

GENERAL READING THE BEGOTTEN OF THE FATHER.

(BY THE REV. J. V. JOST.) "I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me this day have I begotten thee.—Psalm ii.

The above text was recently brought before us in our Sabbath School lesson for our consideration, upon which with all humility and reverence, and with all due deference to our Doctors of Divinity, we would with your permission Mr. Editor, offer a few remarks.

In the text we have only the Dual numbers in the Trinity while in other texts we have the triple, as "In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." The Trine God is the mystic cherubim that guards the way to the tree of life, both in this world and in the world to come for ever—the warp and woof that runs through the book of God, and "is the pillar and ground of Truth." As we cannot with all our philosophy, comprehend the modus of our own existence as "body, soul and spirit," much less, infinitely less, can we by all our searching find out God in His existence, a Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, nor the eternal generation of God's only begotten Son, and in creation there is no existence that can fully and clearly illustrate, either the dual or triple number in the undivided Godhead "with whom will ye compare me, or to whom will ye liken me, for I am God alone saith the Lord."

We obscure the Divine generation of God's Son, when we compare it to Human generation, for in the latter, there must be a division, both in nature and persons, while in the former, there is and can be no division of nature or essence, but only of persons, "I said Jesus and my Father (here are two persons) are one" here is oneness and no division of nature. Again, in human generation, the begetter must necessarily as a person, have existed several years before the begotten, yet as Father he can not be prior to but co-existent with his Son, as Son, but in the generation of the Divine Son of the Father, as the Father is Father from eternity, so must His Son be Son from eternity, and co-existent and co-eternal.

Dead again or second time, but in fulfillment of the promise made unto the Father's that "He would raise up for them a plant of renown—the man who is the Branch, who should build His temple—raise up for them an horn of salvation." God the father did raise up His Son, first from His birth to His death, and again from his Resurrection to His Ascension to the right hand of God the Father, when "He is exalted as a Prince and a Saviour, until all his enemies are put under His feet, when He shall Reign over the house of Jacob for ever—shall dwell on Tabernacle with His Redeemer and glorified ones for ever and ever the inference I think is clear, that the birth and resurrection of Jesus were the two-fold declaration of the aforesaid decree and both were in order to the fulfillment of the promise aforesaid. and that at His birth, He was declared by the angel not only to be "that Holy thing born of Mary" but "also the Son of God," so "by His resurrection He was declared by God the Father who raised Him from the dead" to be the Son of God in the power according to the Spirit of Holiness which dwelt in him, and that neither His birth nor His resurrection is to be interpreted, as this day in which the Son of God was begotten of the Father. Again, if This Day does not refer to His birth nor to his resurrection, it must be understood of the day eternity; this day, that is ours or God's day, man's day is from his birth to eternity to come, consider as an immortal spirit, but God's day is from everlasting to everlasting, "He inhabits eternity," or one ever present now, "future and past subsisting now." If when referring to time, this day means now, it means now, when referring to eternity. We cannot select better phrase as expressive of an ever present now, whether it be in time or in Eternity, we cannot live in the past, nor in the future, but only in the present—so with the Divine existence it is an ever present existence it is always "that which is, as well as that which is to come." The generation or emanation of the Son of God from the Father, is therefore always now, or this day, as is the light from the sun. He is the Alpha and the Omega—our great Melchizedec "without beginning of days or end of life—a Priest for ever after the order of Melchizedec" to receive spiritual tythes from Abraham and his spiritual seed, "to bless his inheritance, feed them also and lift them up for ever." Another proof that this day refers to eternity is, that has God sent His Son—His only begotten, into the world, therefore He must have been His Son before He sent Him into the world, and if God commanded all the angels to worship His only begotten Son, He must be Divine Son of the Father, otherwise angelic worship would be idolatrous. Illustrations, have been made use of to throw some light upon the personalities in the Godhead—St. Patrick used the three leaved clover united to one stalk. The Indian in his simplicity, the river and the ice and the snow, which covered it, the snow, he said, is water, the ice is water, and the river beneath is water. Others have made use of the dew which is visible, having an invisible origin producing salutary effects upon mown grass—and again the audible word which cannot be uttered without mind and breath, has been compared to the personal Divine word, "who was in the beginning, who was with God, and who is God," and who must always, be co-existent with God the Father, and with the Holy Spirit which is the breath of God. But as "God is light," and "God is our sun" and Christ is "the sun of righteousness and the Light of the world." I think we may draw illustrations from the sun and the light, of the Trinity in Unity and of the generation of God's beloved Son. Light is emanated from the sun and heat proceeded from the light and the sun, so the Son is God's only begotten, and the Holy Spirit proceedeth from the Father and Son—the sun with its light and heat, are distinct but inseparable, so the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are distinct and invisible. The light is continually in the sun and from the sun. "The Son of Man (by reason of His Divine Sonship) is in Heaven and from Heaven. Is in the bosom of the father, is of God cometh from God, whose goings forth have been of old. He is in the Father and the Father in Him as the sun is the light and the light in the sun. "He that seeth me," said Jesus, "seeth the Father"—he that seeth the light seeth the sun, we cannot see the sun without the light, nor can we see the Father without His Son: He that appreciates not the light, appreciates not the sun: "He that honoreth not the Son, honoreth not the Father." The sun and the light, in Nature, are one—"I and my Father said Jesus are one." Christ is the Branch, brightness of God's glory, and express image of His Person, so is the light in reference to the sun. Out of the fullness of the sun have all the world received and light for light, so out of the fullness of God our Sun and Christ our light, have all we received grace for grace. The sun is ever full and the same as from the beginning so is God and Jesus the same, yesterday, to-day, and forever." There is one sun which is in all and through all in the world so

