

Contributions.

The Commission vs. Denominationalism.

XVII.

T. R. KNOWLES.

In opposition to the New Testament teaching of a free and conditional salvation to all mankind, and, as Herod and Pilate "were made friends together," who before "were at enmity," in condemning the Son of God, so Calvinism and Universalism unite in the advocacy of a non-conditional salvation. Here these two are made friends, though, at enmity, touching the extent of its provision; the one claiming "All men will be saved," God "will finally restore the whole family of mankind to holiness and happiness;" while the other declares, "By the decree of God, for the manifestation of his glory, some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life, and others fore-ordained to everlasting death." (Confession of Faith, ch. iii.) It is plain that neither of these systems teach the necessity of faith or of obedience in order to salvation, notwithstanding the declaration of Christ, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned." Quite true, as an elderly Christian once said, "Calvinism and Universalism are like two young night-hawks, they run away in opposite directions from each other, although they were hatched in the same nest." Let it be noticed, then, that denominationalism makes man an irresponsible being, by making him the creature of fate. He must either act or not act, just as God has unalterably decreed. He is a mere machine, as much so as a clock. Obedience or disobedience is out of the question, as far as freedom of will or action is concerned. For, "these angels and men, thus predestinated and fore-ordained, are particularly and unchangeably designed; and their number is so certain and definite that it cannot be either increased or diminished." So teaches the Confession, ch. iii.

And further, the same chapter declares, that, "those of mankind that are predestinated unto life, God, before the foundation of the world was laid, according to His eternal and immutable purpose, and the secret counsel and good pleasure of His will, hath chosen in Christ unto everlasting glory, out of His mere free grace and love, without any foresight of faith or good works, or perseverance in either of them, or any other thing in the creature, as conditions or causes moving Him thereunto," etc. But, of the other class it says: "Neither are any others redeemed, by Christ effectually called, justified, adopted, sanctified and saved, but the elect only." (Ch. iii. 6.) "The rest of mankind, God was pleased, according to the unsearchable counsel of His own will, to pass by, and ordain them to dishonor and wrath for their sin, to the praise of His glorious justice." (Ch. iii. 7.)

All this is in harmony with the Articles of the Synod of Dort, which declare, "God willed that Christ, through the blood of the cross, should, out of every people, tribe, nation and language, efficaciously redeem all those, and those only, who were from eternity chosen to salvation, and given to Him by the Father." And, "He decreed himself to give unto them true faith, to justify, to sanctify, and at length powerfully to glorify them." And yet, the gospel goes on the supposition that man is a responsible being, blessed with the power to believe or disbelieve, to obey or disobey, the will of God. Hence Christ said that "God sent not

the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world should be saved through Him." And, "that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish," etc. And also, "that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name unto all the nations," etc. "And the gospel was to be preached 'to the whole creation,' assuring that, 'he that disbelieveth shall be condemned;' and that 'now he commandeth men that they should all everywhere repent;' and men are commanded to 'believe on the Lord Jesus Christ;' to 'work out' their salvation; to 'make their calling and election sure;' to be faithful unto death," in order to win the "crown of life." All of which is meaningless, of course; a mere show of words, a prodigious sham! Calvinism being true. Teaching, commanding, warning, promising, and threatening a man with respect to obeying or disobeying, when he is utterly helpless to do anything of himself! Yet such is the teaching of the creeds.

Man is "wholly defiled in all the faculties and parts of soul and body," says the Confession, while Rev. Mr. Rice says: "Without the special agency of the Holy Spirit, all must die in depravity and be eternally lost." (Deb. 625.) And Calvin says that, "without the regenerating grace of the Holy Spirit, they neither are willing nor able to return to God, to correct their depraved nature, or to dispose themselves to the correction of it," and this, because, "our nature being so totally vitiated and depraved." And, although he has the gospel, which "is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth," and "by which also ye are saved," said Paul to the Corinthians, yet he cannot accept it until forced to do so, by the Holy Spirit, if one of the elect, or forced to reject it if he is one of the non-elect.

Mr. Rice, in his debate with Bro. Campbell, while laboring "in further confirmation of the doctrine of man's total depravity"—first admitted that "every individual must experience a radical change in his moral character before he ever will love God or embrace the gospel of Christ." Then asks: "But are the truths of revelation sufficient to effect this change? They are not." Again, he says, the gospel of itself is "insufficient to renew and sanctify the depraved hearts of men." Mr. Rice continues: "We believe and teach, that in conversion and sanctification there is an influence of the Spirit in addition to that of the word, and distinct from it, an influence without which the arguments and motives of the gospel would never convert and sanctify one of Adam's ruined race" (pg. 628). Again, "Conversion and sanctification never can be secured, in the case of one of our race, without an agency of the Holy Spirit in addition to the truth, and distinct from it" (634). And Prof. Crawford, in a debate with J. S. Sweeny, undertook "to prove and defend in public debate," "that the word of truth alone, or mere moral suasion without direct spiritual agency, cannot effect the renewal or conversion of a soul, dead in trespasses and sins." And in the defence of his proposition, the Professor said, "I find no fault with the quotation he (Mr. Sweeny) gives from a Baptist author (J. W. Hayhurst), God has given us no means by which sinners can be converted, or a general revival take place, irrespective of the direct agency of the Spirit" (pg. 79). Again, the Professor said, "I say the Holy Spirit does act immediately in preparing for the entrance of the truth, etc." That is, the Holy Spirit must be received by the sinner first, before he has or can receive the truth. Not-

withstanding, the statement of Jesus, respecting the Holy Spirit, saying, "Whom the world cannot receive."

