosophy, but it is the very | hood, there is little of the noble left him. It | pamper it, and bend all their energies to the preparation of flowery discourses, which, if they can not manufacture, they will "borrow," or "steal." This, in turn, is justified by some of the people, rowing;" but, on the whole he distinctly makes as their own, what is the intention and wish of consequence, feel this continual self-degrada- who will have their flowers, even if they are stolen. Perhaps I may be supposed, from the ardor of my temperament, to be presenting the case too strongly. But, seriously, to my mind, these are literal facts.

But the tendency of plagiarism is equally bad

ences around them.

In conclusion, let me briefly suggest how this

1. Let such as may feel themselves guilty in

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