

Dune and Robertson,

U. W. v. ...

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"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 worthily of the calling wherewith ye 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 ye 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.

The Order of Confirmation.

To the Editor of THE CANADIAN EVANGELIST: DEAR SIR,—Many thanks for your promise that I should have an opportunity of a reply to my friend Mr. Sheppard.

Was the primary and only intention of the laying-on of hands by the apostles that extraordinary manifestations of the "gift" might follow? or was the primary intention, that by prayer and laying-on of hands, the candidates might receive by faith the "spiritual gift" independently of the way it might manifest itself? I speak of the "spiritual gift" rather than of "the Holy Ghost," as the article is not in the original (Acts viii. and xix.), nor is it in the passage which speaks of the assembled disciples being "filled with Holy Ghost at Pentecost" (Acts ii. 4). That which was received was not the Spirit as a Person for the first time in the New Birth; this can only occur once; it was the infusion of spiritual strength, called sometimes "the seven-fold gift." Mr. Sheppard and myself agree (I presume) that a "spiritual gift" was given, and by faith received, and that in two recorded cases extraordinary manifestations followed. But the laying-on of hands was habitual and ordinary. This is quite clear from Heb. v. 2, where it is classed as one of the six fundamental principles of Christianity; the reason why the two cases in Acts viii. and xix. are recorded seems simply because in these cases extraordinary manifestations did follow the laying-on of hands.

Although all the baptized received the laying on of hands, yet extraordinary manifestations were not given to all. "Are all workers of miracles? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?" (1 Cor. xii. 29). Those who did not receive visible manifestations could still receive by faith a "gift" far more excellent than these extraordinary manifestations which were all to pass away, viz.: "the ordinary working of the Spirit in the heart." As a Christian believer I am sure from experience we have the "gift" still with us (thank God), a Saving Spirit, willing at importunity of prayer to give His sustaining and strengthening "gift" to those who have the faith to receive it. This is the message of the laying-on of hands, to-day, no less

than in the days of the apostles. I have all the early Christians on my side. Mr. Sheppard may answer—the Bible is his only guide—but then it is mine too; we simply differ in our interpretations of it. If Mr. Sheppard is justified in backing up his interpretation of a passage from Hartnoll Horn, surely I may back up my interpretation of the New Testament by the undivided voice of the first age of early Christian writers.

I said our Lord indorsed modifications of the externals (not of the essence) of the Passover as laid down in Exodus xii. Mr. Sheppard says the first Passover was not meant as a model for its yearly memorial—just read Exodus xii. We are very well aware that the Jewish writers, in the Mishna, lay great stress on the distinction between the "Egyptian Passover" and the "perpetual Passover," but this was after their altered circumstances had gradually brought about the modifications. The posture of unrest and hurry gradually gave way on their arrival in the Holy Land to that of reclining in token of attained rest and possession. The Ten Tribes, in all probability, but certainly the Samaritans, who followed their customs, and who clung to the Books of Moses no less firmly than the Jews, observed the ancient custom of the First Passover by a hasty eating of the Lamb in a standing attitude, with loins girt and shoes on the feet, the Passover is still, to this day, yearly so eaten by the Samaritans on Mount Garizim, for of course they have never heeded the voice of the Jewish church. But long before the Incarnation the Jews had ceased to eat it standing, or to observe the rule which forbade anyone to leave the house till morning.

