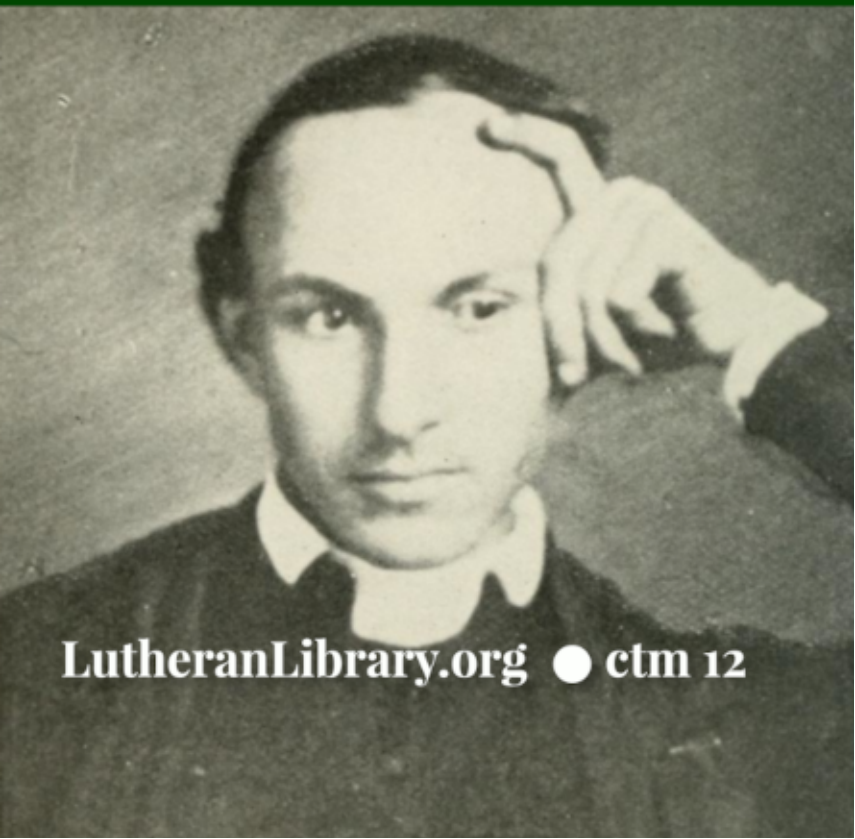


**Matthias Loy, editor**

**The Columbus Theological  
Magazine, Volume 12**



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"The history of the Church confirms and illustrates the teachings of the Bible, that yielding little by little leads to yielding more and more, until all is in danger; and the tempter is never satisfied until all is lost. – Matthias Loy, *The Story of My Life*

**Matthias Loy** was a zealous supporter of the Lutheran Confessions, and to that end founded and edited the *Columbus Theological Magazine*. Dr. Loy was Professor of Theology at Capital University (1865-1902), President of Capital University (1881-90), Editor of the *Lutheran Standard* (1864-91), and President of the Ohio Joint Synod (1860-78, 1880-94). Under his direction, the Ohio Joint Synod grew to have a national influence. In 1881 he withdrew the Joint Synod from the Synodical Conference in reaction to Walther's teaching about predestination.

"There is not an article in our creed that is not an offense to somebody; there is scarcely an article that is not a stumbling block to some who still profess to be Christians. It seems but a small concession that we are asked to make when an article of our confession is represented as a stumbling block to many Christians which ought therefore in charity to be removed, but surrendering that article would only lead to the surrender of another on the same ground, and that is the beginning of the end; the authority of the inspired Word of our Lord is gradually undermined.

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COLUMBUS

THEOLOGICAL MAGAZINE.

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A BI-MONTHLY JOURNAL DEVOTED TO THE INTERESTS  
OF THE EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH.

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EDITED BY PROF. M. LOY, D.D.

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VOLUME XII.

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## THEOLOGICAL MAGAZINE.

VOL. XII.

FEBRUARY, 1892.

No. 1.

