

Dr. Samson's Sermon at Lexington, Virginia.

This sermon, as reported in the Richmond Herald, has deepened our conviction that Young Men's Christian Associations exert an injurious influence on pure christianity. It may, as the Herald says, be read with pleasure, if we look at it simply in the light of scholarship, style, and information. Much of it we most cordially endorse; but it makes concessions and statements which are in conflict with the faith as it was once delivered unto the saints. We are confirmed in the belief that no Baptist can discuss the scriptural development of christianity before a society of variant faith, and practice, without either compromising the truth or giving offense. Many have tried it, but their conclusions have generally been at war with their premises.

It is in this case Dr. Samson reasons very well, and constructs his sentences handsomely; but he is before a Young Men's Christian Association, and must be careful to make Pedobaptists co-workers, and co-equals with the Baptists, for the "truth," enjoined by the apostle John. This is the difficulty under which his discourse breaks down.

His text was the following: III John 8:

"We therefore ought to receive such, that we might be fellow helpers to the truth."

This remark, he says was called forth by the want of charity, which had been shown by Diotrephes towards some excellent workers for Christ? The reader should note here, that those "workers" were Baptist missionaries, and not workers of a different persuasion.

"Want of charity" towards other denominations is a stereotyped complaint against some Baptists, but the Dr. foreshadows his design more clearly in the following:

"No apostle—not the whole company of apostles—can be regarded as the sole discoverers and publishers of truth; but it is the common responsibility of all that Christ illumines with his Holy Spirit, at the hour of their conversion."

This, as the reader will perceive, gathers in all converts, as publishers of the truth, whether baptized or not; and from the text he deduces the following proposition, as the sentiment of the apostle:

"The power of christian association in learning, in exemplifying, in defending and extending the truth as it is in Jesus."

Now, however, naturally, this proposition may arise out of the text, in the view of Bro. Samson, it is difficult for us to see its legitimacy; but if we had wished to frame one as the basis of a sermon for a Young Men's Christian Association, this would have answered our purpose very well. The arguments for, and illustrations of the truth that follow this, are very truthfully and beautifully presented.

It is only when our author essays to group together the "workers" of different and antagonistic principles and practice, that he utterly fails. Then he clutches such weapons as this:

"In John's day, as now, there were those who forbade the spiritual labor of those who did not follow them."

But the Dr.'s charity for other denominations culminates in the effulgence of sunlight in this paragraph:

"Set the permissive will, prompted by the infant wisdom of him who continued the christian church, as allowed and appointed these differences. From one denomination we learn correct readings of the Bible records; from another, systematic groupings of its doctrines; from another, the spiritual applications of its practical truth; from another the claims of duty to herald it to all men; and who dare say that either of these, the eye or ear, the hand or foot, which Christ has placed in the body as it has pleased him, is needless there?"

"The permissive will" of God is equivalent to a divine appointment of the "differences" which exist between Baptists and pedobaptists! Verily the world does more. And then, too—by the same appointment of course—each denomination is a cog in the great wheel of systematic divinity. One teaches us to read the Bible records; another "the grouping of Bible doctrines;" another "the spiritual applications of its practical truth," and another "the duty to herald it to all men!" These several denominations, according to our author, are the eyes, ears, hands and feet in the body of Christ. And what a body! A body with three captains instead of one, and loose, disjointed, mangled and lame in all of its members! We had supposed that any Baptist of ordinary intelligence, might read the Bible records, group its doctrines, make spiritual applications of Bible truth, and learn to herald it forth to all men; but it seems, that we must have different denominations for this work.

We have a high respect for the author of this sermon, and have written this critique solely from a sense of duty. Our churches must not take on trust everything that editors and professors of colleges announce. Scholarship is often a cheat; much learning makes some men mad; but a Berean, with the Bible in his hand, may take a bee-line for heaven, no matter what labyrinth allure him from the way.

DCLXVI.

Notes on Systematic Theology.

TAKEN AT SOUTHERN BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY.

In all ages of the world men have been impressed with a feeling (if not belief) that there existed an Intelligent Power above them. Amplify this statement as much as you may see fit, if you do not run it into an assertion of the positive belief of men in the existence of a God. They have been afraid of Him—their sacrifices to appease His wrath or secure His favor prove this. Whence is this universal feeling? Now a universal consent among men on such a subject must have some basis in fact—for there is no other hypothesis that will meet the case. These are the principal arguments, and they possess weight; but how do we get the idea that there is a God—whence does it originate? Ans.: There is an original foundation for it in the Constitution of the human mind, and the above mentioned arguments address this original constitution of the mind so forcibly, that when Revelation is added we acquiesce immediately and maintain unflinchingly the doctrine of the existence of a God. And these things considered, it is to be very much doubted whether there is a real atheist in the world. There may be those who are atheists in words, but it is very doubtful whether there are any real atheists.

How may eternity be defined? It is duration without beginning or end.

How do you define eternal existence? It is existence without beginning or end. (We are speaking of eternal existence

in the strict sense of the word, i. e., God's existence—not ours.)

How is TIME defined? It is measured duration, or duration in succession. What relation does time bear to eternity? None. It is not a part of duration cut off eternity; it is only a different mode of being—existence in succession. This question is asked, because we usually and habitually regard heaven and eternity as a great distance from us. In this we are mistaken. Mankind are like a chicken in an egg—it requires no change of place to put the chicken in the world. We are now in the other world and eternity, only we can not perceive it because of our mode of being.

Why must succession be excluded from our idea of God's existence? 1st. Because if succession be admitted then it involves infinite series which is an absurdity. 2nd. Because succession is an imperfection. In what sense are all times—present, past and future—equally present to God? We can only answer negatively—in such a sense as to exclude succession.

How then must we understand those passages of Scripture which seem to imply that there is a present, past and future state with God? Ans.: It is only an accommodation of language to our imperfections or modes of understanding or comprehension.

SPIRITUALITY.

