

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 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.

This paper, while not claiming to be what is styled an "organ," may be taken as fairly representing the people known as Disciples of Christ in this country.

Spurgeon on the "Traitorous Scheme."

We commend to all Baptists the following vigorous language by C. H. Spurgeon, written by him many years ago, and reproduced in a recent issue of the *Christian Commonwealth*. It should act as a healthy tonic to any of his co-religionists who suffer from weakness of the spine: "A certain company of would-be extra-superfine Liberals, made up of Independents and Baptists—good enough men in their own way, but thoroughly wrong-headed on this and some other points—are resolved to amalgamate the two bodies; and their first action, inoffensive and insignificant, we judge, from what we know of them, to be merely the beginning of the end, a stepping-stone to something more, getting in the thin end of the wedge—in plain Saxon, a little *dodge*. They would found churches, and found a denomination in which Christ's ordinance of baptism would be left optional. Some of them would even have a font and a baptistry in each place of worship, which, to our mind, is to form churches on the principle of despising the command of Christ, and of counting it an utterly insignificant matter what the ordinance may be, and whether it be obeyed or not—'Whichever you please, dear friends; pay your money and take your choice: sprinkle the infant or immerse the believer—our church does not care a farthing which.' This is the witness of the model union churches, and would be the witness of a united baptized and unbaptized Congregationalism. We quite understand the testimony of our friends who hold infant baptism, as they also understand ours, but to form a denomination which regards all baptisms with equal indifference seems to us to be a *scheme traitorous to Christ and His word*." "When ministers get a footing in Baptist churches, and first disown strict discipline as to baptism, and then inoculate their people with hostility to their denomination, and coquet with Pædo-baptist bodies, they present to our churches a reason for inquiring into the advisability of the very first step in the descent, and they also raise the question as to the honesty of those who gain an inch with the covert view of gaining an ell, when they know very well that no inch would be given if their ultimate design were known." The article concludes as follows:

"That no one may make a mistake as to the writer of this article we append our name, that it may be coupled with all the reproach that any may care to heap upon it for our plain speech in this matter.—C. H. SPURGEON.—*Australian Christian Pioneer*.

Presbyterian Creed-Revision.

"The proposed revision of the Westminster Confession of Faith has failed." So says the *New York Independent*, and the affirmation or prophecy seems amply justified by the facts. In 1889 the General Assembly submitted an overture to the Presbyteries, asking whether they desired a revision, and, if so, in what respects and to what extent. The result showed 134 Presbyteries in favor of revision to 68 against it. Hence the Assembly of 1890 appointed a strong committee of twenty-five—fifteen ministers and ten elders—to submit a plan of revision. Guided by suggestions from the Presbyteries, to whom they submitted their first draft, the committee reported an amended Confession to the Assembly of 1892. Some of the principal changes proposed in this report were given in these columns at the time. It will be remembered that the members of this committee were not permitted to go about their work with a free hand. They were enjoined to make no changes which would impair the integrity of the Calvinistic system. All they were permitted to do was to soften some of the harsher expressions. The doctrine of "reprobation" reappeared as "pre-terition." The paragraph concerning the fate of infants dying in infancy was modified, etc. The committee itself was greatly divided touching the report, only twelve out of twenty-four who made the revision approving of all the changes. The Assembly submitted the revision to the Presbyteries in a series of overtures. The responses to these overtures are now coming in and are decidedly unfavorable. Though but eighty-two out of more than two hundred Presbyteries have as yet been heard from, these are considered fairly representative. Barely one half of them approve the revision and only thirteen approve it entire. As the constitution of the church requires a two-thirds vote before any change can be made, it is evident that the proposed revision will not be adopted.

From the remarks of the *Independent* we gather that the refusals are based quite as often upon the view that the changes do not go far enough as that they go too far. From the facts stated, as well as from what we have read elsewhere during the progress of the discussion, we have little doubt that that journal, which it will be borne in mind is strongly conservative in its general tone, is quite safe in predicting that a new short creed will be the outcome of the movement.

Thirty-four of the eighty-two Presbyteries which have been heard from ask for this, and many more doubtless will approve it. The *Independent* says:

"On the whole, we think the church is to be congratulated on the outcome. The Westminster Confession is an antiquated document expressed in antiquated terms. Any revision of it would

be a sort of patchwork. It would be like putting new wine into old wineskins. A short new creed expressive of the evangelical doctrines held by the Presbyterians, Methodists, Congregationalists and others will meet the wants of the churches, and the venerable Confession can repose in dignity and silence on the shelves.—*Canadian Baptist*.

The Bible Itself.

The *Christian Evangelist* says: The *Christian Intelligencer* makes a good point in the paragraph given below, but it is certainly a noteworthy fact to see in the representative journal of a denomination, the very corner-stone of whose doctrine, as expressed both in its praying and in its preaching, is the absolute necessity of the "direct operation of the Holy Spirit in the conviction and conversion of the sinner," such a statement as this, "The Bible itself has led men to believe." Yes, the "Word of God is alive and energetic, and sharper than any two-edged sword," and the "gospel is the power of God unto salvation." The *Intelligencer* says:

