

them to that sealing ordinance. By the faith of the parent they are children of the covenant—federally "holy." That is all it is contended the passage teaches, and all that is required. If the covenant promises are theirs, the seal is also theirs.

Now as to the scope of the passage. Barnes and the Baptists put the argument thus: "When one party is a Christian and the other not, the question was submitted to the Apostle: Shall there be a separation?" "No," says Paul; "your separation would be a proclamation to all that you regard the marriage as invalid and improper; from this it would follow that the offspring of such a marriage would be illegitimate. But you are not prepared to admit this. You believe your children to be legitimate. The marriage tie is therefore to be held as binding in such cases." This is weak. Look at the verse itself. The Apostle does not reason from a supposed action of the parents to a consequence that would befall the child. On the contrary he reasons from the recognized standing of the child to the conjugal relations of the parents. And again, he does not base his argument on what the Christian parent was disposed to believe, or refused to admit, regarding his child. He points to a fact: "Now are they holy." It is admitted that the Apostle is seeking to settle the minds of certain in the Corinthian Church, whose consciences perhaps were troubled over the fact that their husbands, or wives, were still unbelievers, and the fear that their continuing to live together was improper. But if we try to transport ourselves back to these times and view these things from the stand-point of a converted Hebrew, it will be seen that there is no need to depart from the natural and obvious interpretation of the Apostle's words. Does not the case of Timothy to some extent illustrate the point? Intermarriage between Hebrews and heathens was forbidden, as it is also forbidden between Christians and heathens. But the Jewess Eunice had married a heathen husband. Timothy was afterward circumcised; and he must have received the rite because of his mother's faith. That is to say, the fact of one of his parents being an unbeliever did not unchurch the son in the eyes of a Jew. They evidently felt that his circumcision was quite proper, and would have been highly prejudiced against him if it had not been done. Now suppose this to have taken place when Timothy was eight days old, and suppose the question afterwards to have arisen whether Eunice should part from her husband, would there be anything irrational or absurd in the reply of the verse in question: "The unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife . . . else were your child unclean;" but, as you know, he has not been treated as one of the unclean, but as one of the holy seed—a child of the Abrahamic Covenant. And although no mention might be made of circumcision, a Jew would have no difficulty in seeing that it was implied. The refusal to apply this rule of interpretation where Christian baptism and church membership are involved proceeds upon the false assumption that the Christian Church is an institution totally distinct from the ancient dispensation. To all this may be added the fact that nowhere else in Scripture is such an interpretation as "illegitimate" and "legitimate" admissible or given, so far as I know, to the words "unclean" and "holy," respectively; and also, if the Apostle meant "illegitimate" or "bastards," as is contended, it is pertinent to ask why did he not say so. He uses the suitable word elsewhere—Heb. xii. 8.

Thus I think it is plain that the natural and common interpretation is not only reasonable but precious. Why should men labour to interpret Scripture so as to cheat themselves out of its gracious promises and privileges? If God has from the beginning recognized the children of His covenant people as His also from the womb, and has promised them the blessings of a covenant that involved spiritual things, what is to be gained by trying to make the Bible speak otherwise? If those who do this were the only sufferers it were the less matter; but we know how the Anabaptists harp upon the misleading expression, "believers' baptism," and all that that is meant by them to involve. We know also that while a Presbyterian ministry seeks by evangelical, and not controversial, preaching to declare the whole counsel of God, and rightily to divide the Word, many of the people are carried away by this demonstrative zeal in behalf of a sectarian hobby, become shaken in their minds, and imagine that after all the doctrine of infant baptism is on a very doubtful basis. The consequence is the ordinance is often neglected or denied to their children. Let such persons be

assured that God has commanded nothing in vain, and that if neglect of the rite of circumcision in the old time was punished by a cutting off of the child from the privileges of the covenant, so we may reasonably conclude that no parent can neglect the baptism of his offspring now and be blameless.

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE.

MR. EDITOR,—I cannot express the feeling of pain experienced on reading your article which appeared some time ago, entitled "Priests of Science." As one strongly set for the defence of the truth, and at the same time a student of science, I cannot but differ from your view, *to cito*.

Your position seems to be that, because there is higher truth than that of science—the Atonement, for example—that it is useless and unnecessary for a preacher of the Gospel to be versed in science. I do not intend to show how such a view as you have taken up tends to drive off many of the purest and gentlest scientific spirits from religion. I believe this can be successfully established. Neither is it needed that I should point out the great assistance of scientific knowledge as a means of illustration, when such great preachers as Arnot and Guthrie demonstrated it so clearly in their practice. It is further a fact of the commonest kind that such habits of mind as clearness, exactness and definiteness, as well as succinctness of expression, combined with fulness of statement, are cultivated by the study of science; and who does not know that these are qualities which the people of the present day are insisting on on the part of those who occupy the pulpit? I desire rather to show in a few lines that acquaintance with science by our ministers, and the compulsory study of certain branches of science by our students for the ministry are greatly needed in our time. To begin with, as they say in the schools, for a true soteriology a true anthropology is needed. The tyro may see that the view held by any one as to the physical, mental and moral constitution of man will largely influence his theology. The origin and natural history of man, the questions of heredity, mental growth and primary bias, the relation of the brain to thought, the connection of body and spirit, the question whether life-force comes under the laws of the conservation of energy, the change death effects on the body and on the mind—these and many like them are fundamental questions—are living questions—to the man who will either interpret the Bible aright, or preach a Gospel sermon effectively. I venture to say that the answer to these questions given after a certain manner will make it impossible for the man who so answers to preach another sermon, or for the auditor who so concludes to endure evangelical preaching.

