

Confessions of Faith.

The request to publish the New Hampshire Confession was too late for the issue for which it was intended. This communication is thus rendered a little out of date.

I do not wish to waste words over nice distinctions. What I have been pleading for in the past is simply the continuance of the practice of the Regular Baptist churches of America up to the present. Churches on their recognition have ever been expected to give assent to a statement of doctrine embodying the historic and traditional belief of the Regular Baptist denomination. The statement generally accepted has been one of two. In most cases it has been that published last week in the *Baptist*; in fewer instances it has been that known as the Philadelphia Confession. Both these are in substantial agreement. I know of no case where a church has received the recognition of the body without assent to such a statement. The fact that this statement is required before a church is endorsed by the body, carries with it the further consequence that when a church has departed from the general view of doctrine contained in the statement, the recognition which was dependent upon assent to it is withdrawn. The instances are not few wherein this act of dis-fellowship on the part of the body has followed a departure of this kind. What has been true of the reception of churches has been true also of the reception of ministers into the body or by the body through its councils, from its churches. Candidates for our ministry are subject to a rigorous examination, and their ordination is conditional upon their substantial agreement with the traditional views of the body as expressed in its standard confession of faith. Consistency requires that the condition of entrance into our ministry abide as the condition of continued recognition as one holding this high office among us. Dr. Brown is guilty of the rhetorical subterfuge, popularly known as erecting a man of straw, when he asks: "Did he (the candidate for ordination) vow that he would always, after twenty or forty years of ministry, state truth in the same way, hold truth in the same relations, give to each separate truth the same emphasis, etc.?" Who asks this at his hand? Is there not room for all this without a denial of a statement of doctrine like that published last week? Cannot a man have a deeper view of a truth without changing it? Can a man not see new relations between truths without denying the truths between which the relations subsist?

But what I wish to say just here is this: The practice of the Regular Baptist churches of America has been just what is above described. If this is what is meant by having a creed, then I plead for having a creed. If this is what is meant by having a creed, then a great deal that has happened in the *Baptist*, editorially and otherwise, against creeds, as infringing upon liberty and perils to truth, has been directed against the practice of the Regular Baptists of this continent, and we have the spectacle of a denominational paper, which, as I opine, is expected to uphold the denominational doctrine and practice, using its strong influence against the one if not the other. If what I have stated constitutes having a creed, then it is no use quoting statements from any quarter to the effect that Baptists have no creed. If the practice of American Baptists, as stated above, does not lay them open to the charge, or what not, of having a creed, then all that has been said, editorially and otherwise, has nothing to do with my

position or that of the Baptists of America, and is wide of the mark. I hope this is clear.

It will be noticed that the first article of the New Hampshire Confession declares that all creeds are to be tried by the supreme standard of the Scriptures. Now, is it not possible to have a statement of Scripture truth? Must we not have such a statement? What is teaching, whether in professor's chair, pulpit, or seat of Sunday-school teacher, but a putting of Scripture truth into some kind of statement? Men deny that the Scriptures are the Word of God. Have we not the right to put the counter declaration that they are the Word of God as an article of our faith? Men deny that Christ is God. Have we not the right to accept the declaration that He is God as another article of our faith? Men deny that Christ was the substitute for sinners, and made an atonement for their sins. Have we not the right to make the statement that He is God, and has, as our substitute, made an atonement for sin? Men deny that there is such a thing as justification by faith. Have we not the right to make the statement that justification is by faith an article of belief? Why should a man not have a right to make all these, and others we might name, articles of his faith—of his creed, if you will, as well as the statement that immersion only is baptism, and that believers are the only proper subject of the ordinance? If fifty others, from a study of Scriptures, or by a comparison of this statement of doctrine with Scripture, come to the same opinion, why should they not have the right to band themselves together in a common fellowship to defend and advance the truth as they have, from their best judgment, concluded it to be, in reference to those other doctrines, as well as to thus band themselves together in the support of the doctrine of baptism? If the right is equal in each case, then the denial of this right in the case of doctrines other than of the form and subjects of baptism must involve the denial of this right in the case of the form and subjects of baptism, and this means that Baptist churches have no right to exist.