What do we affirm when we say that God is spirit? Ans.: That he is an active, living, intelligent Agent. What do we deny? Ans.: That any of the attributes of matter belong to him. If he were material he would be made up of finite parts, and therefore could not be infinite. 2nd. If he were material he could not be omnipresent. 3rd. If he were material he could not be unchangeable, and he would be divisible. 4th. If he were material, he could exhibit no marks of design; for so far as we know, matter is not intelligent. Dr. Breckenridge's argument to prove that God is a spirit: When we look abroad in this world we observe two distinct forms of existence. The one is that which thinks, wills, remembers and reasons, &c. The other is that which possesses form, color, divisibility, &c. Mind and matter are the only forms of existence with which we are acquainted in the world. I know that which thinks in me is not a tree—the tree is one thing and my thinking principle is another. Now one of these propositions must be true. Either mind caused matter, or matter caused mind, or both have existed from all eternity as uncaused existences. Now let us examine these propositions. In ourselves we observe both these forms of existence. We are positively certain we did not create ourselves; but we are the highest order of existence in the world. Therefore, if we did not create ourselves neither animals nor mere matter could have created us. Therefore mere matter, or matter in conjunction with mind has not existed from all eternity. The most satisfactory method of proving that God is a spirit, is to prove that he is not material. What two errors are involved in a denial of God's spirituality? Ans.: Pantheism and Materialism.

What is meant by the unity of God? Ans.: That he is one and only one. What negative argument can we bring forward to prove that God is one? Ans.: There is no reason or necessity for supposing that there are more Gods than one. One can account for all things and all effects, and it is a good rule both in Philosophy

and Theology not to introduce more causes than are sufficient to account for existing phenomena. The supposition of one uncaused cause is difficult enough; there is no reason therefore in doubling the difficulty.

For the Biblical Recorder.

There are churches—and there have been such for many years past—that work conjointly in supporting a pastor. But the evil of the four-church system is, that after the first year, one or all of the churches thus cooperating, fall behind in paying the annual pledge. The second year makes the deficit larger, still larger the third, so that by the fourth year, the original obligation is only about half redeemed. Just at this point the nonpaying members become restive. What would have been easy to pay in the yearly instalments, is now a burden. They know that they owe the amount, and owe it for services rendered; but then the pastor can't sue, or if he can, he will not, but still he is an eye sore. 'Tis hard to look such a man in the face from a delinquent pew, and the alternative is, to pay as an honest man; or to repudiate, and manipulate for another pastor.

The good sign to which I invite general attention is this: A church recently met to call a pastor. The nonpaying members were eager to call—wanted to make a short job of it. But there were several members present who pay as well as pray; and they would be an ornament to any church. Not a step would they take towards making a new call, till their former pastor should be paid up. A resolution to this effect passed, and the matter is in statu quo. Now, was not this excellent?

1. Because it proves that there are some honest christians. 2. Because it cuts up by the roots the old custom of paying a new pastor with money that is due to predecessors. 3. Because it contributes to the peace of Zion; for it is a notorious fact, that the clamor and outcry against pastors and members, is made by those who do not want to pay, or be told of their faults. 4. It would ensure permanency to the pastoral office; and, 5. It would make churches an honor to the community in which they are located instead of a hissing reproach.

SENEX.

Drs. Armitage & Wyckoff, of New York, send us a circular from which we make the following extracts:

When the Bible Union was organized, nothing was farther from our minds than at that time to commence the revision of the Spanish Testament. But God so directed us, in his providence, that our duty in this respect did not admit of a doubt. Ministers and colporteurs, using and distributing Spanish translations of the word of God, had become utterly disatisfied with all those then existing. One who had spent some twelve years in disseminating the issues of Bible Societies, both English and American, in South America, at last abandoned the field, went back to Great Britain, and organized a body of benevolent men to revise the Spanish Testament. They united with the missionary projector of the work, Rev. Frederick Crowe, in requesting us to undertake it.

After suitable consideration we engaged in it. Spanish scholars of the highest character for learning, discretion, and piety, were employed by us. The chief translator, Don Juan Calderon, died in the fifth year of the enterprise, when it was little more than half completed. His extraordinary qualifications and high reputation inspired the great est doubts whether a critical success could be engaged.

In answer to fervent and continuous prayer, the Lord sent us a man, not only his equal in qualification, but in official position even his superior. While the work was in progress, brother Norton, wishing to have the

views of a most distinguished Spanish scholar upon the merits of the Revision, submitted the whole to his critical examination from the beginning of Matthew to the 25th verse of the 7th chapter of Luke, and took his pen in writing as follows: (Translation)—"I have seen, examined, and corrected the proofs from the beginning of Matthew to verse 25 of Chap. VII. of Luke, and judge them as perfect as possible."

Here was the book prepared. But brother Crowe died a martyr to the cause, having been imprisoned, till his health was ruined, by Roman Catholic magistrates impelled by Romish priests.

For what then, we asked, did God lead us at this time, to prepare this faithful version of his word?

The question is now answered, and in such a manner as to fill us with exultant gratitude and adoration.

PROCEEDINGS IN EUROPE AND AMERICA.

Spain, till lately, triply barred and bolted against Protestantism and divine truth; Spain, the most bigoted of Catholic countries, was opened a few months ago by God, in his providence, for the reception of his word. Missionaries and colporteurs flocked thither to distribute scriptures. But soon the hearts of some of them began to quail before a growing conviction that the books which they were circulating were not the most faithful versions of inspiration. They communicated their anxieties to their friends in England.

Our agent, Rev. Wm. Norton was sent for. Our book was solicited, and subjected for weeks to a most thorough examination by native Spaniards, and English scholars versed in the Spanish language, and especially by one who had travelled frequently in Spain, and thoroughly felt the need of distributing the pure truth of God.

The result of the examination was perfectly satisfactory. The merits of the translation secured the confidence and approbation of the pious and intelligent men who wished to have a faithful version of God's Word circulated in Spain.