Now with all the reading-rooms of our libraries and Mechanics' Institutes, from Halifax to Winnipeg, teeming with quarterlies and magazines constantly enunciating a variety of views on these topics; with our newspapers abounding with extracts from these; with active and acute leaders of thought by lecture and in society dealing with these subjects, and certain others moreover answering these questions in a way to give a philosophic basis for their licentiousness, how can the man who has bandaged his eyes and stopped his ears to exclude the facts of Biology, Chemistry and Physics adapt his preaching to men who may be bringing scientific considerations, true or supposed, against everything he says, and whose knowledge of his ignorance prejudices them against him. The same line of thought might be pursued as to Inspiration in regard to the teachings of Geology, as to miracles in relation to natural law, and as to certain bearings of the revelations of the microscope and telescope upon some questions of Theology. If any one doubt whether there be this absorbing and wide-spread interest in the class of questions named, let him look at the remarkable spectacle of the Christian world devouring such a book as Drummond's "Natural Law in the Spiritual World," or at the same thing among the higher class of minds in relation to the "Unseen Universe." Dr. Eliot is hardly a writer to be charged with knocking down "men of straw," and yet much of his admirable work on Theism, and a dozen of his appendix notes in succession deal with these questions. The *British and Foreign Evangelical Review* is, as its name implies, an earnest advocate of orthodoxy, and yet in the last number, that of July, three if not four out of eight articles are on Evolution and kindred topics. In the last number of the *Southern*

Presbyterian Review, not less than four out of the seven articles are on the class of subjects under notice. Surely, while no Christian scientist could for a moment advocate preaching science in our pulpits, it needs no further argument to prove that if the young preachers in our colleges are to be able to present the truths of revelation forcibly and effectually to a generation flooded with Agnostic, Materialistic and Positivist opinions that strike at the very foundations of faith, they must be acquainted with these opinions. As I am not in the habit of reading the long letters of others sometimes appearing in newspapers, I do not wish to fall into their error by writing more.

GEORGE BRYCE.

Manitoba College, Winnipeg, Sept., 1885.

[Professor Bryce's energetic protest needs no rejoinder. To the position he assumes the article to which he refers was not antagonistic, nor meant to be. It dealt with the arrogant pretensions of certain "Priests of Science" who affect to ignore all other lines of thought except those belonging to their own chosen department. If the student of Theology can master some of the problems of science, well and good; but he ought by all means to be what a professor of a by-gone century described, "a proficit theologian."—ED.]

HOME MISSION WORK.

MR. EDITOR,—The great question is: Shall the money raised by the whole Church be placed at the disposal of the mission stations and permit them to decide by a vote every six months or a year whether they will "hire the missionary over again or put him away," as they express it, or shall the Church have a voice through its Presbyteries or other agents how its moneys shall be expended? Common sense would suggest the latter. The Congregational Church saw so clearly the folly of placing their money at the disposal of small, divided societies that they have appointed an agent who has a voice in both appointing the missionaries and disbursing the money; and without his sanction neither missionaries nor money can be employed. We may call this Episcopacy or any other name we care; but it is common sense. I will give one case which may be considered a representative one, as an example of the way in which our money and missionaries are employed: A missionary was employed on an extensive field. His most remote appointments were sixty miles apart. The Home Mission Society paid one-half the salary. The field raised the other. At the end of two years a deputation of Presbytery visited the field and held a meeting at the most central point. The few who attended the meeting represented not more than one-eighth of the number attending the services, or paying one-eighth of the salary. The missionary was asked to retire. The people were questioned as to how they liked the missionary, and a vote was taken and the missionary was hired over for another year—as the people expressed it—or re-appointed, as the delegation expressed it. If this practice is continued the people will, after a time, be slow to contribute to the Home Mission Fund.

The scheme which I would propose has been practised by the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in the United States for the last fifty years with the most satisfactory results. The representative elder, instead of being a mere figure-head as with us, is a real power both in his congregation and Presbytery. He goes to Presbytery instructed by his congregation and empowered by them to look after their interests in the appointment of their minister. The Presbyteries assume the whole responsibility of the supplies. This system is more flexible than what is called the Methodist system, and equally effective, and it is thoroughly Presbyterian. This system might be applied with great advantage to all our Home Mission fields and vacant congregations. No extra church machinery would be needed. The Home Mission Committee as now constituted, being made up of representatives from all the Presbyteries, could apportion the missionaries to the several Presbyteries according to their requirements. The Presbyteries could, with the aid of their representative elders, make the appointments in an intelligent manner. The appointments should be revised at least once every year, oftener if necessary.

A Presbytery should translate a missionary to another field at any time if it should be seen that from any cause the work was not prospering in his hands. A minister might be re-appointed to the mission field as often as the Presbytery might deem advisable. Settled