But if any number of men have the right to band themselves together on the basis of this larger creed, shall we say that they have not the right to refuse to receive into their doctrinal and church fellowship those who deny the doctrines they in common esteem precious? Must they accept as pastor one who will subvert the very views they have from study of God's word and from fullest conviction united to advance? Is it any violation of the minister's liberty that they refuse to endorse him and give him the vantage ground of their pulpit to inculcate teachings against which their consciences rebel? Would this be any more a violation of his liberty did he teach erroneous doctrines other than about baptism, than though he were a Pædo-baptist minister, seeking to secure the pulpit of a Baptist church? If a minister holding views out of accord with the well understood beliefs of a body of men should seek to foist himself upon them on the ground of his right to liberty, would not the reply be that these men and women have their rights as to the kind of doctrine they support and endorse, and that for him to claim the liberty to do this would be to claim on the score of liberty what would be an outrage upon the rights and liberties of others? Is the reasoning any less valid, if we put church in place of minister as the party seeking to bring into the fellowship of a body doctrines repudiated by them, and then compel

a quasi endorsement of what may be regarded as pernicious? Is the reasoning less valid if we put a candidate for membership in place of ministers? Is it true that every one must have the privilege to foist himself upon those who have adopted certain views of truth, no matter how diametrically opposed his own views may be to theirs, or have the right to rail at them, forsooth, for interfering with his liberty and conscience?

This is not the liberty I as a Baptist am proud of, and would be willing to suffer something to maintain. It is a hypocritical devil of pretence seeking to get the advantage of the name of liberty in order to prey upon the true liberty.

Much is said about the evil of a recognized belief which is a condition of membership in a denomination because it tempts men to continue to profess it after they have rejected it, in order not to lose their denominational standing. Put side by side with the words of our Lord that men must be willing to sever the dearest ties and give up life even before they can be His disciples, all the care to make loyalty to truth and conviction so easy as to cost nothing, seems inoffensively weak and should be shamed out of sight. God has not made it easy and why should we? He wants to cultivate a more rugged type of character than this hot-house kind.

But I have already taken up too much of your valuable space, in this issue, and will close with a request for the favor of a further hearing in the *Baptist* of next week.—C. Goodspeed, in *Canadian Baptist*.

The Bible.

The life of man was never so significant and glorious as it is to-day. Man in the fulness of his existence is being drawn upward, man in the full capacity of his life. Science begins to study in the rocks and in the stars, and by and by she is coming home to man. What he was, how he came to be here on this earth, what has been the history of his development, what he is to do and what he is to be—these are the great questions which before every philosophy system of religion present themselves and will not down. I think they are answered.

Men know the mystery of their simple humanity as they never knew it before. The simple intrinsic mystery of human life, the simple wonder of being a man, that has come to us, I believe, in the richness of our progress, in the largeness of our sympathy, in the deep study of ourselves as it never came to our fathers, to the generation of dreamers and poets and philosophers of other days. It is in this significance of the present and the future that it seems to me there comes the great promise, at once of the perpetual influence of the Bible and also of a deeper use of the Bible and a profounder understanding of its meaning, to a closer touch upon our human life.—Address by Phillips Brooks.

The Duke of Argyll tells us in a Glasgow lecture: "In the last year of Mr. Darwin's life, he did me the honor of calling upon me in London, and I had a long and interesting conversation with that distinguished observer of nature. In the course of our conversation I said that it was impossible to look at the wonderful processes of nature, which he had observed, without seeing that they were the effect and the expression of mind. I shall never forget Dr. Darwin's answer. He looked at me hard, and said: 'Well it often comes over me with overpowering force, but at other times (and he shook his head) it seems to go away.'"

Selections.

Things that Never Die.

The pure, the bright, the beautiful,
That stirred our hearts in youth,
The impulse of a wordless prayer,
The dream of love and truth,
The longing after something lost,
The spirit's yearning cry,
The striving after better hopes—
These things shall never die.

The timid hand stretched forth to aid
The brother in his need,
The kindly word in grief's dark hour,
That proves a friend indeed,
The plea for mercy, softly breathed,
When justice threatens nigh;
The sorrowing of a contrite heart—
These things shall never die.

Let nothing pass, for every hand
Must find some work to do;
Lose not a chance to waken love,
Be firm, and just and true;
So shall a light that cannot fade
Beam on thee from on high,
And angels' voices say to thee:
"These things can never die."
—Dawn of the Morning.

Rich and Poor.

BY REV. PHILLIPS BROOKS, D.D.

