

## ANOTHER OBJECTION TO ELECTION ANSWERED.

"This doctrine makes God unjust and partial."

This deserves as candid an examination as any objection against the doctrine. But there is much greater difficulty in producing conviction of its groundlessness in the mind when it exists, because this objection is a feeling rather than an argument, and in many cases the feeling so warm and strong that it holds the understanding in a slavish subjection that renders it as insensible to the force of logic as the eye of the blind man is to the beauty of colors.

To persons, however, who wish to try the real weight of this objection, the following suggestions may be acceptable.

The doctrine makes God unjust:—To whom? Not certainly to the elect. No man will say that God treats with injustice those whom he renews by the Spirit and crowns with eternal glory.

But the doctrine makes him unjust to those not elected. How? What does the doctrine of election represent God as doing to them? Any thing they do not deserve?—Have they not all broken his law? Do they not all reject his Son? Are they not all impenitent, and do they not continue so till the day of final judgment? Is it then any injustice to them if he leaves them to receive the punishment of their sins; to reap the bitter fruits of their own desires?

Does justice require that God should snatch the sinner from the flames into which he is plunging? Must God annul his law and annihilate future punishment, in order to be just toward the sinner who has rebelled against his authority and despised his mercy, even to the trampling under foot of the blood of Christ?

It must be borne in mind that every soul lies before God ruined by its own sin. God is under no sort of obligation to any one of the whole number. With unimpeached and adorable justice he might leave the whole to perish eternally. But eternal and unbounded mercy has determined to save some. This determination, or election, is pure mercy to those who are rescued by it. But what is it to the rest? Is it injustice? What does it do to them? It does nothing. Does it make them sinners? Does it compel them to remain such? Does it force them down to hell? Neither. It only leaves them, just as all might have been left without casting a blemish on the throne or character of God. It leaves them to follow their own-chosen way.

But cries a murmuring sinner; "I had as good a right to be elected as any other." So you had exactly, and what right was it? Examine this well—*what right was it?* What right have you to day, in which you can go to God and call upon his justice to change your heart and bring you to repentance, and prepare to save you? Have you any such right? Dare you take your position before God and say: "Most holy God, thou art granting thy Spirit in his renewing power to other sinners no better than I am and I demand it of thee, on the principles of eternal justice, to do the same by me." Sinner, have you a heart or a conscience to take your stand upon this ground? Take it then and gird on your armor for the controversy with your Maker.—Demand of him to give you an earthly crown and a world of gold. You had as good a right to be ordained to these as a Cæsar or a Cæsar. Demand of God to new-create your intellect. You had as good a right to be born a son of genius as the fiendish Byron or the sainted Paul. Demand of him to free you from your tabernacle of clay and give you an Archangel's harp. You had as good a right to be made for such a place as Gabriel, that faithful servant, or Lucifer that proudly fell.

But perhaps you admit that it is right and just for God to pass you by to day, while his Spirit awakens the conscience of your companion; selecting him alone from all the Congregation, and bringing him to newness of life and new obedience. But is it just for God actually to do this, and yet just for him previously to determine to do it? Does an action receive its character of justice or injustice, partiality or impartiality, from the circumstance of its being determined upon at the instant it is performed, or before hand? If it is right and just in God to renew the heart of an individual to day, while no others are affected, then it was right and just to determine yesterday that he would do it; and equally right to determine the same ages ago.

The doctrine of election simply asserts that from Eternity God determined to do precisely what he actually does in awakening, convert-

ing and saving his people. If therefore it was unjust to determine to do this, it is much more unjust to actually do it. Of course if you say that election makes him unjust, then his *actual and daily dealings are unjust*. He is then guilty of injustice every time his blessed Spirit descends to renew and save the souls of men. And is this an unjust act—let it not be done. And then what will become of the objecting sinner himself? God must not put forth a single act in his behalf—because, if he does, it must be an act determined on from Eternity, since God is immutable—and to put forth an eternally determined act upon him would be injustice to others. He must be left to perish in his sins.

Let all who complain of the injustice of an electing sovereignty, tell us what olive branch of hope except this they can find as they look over an apostate world drowned in sin!—*Puritan Recorder*.

## The Great Want.

The following remarks, taken from the N. Y. Observer of last week, we commend to the careful consideration of our readers. An earnest recognition of the truth here advanced is not only in order of time the first thing needed, but would do more than anything else towards supplying the great want alluded to, the existence of which cannot but be deeply felt and deplored by our churches.

