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Religious Intelligencer.

REV. JOSEPH MCLENNAN, EDITOR.

FRIDAY, MARCH 30, 1877.

CHRISTIAN COMMUNION.

We have allowed ourselves to be diverted from the direct course we intended to pursue, by the objections raised to our statements respecting Scripture truth and doctrine. These diversions have, however, brought out more fully the fact of the heresy of close communion. There seems to be no point of view in which the dogma may be made to harmonize with the Scriptures. Without farther delay over these points, we propose to state in one or two articles what we hold to be the true practice for Baptists in respect of the communion, and the reasons therefor.

We think there is no reasonable doubt that, in the apostolic age, the first duty of a believing Jew was to be baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. By this act the Jew recognized Christ's divinity, the thing most necessary for him, and which was the headship over the church, and was consecrated to Christ as God. Others than Jews were probably baptized, as Christ directed, into the name of the Divine Trinity; for it was necessary on their part that they should recognize that Trinity, while the Jews, who already believed in one God, were required particularly to recognize Christ as his son.

If any man, after conversion, and being instructed in his duty, had refused to be baptized, none of the disciples, nor any of the people, would have recognized him as a Christian in any particular. He would not have been admitted either to communion, or to participate with the disciples in any other Christian privilege or duty of work, because he so refused to identify himself with Christ and his people by submitting to that rite. Had he, under the circumstances, assumed to be a Christian, and been looked upon as such by a deceived and dishonest man, but as a willfully bad and dangerous one, a promoter of heresy and schism. And very justly so. While the apostles lived, whose words were final as to a believer's duty in this, he could have no excuse for his purposeful neglect. His act could not be understood in only two ways; either he did not believe in Christ at all, notwithstanding his professions, or, if believing in him, he yet contemned his commands and authority. He would thus hold a position of antagonism to Christianity, an antagonism exactly proportioned to the extent of his notoriety and influence. In such case the disciples could not, dare not, admit that he was a Christian, or hold the remotest fellowship with him, but would have been compelled to shun him, and refuse him fraternity, in everything pertaining to Christian worship.

What is the duty, in this regard, of the church in this age, towards those who thus oppose themselves to the gospel and to Christ?

Just what it was of the apostolic age—to hold them as unchristian, altogether out of the pale of the church; to have no fellowship with them. But does this meet the case as respects Pedobaptists now? Not at all. Though these are not, as we conceive, baptized, nor willing, on our presentation of what we conceive to be the correct form and just claims of the ordinance, to so submit to it, yet we are compelled to admit, what the apostles could not under like facts have admitted, that these people are Christians. In all Christian work we extend to them frankly a cheerful fraternity, believing that their refusal to be, as we conceive, baptized, does not arise from any antagonism to, or contempt of, Christ's commands or authority, but rather from a misconception of the form, or a mistaken notion as to the necessary perpetuity of the primitive form of that rite. Their practice expresses, in their own way, obedience and submission to the divine Head of the church, so that they cannot, with the least semblance of propriety, be classed with those who, in the apostolic day, refused to be baptized.

There thus exists, viewed from a Baptist standpoint, a condition of things impossible in the primitive church. To the early disciples, those who were not baptized were not Christians. The conclusion was simple and direct. There was no middle ground or class. To Baptists in these days, many who are not baptized are Christians. What shall we do, under these altered conditions? No apostolic precedent covers this ground directly. To exclude from any Christian privilege those who are Christians, simply because the apostles excluded those who were not Christians, and to claim the latter act as precedent for the former, as close communion does, is one of those strangely absurd things to be found only in connection with the practical working out of that dogma. In admitting that Pedobaptists are Christians, Baptists depart from their own theory of Scripture usage; in excluding Christians from Christian privilege, they go still farther from the letter and spirit of the Scriptures. What would the disciples have done with respect to communing with one whom they knew to be a Christian, and whom they fellowshiped in every Christian work and act of worship, but who was not baptized?

NEGLECTING SALVATION.

No one will be lost as the result of choice. Moral beings never invite destruction, nor welcome the doom of the unsaved. There won't be a soul in eternity left outside the gate of paradise because he didn't want to go in. The foolish virgins cried, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and the rich man would have gladly shared the great guilt and shared the destiny of Lazarus, if his suffering could have been mitigated by so doing. Men do not sin even as a matter of deliberate choice.

Men sin because they refuse the good which reason and revelation dictate, and yield to Satan and carnal desire. Individuals are lost because they decide and neglect the great salvation.

But, says the sceptic, "God would be unjust, unmerciful, and the very opposite to love, to condemn a soul forever just for simple neglect." Thus many dwell upon this seeming inconsistency, and awake to a consciousness of their "error" when it is too late to correct it.