The same convictions were springing up in America. Inquiries were made for our books. Rev. Henry C. Riley, Episcopalian, Pastor of the Spanish Church in this city, called, procured copies, carried them to Mexico, recommended and circulated them. Three sets of stereotyped plates were made; one for use in America, one in Great Britain, and a still larger one in Spain. Seven missionaries in the latter country are now engaged in distributing the books, and the English Missionary Society and other bodies have taken up nearly the whole edition issued in Great Britain.

Now, brother, sisters, do you not say to us: "Go on. The call is from God. Furnish the books as they are needed?" We know that your heart will prompt you thus to encourage us.

Of course, you will pray for us. You will ask for God's Spirit to accompany the distribution of His word. You will rejoice, and exult, and thank the Lord that Spain, and Mexico, and Cuba (about Cuba), are all open to receive the truth. And oh! how you will thank him, that we had a faithful Spanish Testament ready for distribution! How wonderful! How providential!

All ready, all prepared, except the means of making the books. Every copy of the Spanish Testament is gone, and we have not a dollar in our treasury to make another.

Now, brother, sister, don't wait; send us something immediately. The King's business requires haste.

Suppose a candidate is baptized "in proper form, by a duly authorized administrator, but with a sinister intention—say, to enjoy a more favorable opportunity of robbing the church of its communion service—would that be valid baptism? We think not, and can hardly suppose that the Baptist Herald does. If this opinion is "unbaptized" it is high time that it should be changed. We have never affirmed that a right intention on the part of the administrator is essential to the validity of the ordinance. Does brother Link think it is?

—Religious Herald.

We beg leave to say that the Baptist Herald thinks that such a baptism would be just as valid as that of any other unbeliever. The church and all concerned would give it official recognition as valid till the individual's true character was discovered, and then they would withdraw from him as from any other unbeliever made manifest, whether self-deceived or an intentional deceiver. If such a one should be afterward converted, it would be his duty to be baptized. But we do not see what this has to do with the matter in hand. We have said nothing about "the intention of the administrator," and fail to see any point in the sentence referring to it. If baptism depends on such intention, who of us is baptized?—Texas Baptist Herald.

For the Biblical Recorder.

I am pleased to learn from reports published in the RECORDER that so general and deep an interest is taken by Baptist brethren in the cause of Sunday Schools. There is no subject which seems now to engage more of their attention, and none perhaps which has stronger claims upon their benevolent efforts. The work of giving proper religious instruction to the rising generation is one of transcendent importance. On it, to no little extent, hangs the future of our country. Especially is this true of its future moral and religious condition. There never has been a time since the institution of Sunday schools that they were not highly beneficial to the young; but the circumstances in which we are placed render them indispensable now to the people of the South.

If our youth are to be snatched from the whirlpool of infidelity and its attendant vices, if they are to be elevated above the base and demoralized of our unhappy country; and especially if they are to be qualified to meet and resist the many isms and errors now being transported into our land, the Sunday school must be a co-worker with the pulpit. Parents and friends, as well as preachers of the gospel must wake up from their slumbers and come to the rescue. There is work enough for all to do; and our minister would no doubt feel greatly strengthened by such cooperation. He who was called the wisest of men has said there is a time for all things. If the sentiment is true, then surely the present is a proper time for christians generally to do all they can to save the young of our land from the many and imminent perils that threaten their moral ruin.

The season of the year is now upon us, when Sunday schools in the country places, as well as in towns and cities, can go into operation. There is no good reason why any church may not have its Sunday school either large or small; and it is surely time that the professed followers of him who said, "Suffer little children to come unto me," and who "took them in his arms and blessed them," should try to follow and imitate the example of their Lord so far as to point out to them the way to the Savior of sinners and pray with and for them, that they may be made meet for his blessed and glorious kingdom.

But I did not propose writing a communication on the importance of this great subject—the religious instruction of the young. That I leave to able pens; but I do wish to express my deep interest and sympathy in this cause and to say to my brethren who read the RECORDER, let us be up and doing what we can while it is day. Our lives are rapidly passing away, and the night of death will soon be upon us, when our labors here must forever cease.

I desire also to say, that as one of the officers of the N. C. Sunday school convention and also as one of a committee appointed at the last session of the Beulah Association, it made my duty to call a convention or general meeting of the friends of Sunday schools in this Association. After consultation with the other members of the committee and other brethren, we have decided it will be best not to attempt to hold a convention for Sunday schools till the time of the meeting of our next Association, which will be with the Baptist church in Yanceyville, embracing the 2nd Lord's day in August next. The afternoon on Sunday to be devoted to the Sunday school cause. I therefore hereby give this notice, and not only invite but request brethren of the State society and others interested in this great work to be with us on that occasion, that we may have their counsel and influence to strengthen the Sunday school cause in this portion of the Master's vineyard.

JAS. POTEAT.

Unitarian Baptists.

We had thought that Baptists were all Trinitarians. Taking the statement of I John v: 7, and (Paul) Col. ii: 9, and others, it was thought unnecessary to place our Saviour in any of the aspects of a christian, as requiring either a ritual of the old dispensation, or a qualification under the new.

One brother recently supposed that baptism was necessary to remove "ceremonial uncleanness" from our Redeemer, and fit him for his office in the work of Redemption. More recently another tells us, "he was baptized of the Holy Ghost."

Ministers and christians are excusable for differing in their ways of expressing the same fundamental truths; but there can be made no allowance for such differences as undo the equality and sameness of the godhead of Christ, or represent him as unqualified in any case for the work of Redemption.

Christ needed no anointing to make him King, for he was "born king," none to make him priest, for he "was a priest forever." He was circumcised, not to make him a saint; but to confirm him Abraham's descendant. He was baptized, not to make him a saint, not to make him a professed disciple, not to make him an officer, not to make him a member of "the church;" but to give a form to his church in becoming his followers, and to establish himself as the head of the spiritual house. The spirit of God descended upon him not to baptize him, but to point him out, "God manifest in the flesh," the man "in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the godhead bodily," the great God, the only true God, dwelling on earth in the man, Jesus.

The writer of this professes to be a Hexarian, or a double Trinitarian. Not a unitarian, to count Christ one, and God a different one; but to count the two one; to consider the three, one; and to regard the six that is, the Father, the Son, the Holy Ghost, the spirit, the water, and the blood, to be this, the same God man, the one, Jesus.

