

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 worthy of the calling wherewith you 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 you 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.

A Buddhist Divinity School.

C. H. GARST.

Col. Olcott and Madame Blavatsky regard themselves as Buddhists, and they are so regarded by the Buddhists of Japan. Theosophy and Buddhism are synonyms. The "theosophy" of the West being theoretical, there being no samples of it before the people for them to see how it works, I desire to give a few facts about the vicissitudes of a school here in Shonai. Before Christianity entered Japan thirty years ago, the Buddhists paid very little attention to schools. Small boys entered the temples as servants and studied when they had spare time, and as they grew up they performed the functions of priests. Even to-day the word for a young servant or messenger is "small priest." Lately schools have been erected and the pupils are taught in them, English being numbered among the studies. A school was opened some years ago in this city, but the young priests (all the students shave their heads, wear the priestly vestments, and are considered to be priests) behaved so badly that they demoralized the neighborhood. Great dissatisfaction was aroused but there was no redress, and complaint brought no reform in conduct. Some one struck the happy idea of burning them out. One night when they were all dreaming of blissful inactivity and indifference in nirvana, the alarm of fire brings them to their feet and soon the school was in ashes. It was again erected, but ere long met the same fate; as it was only a few blocks from us I remember the fire, particularly as we got some of the sparks and were in danger of losing our thatch roof too. Lately the school has been opened a third time, but not without considerable difficulty. In this city there are nearly four thousand houses and as many household Buddhist altars, with their idols and candles; one would, at first blush, think they would be delighted to have a school for training young priests, but no they are not! The projectors of the school tried several wards of the city, but wherever they went they were requested to seek another site. They were advised to go to a village near the mountains, but the people there said: "We too have daughters whom we do not want demoralized." Finally they decided to proceed, though the ward meeting unanimously objected, and have opened their school. As no legal injunction could be obtained

the neighborhood did the best they could, they urged the chief priest to great circumspection. The students are not permitted out of the inclosure day nor night except on urgent business. The whole premises are enclosed by a tight fence six feet high, and just inside of it is a moat six feet wide and six feet deep to prevent escape. The slope of the whole drain into this ditch, and there is no outlet!! Such is "theosophy" in "real life" in the "Far East!" I wonder if the admirers of theoretical Buddhism would admire it in practice?
Shonai, Japan, July 24, 1891.

The Vine and the Branches.

JOHN xv.

This figure of the vine and the branches very beautifully illustrates the relation that exists between Christ and His followers. Paul says, "If any man be in Christ he is a new creature." The Saviour represents Himself as the vine, the true vine, and when He speaks of the branches He does not mean the different denominations or churches, but He means His individual followers, or those who abide in Him. Our Lord says, "Every branch in Me that beareth fruit He cleanseth it that it may bring forth more fruit." All depends on the vine; branches could not be healthy or thrive in a defective or imperfect vine, hence the perfection of Him, human and divine, who is represented as the true vine, the good shepherd, the Light of the world, the way, the truth and the life.

"Every branch in Me," etc. A dead branch cannot be said to be in the vine at all; it is like the man who "seems to be religious" and bridled not his tongue; his religion is vain, and the branch that beareth no fruit will be cut off. Dead branches are an injury to the tree or vine; they should be cut off even though the tree, for the time, may "seem" to lack symmetry. Yet the adjacent branches are better without the proximity of this dead branch—Cut it off.

There are no imperfections in the vine. Christ is perfect; and when man is united to Him by faith he must produce the fruits of the spirit: "Love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith."

They that are Christ's, those in the vine, crucify the flesh with the affections and lusts. They walk in the Spirit. In "times past," before they were grafted into the vine by the "obedience of faith," they walked "according to the course of this world," "according to the prince of the power of the air that still works in the children of disobedience." But says Paul to the Ephesians, in referring to those dead branches, "You have not so learned Christ," "For ye were once darkness, but are now light in the Lord." "Stand, therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness; you are in the vine. "Walk worthy of your high calling."

But I referred to the perfection of the vine, the spotless purity and perfection of Him who was the brightness of the Father's glory, in whom, says

the apostle, dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead, bodily, and he says, "You are complete in Him." You are established in the faith, or, in other words, you are in the vine drawing your nourishment, your spiritual life, from Him who is the true vine. There is no danger of being cut off while you abide in the vine, for there is life in the vine; and the branch cannot bear fruit except it abide in the vine. "He that abideth in Me and I in him, the same beareth much fruit." In Jesus, the Christ, as the vine, there is a fulness; He is able to impart life to every branch, and not one of all the numerous branches need show even the slightest symptoms of decay.

"Herein is My Father glorified that ye bear much fruit so shall ye be my disciples." But He says, in verse 2, "Every branch that beareth fruit He cleanseth it that it may bring forth more fruit." You perceive that it is not altogether the quantity of fruit—if the branch is producing fruit at all, even a little fruit, He looks after it; it will not be "cut off." "He cleanseth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." Paul says to the Christians at Rome, "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." He speaks to the Corinthians as "babes in Christ," and they were not producing very much fruit. "But," He says, "I have fed you with milk, and not with meat." He had fed them with the sincere milk of the word, and did a little pruning too when necessary, I. Cor. iii. The branch, however, "cannot bear fruit of itself," it must abide in the vine, or no fruit. Suppose you sever the branch from the vine, or cut off the branch from the tree, how soon they wither. In a very short time you would not suppose they even belonged to the tree at all. They wither, they die. Now, the Lord says, "If a man abide not in Me he is cast forth as a branch and is withered," and they are finally cast into the fire and burned, and I suppose that is the best way to dispose of them. They are burned. But what are we to understand by the term "Abide in Me"? To abide means to continue in one place, to take up one's abode, to dwell in. But before a man can dwell or abide in a house he must come into it, hence, says the apostle, Rom. vi. 3, "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death, therefore we are buried with Him by baptism. And again, Gal. iii. 26 27, "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus, for as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." But in order to abide in Him we must be diligent, yes, we must give all diligence to add to our faith, courage, knowledge, patience, temperance, godliness, love to the brethren. These are the fruits that must be in us "and abound" if we are in the vine. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and hath forgotten that he was purged, or cleansed from his old sins. In fact those who lack the fruits of the Spirit only seem to be in the vine, and must finally wither; they are dead branches. John says, "Hereby know ye that we are in Him if we