A Chinese missionary, speaking before the British and Foreign Bible society, referred to the case of an old man in his field who once became possessed of a New Testament, and read it without any assistance from a missionary or any private Christian. After reading it, especially in the Book of Revelation, he turned to his sons, and feeling that there was something to him in it said, "This does not come from man; it is from heaven." He charged them to worship God, and when his end came, which was not far off, to bury him as a disciple of Jesus Christ. Before that came, he fell in with missionaries and was baptized upon his deathbed. Then his home became the center of a little circle of Christian worshippers. Similar cases have occurred in Japan, in Persia, in Turkey, and, indeed, all over the world. The Bible itself has led men to the belief of the truth without the aid of a living teacher. This fact is, we believe, without analogy in the case of any other religion. The ethnic faiths have their sacred books, some of them possessing remarkable qualities, but who ever heard of a conversion affected by any of these books? When did any man have his life altered by reading the sayings of Confucius, a Veda of India, or any portion of the Zandevasta, or a chapter of the Koran? These religions have been propagated, and sometimes widely, but it has always been by the oral teachings of their advocates, never by the mere circulation of the books in which their tenets are recorded. It is otherwise with the Scriptures. They are the living oracles of God. They have life and that life reproduces itself. No word of the Lord returns to him empty. All of them go abroad to work. Centuries have passed over them, and still they wear their eternal youth. Still they are living and powerful, and pierce to the very joint and marrow. By virtue of their own contents they challenge attention and assent, and often, very often, attract the reader to the faith and service of the Lord Jesus. As Paul said, they "are able to make wise unto salvation."

This Gospel of Noise.

It sometimes seems as if some people had embraced the "gospel of noise." They seem to have forgotten those scriptures which say: "The Lord is in His holy temple, let all the earth keep silence before Him."—Hab. ii. 20. "Be still and know that I am God."—Psa. xli. 10. "Stand in awe, and sin not: commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still."—Psa. iv. 4. "Be silent, O all flesh, before the Lord."—Zech. ii. 13. "When thou goest to the house of God . . . be not rash with thy mouth to utter anything before God; . . . for a dream cometh through the multitude of business; and a fool's voice is known by the multitude of words."—Eccl. v. 1-3. It is sometimes the case that from the beginning to the end of a religious service there is nothing but noise; not *one moment* for quiet meditation and careful thought. At first there is what is sometimes termed a "praise service," where for half an hour or an hour people sing—sometimes without much regard to sense—noisy tunes with rattling choruses, the more noisy and the more rattling the better, until people are exhausted and wearied; then comes in a short sermon, or a few brief prayers or remarks, interspersed with more of the same kind of music, and so the hour passes by.

We recollect a special service where there were present a number of persons who were perhaps qualified to edify and instruct the people, but someone who supposed he had charge of the services, occupied nearly an hour at the beginning with preliminaries, mostly noisy and exciting singing, until at length he was interrupted by some one more experienced, who took the meeting in hand and tried to bring quiet, order, self-examination, and devotion out of the noise and confusion which prevailed.

We need in these days something besides the gospel of rattle-te-bang. There needs to be searching of hearts. The blessed man is one who meditates day and night in the law of God. His life is not one whirl of noisy excitement. He has learned to wait on God. When he speaks he has something to say, and when the Spirit of God prompts him to bear testimony he proposes to have time to deliver the message which he has received. He is not anxious to see how much talking can be done in fifteen minutes, or how many people can jump up and sit down in half an hour. The question is not how much powder can be fired off, but how much execution can be done. The word of God, sharper than a two-edged sword, pierces to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit; but the gospel of rattle-te-bang, the gospel of noise and clatter, the gospel of song which affects people's toes more than it does their hearts, and is better adapted to jigs and glees than prayers and supplications, is not likely to lead men to Christ, the Lamb of God, nor to melt and break the hearts of lost souls.

Can we not learn something from those that have lived before us? Is it not wise sometimes to wait in silence before the Lord, to ask Him to show us His will, and then to listen while he

answers us? Maybe in some hours of quiet and silent devotion the Lord will reveal to us truths which we shall never hear in the midst of noise and tumult and confusion.—*The Armory*.

Dr. Barrows, chairman of the World's Fair Congress of Religions, has an article in the *Review of Reviews* on this unusual assemblage, in which he states that over sixteen hundred men, eminent in the religious life and work of the world and representing nearly all the great Christian Churches, and all the leading historic faiths, have accepted places in the Advisory Council of the Parliament. This great strength of support has been given it from a variety of considerations. There are those who favor it because of the aid it will bring to the study of comparative religions. Again, very many have favored the Parliament from the profound conviction that it would show forth the superiority and the sufficiency of some particular form of Christianity. Others have favored it from the feeling that their own religion has been misunderstood, and that they have cherished important truths which others will do well to heed. Multitudes of the more progressive and broad-minded men in Christendom have championed the Parliament from the feeling that they, as Christians, may rightly and wisely show a more brotherly spirit toward the representatives of other faiths. Furthermore, the Parliament has received the allegiance of many because they are assured that the conference will draw Christians more closely together. The future alone can tell whether this ecumenical council at Chicago will do more to advance true religion than those at Nice, Constance, Trent and the Vatican.—*Christian Evangelist*.

Many mean things are done in the family for which moods are put forward as the excuse, when the moods themselves are the most inexcusable things of all. A man or woman in tolerable health has no mortal right to indulge in an unpleasant mood.—J. G. GOLLAND.

When you make a mistake, don't look back at it long. Take the reason of the thing into your mind and then look forward. Mistakes are lessons of wisdom. The past cannot be changed. The future is yet in your power.—HUGO WILHE.

"That is the happiest state of life in which one has not to command nor direct, but to obey solely, not having to choose for ourselves, but having our path of duty, our mode of life, our fortunes marked out for us. What else does God require of us in the injunction: 'Commit the keeping of our souls to Him, as unto a faithful Creator.'—FRIL.

"I am satisfied that the day is coming when, in our church and all the churches of the world, we shall look chiefly to the conversion of children, and as a comparatively rare instance to the conversion of those in maturer years."—BISHOP SIMPSON.

People who never think of anybody but themselves are always little, no matter how big they feel.