His disciples were baptized with the Holy Ghost; but Christ was the Holy Ghost. Christ was not baptized into his disciples, but they were baptized into him. M. B.

Protracted Meetings.

Perhaps my experience and observation on this subject may be of use to some. I date my spiritual birth at a protracted meeting. I have been a great advocate for protracted meetings; I verily thought that those who opposed them were opposing the work of God. But my experience is such that I can not now have any great joy at the accounts of revivals as often published. Such as, say, so many "were converted," at this place, and so many at another.

But I wish it understood that I do by no means, even speak lightly of a true revival of religion in the soul. When the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, is sent to comfort God's people, and to reprove (or convince) the world of sin, let every one praise the Lord and rejoice in his goodness.

We sometimes meet in the name of Christ, and for some reason, and do not have the spirit of Christ. And to my mind, it is an awful sight for our dear brethren to go to work to make up in animal excitement what they lack in spiritual influence. My heart has been sad to see friends, in great excitement go to their friends, and parents go to their children, and say and do every thing they can to excite them and force them, (often contrary to their feelings and judgment) to the "anxious seats," and then tell them that the Holy Spirit is at work with them. And as soon as there is a natural release and "they feel better," then tell them that they are converted, and that they must join the church.

I have been in many such meetings which have resulted in getting scores into the churches which have proved to be mere "dead heads," more dead weight than spiritual strength.

I have known Sunday schools dismissed to attend such meetings, and so demoralized by them, that they could not be kept up afterwards.

J. P. M.

There will be a Sunday School Convention of the Liberty Association at Abbott's Creek Church, commencing on Saturday before the 5th Sunday in May. We hope every church in the Association will be represented by two, three or as many of their active members, as can come; also, that all the ministers will be present.

Dear brethren, duty to our country, our children, ourselves, and duty to our God calls us to faithful, earnest and immediate action in regard to Sunday schools.

Come, brethren and let us consult and plan about the duty. Abbotts Creek Church throws open her arms to receive you—read her resolutions:—

Resolved, that we cordially invite the churches of the Liberty Association to meet with us in a Sunday School Convention on Saturday before the 5th Sunday in May.

Resolved, that we earnestly request Brother B. W. Justice to be with us in said Convention.

Do not forget brethren to come. Yours in Christ,

J. B. RICHARDSON, V. P. of S. S. A. of N. C.

Rev. J. D. Fulton in a recent sermon was very severe on the present generation of Bostonians. He said:

The wisdom of our wise men is perishing. The people reject it, trample upon it, and prefer instead the last sensation. Ministers find a sneer at christianity popular, and a defence of infidelity a sure path to renown. Even in scientific circles, infidelity is rampant, and our halls devoted to education of the young are made to echo to utterances which disgrace and ruin Europe, and which, like the dry rot, are eating into our national life. Men are courted and praised who are impious in speech. A senator, having the effrontery to denounce the pulpit and Sunday, becomes a candidate for popular favor, and those who are conscienceless, who place morality and virtue in the pillory, and are pliable to the wishes of the prefigate and the designing, are sure of support.

Another class, claiming "that it is impossible to legislate people into heaven," seem to try their hand in legislating them into hell, and christians stand aside, helpless, because of their faith.

Patriotism, love of the people, and love of liberty are cheap in talk, but oftentimes dear in fact. How sad to see members of the church of Christ, men who claimed to be temperate and to love temperance not for themselves alone, but for their children and society, men honored by their friends with their elevation, in the expectation they that would meet their responsibilities in the light of duty—how sad to see their profession proving to be a cheat and a lie when the strain touches them! Their record will be hard to meet with composure at the bar of an enlightened public conscience or at the judgment seat of Christ. It will be impossible to forget that a negro, a member of an evangelical church, elected by the votes of christian men in Boston, has for forgot his obligations to his race and to himself as to join with his former enemies in consigning his people to the merciless dominions of the rum power, and gloried in finding his commission for so acting in the precepts of men. Such a man dishonors and betrays his race, and is the foe of humanity.

BIBLICAL RECORDER.

April 20th, 1870.

Spurgeon.

How suddenly some persons win a wide fame, while others of larger capacities, ripe scholarship, felicitous utterance, and unblemished morals, never become known beyond the limits of their parochial or professional circles! Once in the course of centuries, a genius is brought upon the stage of human life, by an unseen usher, who instantly plays an important part in the drama of religious or political events—it may be a Washington, a Whitfield, or a Luther. He may hold much in common with his contemporaries. Corporeal organization, form, presence, language, and education may differ but little from those of his fellows; yet he rapidly gains a position far in advance of them—demands universal admiration and deference, and promptly receives them. No one disputes his claim. None ventures to compete for the enthusiastic laudations of admiring multitudes. The united testimony of all is, that he is alone and pre-eminent among his contemporaries.

Why things done and spoken by some persons, are so much more forcible and effective than the very same things would be, if proceeding from other persons, it is not our prerogative to explain. The problem could scarcely be solved by the wisest philosophers. Speculate and theorize we may, till half convinced that we have detected the secret of the orator's power, and regard him as in nothing superior to persons who have educated popular eclair—yet, the spontaneous verdict of extolling assemblies will set aside our best conclusions. The magic touch of genius evokes responses from all hearts.

Mr. Spurgeon—apparently a precocious divine, in the beginning of his ministry—has held his own as a pulpit orator of the first rank. In fact, no pulpit of any denomination has been able to duplicate him. Beecher's admirers have called him the Beecher of England: we should be unwilling to rate Beecher as the first Spurgeon of America. Not because of any inferiority of intellect in the former; but because the sermons of the latter contain the marrow and fatness of the gospel, a quality wanting in those of the former.

Spurgeon's popularity may, however, be due, in part to the character of his audiences. The English have for centuries been held under the yoke of written and poorly read sermons. There was nothing in their utterances to wake up the sleepers, startle the conscience, or elicit admiration. The everlasting manuscript, measured and monotonous enunciation, and the stereotyped Episcopal formularies chilled and froze the hearts of the people.