keep His word." "He that saith he abideth in Him ought to walk even as He walked." "He that saith I know Him and keepeth not His commandments is a liar." He is a dead branch; he only seems to be in the vine; only seems to be religious; his religion is vain. "The world passeth away and the lust thereof, but he that doeth the will of the Lord abideth forever." Let us, therefore, abide in Him.

H. BROWN.

Ridgeway, Aug. 1, 1891.

Mr. Bevan's Last Word on the Confirmation Question.

To the Editor of THE CANADIAN EVANGELIST:

SIR,—This will be my last communication on this subject. A very excellent extract from Philip Schaff is printed in your issue of August 16; alongside of it are Mr. Sheppard's quotations from what are now quite ancient works, viz., those of Parkhurst, Clark and Barnes. Schaff tells us very truly that "a new and most important branch of theological science has sprung up," viz., a scientific exegesis of the New Testament. We shall not be disappointed in turning to these old authorities—as also indeed to many medieval writers—in search of spiritual lessons of great value, but what theologian would now turn to them as authorities on a subject of New Testament exegesis? To quote them for this purpose seems like attacking a modern ironclad with a bow and arrows? It is altogether beside the point to quote St. Paul's expression "pan ethnos" every nation, Acts xvii. verse 26, as if it were the same as the technical "ta ethne." What I said was that the word nations (plural) with the article, viz., "ta ethne," was a technical expression always used in the New Testament for the human race outside of Judaism and Christianity as in the passage: "And when the Jews were gone out of the Synagogue the Gentiles (ta ethne) besought that these words might be preached to them the following Sabbath," Acts xiii. 42. Let Mr. Sheppard quote a passage which proves me wrong. Not one of the one hundred and thirty-two passages in the New Testament in which the expression occurs will help him.

There is nothing said in Mark xvi. about any form of words for baptism—and if there were it would not help Mr. Sheppard who claims to stand on Holy Scripture alone, for from the 9th verse to the end of the Gospel as we have it, is on all hands acknowledged not to be a part of the original document, but an after addition.

I can scarcely bring myself to believe that Mr. Sheppard is serious when he contrasts my assertion that Heb. vi. 2 teaches us that the laying on of hands was an abiding principle with the author's expression "leaving the principles, etc. Heb. vi. 1 (read Heb. vi. 1, 2 and 3rd verses). The author of the book tells the converts to whom he is writing to pass on from "the first principles of Christ" to a more perfect knowledge of the doctrines of their newly received religion. The six foundation principles, or rudiments of the oracles of God he lays down clearly; of

course he had complained of the necessity for doing this (see Heb. v. 12). These six foundation (and therefore abiding as regarding Christianity) principles are: 1. Repentance; 2. Faith; 3. The relative importance of Jewish and Christian baptisms; 4. The laying on of hands; 5. Resurrection; 6. Eternal Judgment. Although in some instances we find them connected, yet there seems no reason for believing that there was a designed connection between the imposition of hands and the bestowal of miraculous powers. Such imposition was rather the recognized symbol of the bestowal by God of spiritual gifts on those who had been baptized, quite aside from the manner the Spirit might be pleased to work in those who received His gifts. The church from the Apostles' days until to-day without a break has used this apostolic rite. It was evidently used when the Hebrews were written, and if the church was wrong in retaining this rite, she is just as likely to be wrong also in retaining a book like the Hebrews in the canon of the New Testament. Her greatest divines in the earliest ages acknowledge they were ignorant as to who was its author. It was only as the dark ages gathered around her that the church's divines began to assign the book to St. Paul as its author.

Yours truly,

WM. BEVAN.

Princely Givers.

This age of immense fortunes ought to be also the age of splendid beneficence. That it may come to be such is the happy prophecy contained in these facts, cited by the Youth's Companion.—

Mr. James B. Colgate, of New York, gives his millions while he lives. He has for many years been the benefactor of the venerable little college at Hamilton, New York, which now calls itself Colgate University. This summer he has given it a round million dollars.

This kind of munificence is increasing in our country. Not long ago, Mr. Clark founded Clark University in Worcester, Massachusetts, on the million scale. Later, Mr. Rockefeller, of New York, has given a million dollars to Chicago University.

Others of our business men have given smaller sums for like objects. These benefactions mark a new era in the resources of American education. The great English universities were founded in the early ages by immense grants and princely gifts. They had thus the means of always leading in the world's thought, and giving the best instruction any country could offer. But most of our American colleges have had a sad struggle against poverty and insufficient equipment in all their branches.

The donors to the European universities frequently gave all their fortunes, and then retired to the monastery. But these Americans of whom we are proud can give sums which would have bewildered those old worthies; and after they bestow their millions stay in the world to acquire more, to be used to benefit those less favored than themselves.