The laying-on of hands has been the token and pledge of blessing throughout the ages. During the Patriarchal Dispensation it was the token of such blessings as it pleased God then to bestow, and so throughout the Mosaic Dispensation, and from the days of our Saviour and the apostles, it has been the token and pledge of that spiritual blessing which is peculiar to our own dispensation. However objectionable a few unimportant accessories of our English Confirmation Office may be to Mr. Sheppard, he will find it a difficult task to overthrow this sacred rite of the ages. As to Mr. Sheppard's quotation from Colossians, torn bleeding from the context from a letter written to counteract the fantastic errors of Gnosticism, it has nothing to do with the subject. The laying-on of hands is not an ordinance of man; in our dispensation it is an apostolic ordinance. Even were it only to stand upon an injunction of the church, it would not be a mere ordinance of man. Our Saviour gives a few samples of what he meant by "the doctrines and commandments of men" in the context, viz.: the selfish distortions and destruction by individual Jewish teachers of plain moral precepts. He has also told us to "hear the church." The keeping of the "Lord's day" is an ordinance of the church, so our friends the seventh day Baptists do not observe it—for them it is an ordinance of man, and yet why they

observe the seventh day with St. Paul's observation on the matter in near context with the passage quoted by Mr. Sheppard before them, I cannot understand. By "letter" St. Paul refers to the written Mosaic law, I know, the New Testament had not then been written (reduced to the letter). "All Scripture" refers to the Old Testament; the New Testament bears witness to the Old but never to itself, the church which collected it, bears witness to it. Now that we have the New Testament in the "letter," there is a way in which we may speak of the letter killing but the Spirit giving life as regards it. If the Church had not acted in her corporate capacity (in her Episcopal synods), but if she had left this matter of the New Testament canon to every little independent community of Christians (humanly speaking), how would the matter have ended? Mr. Sheppard quotes from 2 Timothy, which large numbers of critics have rejected as St. Paul's; 2 Peter is also rejected by numbers; Luther rejected St. James' epistle. The controversies were numberless among the early Christians, and are so still, about the Apocalypse and the Hebrews; but I am glad to see so large a number of Christians still respecting the stamp of authority given the New Testament canon, which was finally collected and sealed about three hundred years after Christ by the church. The legalistic mode of interpretation would effectually do away with baptism and its complement the laying-on of hands; as far as Christendom is concerned, the Quakers' position would alone be logical. Our Saviour commanded that all nations (viz., heathens) should be baptized in the name of the Trinity. We find (see Acts) that Jews were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus only, being already in covenant with God the Father. We find St. Paul saying that the children of believing parents are holy (hagios), and although we have a history (in the Acts) of the early Christians for the first thirty-four years, we have no recorded instance of the baptism of a person of Christian parentage; therefore baptism is simply the mode by which Jewish and pagan believers may be admitted into the church. Join with this St. Paul's warning about being "over-ridden with ordinances," and the Quaker position is secure. But then the meaning of Scripture must be determined by its whole drift and tenor, and not by picking out of it a few isolated passages to be tessellated into systems to which they are quite foreign. A text may be made to mean anything or nothing according to the prepossessions of the interpreter. Problems like these must be measured by wider considerations, considerations based upon the great principles of revelation. Texts have been arrayed against the advance of science and knowledge, the martyrs of science have been slain with well-sounding texts. When we remember that the word "servant" is generally "slave" in the original, no wonder slavery had abundance of texts; but then the grand spiritual truth of the brotherhood of Christian believers whirled the cart-load of texts advanced

in favor of slavery. The great spiritual principles of our religion outweigh the "letter." The laying on of hands is so religiously natural, so simple, so certainly apostolic, as to have taken its place among the few Christian ordinances, and to be counted from the beginning a foundation principle. Yours truly, WM. DEWAN.

Tobacco.

Tobacco—This word means in Indian language a pipe in which the weed was smoked.

Let us examine into the harm to the young that all—doctors, writers, fathers and mothers—agree that there is in the use of tobacco.