When, therefore, Spurgeon appeared, delivering his message from God, fresh from the heart in a rich, full, round voice, darting arrows of both wrath and love deeply into the sinners' soul—the people listened with open ears, received him with open arms, and loved him with warm and glowing hearts. In America, such preaching has not been so uncommon, and if this English celebrity had made his debut in this country, his fame might not have culminated so rapidly. But, bating all reasonable criticisms, Mr. Spurgeon must be a superior man, despite the unfavorable critiques of some of his reviewers.

We have read many of his sermons with profit and delight. They are, in many respects, superior to the printed sermons of Whitfield, or of Christmas Evans. They are in doctrine Calvinistic, and evolve just such sentiments as have always been dear to Baptist minds. They are drawn from the Scriptures as the bee extracts honey from a flower, and when Mr. Spurgeon is done with his subject, one wonders what more could be said of it. He never repeats himself—at least we have never seen any evidence that he does. Aside from the man, these sermons have merit. They are adapted to the popular capaci-

ty, are the plain statements of holy writ, unfold to man his lost condition, explain the danger of procrastination, and mercifully point to Jesus as the only being who can save. We like such sermons, and only regret that their highly gifted and distinguished author cannot see it to be his duty to eschew open communion.

The *Christian Era* agrees with many Baptists of the South "that any endorsement of the pernicious views of Baptistal Regeneration held by the Campbellites, would be a heretical concession," but thinks "that a Baptist minister by exchanging with a pedobaptist clergyman simply recognizes his ministerial character as an accredited preacher of the gospel—nothing more, and nothing less."

This is precisely what we object to. Jesus never wrought a miracle, nor preached a sermon till after he was baptized; and shall we accredit a man as a preacher of the gospel who refuses to imitate the example of Christ?

The *Era* gives its views on one another question as follows: "Another question also occupies the attention of Southern Baptists, namely: Can a clergyman who has not been immersed, legitimately immerse a candidate so that the baptism shall be considered by Baptists as regular? Many of the Southern Baptists answer, no. This answer involves the doctrine of apostolic succession, a belief in which seems to us a matter of faith without evidence, that is, superstition."

This doctrine involves only a part, if it involves any, of the apostolic office. No Southern Baptist maintains that the miraculous functions of the apostles were perpetuated. But they were preachers and baptizers, and can the *Era* say that they have no successor in these offices? Is it 'superstition' to confide in the promise of Christ, though we may not be able to trace a continuous chain of succession? "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."

The *Era* gives us new light in reference to ordination: "As a historical fact it cannot be found that John Bunyan, or John Calvin, were ever legitimately ordained. Who cares if they were not? The Holy Ghost ordained and sealed their ministry by his converting influences."

At Antioch the Holy Ghost gave directions for an ordination, but certain ministers ordained; and we are not aware that the Holy Ghost ever ordained in a different manner from this.

The *Era* makes its capital mistake by assuming, that baptism to be regular, must necessarily have come down to us, by one unbroken line, whereas it may have reached us, and regularly too, through numerous lines!

Imitative Elocution.

Knowing man to be an imitative animal—even from his cradle—care should be taken never to indulge this propensity of his nature, in violation of good taste, or an exact orthodoxy. The force and beauty of fine speaking depend mainly on a full and distinct utterance of words according to their elementary combinations, and a judicious use of accents and emphasis. Well aware are we that it is easier to detect faults in the oratorical performances of others than it might be to avoid them ourselves; but this is no reason for withholding a just criticism.

We have noticed of late that the custom of employing the definite article before the words beginning with consonants, as if it were written *thee*, is becoming a habit with some speakers. The orator in Congress says: *Thee* law, *thee* house, *thee* resolution; *thee* word, *thee* sinner, *thee* gospel. The mannerism was doubtless taken up by the ear from the tongue of some popular, but incorrect, speaker.

Be this as it may, the habit is a cant which all orators who aim at elegance of enunciation, should studiously avoid. It accords not with the dictates of good taste, nor has it the sanction of the best prosodists and teachers of elocution. Walker gives this rule:

"When *the* is prefixed to a word beginning with a consonant, it has a short sound, little more than the sound of *th* without the *e*, and when it precedes

a word beginning with a vowel, the *e* is sounded plainly and distinctly. This difference will be perceptible by comparing the pen *the* hand, &c., with the oil, the air, &c."

Let this rule as a general practice be observed, and it will contribute to smoothness and beauty in oratory. There are, however, cases in which the definite article may be, and perhaps ought to be, properly emphasized, even before consonants; but these are when comparisons are made, or when it is intended to express superiority: as for example, *the* city—that is, the city above and before all other cities. If any one would have a clear perception of the beauty of this distinction in the use of the definite article, let him practice on words as above directed.

Without extending these remarks on imitative elocution to an undue length, we may just hint at a growing carelessness in the pronunciation of proper names. Some years ago in the city of Baltimore, we heard an excellent sermon from a distinguished pedobaptist minister, whose delivery on the whole was very fine; but he invariably pronounced the word Abraham, as if it were written A-brem. Now, what right had this disciple of Wesley, to change the ancient orthography, and rob the father of the faithful of an *h* and two *a*s? Then we have, at times, heard a Baptist minister cut the matter short with a blunt A-brem. But even this we thought discourteous, if not criminal. Why displace and knock out letters? The sin lies at the door of imitative elocution, since it is easier to imitate, than examine and study.

SELF MADE MEN.

What does this mean? Does not every man make himself in science, literature, politics, or in whatever may be the object of his pursuit? Did any college, or professor, ever make any man? Personal energy and industry make the man what he becomes, or these and university privileges combined. Let not the too common notion that a self-made man must necessarily have a superior genius, intimidate any person. Let no one imagine either, that no advance can be made on collegiate acquisitions. While it is true that most men who rose to high distinction, possessed superior native endowments, such as Washington, Andrew Fuller, and Rittenhouse; it is just as true that native powers can only be developed by constant mental exertion. Milton, Luther, and Sir Isaac Newton, though wearing the honors of the best universities of England, were as much self-made men, as Dr. Franklin and Sir Humphrey Davy. In fact, all the bright luminaries that ever adorned the firmament of law, literature, philosophy, or religion, rose to eminence by their own indomitable energy and perseverance. "Perseverantia omnia vincit," was their motto, and we shrewdly suspect that if a man has not the energy to make himself, whether in possession of a college diploma or not, he will pass through the world, as Shakespeare might have said, "but half made up."