"The great want of the churches, at the present time, is, the special presence of God's Spirit to revive his work. Whatever deficiencies there may be of means and appliances, for the conversion and salvation of the masses in our country, there can be no question that, if the means now enjoyed were generally blessed of God, there would be a universal movement in the community, the kingdom of God would suffer violence, and the violent would take it by force. There never was a time before, when the word of God was so universally diffused among us, when so many religious books were circulated, and when the Gospel was so extensively preached. There is certainly, in many respects, a preparation for a more extensive work of grace than we have ever experienced. The ground has been extensively broken, and the seed sown. Why, then, is the rain from heaven withheld? This is an inquiry of solemn import, which ought to come home with power to the heart of the church. And another, equally momentous is, how can this blessing be secured?"

In answer to this, we may say that the first step is, to *feel the want*. We shall never engage earnestly in the pursuit of any object, till we see a pressing need of it. But to show this want needs no argument. The churches need reviving for their own sake. Individuals need reviving for the sake of their hopes of heaven, and to be prepared either to live or die. They need reviving also, for the sake of the masses who are living without hope.

But the want being acknowledged and felt, and God only being able to supply it, is there any thing that man can do to secure the blessing needed? We know what promises God has made in respect to the gift of the Holy Spirit, in answer to prayer; and we know also as a matter of fact, that a work of grace is not to be expected in a church, without a season of deep humiliation, anxiety, and prayer, on the part of ministers and private Christians. The very acknowledgment of the need of a revival of religion, is a confession of backsliding and prevailing stupidity. And these must be repented of, with deep humiliation, before we can expect the pouring out of God's Spirit for the conversion of sinners.

The intense activity of this age is unfavorable to the cultivation of an earnest devotion, and deep spirituality of mind. Hence there is the greater necessity of setting apart special seasons for devotion, and self-examination and humiliation: and the greater need there is for a general movement of the public mind upon religious subjects, in order to arrest the current of worldliness long enough to get the truth fairly before the minds of the unconverted.

But we cannot pursue this subject further at this time. We wish, however, to leave upon the minds of our readers one or two solemn questions for consideration: Can the churches of this land make much further progress without extensive and powerful revivals? Can they even hold their own? Is it to be expected, judging from the past, that the masses in this country will be converted without the recurrence of those seasons of "refreshing from the presence of the Lord?" And if the Gospel is not made the power of God for

the salvation of this land, can we expect that it will be made efficacious for the conversion of the world? Can the work of foreign missions be prosecuted much further, till the pulse of the church shall receive a quickened vitality from above?

## Watching for Death.

Reader! did ever you watch for Death to enter your dwelling? How strange the feeling! An indefinable awe steals over your soul, as in breathless expectation you listen for his footstep. For hours, perhaps for days, you have been admonished of his approach, and with aching heart, through weary nights, you have awaited his coming. Now you are told that he is near. At the call of the watcher you have risen from your troubled sleep to see a loved one die. As you sit by the fire in your dimly-lighted chamber, where every step is hushed, and scarce a breath is audible, strange shadows flit before you, and intermingled with these, holy memories revisit your soul. Presently you are startled by a sigh, a groan, a convulsive shudder. Was that he? Has Death come at last? No: life still gurgles there, and, strange though it may seem, you catch a glimmering hope from the fact that another struggle has been survived. As well might you suppose the tide was rising because the receding wave seems at first to creep upward along the beach. But you breathe more freely; you wait awhile for some decisive sign of death, and then sit down again to your meditations. You call to mind the promises of the Gospel; you engage in silent prayer; you find comfort and support in God; and yet an unwonted sadness diffuses itself over all four thoughts and feelings. You are looking for something you know not what.

You have often watched at midnight for a tardy guest, listening to every footfall, starting at every sound, your mind bewildered with strange fancies, your heart palpitating with unreasoned fears. But never have you before watched for such a visitor. You know not when, or where, or how to look for him; he will enter by no door; he will make no formal announcement; but come he will. Again you are called to the bedside of the dying one, and again; but death still lingers, and hope revives. And now, with conflicting emotions, you once more resume your seat by the fading embers, to meditate and watch. Presently all grows strangely still. The silence is deep, is awful. You are again at the bedside. Is the loved one sleeping? Ah! there is no motion, no sign of life. The lips are fixed as marble, the eyes are set in their sockets. But how quiet,—how calm? Is he really dead? You are watching for Death, and he came, and you heard him not. You heard him not; but now that he is here, his footstep reverberates through your inmost soul. A gush of grief, a broken prayer, first break the dreary silence, and bring you to the consciousness that Death has come.