When Jesus said to the rich young man, "Go and sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor," He had simply found a man who did not know how to be rich. There was nothing to do with that man but to send him back to the preparatory school of poverty. To make that special treatment of a single man the universal rule of human life would be to shut up one of the great higher schools of human character in sheer despair. Sometimes, perhaps, a rich man feels that if he could get rid of his money he could be a strong and unselfish man. It is the old delusion. The sinner in the Tropics thinks he could be a saint at the North Pole. It is only that he knows how the sun burns, but has never felt how the frost freezes. There is a special strength and a particular unselfishness which the rich man's wealth makes possible for him. It is his duty to seek after them, and never rest till he has found them. Not to make himself poor, but to know how to be rich is the problem of his life.

These thoughts rise up in us with every outcry of poor men at the anomaly—almost, some of the poor would call it, the atrocity—of some men being rich while other men are very poor. Such outcry there will always be; but at its heart that which makes such an outcry pathetic, and that alone which makes it dangerous, is that, often blindly and not able to understand or to define itself, it is an outcry not against rich men, but against rich men who do not know how to be rich. Always there will be angry protests against any man holding in any way, even the highest and most unselfish, wealth which the man who protests has failed to reach; but it is not this—it is not wealth simply in itself—it is the pride of wealth, the indifference of wealth, the cruelty of wealth, the vulgarity of wealth—in one great word, the selfishness of wealth—which really makes the poor man's heart ache, and the poor man's blood boil, and constitutes the danger of a community where poor men and rich men live side by side. Let riches know "how to abound" and poverty will not lose its self-respect and so will not struggle after the self-respect which it feels that it is losing, with frantic and tumultuous struggles. Oh, that every rich man and woman here might know this truth, and use it when their lives touch the sad and sore and hopeless lives of poor men at their side!—"The Light of the World," and other sermons.

Giving and Trading.

Giving is giving, and trading is trading, but the two things seem to be strangely confounded in the religious world. And here it is that church fairs and church bazaars and church concerts, and other modes of trading, are so often spoken of as if they involved or included the element of giving. If, indeed, a person wants to secure money in order to give it away, it is perfectly proper for him to enter into any legitimate mode of trading as a means of getting money, regardless of the use he is to make of that money when he has obtained it. He can sell coal, or potatoes, or soap, or dry goods, to such customers as he can secure, and at such prices as he can get; and whatever profit he makes on his sales he can give away as he deems best; but in such a case the trading and the giving are two distinct operations, and ought not to be looked at as belonging together. Yet how often one person asks another to buy a doll, or a dish of ice-cream, or a fancy quilt, or a concert ticket, as a means of getting and doing good! The effect of this mode of double dealing is clearly injurious to the community; for it confuses important moral distinctions, and whatever pecuniary gain comes from it is more than canceled by the moral loss. This is a truth that might profitably be borne in mind by Christian workers generally, as well as by a young girl of earnest spirit who writes from Ohio for counsel in this realm of practical religious effort, after this sort:—

I have been appointed, by the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor of our church, to write for information as to the best way or ways to raise money to buy a piano for the lecture-room of the church. Societies are not a success in this town, and we are at a loss to find a way to obtain money for a piano. At the same time we are anxious to have one, for we need it very badly. Of course, the members of our Sabbath school are interested as much as the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor is; for they will use it too, if we get it. Now I hope you will answer soon, for we are anxious.

A very simple way of raising money in such a case, is for all who are interested to give what they can afford to give, and then to get others also to give. If, indeed, there is not enough available money in the community for the purchase of a needed piano, no peddling of dolls and ice cream, or selling of concert tickets, would secure the requisite sum; but if the difficulty be only in the lack of a spirit of giving, then it would be better for all concerned that the spirit of giving, rather than the trading spirit, should be cultivated there. It is better to be without a piano than to gain a piano at the risk of lowering the moral tone of the community by fostering the feeling that a man can eat four saucers of ice cream on a hot night, and charge a large percentage of the outlay to his charity account. The best way to get money for the Lord's cause is to get it both honestly and directly.—*Sunday School Times*.

According to the Persian proverb, all the world is represented by four men. "First, he who knows nothing, but does not know that he knows nothing. He is a fool, shun him. Second, he who knows nothing, and knows that he knows nothing. He is willing, teach him. Third, he who knows, but does not know that he knows. He is asleep, wake him. Fourth, he who knows, and knows that he knows. He is wise, follow him." Where do you belong? Are you satisfied with a little knowledge, or anxious for more, or too lazy to think, or alert and watchful of current events?