Succession Running to Seed. It is sometimes amusing, but oftener painful, to notice the variant, not to say wild, views which editors and correspondents of the religious press, seem to cherish in reference to an indefinite something, that connects modern with primitive christianity. All are agreed, we believe, that the present form of christianity, as practically manifested by people called Baptists, resembles, very nearly, that which was instituted by Christ and his apostles; and some, perhaps many, would advance a step further and affirm that it is both the offspring and continuation of that primitive religion. But how came it here, is the perplexing question of the age? Somehow, through fear, or flattery, or a desire to please collateral societies, the Baptist faith has become enfeebled, so that it can scarcely grasp the possibility of an unbroken succession of faith and practice from the year thirty, to

that of one thousand eight hundred and seventy. This period was much too long, and some parts of it much too dark, to be seen through, from end to end, by the ever watchful eye of Christ.

His promise: "Lo, I am with you always, unto the end of the world," in the opinion of these doubting Thomases, could not possibly have struggled through the ten Roman persecutions, much less the fiery trials under the crusaders and inquisitors. The *modus vivendi* with which Christ would have encouraged the hearts of all his people, meant simply an age; and must have brought the world to an end, somewhere between the time of Pope Sylvester and Luther's Reformation—so called.

Now, we are happy in believing in a succession of faith, and practice, and official administrators of the two gospel ordinances, from the very hour that the Master said: "Go ye therefore &c." We believe this on the promise of Christ, and our faith is strengthened by what the New Testament teaches, and the best of Baptist churches practice. If we should see the two ends of a chain, made of the same kind of metal, with links of the same length and form, we should believe it to be the same chain throughout, though the centre might be hid from view. And if by tracing from the two ends in search of a centre of union, we should find no connection, we should still think that the chain had been entire, and that the end nearest to us, might be safely extended, ad infinitum, as a continuation of the original chain.

So, if in some lonely isle, we should chance to meet with a being, the fac-simile of one of the human species, we should not take him for an ape, nor as a cross between a monkey and a man; but for a man, and a man by a regular succession from the Adamic stock. We should not even stop to inquire if the line had ever been broken, and the man before us might not be a result of some such process as that by which Drs. Poindexter and Shaver would build Baptist churches in an unbaptized way; but we should hail him as a full man—just as God had designed him to be.

We lay down this proposition: Without a succession of faith, ordinances, and officers, as Christ and his apostles ordained, there is no such church on earth as Christ established. Gainsay it who may, this proposition we can and will defend.

Many of our prominent Baptists, however, write and teach as if they had no faith in such a proposition as this. The editors and teachers especially are in a state of effervescence over it. Drs. Winkler and Mell would allow any unoffical disciple to preach. Dr. Poindexter thinks it "probable" that official preaching has been perpetuated, but says there is no proof of it. He would not recognize a Pedobaptist as a minister, except by exchanging pulpits with him! Dr. Henderson "would not give a fig for apostolic succession," and brother Graves "does not believe that any living preacher is now acting under the apostolic commission." These brethren are wrong, or we are. No man succeeds the apostles in that part of their office which makes them to discern spirits and work miracles; but as preachers and baptizers, every true minister of Christ is their legitimate successor. If not, let us all be Quakers at once. And if ministers do not officiate in virtue of the apostolic commission, Dr. Graves will confer a favor by informing the ministry, in virtue of what commission they do officiate. Some, at least, would like to know.

Next we have Dr. Jeter and Dr. Fuller publishing to their thirty thousand readers, that the *intention* of the candidate may, in doubtful cases, give validity to his baptism; or that each church may decide the case for itself—as if every church and all churches were not bound by one uniform law of Christ.

The fact is, the Baptist denomination is hanging at loose ends, and mainly through the influence of its most prominent teachers.

What one of our Foreign Missionaries Believes.

"I believe that where a number of men have had their hearts renewed by God's spirit and are resolved to walk by the Word of God as their only law, they should unite together to form a church, and should exercise the gifts God has given them, choose one or more of their number, whom God has endowed with ability, to preach and teach as their elders, thus giving them authority to preach and baptize. I believe that such a baptism would be perfectly valid, and, what is infinitely more important, that such preaching would be authorized by God. A body of believers have life in themselves that should develop the form of a gospel church."

R. H. GRAVES.

This is the view of all who stagger at a succession of the order of primitive Christianity. It is the old "dozen-on-an-island" theory, which has been exploded, perhaps as often as there are days in the year. It is based on a supposed contingency, which has never, that we have ever heard or read of, happened but once, since the world began; and then the organization lived just long enough, to demonstrate the absurdity of the whole proceeding. But it has left a "mus in pice" which has well nigh defied some of our most ardent harmonizers.

There have, however, been individuals and groups of persons, who have come to a knowledge of the truth by means of God's word alone—in fact, converted by it to Baptist views, who could not be immediately baptized for want of a scripturally qualified administrator. They did not, however, act on the suggestion which our Missionary would have given them, but they waited till the Lord sent the proper officer to immerse them.

Bro. Onken's case is in point. A Pedobaptist minister offered to immerse him, but the pious German declined his services, on the ground that he himself had not been baptized. Subsequently, the Lord sent Dr. Sears, as he had sent Philip to the Eunuch, and the baptism took place. Hence all the churches, planted by this prince of missionaries, were Baptist churches, which they could not have been, if the Pedobaptist had immersed him.