Of course, the "totally depraved" cannot act until acted upon; nor are they responsible, since, as Dr. John Owen says: "There is, then, in the regeneration of the souls of men, not only a moral, but a physical, immediate operation of the Spirit on their minds by His power and grace. The Spirit of God works internally, immediately, efficiently, in and upon the minds of men in their regeneration" (O. H. S. p. 276), which, in Mr. Rice's language means: "They are first quickened, then they exercise true faith and love." That is, they must "be quickened," and have "spiritual life" before they can believe. "He is first alive, then he acts," says Mr. Rice (Deb. 692). Peter, of course, did not so understand it. For, when speaking of the conversion of the Gentiles at the house of Cornelius he said that God "made no distinction between us and them, cleansing their hearts by faith," not in order to the exercise of faith. The New Testament everywhere talks to man as a responsible, acting creature and teaches him to hear, believe, obey; and that the gospel is "living and active," and "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." "No," says Calvinism, "without this abstract influence of the Holy Spirit the Word of God is a dead letter" (Our Rel. Denom., 19). And, says Mr. Rice, "The gospel alone is not sufficient to effect their conversion." And the Shorter Catechism says: "Who can change a sinner's heart? The Holy Spirit alone."—James, who said "of his own will begat he us with the word of truth," take a back seat!

Denominationalism makes the sinner utterly powerless (1) by the eternal decrees, (2) by total depravity, (3) by stripping the gospel of its power, and (4) by making faith the direct gift of God. Let us hear some of its utterances. "We believe," says the Bap. Ch. Manual, "that repentance and faith are sacred duties, and also inseparable graces wrought in our souls by the regenerating spirit of God." And Rev. N. L. Rice maintained that, "Regeneration is the cause of which faith is an effect." (Deb. 704.) And Calvin says, "That some, in time, have faith given them by God, and others have it not given, proceeds from His eternal decree." Again, "He decreed himself to give unto them true faith, to justify, to sanctify," etc., "who were from eternity chosen to salvation, and given to Him by the Father, that He should confer on them the gift of faith." And the Shorter Catechism also says: "Why is faith called a saving grace? Because faith is a gift of God, without which we cannot be saved." And a Catechism of the M. E. Church No. 3, says: "Can we repent and believe of ourselves? No, the power to repent and believe is given us of God." So to the "Homily on Salvation" (Episcopal): "St. Paul declares nothing upon the behalf of man concerning his justification, but only a true and timely faith, which, nevertheless, is the gift of God, and not man's only work without God." (Theo. Inst. ii. 247.)

Again, Calvin says, "But faith in Jesus Christ, and salvation by Him, is the free gift of God," and here quotes Eph. ii. 8, as do most of the others, for this seems to be the chief proof-text relied upon. And yet, a mere glance at the text is sufficient to show that "faith" (pistis), which is feminine, cannot be represented by the relative, "that" (touto), which is neuter. "That" or "this," which the apostle says "is the gift of God," does not refer to, nor agree with "faith," but, to the gracious plan of salvation, which is

"the gift of God." But some were kept out of the gift of faith till rather a late period in their conversion, it would seem, from the following: A Mr. Murray wrote to Mr. Wesley, "I received the gift of faith after I had seen myself a lost sinner." (Lives of the Wesleys, pg. 135.) And Mr. Wesley says: "But I could not understand how this faith should be given in a moment." "But, on Sunday 22," by the testimony of several, that they had given to them "in a moment, such a faith in the blood of His Son," he was convinced, "that God can, at least, if He does not always, give this faith whereof cometh salvation in a moment, as lightning falling from heaven." (L. of the W., m. to pg. 24.) Let us also hear the teaching of Arminius, in his system. Art. 3 reads: "That true faith cannot proceed from the exercise of our natural faculties and powers, nor from the force and operation of free-will, since man, in consequence of his natural corruption, is incapable either of thinking or doing any good; and that therefore it is necessary to his conversion and salvation, that he be regenerated and renewed by the operation of the Holy Ghost, which is the gift of God through Jesus Christ." Now, it is time to hear what the Divine Word affirms with respect to faith. Says Paul, "So believeth cometh of hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ." (Rom. x. 17.) "Let God be found true, but every man a liar."

Literary Notes.

TO PUBLISHERS.—All books, tracts, pamphlets, magazines, etc., intended for notice or review in this department must be addressed to the Editor of THE CANADIAN EVANGELIST, 25 Wellington Street North, Hamilton, Ont.