is Christ, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, all in all, and through all and over all God blessed for evermore; without the great ruler of the day all would be dark and cheerless and dead, so without God our sun and Christ our light. Heaven and Earth would be void of life and light and joy for ever. God and the Lamb are the light of both earth and heaven; no art of man can rob the light of its beauty or stain its unpolluted heavenliness, even so God is holy, "cannot be tempted with sin, neither tempted He any man." In the sun is no darkness—God is light and in Him is no darkness at all, and as the light of the sun comes to us through the surrounding atmosphere, so the Holy Spirit compared to the "wind" and to "breath" takes of the things of Christ and reveals them to us leads us into all truth, shows us things to come, and makes us meet for their eternal enjoyment—as the sun if it could speak, might say, no man can comprehend the sun but the light and no man can comprehend the light but the sun and he to whom the light will reveal him, even so no man knoweth the Father but the Son and He to whom the Son will reveal Him; and as the sun may say from the beginning, thou art my light this day have I begotten thee, so hath God decreed from eternity "Thou art my Son this day have I begotten Thee." We see then that God has no left Himself without witness even in the shining sun, which is a grand and striking image of the one true God and Jesus Christ his only begotten Son, whom He hath sent, to be a light and Saviour of the world, and of the Holy and ever blessed Spirit, which proceedeth from the Father and the Son to whom be all "Glory as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be world without end." Amen and Amen. We are thankful Mr. Editor that it is not required that we believe How God is, but that He is, and is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. May this, dear brother, be our faith and then in glory we shall see as we cannot now the king in His beauty and in Him God face to face. Charlotetown, March, 1879.

HENRY WARD BEECHER ON MINISTERS AND THE MINISTRY.

The relation of the ministry to the welfare of the whole country is worthy of a moment's consideration. An impression has gone abroad that ministers are men that are educated and put in comfortable places to save souls; and that the church is like Noah's Ark, meant to carry folks through this life and land them safely on the other side of the flood; and if you judge by many churches as you see them in cities, and by the career of many ministers who are far more engrossed in public labor than in parochial and household work, perhaps that may have some color of truth in it; but taking the ministry at large it is a very different thing from a soul-saving instrumentality. It includes that; but it goes upon the theory that the soul is saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ by a course of spiritual preparation, and that it is through education and development, through moralizing and religious influences, that the soul is brought into a salvable state.