Equally into the nature of the sin involved in neglect, and of the consequences which follow, suggested to us every day by things which come under our notice, ought to correct those common erroneous ideas of sin.

1. Mild as the term is, and trivial as the sin involved in neglect may seem, yet it implies unbelief. And unbelief is a stubborn sin and no doubt, unbelief is the cause of more condemnations than any other single vice. "He that believeth not shall be damned." Now every one knows that valuable interests are not neglected, &c., if men are sensible of their value. Men take every precaution to save their property, and no one chides them for doing so. But such precaution is only the responsible result which follows practical belief. Let the Queen of England offer a valuable gift to every British subject for some simple condition—

condition which all could comply with—and if her subjects would not comply therewith, it would be on the ground of unbelief. In proportion as men and women believed, so would they accept or neglect. This needs no illustration or argument to prove it true; however, for neglecting that which is our only reasonable hope implies unbelief on the very face of it. But neglect implies more than this.

2. Neglecting the means of salvation implies hatred of those means. This the Bible teaches. The simplicity of the gospel was a stumbling-block to the Jew and foolishness to the Greek. And so it is with the world to-day. Men will submit to any plan of salvation, except by the cross of Christ. Our Saviour said, Ye will not come unto me that ye may have life. Again, He that cometh not to the light, but to the darkness, shall be hated of the Father. Neglecting salvation implies hatred of the means.

Besides this, we witness the consequences of neglect in common things to be of fearful character. It follows, therefore, that neglecting that which is all important will be attended by the most awful results. He who neglects to plow by reason of the cold will be perished by the frost. The boy who neglects the means which offer him an education will suffer an irreparable loss. Neglecting to watch may send an ocean steamer upon the rocks and a thousand souls to eternity. A man may sit quietly in his skiff on the Niagara river, and if he is drifting downward with the current, he is as sure to be lost as he lives, unless he pulls for the shore. Though simple neglect he may go over the falls, and no one says God is unkind to allow the man thus to be lost. So with him who is forever lost; it is sheer neglect on his own part.

God delights not in the death of any man. The Saviour is anxious and waiting to save. Therefore, dear reader, remember that God desires to save you; and if you neglect and are lost, the punishment which follows you will bring upon yourself.

"Whoever a man saveth, that shall he also reap."

B. A. S.

WHAT OF THEIR FUTURE.

As it seems to us, it is one thing to win a soul to Christ, and quite another thing to lead that soul along the right road, to train it, develop its powers, bring into exercise the full strength of the Christian character, that the "measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" may be seen and recognized. And it is one of the things to be deplored, as peculiarly affecting the history of very many Christians, that the average of our pastors is so short, that hardly does the minister of Christ become the instrument of introducing a considerable number to the church when some one is found to whom, of his "stature," as "at an end," or, in other words, to whom the "measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" may be seen and recognized. And it is one of the things to be deplored, as peculiarly affecting the history of very many Christians, that the average of our pastors is so short, that hardly does the minister of Christ become the instrument of introducing a considerable number to the church when some one is found to whom, of his "stature," as "at an end," or, in other words, to whom the "measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" may be seen and recognized.

IN THE NEXT MEETING.

of the church. Here, first, all education must begin. We have had frequent occasion to meet with churches where, to be sure, there are many females, but where there were few or none to speak or pray. None had any "gifts." Brethren would sit, and watch, and listen, and leave all the work to the minister. And why? Because these "Silent partners," as some one has called them, had really no gifts! No. As to natural qualities they were as gifted as the average. They had brains, and talents, and tongues, and some instances had rich experiences; but they did not use the "talents" they had; they did not cultivate them; and, consequently, "when for the time" they had spent in the kingdom of God they ought to have been "teachers," they had "need that one teach them again what be the first principles of the oracles of God," and had to be fed with milk, the food of babes.

The fault of men's failures are not to be laid back upon God; but to be borne by themselves, for the "hard places," as we have said, are the fault of the man, and not of God. The fault of men's failures are not to be laid back upon God; but to be borne by themselves, for the "hard places," as we have said, are the fault of the man, and not of God. The fault of men's failures are not to be laid back upon God; but to be borne by themselves, for the "hard places," as we have said, are the fault of the man, and not of God.