THE TREASURY OF RELIGIOUS THOUGHT for August is excellent in every department, and maintains its high standard among the magazines of the day. It is thoroughly evangelical, undenominational and always abreast of the times. Its frontispiece for this month is the Rev. Dr. D. K. Tindall, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, Omaha, Neb., followed by his sermon on "The Abundant Life." There is, also, a view of his church, with a biographical sketch. The Rev. Dr. R. McCheyne Edgar furnishes the noble sermon he preached as Moderator of the Presbyterian General Assembly in Ireland. Dr. W. R. Huntington discourses on Jesus Christ, the Truth Teller. Dr. Joseph J. Lampc supplies the sermon on "The Banner of Protestants" he preached before a body of Orangemen on their anniversary—a sermon that should be read by every Protestant in America. The Leading Thoughts of Sermons are by Bishop J. C. Keener, Prof. D. MacDill, D. D., and Dr. D. Boardman. Dr. Philip Schaff sketches The Apostolic or Patriotic Pulpit. Dr. J. C. Hiden gives Christ's Quotations from the Old Scriptures; Dr. J. Hall shows the Origin and Progress of Puseyism and its Lessons for Some Teachings of to-day; Prof. E. M. Hurl furnishes an excellent article on The Influence of Jesus in Great Art, and Rev. S. P. Cook one on The Lips in Soul-winning. Pastoral Work has—Preaching of the Gospel the Remedy for Scepticism and Young Men in Harness; Thoughts for the Hour of Prayer has—Love's Luring Memorial and Unanswered Prayers. Dr. Momen's Light on the S. S. Lessons is always clear. Editorials are on An Evil of Popularity, Christian Union, Young People in the Church, and Beer—the Great Sabbath Breaker. All departments full.

Yearly subscription, \$2.50; Clergymen, \$2.00; Single copies, 25 cents. E. B. TREAT, publisher, 5 Cooper Union, New York.

The Canadian Magazine's mid-summer (August) number is rich in variety of interesting topics and copious in illustration, and well maintains the reputation acquired by this most creditable of Canadian literary periodicals. In fiction, the illustrated story, "The Backsliding of Elder Pletus," by W. T. James, gives a graphic picture, true to life apparently, of the inner life of a Shaker community in Kentucky. "Accused by the Dead," a capital story by E. MacG. Lawson, is strikingly original in treatment. The illustrated articles are "Something about Hawaii," by H. Spencer Howell; "Upper Canada College," by W. Allan Neilson; and "A Mountain March" in the Himalayas, by A. H. Morrison. Other articles are, "Sir John Thompson and His Critics," a defence of the Canadian premier, by J. L. P. O'Hanly, C.E.; "Political Lessons from the Times of Cicero," by Edward Muek; "Referendum and Plebiscite," by Hon. G. W. Ross, Minister of Education, Ontario; "The Ethics of Tillage," a eulogy of farm life, by Dr. P. H. Bryce; "The Displacement of Young Men," by J. L. Payne; "Concerning Criticism," by Helen A. Hicks; "A Camp Experience," by E. Stewart, D.L.S.; "A Chapter from the North-West Rebellion," by Geo. B. Brooks; "A Canadian in New York," by Elgin Myers, Q. C. Poetry, scientific notes, and book reviews, complete this excellent number of a national review and magazine which no intelligent Canadian can well afford to be without if he wishes to keep abreast of the thought of his own country. Published at \$2.50 per annum by the Ontario Publishing Co., Ltd., Toronto.

"SMALL TALK ABOUT BUSINESS." By A. E. Rice. A banker's business hints for men and women. Published by Fremont Publishing Co., Montreal, Ohio. 66 pages. Paper, 40¢; cloth, 75¢; by mail, post paid. Descriptive pamphlets free.

This book, as its name indicates, is a talk about business; a banker's talks to men and women about the common, every-day business affairs of life. It is brimful of useful ideas for young and old, and is a book that should be on every desk and in every home.

Obituaries.

STOUT.—At Rockwood, on the 12th day of May, 1893, George, son of Eli Stout, in his 21st year. Bro. Stout was a member of the Everton congregation and was greatly loved by all who knew him. He was a victim of that dread disease, consumption, and his suffering and distress were intense. Yet with the hope of the Gospel before him, he patiently endured. His Bible was the only book he really desired to know, and his aim in life was to conform to its teachings—to "know God's will and to do it." Almost his last words to me were these: "I know him whom I have believed," 2 Tim. i. 2. Mr. Hart (Methodist minister) and the writer conducted the largely attended funeral services. "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord." P. BAKER.

What Say They?

In popularity increasing. In reliability the standard. In merit the first. In fact, the best remedy for all summer complaints, diarrhoea, dysentery, cramps, colic, cholera infantum, etc., is Dr. Fowler's Extract of Wild Strawberry. All medicine dealers sell it.

If you have catarrh, we call your attention to the "honest offer" of the Medical Inhalation Company found on another page.

For colds use Slocum's Emulsion, 35c.