

permanent. Amidst the unseemly jealousies and bitter strifes that have unhappily prevailed among professing Christians, it is consolatory to reflect that this spiritual unity, this vital and real union, exists among all whom the Lord knows to be his.

But important, unspeakably important, as this union between Christ the Head and the members of his mystical body is, it is not to Christian Unity in this point of view that our attention is, for the most part, directed in scripture. While it is truly satisfactory and profitable to form just, scriptural conceptions of Christ's mystical body, it is not with this mystical body, as such, that we have, in the first instance, to do.

We learn from the apostolic letters addressed to those first churches, that the invisible, though real, union existing between Christ and the members of his mystical body, of which we have been treating, was the foundation of a farther union—a union of a visible kind.

A loving word is always a safe word. It may or may not be a helpful word to the one who hears it; but it is sure to be a pleasant memory to the one who speaks it.

Regeneration and Sanctification.

THEIR RESPECTIVE SPHERES.

[We give here a liberal extract from a lengthy article in the Jan. 20 number of the Christian Guardian. It was written by Rev. T. L. Wilkinson, of Grimsby, and bears the title given above. Mr. Wilkinson wrote in opposition to some of his own Methodist brethren who mistake the spheres of Regeneration and Sanctification and set forth their views in a paper of their own. Their main proposition is—

"Regeneration is salvation from actual sin; entire Sanctification is salvation from inbred sin."

Mr. Wilkinson very successfully shows that the Scriptures recognize no such distinction as that claimed between "actual" and "inbred" sin, and quotes John Wesley's definition, "By sin I mean a voluntary transgression of a known law." We should be pleased to have Mr. Wilkinson explain how he understands the doctrine of the Methodist Church in regard to the "Baptism of Infants," and whether he thinks it consistent with the views he expresses in the extract given below.

Mr. Editor, as I penetrate more and more into the sublime depths of this subject I become somewhat anxious about our little ones. I am led to wonder whether there is any of this naughty "inbred sin" in them. If so, and they have neither been regenerated nor sanctified, do not "the seed and root of all sin" remain in them? And must they repent deeply and pungently before they can be healed? If so, being unable, as infants, to repent, what will become of them if they chance to die in such a state, or must they go, though "not a span long" in some cases, where all bad people go? If their inbred sin is hereditary they are under the same obligations to repent of theirs that I am of mine.

- 1. That any hereditary tendencies to evil in us are not sin at all, but depravity.
2. That by actual sin depravity deepens.
3. That there is but one divine remedy for our diseased and polluted natures, viz., the atonement.
4. That the act of divine forgiveness blots out our actual sin, and the divine remedy purges away our pollution, quickens our dead natures, and "renews us in the image of God, in righteousness and true holiness."
5. That regeneration does not necessarily so turn the bent of our every inclination, that we will, from the very inception of the new life, have as strong inclinations to good as we formerly had to evil, or that every desire for unlawful indulgence or tendency to doubt and disobedience will be so eradicated that we will feel no "motions of sins" working "in our members;" but that such direction is given to our faculties and affections as will enable us to serve God acceptably, if we will, and run in all the way of his commandments, "having power," as these brethren express it, "over all inward and outward sin," or, as Wesley expresses it, "holiness of life, arising from holiness of heart."

6. That by the faithful use of this power, and cultivation of right affections, we may "grow in grace," and our pathway become "as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." But by neglect in this matter, whether through ignorance or carelessness and habitual yielding to sin, we "lose our savour," fall into condemnation, are shorn of our strength and become as other men.

7. That when this enfeebled spiritual state is recognized, we may by a determined effort of faith, a renewed consecration to God, and a "deep and pungent repentance," recover our first love and light and joy perhaps in larger measure than ever, and call it, well, whatever our religious teachers have taught us to call it—perhaps imagining that we had no "actual sins" to repent of, though the very fact of our having lived beneath our

privileges for years, and neglected known duties to God and man, was sufficiently actual to make us actually wretched and worthless.

8. That sanctification, or holiness, is rather the state into which the process of regeneration introduces us than a distinct operation in itself, else how can "converted people" be "holy," or partly sanctified? Either regeneration makes them holy, or part of the process of sanctification takes place contemporaneously with it. In the latter case there must, according to our editorial brethren, be two sanctifying processes, one at the time of regeneration and one later. But if we allow that sanctification is the result of regeneration, then we have no confusion of thought. And surely the process of sanctification, as far as it is a process, viz., the acts of separation and consecration, takes place then. Regeneration cleanses, renews, and quickens, and whatever produces these effects in us is regeneration, and not sanctification. Yet when a man is cleansed, renewed and quickened he is made holy, hence regeneration makes us holy or sanctified. In this state we may grow—in fact, we must grow or die. Onward is the watchword and genius of Christianity. "Being made free from sin, and become servants to God, we have our fruit unto holiness," etc.

9. And when will sensible people come to see and acknowledge that infant children, by virtue of the atonement, stand in the same relation to God, and possess the same moral nature as regenerated adults, no sin, either "actual" or "inbred," being imputed to them? "Of such is the kingdom" is said of infants. "Except ye be converted (or born again), and become as little children, ye cannot enter the kingdom," is said of adults.

WHY NOT MORE BAPTISTS?—By a singular freak of arithmetic the denominational increase of the Baptists is exactly 4,000. They seem to be very much discontented with this increment, and they are right, for when the rapid growth of population is taken into account it is not an increase but a mark of stagnation. But why should the English Baptists—really—be disappointed? How much of reality is there in the assumption that the Baptist Union is really a Union of Baptists? Immense numbers of "Baptists" are not baptized. Probably many hundreds of the contingent of 4,000 are unbaptized members. For nothing is easier than to be a Baptist without the slightest right or title to such a name. The "open-membership" system is converting many Baptist churches into something other than what their name implies. There is something in these days so far from genuine about the practice most favored by the Baptist Union, especially in London, that the distinctive denominational enthusiasm founded on an ordinance must be dwindling more and more into rapid indifference.—Christian Commonwealth, London, Eng.

[The foregoing explanation of the small increase in the so called Baptist denomination in England will astonish those who are not aware of the fact that in that country "immense numbers of 'Baptists' are not baptized." It seems incredible, but it is true. Baptist meeting-houses whose trust deeds exclude the baptistery; Baptist deacons who have not been baptized! Has it come to this that Baptist churches claiming to be churches of Jesus Christ set aside his ordinance and so virtually repudiate him? Let all who feel disposed to make light of baptism take warning.—EDITOR EVANGELIST.]

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