There are two theories prevalent in respect to this world. One is that it is a world which has been paralyzed, and which can never recover from the shock, and that we are to gather off from the surface of it just as many men as we can, and save them and let the rest go, and leave the old ship to founder in the sea. The other theory is, that the world is a seed that has just sprouted, and that it is yet to develop national life, and all forms of civility; and that it is the office work of the church and the ministry to cast in their influence for the sake of the ever-increasing future.

In this last point of view the ministry and the church have not an ignoble position, but a sublime function. It is for them to minister to growing communities, to industry, to society, to legislation, to all the great interests of the commonwealth. It is for them to perpetually generate and diffuse that moral influence which is indispensable to the highest forms of civilization. Churches are the only centres whose very business it is to develop morality. They are engines that are built expressly for that end. The newspaper is not. In large cities, and in special conditions of society, churches may be full of men of misconduct—and they are. Church members have been breaking down in Maine, in Massachusetts, in Connecticut, and even in New York; and many criticisms have been made in respect to the fact that churches do not any longer answer the end of their existence, and that they fail to hold up their members.

Why, the best agricultural industry in the world cannot prevent floods, nor droughts, nor insect summers, nor blight, nor murrain; but it does not follow that the church is altogether bad because men break down under such extrinsic influences as have been at work among us. When great wars

have disjoined the morality of a great continent, when gross immoralities have prevailed and poisoned the whole imagination of a generation, it is not to be supposed that the church has no part nor lot in the mischiefs that ensue; but although there are in churches multitudes of men that are not worthy of their calling, and that do break down under evil influences, yet the fact remains that, from the planting of these colonies to this very hour, the churches of this country—and that without any discrimination of denominations—have been the central factor of the public spirit that has wrought toward morality as well as toward religion.

And we are not to consider ministers merely as preachers; they are that, and in large parishes they are only that, by reason of the peculiar conditions which exist there; but in the great majority of cases, in cities, in towns and in villages all through the land, ministers are not half so influential in the pulpit as they are by their personal supervision of all the enginery of morality and of society outside of it. They are the men who lead the movements in temperance. They are the men who promote schools, who visit them, and who incite the minds of parents to look after their children. They are the men who give wise counsel. They are the men, in short, who are doing what no newspapers and no political influences can do. They are the men that gather and group the few together who represent the higher thoughts, the truer ambitions and the purer ways of life. If to their other virtues they add eloquence of discussion and skill of ministration in the pulpit, so much the better; but if every one of them was dumb in the pulpit, the influence of the parochial functions performed by the ministry through this country is immeasurable.

We are accustomed to think that he is the useful minister, whose name is in the newspapers, whose sermons are printed and sent out through the community, and who is much in the thoughts and on the lips of men; but there are hundreds of useful men who are little known and low down. There are hundreds of men who are working unseen, unpraised, almost unsympathized with, in the lower walks of life. There are hundreds and thousands of men in the town, in the hamlet, in the wilderness, among new populations, everywhere, going forth in the essential spirit of the gospel, not counting their lives dear to them, to hold up the standard of the cross, under which march all morals and equities and refinements of life, having faith in the declaration that "Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come." Take away the ministry and the churches of this country, and you take away the daylight, and bring in, if not darkness, at least twilight. Talk about science and lectures taking the place of the preaching of the Gospel in Christian churches! You might as well propose to obliterate the stars, and use glow-worms at night to light up the darkness!

The country pastor is the most active promoter and supervisor of everything that belongs to the higher civilization of society. He is foremost in every salutary work.

A LADY'S REASON FOR NOT DANCING.