## AN INQUIRY CONCERNING THE CONSCIENCE.

Various circumstances led the writer years ago to direct his attention to the claims and operations of that mysterious power in the soul which we call the conscience. It was his desire then, as it has been repeatedly since, to reduce his thoughts to some systematic form and order, and present his work for examination to the public. To the execution of this purpose the demands made upon him by his vocation have not been favorable. Perhaps he may render some service to his brethren now by offering some reflections on the subject, though he is still not at leisure to prepare such an essay as he once contemplated.

While modern speculation has devoted much time and attention to the analysis and definition of man's intellectual powers, comparatively little effort has been made to obtain a distinct notion of the moral and religious faculty. To our knowledge there is not a single work in the English language that has for its purpose a thorough exposition of the nature and operations of conscience, and the treatment which it receives in psychological and ethical works is usually too cursory and commonplace to satisfy earnest inquirers. In Germany indeed, that land of patient research and thorough investigation, a number of monographs have

appeared on the conscience within a comparatively recent period, but these too, so far as the writer has been able to become acquainted with them, show how much of difficulty encompasses the subject and how far scholars are from having attained any common form of doctrine on the complicate questions involved.

The reason for the comparative neglect of conscience in philosophical study is certainly not to be found in the conviction that the subject is of little importance. There is no evidence that such a conviction exists, and there is no ground why it should exist. The matter is of the highest moment. As a psychological question that concerning the nature and functions of conscience is worthy of a place in the very first rank in the investigation of soul life. We do not find in it indeed such a revelation of God to the intelligent creature as some have thought it to contain. We rather regard the customary appellation of "the voice of God," with which so many have been contented to dismiss the subject, as if that contained all the light which could be shed upon it, a source of dangerous error and a barrier to more thorough investigation. That is often an unmeaning phrase, often an assertion full of false implications. It is not true that in our nature there is a source of moral and religious light, which we need only to heed in order to know the Creator's will and to do what is pleasing in His sight. There is no revelation of God's will in conscience that could serve to attain the end of our being and would render all other revelations superfluous. But there is unquestionably something in our nature that points to the original purpose of our creation and shows the great plan of righteousness on which the soul was constituted. All psychology is radically defective that makes no account of this. Notwithstanding all the disastrous effects of sin on the life of the soul, there is a conscience that asserts its power. It is a part of our nature, and the psychologist cannot ignore it without leaving unexplained some of the most interesting mental phenomena.

and thus rendering the whole system of psychology imperfect and unsatisfactory.

But of even greater importance is the doctrine concerning the conscience in a theological point of view. There is much of the modern theology which, boasting of its scientific superiority over the less pretentious biblical system of our fathers, finds its entire basis and principle in conscience. Its Dogmatics are but the development of what this faculty is supposed to furnish, and its whole authority is made to rest on the supposed sanction which the soul thus gives the speculative system. The so-called philosophical ethics is represented as embracing all that need be known or can be known concerning religion and morality, and as imposing all the obligations which the soul can recognize without debasement. The study of biblical science and the reverential submission to revelation as given in the Holy Scriptures, are thus virtually stigmatized as superfluous. And if there are some speculative theologians who, while they adopt this naturalistic principle in its general features, are unwilling explicitly to reject the Bible, which they are constrained still to recognize as one of the factors of theology, they practically empty it of all its divine contents by theoretically coordinating conscience with it as a source of saving truth. The doctrine of conscience thus becomes one of fundamental significance; and if those who thus deify it do not deem it worth their while to enter upon a thorough investigation of its nature and authority, thinking it more advantageous to assume the principal points in dispute, there are others who cannot recognize the legitimacy of such a procedure. The interests of science, as well as those of religion, demand an examination of the subject. If God has been pleased to give us the truth, and the needful motive powers to obey it, in the conscience, the theology which explicates the contents of conscience and brings them clearly to our view, is all that man needs. Then the theology of supernatural revelation is just as superfluous as are the laborious efforts of modern.

philosophical religionists to mediate between this and the theology of natural conscience. But if conscience is utterly incapable of furnishing what divine revelation contains, it is important that this should be known. Those whom the Spirit of God has led to the knowledge of the truth as contained in the Bible only, must not be expected, without proof to grant premises, which logically lead to the rejection of that blessed Book. The crafty assumption of errors by wily men, who are careful not to arouse suspicions by attempting to prove them, has led many away from the only fountain of true knowledge unto life eternal as found in the Holy Scriptures. Our theological views must be influenced largely by our view of the nature and functions of the conscience.

