

The Canadian Evangelist.

"GO . . . SPEAK . . . TO THE PEOPLE ALL THE WORDS OF THIS LIFE."

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THE Canadian Evangelist

is devoted to the furtherance of the Gospel of Christ; and pleads for the union of all believers in the Lord Jesus in harmony with his own prayer recorded in the seventeenth chapter of John, and on the basis set forth by the Apostle Paul in the following terms: "I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beseech you to walk worthily of the calling wherewith ye were called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long suffering, forbearing one another in love; giving diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, even as also ye were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all."—Eph. iv. 1-6.

In and About Toronto.

In my last I made rather lengthy extracts from the address which Sir Daniel Wilson gave last Convocation day. I now intend to call special attention to a few expressions used by the President. First, "the stately buildings in which the University has progressed, from comparatively humble beginnings and a limited attendance to its present numbers and efficiency, stands roofless and defaced by fire. But happily stone walls and architectural adornments do not constitute the essentials of university life." Great as Toronto University now is, it had "humble beginnings and a limited attendance." This should inspire those among us who are willing to begin in a small way; and it should cause those (I am sorry to say there are some) among us who are not disposed to aid in small things to ponder the matter well. If we were to look into the histories of colleges, now large and prosperous, we would find that many of them had small beginnings, that some of them began in private houses. Notice further that the President says: "happily stone walls and architectural adornments do not constitute the essentials of university life." It is not to be denied that "walls" may form quite an important part of a university, but let it be carefully noted that they are not the "essentials." What are the essentials? President Garfield said: "a log with Prof. Everett on one end and myself on the other is university enough for me." The essentials, then, are teacher and students, and without these we cannot have a college—with them we can. What have we wherewith to begin a college? We have students, several now attending the University, others at the Collegiate Institutes and others preparing for these institutions. Our immediate need is a teacher, and this we can only have through the co-operation of the brotherhood. Had we a teacher, I think we could soon have a building suitable for all our needs. We certainly have men among us who could easily contribute one, two or three thousand dollars for such a purpose, and many others who would willingly contribute according to their means. It seems to me that the only question for us to determine is, whether we have a plea worthy of promulgation.

If we have such a plea, let us act as if we believed it and let us use our own common sense and our own means to disseminate said plea; if we have no such plea, the sooner we stop talking about the "grandeur of our position" the better. I think that we have a grand and a most unique position; those of your readers who have read the discussion with the *Baptist*, I am sure will agree with me, and I think we are safe in saying that did we but work energetically and let our position be known, the Baptists would be compelled to either give up their man-made creeds, or lose many of those who are nominal Baptists. Loyalty to our Master, to our country and to ourselves demands that we at once put forth our best endeavors. "There is a tide in the affairs of men, which taken at the flood leads on to fortune."

THEATRES.

Let Discussion Continue.

The *Baptist and Reflector* refers to the differences and discussions among "us as a people," and suggests that we ought to agree among ourselves and quit arguing with each other before we push "our plea" for the union of all Christians on the Bible much further. The brother erre, not knowing the Scriptures. Because we differ in opinions and argue questions among ourselves, it does not follow that we are not united as Christians on the Bible. We have never proposed or desired to unite Christians in any institution that is so narrow to allow them to differ in opinion or argue with each other. We are in favor of giving everybody room to think and liberty to speak for himself. For myself, I am opposed to any institution that allows no one but the bosses and grand moguls to entertain an idea or express an opinion. For the life of me, I can't see that I am under any more obligation to agree with Alexander Campbell than he to agree with me. I would never unite with him or anybody else on the Bible on any other condition than that I am as free as he to study the Bible. This is the only kind of union we have ever proposed, and it is the only kind that is practicable or right among men. Whenever it comes to human organizations in which no one but the framers of doctrinal standards are allowed to do any thinking, I beg to be excused. My thinking apparatus is not very large, I admit, but I claim all the room the Bible allows me in which to operate it. The *Reflector* evidently thinks that because every man, with us, is free to think for himself and to differ from, and argue with, everybody else, therefore we are not united. That is an error. We are united, and the beauty and strength of the union is to be found largely in the fact that it is a union in Christ where in every one is allowed to study the Bible and think for himself, without being amenable to ecclesiastical authorities or doctrinal standards of human make. The *Reflector* seems to have the old, bigoted idea that if a man should happen to differ from me and undertake to argue a question with me, he must get out of my church and start

a little concern of his own. That has been the trouble with religious bigots all along the ages. It takes just such bigotry as that to build up denominations and keep Christians apart. "We as a people" are a rather contentious set, I admit, but we have not yet given in to that idea. It is just at this point I file my objection to the Baptist church. One must accept its doctrinal standards, written by uninspired men, or get out of it. Here is the *Baptist and Reflector*, for instance. It could think out some very good ideas of its own, and express them in very creditable English, if it only had room. But, my! Wouldn't the Baptist bosses sit down on it with a crash if it should happen some day to think a little thought all by itself, without consulting the doctrinal standards? The basis of our union ought always to be as broad as the conditions of salvation. No man has any right to make his plea for union narrower than this. It is wrong to make anything a condition of fellowship which is not essential to salvation. We draw the line here. That which will damn a soul and separate us in the next world should divide us in this—nothing else should.

There are a few men among us who are trying very hard to "organize" the thing called "us as a people" so as to shut off all investigation and stop all discussion; but they are exceedingly narrow in their ideas to fairly represent this reformation. They say that if something of this kind is not done very soon "our plea" will burst into smithereens, "our organized mission work" will break all to shinders, and "we as a people" will go to smash on general principles, but I think not. The shortest route I know to such a crash is to organize us and undertake to compel us all to quit thinking and arguing and accept the conclusions and carry out the plans of "leading men and papers," without the liberty to conceive an idea or express an opinion of our own.—F. D. Srygley, in *Gospel Advocate*.