Reader! one day you will watch the coming of Death to you, and while others see him not, you will feel his cold hand upon your heart-strings, and hear his murmurs in your palsied ear. This year thou mayest die.—Watch, then, for the coming of the last Messenger?

## The Flight of Time.

In reference to the flight of time, Dr. Spring once closed a discourse in the following graphic language?

"I shall never address this audience again. I shall never again meet them but at the bar of God. That interview seems indeed far distant. But it will be as soon as Time, with his eagle wings, shall have finished the little remnant of his short career.

"After death the judgment." We die; but intervening ages pass rapidly over those who sleep in the dust. There is no plate there on which to count the hours of time. No longer is it told by days, or months, or years; for the planets which mark these periods are hidden from their sight. Its flight is no longer noticed by the events perceived by the senses, for the ear is deaf and the eye is closed. The busy world of life, which wakes at each morning and ceases every night, goes on above them, but to them all is silent and unseen. The greeting of joy and the voice of grief, the revolution of empires and the lapse of ages, send no sound within that narrow cell. Generation after generation are brought and laid by their side; the inscription upon their monumental marble tell the centuries that have passed away but to the sleeping dead, the long

interval is unobserved. Like a dream of the night, with the quickness of thought, the mind ranges time and space almost without a limit.—There is but a moment between the hour when the eye is closed in the grave and when it wakes to the judgment."

## The Rich Child.

A great man may say, "My house, my lands, my horses and chariots, my numerous and valuable estates." A great merchant can say, "My ships laden with treasures, my silver, my gold." A great king can say, "My kingdom, my throne, my diadem, my palaces, my navy, and my army." A pious child, though poor and mean, has more than the great man, the great merchant, or the great king. And a pious child, though very poor, can say more than the great man, the great merchant, and the great king, if they have no grace. He can say, "The Lord is my God; God the Father is my father; God the Son is my Saviour; God the Holy Ghost is my Sanctifier; God is my God forever, and he will be my guide even unto death. He is the FAITHFUL God, who has made with me an everlasting covenant, well ordered in all things, and sure. He is all my salvation and all my desire." Pray fervently, my young friends, for that piety and that grace, by which you shall say what no graceless king on earth can ever say, "Jehovah is my God, he is my strength, he is my song, and he also is become my salvation." Amen and Amen.

## Scattering and Increasing.

A young mechanic, some thirty-five years ago, commenced business in a country town, with little capital, and small prospects of success. He put up a dwelling house, but it remained long unfinished. His worldly affairs were any thing but prosperous. Suddenly his neighbours were startled to find that he had pledged *fifty dollars a year* to the American Board of Missions. People shook their heads. Some say he ought not to pay it. Others said there was no danger, it never would be paid. But it was, and paid punctually. And then similar or larger sums were pledged to other benevolent enterprises, which were afterwards increased and multiplied. In the meantime, that unfinished dwelling got gradually completed, the grounds around it were made tasty and inviting, and other grounds and other buildings added. In short, when men died a few years since, he was one of the most wealthy men in town, and the most influential in society, as well as benevolent. But what is observable is, and it was often remarked by his friends, that the determination of this man to pay fifty dollars a year to the Board of Missions, *gave a new impulse to his life and character*. I taught him to be economical, and made him "diligent in business" in the best sense of the word. It excited his business talent, and made him a man of wealth. "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth."

**DEATH OF THE INTEMPERATE.**—It is a sad death. There is no comfort on that dying pillow. No sweet repose—no voice of friendship, bidding adieu—no lighting up of joy in the departed spirit.

It is a frequent death. Three, every hour, go through its gates in our own land.

It is an early death. Few drunkards live out half their days.

It is an unlamented death. "I am glad he is gone," is the common saying, as the bell announces the solemn event. Even his family look for comfort, now that he is no more.

Let it be soberly contemplated—

1. By the moderate drinker. It may be his.

2. By the vender. He has filled the bottle and done the deed.

3. By the Selectman. He signed the license.

4. By the heedless parent. It may yet be the death of his own son.

5. If not too late, by the drunkard himself: and let him escape for his life.

[And we would add 6th, by the friends of temperance and law, who might have prevented it.]

Habit hurries him onward. Sickness hurries him onward. The vender hurries him onward. But, oh, his end!—His dreadful end!

"On slippery rocks, I see him stand, And death's dark billows roll below."

**HABIT.**—If we wish to know who is the most degraded, and the most wretched of human beings, look for a man who has practised a vice so long that he curses it and clings to it.