Those who accept the divine revelation contained in the Bible are sometimes found appealing to conscience when the appeal should be made only to the law and the testimony. An authority is thus conceded to a human power which of right belongs only to the divine will, and this concession must eventually lead the soul away from the only infallible criterion of truth and right. What Harms said in his famous theses upon occasion of the ter-centenary of the great Reformation, was truth which deserves not the less attention because it was uttered nearly a century ago. Theses 9-15 read thus :

“The pope of our times, our Antichrist, is reason in matters of faith, and conscience in matters of conduct, (in the attitude in which they are placed against Christianity, Gog and Magog, Rev. 20, 8); upon the latter of which the triple crown has been placed of legislating, commending and rebuking. But conscience can give no law; it can only exhibit and inculcate the law which God has given: it can command only what God has commanded, and rebuke only by presenting the rebukes of God, according to the Divine Word, which is the text of conscience. Conscience cannot forgive sins; in other words, no man can forgive his own sins: forgiveness is God's. That the operation of severing

conscience, as a layer, from the Word of God, was not consummated in the case of a few, is a special grace of God vouchsafed to them. That greater wickedness did not ensue where it was consummated, is owing in part to the laws of the country; in part to the requirements of custom, which are better than the prevailing doctrine. This operation, by which God was deposed from His judgment-seat and every man was permitted to elevate his conscience instead, was performed while there was no vigilance in our Church. Calixtus, whose separated Ethics from Dogmatics, prepared the throne for Conscience, and Kant, who maintained the autonomy of Conscience, placed it on the throne."

It is unquestionable that the moral character must suffer by a separation of the conscience from its legitimate standard, and that the moral conduct will frequently be reprehensible, notwithstanding the rectitude of intention, when the so-called dictates of conscience are substituted for the revealed will of God. If the natural conscience be taken as an infallible guide, it will be unsuspectingly followed, whether its course be right or wrong. That some will prefer bogs and fens to the most delightful gardens, with their beautiful flowers and grateful odors, is not to be doubted; but it is desirable that those who have the grace to prefer the latter should not be led into the former by innocently following an unreliable leader. It is right to follow an unerring guide, and perfectly safe also, even though we should not be able to see the path; but before conscience is chosen as such a guide it behooves us earnestly to inquire whether it be infallible.

There is a certain vagueness in the use of the word which baffles all attempts to fix its meaning by a reference to general usage. This is no doubt owing to the different elements which seem to be involved in what is denominated conscience, and to the different criteria received for testing the validity of judgments which seem to lie within its scope. That it is a power of the soul, that its sphere is that of right-

eousness, and that its dictates are in some sense authoritative, is perhaps all that can be alleged to be universally received; and even this might require some modification of statement to satisfy those who prefer to speak of conscience as the voice of God, and of its domain as that of religion. Some regard it as an original faculty, distinct from all others, designed for the special purpose of guiding man in the path of rectitude; others consider it as a mere function of one or the other of the faculties recognized as existing in the soul, which have an office to perform independently of the sphere of morals. Some give prominence to the judgment which is pronounced on questions of right, and look upon this as the main element in conscience; others represent the rule, in accordance with which the judgment is formed, as that which determines everything in this sphere. Some regard the sense of obligation as distinct from the cognition of right, and find the essential element of conscience in that; others regard the feelings consequent upon moral cognitions as the principal feature, and frame their definition accordingly. Amid the multiplicity of views there is much to discourage the inquirer after truth; and it is no wonder that some despair of finding it and give over the search, while others are content to use the word conscience as a convenient name for a certain something that is employed about morality, without knowing or caring what it is. It is by no means a field of delights for the explorer; but the tangled tufts contain golden grain, and this richly repays the laborer's toil.