- 1. Dancing would lead me into crowded rooms and late hours, which are injurious to health and usefulness.
2. Dancing would lead me into very close contact with very pernicious company, and evil communications corrupt good manners.
3. Dancing would require me to use and permit freedoms, with the other sex, of which I should be heartily ashamed, and which I believe to be wrong.
4. My parents and friends would be anxious about me if I were out late; keeping company with, they know not whom.
5. Ministers and good people in general disapprove of dancing, and I think it is not safe to set myself against them. If a thing be even doubtful, I wish to be on the safe side.
6. Dancing has a bad name, and I mean to study things that are pure and lovely and of good report.
7. Dancing is generally accompanied with drinking, and I see drinking produces a great deal of evil.
8. I am told that dancing is a great temptation and snare to young men, and I do not wish to have anything to do with leading them astray.
9. Dancing unites the mind for serious reflection and prayer, and I mean to do nothing that will estrange me from my God and Saviour.
10. There are plenty of graceful exercises and cheerful amusements which have none of the objections connected with them that lie against dancing.—Central Methodist.

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FAMILY READING.

GOOD FRIDAY HYMN.

O Sacred Head, once wounded, With grief and pain weighed down! How mournfully surrounded With thorns—thine only crown! O Sacred head, what glory! What bliss, till now was thine! Yet, though despised and gory, I joy to call Thee mine.

How art thou pale with anguish, With sore abuse and scorn! How does that visage languish, Which once was bright as morn! Thy grief and thy compassion Were all for sinners' gain; Mine, mine was the transgression, But thine the deadly pain.

What language shall I borrow To praise thee, heavenly Friend, For this, thy dying sorrow, Thy pity without end? Lord, make me thine forever, Nor let me faithless prove; O let me never, never, Abuse such dying love.

Be near when I am dying, O show thy cross to me! And for my sinner flying, Come, Lord, and set me free! These eyes, new faith receiving, From Jesus shall not move; For he who dies believing, Dies safely—through thy love. Translated by J. W. ALEXANDER.

THE LORD IS RISEN.

Sing praise! The tomb is void Where the Redeemer lay; Sing of our bonds destroyed, Our darkness turned to day.

Weep for your dead no more; Friends, be of joyful cheer, Our star moves on before, Our narrow path shines clear.

He who so patiently The crown of thorns did wear,— He hath gone up on high; Our hope is with Him there.

Now is His truth revealed, His majesty and might; The grave has been unsealed; Christ is our life and light.

He who for men did weep, Suffer and bleed and die,— First fruits of them that sleep, Christ hath gone up on high.

His victory hath destroyed The shafts that once could slay; Sing praise! The tomb is void Where the Redeemer lay.

THE "I WON'T" OF THE ENGINEER.

BY S. E. B.

A country pastor thus speaks of his experience:—

"Among my parishioners was an engineer on one of our leading railroads. He never attended a prayer meeting, but was conscientiously constant at the preaching services of the Sabbath. He prided himself upon his integrity and uprightness, and openly declared his belief that God was not ready to convert him. When the time in his wisdom came, he would yield to the call and become a Christian. I talked often with my friend, and sought to win him from such a delusive idea, but words and prayers alike seemed wasted.

"One day, while we stood together at his station, waiting for the incoming train, he abruptly asked, 'Will you tell me, Mr. —, why I do not become a Christian?' 'Yes, I will; you ask me frankly, and I will reply as honestly; it is because you won't!' "We parted for the day, and great was my surprise, at our usual evening service, to see the engineer come into the vestry, and take a prominent place at my left. When at the close of the meeting I gave an invitation for those desiring to become Christians to rise, he at once came forward and penitently bowed at the altar, accepting then and there the Saviour, whom he had faithfully served for years.

"In giving me his experience, he said that those words at the depot, 'you won't!' rang in his ears all through the day; that every throb of the engine seemed to say, 'you won't!' Above the rattling of the cars, and sounding louder than the screech of the steam whistle, thundered those two words, 'you won't!' In the street of the city he saw staring from each signboard those simple words, which to him were a mighty volume of unwelcome truth. 'My own self-will,' he continued, my determination to make a waiting God wait still longer, my self delusion in attributing to Divine Love my lost condition, forced itself into my soul's depths. The burden was intolerable, and I sought, as you know, the place of prayer, and with the 'I will!' came to me the joy and peace of a life hid with Christ in God."

The honest frankness of one of our honored pastors with an inquiring soul was rewarded by the saving of that soul.

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