"Of the Same Lump."

ROM. ix. 21.

In illustrating these words and the connection by reference to Jeremiah xviii. 6, Macknight says: "Here every reader must be sensible that nothing is said concerning God's creating individuals, some to be saved and some to be damned, by an exercise of absolute sovereignty. It is power and sovereignty in the disposal of nations only that is described by the figure of the potter." This is very good as coming from a writer who had subscribed to the Westminster Confession of Faith, and we think that every person unfettered by preconceived prejudices will heartily coincide with the first period of this quotation at any rate; but it appears to us that nearly all commentators make a mistake in stating, as does Macknight, when he adds: "'The same lump' signifies the mass of mankind out of which particular nations are formed."

Does not "the same lump" rather refer to the same nation? "And the vessel which he made of clay was

marred in the hand of the potter; so he made it again another vessel as seemed good to the potter to make it."

Dr. Thomson, in "The Land and the Book," writes: "When Jeremiah was watching the potter the vessel was marred in his hand. . . I had to wait a long time for that, but it happened at last. From some defect in the clay or because he had taken too little, the potter suddenly changed his mind, crushing his growing jar instantly into a shapeless mass of mud, and, beginning a new, fashioned it into a totally different vessel."

This would teach us, not as a popular writer asserts: "On this mass (all ruined mankind), where none have any claim, he may bestow life on whom he pleases, without injury to others; he may exercise the right of a sovereign to do whom he pleases; or of a potter to mould any part of the useless mass to purposes of ability and beauty."

As expressed in a previous verse of this chapter, God will have mercy on whom He will have mercy; He will do with nations as the potter does with the clay, as it seems good to him; but we are thankful to know that God has in this figure revealed what His will is:—

"At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up and to pull down, and to destroy it; if that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation and concerning a kingdom to build and to plant it; if it do evil in My sight, that it obey not My voice, then I will repent of the good wherewith I said I would benefit them." The same lump of clay, made into a different vessel, represents the same nation receiving good or evil according to its deeds. The Ninivites and the Jews afford striking examples of God's dealing according to this figure.

We have taken up more space in discussing what we consider the true import of these words, because we consider that they throw light upon the meaning of the whole chapter in which they occur. What is conditional to nations is conditional to individuals. Forgiveness and salvation for the sinner that repents and obeys. Guilt and destruction for the saint who turns away from God and righteousness. "But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth, and some to honor and some to dishonor. If a man therefore purge himself from these (i. e., iniquities), he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified and meet for the Master's use and prepared unto every good work," 2 Tim. ii. 20, 21. The italicized words give our exegesis of this quotation. E. S.

[EDITORIAL.]

Baptists Against Themselves.

III.

The Committee of Disciples appointed to prepare a statement on Union gave expression to the opinion that Baptists teach that "Baptism is because of remission of sins."

The *Canadian Baptist* says: "It will probably be news to our readers to learn that it is an article of Baptist belief that baptism is because of remission of sins."

Anyone taking the *Baptist* as an authority would naturally think the Committee of Disciples very far astray, and would conclude that Baptists never anywhere hold such a belief. Now as the fact is vastly different, we deem it, in the circumstances, important to affirm that Baptists generally have held, and we think still do hold, that "baptism is because of remission of sins." Whether Baptist churches do now usually make subscription to that doctrine a test of fellowship, we are not in a position to say, though we think they virtually do so; but we do know of cases where recently the refusal to accept that dogma was a bar to Baptist fellowship. And we have no hesitation in saying that those Baptists to whom it would be news that it is a part of Baptist belief that "baptism is because of remission of sins" are neither well-read in the history of Baptist doctrine nor well informed as to the practice of many Baptist churches of our own day. It is difficult for us to believe that the editor of the *Baptist* was entirely candid when he accused the Committee of Disciples of misrepresenting the Baptists as to the relation of baptism to the remission of sins. We should like to have an historical sketch on the subject from the pen of "O. G." He would not speak of such a doctrine being news to Baptists.

That the dogma in question is still held and promulgated by Baptists, the following extract from a Cincinnati Baptist paper, the *Journal and Messenger*, will testify:—

Now carrying what we have learned to the interpretation of the passage in question (Acts ii. 38), we say that Peter commanded the inquirers at Pentecost to repent and be baptized with respect to the remission of sins, that is, because their sins had been remitted. They had come to believe the truth which Peter proclaimed, viz.: That Jesus of Nazareth, the crucified, was Messiah, and they needed now to repent of their sins, assured that God was ready to forgive them, and then, because of the remission of their sins, and because they felt the assurance of such forgiveness in their own souls, they were to be baptized.

We think that when the editor of *Baptist* accuses the Committee of Disciples of misrepresentation, he should lay the same charge against the *Journal and Messenger*. The reader will note that according to the *Journal and Messenger*, baptism is not only "because of the remission of their sins," but also "because they felt the assurance of such forgiveness in their own souls," according to the *Canadian Baptist*, that will be news to Baptist readers also. The Committee of Disciples may well congratulate themselves on having so accurately measured and so fairly stated Baptist doctrine, and we think the editor of the *Baptist* should withdraw the charge of misrepresentation, though we have little hope now that he will, as he seems determined that Baptists shall be measured according to his standard. If he can induce the Baptist people to accept him as an exponent of Baptist doctrine we shall not be sorry.