In a psychological question like this the appeal to consciousness is inevitable; and notwithstanding the diversity of views entertained respecting the conscience, all of which may be presumed to have some ground in the facts of consciousness, the appeal cannot fairly be regarded as promising no results of any value. The acknowledged universality of conscience gives every man the right to look within his own soul, and to make account of that which he there discerns;

and the fact of such universal experience is a barrier against the success of any *a priori* system, in which no regard is had to the facts as they present themselves in consciousness, and in which these facts are not utilized and explained. Men will scorn the philosophy which contradicts their own experience, no matter how skillfully it may be constructed. If this experience seems to vary in different individuals, this renders the work more difficult of reducing the varied phenomena to a consistent system, but it cannot justify us in ignoring them or attempting to explain them away. We must take the facts as they are.

But there are questions connected with conscience which lie entirely beyond this empirical sphere, and which render an appeal to divine revelation necessary. Conscience involves phenomena which the facts of consciousness do not explain, but for whose explanation the Word of God affords all the requisite information. The interests of science as well as those of religion therefore require that we should derive light on the subject also from this source. No valid objection can be made to this on the ground that the Bible is not a book of science, and that therefore an appeal to it on a scientific question is not legitimate. Aside from the fact that the subject of conscience is theological as well as psychological, it must be admitted by all who accept the contents of the Bible as a divine revelation that its declarations are absolutely authoritative, whether the objects to which they refer lie in the domain of the natural or of the supernatural; for the Word of God is infallible in the one case as well as in the other. The only question that could arise among believers, in this regard, is one of fact, whether there be any decision given respecting the subject under consideration. To exclude its testimony by the *a priori* dictum that it cannot give us any light on such a scientific subject, is a most arbitrary proceeding, which no sound philosophy will sanction. While the method which treats the Bible as if it were intended to be a book of instruction in



all the objects and relations of nature, and fanatically discards all scientific pursuits and studies that are not confined within the limits of the express information contained in the Bible, cannot commend itself to the minds of intelligent inquirers, the method which despises the instruction given us by supernatural revelation concerning this world and its uses commends itself still less to the believing soul. There are things in our experience of which no studies in mind or matter on the basis of nature will give us the light which is necessary to make all plain. The sinner that refuses to make any account of that which God has been pleased to make known to us over and above the revelation contained in creation and providence will always be destined to grope in the dark. What, for instance, can the visible world tell us about its origin, save through the general intuition of causality, that leaves room for every variety of speculation concerning details? And what can we know from nature concerning the source of all that misery and woe which darkens the history of our race and burdens the life of every individual that cometh into the world? There is nothing in nature around us and nothing in the experience within us that can give us any knowledge beyond the existence of the sin and pain that renders this life such a mystery. How sin and woe and death came into the world and our race set out upon such a painful history, only supernatural revelation can inform us, as only by this can we have any knowledge of the remedy provided in the mercy of God for the misery of man. And so too the truth contained in the Bible must help us to understand how there can, in this general corruption of our nature, be any such thing as we call the conscience, insisting on righteousness while the whole soul is enslaved under sin. If we would understand the nature of man we must study it in the light of Scripture as well as of consciousness.

I. CONSCIENCE A HUMAN FACULTY, NOT A DIVINE REVELATION.

It is not an activity of God furnishing light, but a power of man. What the nature of that power is the etymology of the word does not distinctly inform us. Like the Greek and the German name it indicates knowledge, a *scientia*, and suggests some kind of co-operation with another power in the particle *con*, as do also the Greek and German prefixes. All that is thus made manifest is the general feeling that conscience is cognitive without implying that it is an independent source of knowledge. Of the source of its cognitions, of the relation of these to the nature of the soul and to its other faculties, and of the mode in which its knowledge is obtained, nothing is indicated. Conscience would thus seem to be merely a form of consciousness, and originally the two words were synonymous. The name is certainly not indicative of an accurate analysis of the thing.