About one hundred and seventy-five years ago, a little band of Quakers, near Brandywine, Pa., resolved to meet together to read the Scriptures. They were soon convinced that they ought to be baptized, and that by immersion. In the course of time, says "J. M. P." in *The Baptist*, the Pastor of the "Welch Tract" Baptist church came along, baptized this band, and organized them into a church. This was the beginning of the Brandywine Baptist Church, which has just completed a meeting house, at a cost of eleven thousand dollars. These cases show that God sends administrators when and where they are needed.

Interpretation.

Inquiries have been perplexing the minds of some brethren, as to whether there are well established rules of interpretation, to warrant the rendering of different words in the Greek, by one term in English. The word *propheteia*, for instance, which occurs in the New Testament about one hundred times, is in every case, a translation of an inflection of one of the following words: *προφητεια*, *προφητεις*, *προφητις*, *προφητιον*, and *προφητιον*. Of these, *προφητεις* occurs as many as fifty-three times, and it is uniformly rendered by the word *preach*. Luther endorses this rendering by giving *predigen*, its equivalent in German. Prof. Leusden does the same in his Latin Testament, except Luke xi: 32, where he translated by *proclaim*. The Bible Union revisers make four exceptions, namely, *proclaim* twice, and *publish*, and appoint:

A. C. Kendrick in the Bernard version, renders it about equally between *preach* and *proclaim*. These variations from our Common Version, are so slight and unimportant, that we may safely regard *propheteia* as the exact equivalent of *preach*. *Προφητεις* occurs at least twenty-six times. This Luther translates by *predigen* (preach), eighteen times; and by *verkundigen* (announce) eight times. Leusden simply transfers the word, except in three instances where he renders by a Latin term which means to announce. The Bible Union revisers translate it by *preach*, ten times; by *publish*,

twelve times; once by the phrase "made known"; and three times by the phrase "bringing glad tidings." A. C. Kendrick has *proclaim* fourteen times; *publish*, six times; *announce*, three times; and in three instances, the original word is strangely obscured by a periphrastic rendering, for which we, at least, cannot find good reason.

It will be seen that in reference to *προφητεις*, the variations are more numerous than in the case of *αγγελος*; and yet there are only shades of difference, which a fertile fancy perceives between *preach*, *proclaim*, *publish*, and *announce*.

Καταγγελλω occurs six times, and is invariably rendered, by both Luther and Leusden, by German and Latin terms, which, in English, signify to announce. Kendrick and the Bible Union revisers give *preach*, four times, and *announce*, twice; but in two passages, where the one has *preach*, the other has *announce*, and vice versa.

Next, we find that *εὐαγγελισμος* is used five times, and is defined by Luther, *predigen* (preach) once; *reden* (speak) three times; and by *sagen* (say) once. This agrees, substantially, with all the other authorities, cited above.

Εὐαγγελισμος comes next in order, and this all the aforesaid authorities render by the word *announce*.

We meet with *εὐαγγελισμος* only twice—at Acts xx: 7, and at the ninth verse of the same chapter. Of these, Luther would have one to *preach*, and the other to *speak*. The Bible Union revisers, with Mr. Kendrick, prefer *discourse*, in both cases, while Leusden would be satisfied with the word *discourse*, for both passages.

Παρηγορησεν occurs only in Acts ix: 27. The Bible Union revisers and Luther render it by *preach*; but Kendrick prefers *speak*, to which Leusden makes no serious objection. Now from this large induction of root-words—which we have used, instead of derivatives and inflections, for the sake of convenience—we record the conclusions. If they are unsound, we hope that some scholar will put us right:

1. The rendering of these, apparently variant words, uniformly by the word *preach*, was neither the result of carelessness, nor of scholarly inability. Rule eight, of King James' instructions, required the work of each translator to be reviewed by the whole college, and then to be submitted, for final decision to the King's Professors in Hebrew and Greek in each University.

2. This uniformity of translation by forty-seven as good scholars as any age has yet produced, can not be set aside by individual opinions. We have heard their scholarship questioned, but have never seen any proof that they were inferior to the scholars of the present day.

3. This uniform rendering by a single term, accords well with the verdict of common sense; for while speaking, proclaiming, publishing, and announcing, are not necessarily, under all circumstances, *preaching*; it is difficult to see how any man could preach the Gospel, without including, in the service, the meanings of all these terms.

STEP BY STEP.—The *Religious Herald* says:

"We think it better that the Southern Baptist Convention should have no publication department. In this work, we can advantageously cooperate with the American Baptist Publication Society. We cherish not the slightest opposition to the Publishing House in Memphis, or to any other. We wish them all success. If they publish good books, we shall be pleased to read and to circulate them. We think, however, that the brethren of the border States and of the Atlantic slope should not be required, or expected, to obtain their books from a point so far from their commercial centre, and so entirely aside from the usual channels of trade."

Why did you not say this when you made your speech in favor of moving the Board to Memphis?

The Plan of Circulars.

There are not many Baptists in the State who would not give a dollar to build a church in any important place, if waited on personally by an agent. But agents are expensive—they must be fed and clothed as well as other people; and it would take so many small subscriptions to support an agent, that this plan wouldn't pay. How much cheaper the plan of sending out circulars, stating the facts of the case, and asking for only one dollar! The pastor of the 2nd Baptist Church of Petersburg, Rev. J. E. Hutson, has raised in this way between four and five hundred dollars, and Mrs. Graham has realized several hundred dollars sent out in behalf of the Hillsboro Church.

If we will honor these circulars by promptly forwarding one dollar, this will be the plan generally adopted for raising money to build churches, and thus much valuable time and labor, as well as money, will be saved. There are churches struggling under debt at Wilmington, Hillsboro, High Point and Thomasville, which would be effectually relieved, if half of those who read this article would send them a dollar each.

Sunday School Meeting.

The Sunday School Convention of Yadkin Association met at the New Hope church on Friday, April the 9th.

Opening services by Elder J. K. Howell. The president and vice president, being absent, Elder J. B. Marsh proposed to spend the time till 12 o'clock in Sunday school mass meeting.