It contains a poison called nicotine which is as deadly as prussic acid. One drop of it has been known to kill a cat in a minute, a rabbit in three minutes. This poison all who use tobacco in any of its forms, cigars, snuff, cigarettes, etc., are bound to take into their system. Cigarette smoking is the most hurtful of all tobacco. Formed of refuse—the thrown-away stumps of cigars, collected from roadside or wherever they may be, saturated with opium, wrapped in dirty paper! Think of it, you delicate, aristocratic gentlemen; you cleanly, particular

lads. This nicotine acts on the brain, dulling it. It makes a bright boy stupid; the ambitious boy forgets all his dreams of advancement and becomes lazy, stunted, unhealthy, unhappy and prematurely old. We pity those poor afflicted creatures, dwarfs, idiots, who have come into the world so mis-shapen, but what can we say of those who, of their own free will, by daily using tobacco, have stunted their growth, dwarfed their intellect, spoiled their lives, and, more than all, it may be, lost their souls? Do not think, boys, that this is wild talk. Facts bear out the statements. Out of 294 insane through drink, 246 of the cases followed the use of tobacco. Another authority says that nine out of ten boys and young men who use tobacco become drunkards. The wise person is he who, seeing the danger ahead, avoids the path. How foolish he who, seeing the pitfall, puts something into his mouth to blind his eyes, and goes surely forward into it. Certainly this is self-murder, the worst of all murders.

Look at some facts from another point. God puts into our mouths a moisture; those who use tobacco spit it upon the ground, or—the horror of it!—wherever a convenient place be found, thus saying in their ignorance and folly that they know better than God. This moisture—saliva, spittle—was given to help change food to blood—life. "The blood is the life." "We are fearfully and wonderfully made." Now the tobacco user has knowingly wasted, spat away, one of the things needful to perfect digestion. Then anyone can see imperfect digestion must follow, imperfect blood, finally dyspepsia. This last is but another name for misery—misery to self, misery to all connected with you.

Now see one reason for a stunted body, a pale face, a weak intellect. The throat, the lungs, the heart, are

all sufferers from the silly habit of smoking.

Above it has been said that tobacco users in many cases become drunkards. It is but a natural effect, for tobacco causes thirst. Then, too, tobacco being a narcotic, the conscience is not fully alive. Indulgence in tobacco causes an "itching desire" for further use of it. Thus the will power is weakened. Temptation to drink comes, and the higher nature being weakened or lulled into false sleep, the animal nature clamors to be satisfied. Thus are you betrayed. Coming in the guise of a friend you find, maybe too late, how false was your trust.

Can you see the danger ahead, my young friend? While you are yet able escape from a habit that will surely make you a slave.

What more can be said? The millions of souls who have never heard of God. Those mortals "wait on the generosity of God's people."

Look at our boasted generosity! Seven dollars and twenty cents yearly is given for liquor and tobacco by each one of us, and FIVE CENTS for souls to know of Christ. Oh, the shame of it!

Boys, you are free: break this record! With you it rests whether, or not this disgrace, which we of to-day cannot deny, will be wiped out.

Which will you choose,—that noble giving up for God and thy fellowman, or that ignoble service—self and the devil. CLARA REID.

Holiness indicates our state towards God, righteousness our state towards man.

No sermons are quite so good as those the preacher aims at himself. Only the divine Master could afford to preach to men except from the common level of sinfulness, and even He seeks the common level of humanity that He may reach us. The most penetrating preaching is that of men who have looked into their own hearts to discover the common needs of all their brethren. Alexander Vinet exerted a wonderful power over his hearers through the sense he awakened in them that his teaching was his invitation of them to a struggle in which he himself was sharing. His hearer might not find his eloquence or his literary skill comparable to that of others, although both were great. But, their unflinching comment on every sermon was: "You have done me good." An illiterate old woman who lived not far from him made her way to his house to lay before him difficulties about her life as a Christian, to which her own pastor could not speak. He welcomed her, made her stay all day with him, talked with her as a brother with a sister, and sent her home full of strength and comfort. She said to her pastor: "You others talk down to us, very finely no doubt. But M. Vinet gets right beside us, and we feel his words." The teacher, as well as the preacher, must get beside those he would reach. Elisha's attitude in recalling the dead child to life is the symbol of the best work of the Sunday school.—Sunday School Times.