In the numerous and conflicting definitions which have been given of it there are two points in which there is perhaps a general agreement. One is that its activity always implies knowledge, whether it be itself the faculty by which this is obtained, or whether it merely utilizes the cognitions derived from some other source or obtained through some other organ. The other is that the knowledge employed, whatever may be its source, is always accompanied by a feeling of obligation. It confronts us with an authority from which no one can exempt himself, and binds us by a power that is more than human. Seemingly there is thus a consensus among men as to all that is of high importance in the subject before us. But these very questions of cognition and obligation bring before us the matter that challenges investigation.

## 1. CONSCIENCE IS NOT A DIVINE REVELATION.

It is treating the subject lightly when we accept the popular designation of conscience as the voice of God as if that settled every difficulty and silenced every inquiry. There is a sense, no doubt, in which such a statement may be accepted. No other faculty asserts itself with such divine authority. Its demands come with an imperative force that we cannot set aside at pleasure. All admit that it is divine in another sense than that in which all our mental powers are divine in origin and purpose. There is a divine obligatoriness attaching to its requirements which does not attach to the products and pronouncements of every faculty, though God bestowed them all alike. But that does not explain everything. Least of all does it justify the summary procedure of declaring the conscience a revelation that suffices for all the moral and religious purposes of life. There is something of God and His will declared in His works, and there is more made known in the Scriptures which He has given us by inspiration. He has not left Himself without a witness among men. There is a revelation given in nature, and one of higher import given in the Bible. But is the conscience that revelation, or the medium by which it becomes known? Are there constant communications made by the Creator to the human soul through the mediation of conscience, so that nothing more than this is needed to guide us in the paths of righteousness?

A. If when conscience is called the voice of God it be meant that direct revelations are given through it for our guidance, we must dissent.

1. We are not conscious of receiving any such immediate communications from heaven which relieve us from the duty of judging what is right and what is wrong. It is true, we may have knowledge without an immediate consciousness of its source; but the mind is capable of tracing

this to its origin by reflection. We know that the idea of a tree and that of the space which it occupies are not obtained in the same way — that one is by sense-perception, the other by a rational intuition, and the sane mind that reflects will not refer the cognitions of the one faculty to the other. The truths imparted by divine revelation are distinguishable in their origin as well as in their character from those which we derive from natural sources. Man may err in this respect, as in every other; but the error is not a natural necessity, so that it would be impossible to know the origin of cognitions. But we find no evidence whatever in consciousness, even upon the most patient reflection, of divine communications made to the mind immediately by the Creator, for the purpose of directing us in the attainment of the end of our creation. We are conscious, on the contrary, of frequent perplexity on account of the absence of such knowledge as would enable us unerringly to distinguish between the right and the wrong. The testimony of consciousness is at variance with the assumption that we are constantly receiving communications from heaven for our guidance in the path of rectitude. To say that we have immediate revelations which appear in consciousness without any mark of their divine origin, is virtually to admit that the notion is without foundation; for if they bear no such mark, they cannot be recognized as divine revelations.

2. Difficulty is frequently experienced in determining what is right and what is wrong, and not unseldom do disputes arise between different persons respecting moral questions, showing that the moral judgment is not the same in all. With this common experience the assumption is at variance that we are the recipients of revelations from God, deciding all cases lying within the domain which is ordinarily assigned to conscience. There could be no difficulties and no differences respecting moral subjects, if an immediate divine revelation were given to decide them. There could be no difficulties, because such a revelation would

relieve us of all perplexing questions in morals. There could be no differences, because the revelation given, being divine and infallible, would decide them in all minds exactly alike. The assumption that there are such revelations therefore denies facts which all must admit, or implies that they are not divine, because not invariably the same in every soul and not always decisive.