But whether these young Christians are to be developed, educated, and to become efficient in the social meetings of the church depends very largely upon the pastor by whom they were introduced to membership. He, above other men, has their confidence, their affection. It is his privilege to speak to them in plainness, and with such affectionate earnestness that his words shall be heeded. It is his privilege to call them out; to help them over the "hard places," to speak words of encouragement, and to suggest improvements in manner, as well as in trains of thought. As it is a loss to be compensated when the young convert is destitute of such a pastor, or fails to heed his counsel, we desire, therefore, to say to our brethren, the pastors whom God has so graciously blessed during the past few months: Dear brethren, the future of the churches, in whose ministry the Master has so blessed you, depends upon what you have already achieved thus far.

And finally, prayer to Him who is the Father of the Lord Jesus committed the care of these new believers, and he is saying to you, as Pharaoh's daughter said to the mother of Moses, "This child was a nurse to me, and I will give thee thy wages." Your faithfulness, your wise rulership in the churches, your true pastoral work, is now to be tested.—*Journal and Messenger.*

"IF TWO OF YOU SHALL AGREE."

In a certain congregation a few young men, whose hearts the Lord had touched, felt anxious to "learn to pray." They wished to take their share in the public meetings for prayer, but felt unable to do so to the edification of others. Their pastor, who had urged on them the duty of public prayer, invited them to meet with him in his study one evening each week, not only to learn to pray, but to enjoy Christian communion together. For a few evenings they met thus, where he suggested their taking special objects for prayer. One young man in the congregation was chosen, and soon after another, for whose souls they agreed specially to pray. Next they chose a poor sick woman, who was not a Christian, for whom they also prayed. And finally they agreed to pray specially for a revival in the church of which they were members. They entered into an agreement that each time they prayed, whether in private or in this little meeting, they would pray for a revival in the church.

Thus they met, week by week, and thus they continued to pray for several months, yet no answer came to their prayers. It was trying to their yet inexperienced hearts, but they persevered.

At length an answer to their supplications appeared. And finally prayer to Him who is the Father of the Lord Jesus committed the care of these new believers, and he is saying to you, as Pharaoh's daughter said to the mother of Moses, "This child was a nurse to me, and I will give thee thy wages." Your faithfulness, your wise rulership in the churches, your true pastoral work, is now to be tested.—*Journal and Messenger.*

For the greater part of a year did these young men keep their agreement, to pray for the conver-

sion of the remaining young man, and to pray every day for a revival in the church.

Suddenly it became evident to the pastor that a remarkable work of grace was in progress. One and another came to him in the darkness and quiet of night, asking him to pray for them.

The result of all was that the church enjoyed the most precious revival ever known in the community.—*Christian Treasury.*

EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE.

A trip to Boston seems the fashionable thing just now. Not for this reason, however, is the editor found here. A desire for a modest rest, a few days, coupled with a desire to see and hear study the religious work going on here, induced him to come. Is he sorry he came? No. It has paid already he thinks, though but a few days have been spent here; and he thinks still more good will come of it.

So far nothing unusual occurred, more than the meeting of several ministers, on a similar errand. Rev. C. T. Phillips (Pres. Baptist), of Sussex; Rev. H. McKewen (Methodist), of Fredericton; and Rev. Mr. Miller (Presbyterian), of Charlotte Co., had taken leave of their charges, "to take," as one expressed it, "some lessons from Moody in winning souls."

A description of the Tabernacle has already been given in these columns. The leaders also have been described. The character and extent of the work being done have received considerable attention. The Rev. C. T. Phillips (Pres. Baptist), of Sussex; Rev. H. McKewen (Methodist), of Fredericton; and Rev. Mr. Miller (Presbyterian), of Charlotte Co., had taken leave of their charges, "to take," as one expressed it, "some lessons from Moody in winning souls."

After the formal adjournment of the Council, public meetings will be held in Edinburgh and other cities. The number of the delegates is limited to 300, of whom 100 are allotted to the United States, 100 to Great Britain and Ireland, fifty-four to the Continent of Europe, and fifty to the Colonies, etc. It is announced that at least 200 delegates are expected to attend, including representatives from the Canadian, Australian and South African colonies of England, and from the Continent.

—OUR "HOLY FATHER." It appears that the Pilgrimage to set out from Montreal on the 11th inst., is to include a delegation from the Maritime Provinces, to consist of one representative, each from New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, and Cape Breton, who are to carry with them the money and the prayers of the Acadian population of these Districts, and of the Magdalen Islands, to present their wants and persons to the Holy Father, and to receive his benediction, for these loyal children doomed to dwell in this Sodom of Free Schools, and to be free, speech and free, and a conscience untrammelled by human authority, we have nothing to say, only that we hope these delegates at least will return wiser men, if not better men, and that their trip will prove to be as profitable to the people they represent, as it will doubtless be to themselves.

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