Elder John Ammons was called upon to address the meeting. We introduced his speech by calling attention to the beautiful Sunday school mottoes suspended on the wall, such as: "Feed my Lambs," "Ye must be born again," "Hope in God," "Stand up for Jesus" &c. &c. After which he made a few remarks on the importance of the Sunday school work.

Song, "Rock of Ages cleft for me," followed in a brief address by Elder Howell.

Adjourned for dinner. Afternoon session. Topic: "Singing in Sunday school." An essay was read by Elder J. B. Marsh. Elder Ammons addressed the convention on the power and utility of music enforcing the subject by appropriate illustrations.

"Shall we gather at the river," was sung by the choir. Elder Howell said, while the song was being sung, he had been contemplating the march of Israel into Canaan. They gathered at the River Jordan over 600,000 souls—parents and children—so we must gather at the dark river of death. O let us so live, and act that when we gather there we shall go over to live with Jesus. The convention adjourned till Saturday 9 o'clock a. m.

Saturday, 12 o'clock, on account of rain. President Eaton in chair.

Topic for discussion: "The relation of the Sunday school to the church" was opened by Elder Ammons. He argued from the nature of the church and its mission, that the relation of the Sunday school to the church is that of scholar to teacher, like that of child to parent, or of field to laborer. He gave the views of various writers, representing the Sunday school as inviting field of labor and expressed his belief that there is just as much authority for teaching as preaching. He took a broad view of our obligations and urged every one to strive to fill up the measure of responsibility.

Song, "Am I a soldier of the cross," Elder Marsh endorsed all that has been said by the speaker, and urged upon all the members of the church to live up to this great measure of responsibility.

Song by the choir. Evening session. Topic: "What we should teach in the Sunday school. Opening address by Elder Ammons. Suggested, in opening remarks the questionableness of teaching spelling in Sunday school, planted himself on the Bible—the whole Bible, and suggested the use of helps in teaching it.

A little girl, Alvira Collett was introduced to the convention, who delivered a very touching memorized piece. Subject, "What shall we do with the little ones?" Elder Marsh made some very feeling remarks, and closed with prayer.

The discussion being closed, the convention disposed of its miscellaneous business, and adjourned to meet at the time and place with the Yadkin Association.

On Sunday morning there was a children's meeting, addressed by Elder Ammons. After which Elder A. preached from "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ," Rom. 1: 16, and assisted the pastor in the administration of the Lord's supper. The gracious Lord was with us to comfort our hearts, and strengthen our faith—we all felt that it was good to be there.

The meeting was an important one to the Sunday school work, strengthening to the brethren, and giving promise of rich blessing upon the labors of the Lord's people in this blessed work.

The brethren seemed to part reluctantly, and there is reason to hope that at the next meeting of the convention, there will be many of the ministry in Yadkin Association to participate in the labors.

Dear brethren in the ministry in Yadkin, you lost much in being absent—your hearts would have been warmed and your hands strengthened, no doubt, had you been there; and then the writer lost much in not being permitted to see you and form your acquaintance. Go to work brethren with a will, form church Bible schools every where, trust in God and he will bring it to pass.

JOHN AMMONS.

State Evangelists.

The General Association of Ky., has taken three of its best and ablest men from their pastorates and put them in the field as State evangelists. Dr. Coleman, for many years president of the Association, Dr. Spencer, and the recent popular pastor of Paducah, Rev. A. B. Miller, are those evangelists; and the results of their labors in different parts of the State show that the action of the Association was wise. Would God we had such men at work in North Carolina in the same way.

The Centurion's Servant.

This noted miracle of Jesus, recorded by Matt. (vii: 5-13) and by Luke (vii: 1-10,) is supposed by some to be two separate cases; by others only one.

Let us compare the statements. They agree in the following particulars.

1. In location—at Capernaum.
2. In the order of time or narration, both following Christ's illustration of the folly and the wisdom of building on unsecure and secure foundations, save that Matthew interposes a short statement of the healing of a leper.
3. In each case the sick was the servant of a centurion.
4. Each concurs in the humility of the centurion, and the exalted opinion which he held of the dignity and power of Jesus.
5. The admiration, comment, and prescription of the Saviour are in each case identical.
6. Both represent the servant as immediately healed, Jesus not having seen him.

The accounts differ—
1. Matthew represents the Centurion as personally applying to Jesus—Luke says he sent elders of the Jews, bidding him not to come.

2. Matthew describes the servant as sick of the palsy, grievously tormented. Luke, without stating his malady, simply says of him, sick, ready to die.

The two writers then proceeded to treat of different subjects.

Were there then two similar miracles, or are these different accounts of one?

Let it be remembered that Luke prefaces his gospel with the expression of his intention to give a more detailed and orderly account of the things of which from the beginning he had been an eye-witness, not referring however to the other gospels which had probably not yet been written, but to opinions, declarations set forth of the sayings and doings of Jesus.

We would then look for a more extended and precise narration from him, and we find on examination that such is the character of his gospels.

Matthew deals in general statements, but Luke in detailed particulars. Hence Matthew speaks of the centurion as doing personally what he, more probably from the circumstances, did through others. Jesus being of a different race, and a man whose fame had preceded him, as one to whom all manner of diseases and devils were as subject as his own subordinate soldiers were, we would sooner expect the centurion to send to him, than to apply to him personally.

This mode of expression is common with us. We often speak of a person's doing what he causes to be done by others. Luke is so particular as to specify that the centurion, when he heard that Jesus was coming, sent a second deputation bidding him not to come.

Besides, it is very improbable, if not altogether inadmissible, that there were two centurions living in the same place, at the same time, each of whom had a servant seriously sick, and who in their interviews with the Saviour, whether personally or by proxy, used not only the same form, but also the same words of entreaty and earnest expression of faith.

That one writer specifies the disease, and the other does not, is a matter not worthy of consideration.

But there is one expression given by both which sets the matter at rest beyond all cavil.

The comment of Jesus on the faith of the applicant, is "I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel."

This the Saviour could not have said in two cases where the exhibitions of faith were of the same nature and of the same degree—"Say in a word, and my servant shall be healed," "Say the word only, and my servant shall be healed."

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