3. If there were such immediate divine revelations made to the soul, it would be impossible to account for their poverty, in view of the fact that they are not even claimed to be sufficient for the accomplishment of God's designs respecting man. Why there should be a limitation of these revelations to the exigences of man's daily life in the domain of morals, while he is left in the dark concerning the infinitely more important religious truth, without which he must forever perish, would be a perplexing question which no ingenuity of reason would suffice to solve. It is true, there are mysteries which the human mind can not fathom, and the fact that a doctrine involves such a mystery is, when it is established by sufficient evidence, no argument against it. Against a truth resting upon the authority of God such an objection has no force whatever; for His perfections are guaranty enough that His thoughts are right, though we cannot fathom them. But man can put forth no reasonable claim to have his notions accepted, notwithstanding their apparent inconsistency, unless he can show sufficient reason to convince us that they are correct and that the inconsistency is only apparent, not real. What reason can men give us for making the statement, and asking others to accept it, that we receive daily revelations from God, while they confess that these supposed communications are totally inadequate to compass the designs of God respecting our race? If the Lord Himself informed us that His will respecting morals is revealed directly to each mind as the knowledge is needed, while His will unto salvation is revealed once for all in the Scriptures, the reverent soul would be perfectly

satisfied, because the Lord's pleasure is always good and wise; but in the absence of any such information, and of all other convincing proof, the mind cannot reasonably be expected to accept a theory involving such improbabilities. It would reflect discredit upon a man to have constant intercourse with a neighbor and to make daily communications to him, professedly for his prosperity, and yet to withhold from him all the information upon which that prosperity ultimately depends; and it would be gross irreverence to impute to God such dealing, without clear warrant in Scripture. That man, notwithstanding his conscience, is in the dark concerning the most important truths, until the light of written revelation shines in on his soul, there is no room for doubting. The Scriptures testify it, and experience confirms it. If there is light given in conscience it is entirely inadequate. "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? . . . . So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Rom. 10, 13-17. The knowledge which we possess of God's will and ways, independently of that derived from Holy Scripture, is too defective to give any plausibility to the opinion that God has constant direct communication with human souls through the conscience.

4. The theory of immediate divine revelations opens the door to the wildest fanaticism. If it is admitted, the most absurd doctrines may be promulgated and the most tyrannical claims set up under the sanction of divine authority. We have no remedy against the extravagance of fanatics if we once grant the principle upon which it rests. Their utterances, put forth as divine revelations, may seem preposterous; but what can we oppose to them if we admit that there are immediate revelations imparted in conscience? An appeal to the Scriptures, which is our only

sure defense against enthusiasts, would be futile after the fact of immediate inspiration has been conceded; for even if the fanatics recognize these as authority also, experience has shown with what facility the plainest words are perverted when they do not harmonize with preconceived opinions embraced as divine truths. Under the influence of this error not only would each one be justified in believing his own whims to be divine truths, but he would think himself authorized to bind these whims upon the consciences of others as divine requirements. The history of fanaticism furnishes ample proof of this. If it be conceded that there are immediate revelations given in conscience, it must be left to each individual to determine what he shall place in that category, as there can be no criterion for distinguishing between the real and the imaginary revelations. Thus follies and absurdities will have an equal chance with heavenly truth to be spread as God's will among men, as it would be palpable arrogance for any man to say that only *his* notions are revelations of God, because only *his* seem to him to be right. The vagaries of others seem to *them* right also. A theory which thus assists in supporting and disseminating fanaticism, of which there will always be enough without such encouragement, has no claims upon the approval of reflecting men.

5. The assumption of immediate revelations to explain the facts of conscience, is unscriptural as well as unreasonable. Not only would it be unaccountable why God spake to men of old in dreams and visions, if each individual had been the recipient of divine revelations as circumstances rendered them necessary to show the good pleasure of the Creator; not only would the whole revelation given in the Bible be superfluous, if God held daily communication with each soul by a sort of inspiration in conscience: but plain statements are made in the Scriptures which condemn this unwarranted assumption. We are taught that naturally, notwithstanding the possession of a conscience, men walk

“in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart.” Eph. 4, 17. 18. It is a palpable contradiction to assume that a divine revelation is given immediately in the nature of man for his guidance, and yet to believe that each one is ignorant, blind, benighted. Whatever intuitions men may have by nature, it is indubitably certain, from such passages, that there is no constant revelation from God to man, guarding him against ignorance and the evils to which it leads. Of errors in respect to faith not only, but of errors in life it is said: “I wot that in ignorance ye did it,” which would be impossible if even moral revelations were given to the mind in actual conscience. Not immediate communications, but “Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.” Ps. 119, 105. Those who maintain that there is another sure guide in conscience, are relinquishing that which is certain and infallible for a mere delusion. The theory of immediate revelations has no warrant in reason or in Holy Scripture, but is in manifest conflict with both, and must therefore be rejected.

B. But even supposing there were such immediate revelations given, it would be an error to identify them with conscience.

1. The word conscience does not designate communications made to the mind. The claim that it does, is at variance with all established usage respecting the term. Whatever vagueness may attach to it, it never designates an entity lying outside the mind and essentially distinct from it. Communications made from God have other names, and no one, unless he were especially influenced by a theory, would understand the word conscience as synonymous with any of them. Not even those whose favorite appellation for conscience is the phrase “voice of God,” are willing, when they reflect upon the meaning of the words used, to insist



that the conscience and immediate communications are one and the same thing. The identification can arise only from a confusion of ideas, or from a careless use of terms without a clear apprehension of their meaning. Upon reflection it will appear that the conscience is something in man, forming part of his mental constitution, not an utterance of Jehovah. There is reason to suspect that the identification of conscience with divine revelations, when anything more is meant by the terms in which such identification is expressed than that conscience confronts us with divine authority, originated in the desire to use a phrase which, in a loose sense, had obtained currency among the people, as a vehicle for the conveyance of a dangerous error. Be this as it may, it is certain that usage does not sanction the application of the word conscience as a proper designation for immediate revelations.

2. The use of the word in such a sense conflicts with the recognized fact that conscience, instead of being itself an immediate revelation, makes use of the revelations given in the book of nature and in the Holy Scriptures in the performance of its functions. If conscience were the name of communications at all, the term could not, consistently with this acknowledged fact, be limited to those which are supposed to be given immediately. The supernatural revelation that Christ is the only Savior from sin and death and must be glorified as such, is as much a truth for the conscience as any information pretended to be received directly from God is claimed to be. A fact so plain not even the most strenuous advocate of a special revelation in conscience will presume to deny: he may reject the truth of Christianity, but he cannot doubt that if it be true, it must affect the conscience. But if this be admitted, it necessarily follows that the word conscience must apply as well to the truths contained in the Christian revelation as to those assumed to be communicated immediately. The relation of conscience to both is the same. It would be a most arbitrary proceed-

ing to employ the word conscience to denote the divine revelation whose authority it renders effective in our experience, and yet so restrict its meaning to the least important portion of that revelation. If conscience is a divine revelation at all, it is the whole revelation that enters into conscience. Then nature and the Bible are conscience, as well as the supposed immediate revelations. But such a claim bears its absurdity upon its face. The truth comes thus distinctly into view that conscience is not divine revelation at all. If the doctrine that conscience is the voice of God is to be accepted, it cannot be in the sense that it is itself merely another name for communications divinely made to the human mind.

## 2. CONSCIENCE IS A POWER OF THE HUMAN MIND.

A. *It is a power.* Manifestly the word does not signify merely an act or a series of acts. As it is not a divine revelation, but a faculty of the mind which is employed about such revelation; so it is not a function, but rather that which performs functions. It is the name of a peculiar power which the mind possesses, not of its action or of its products. Persons can be said to have a conscience when they are not conscious of any activity in regard to moral subjects, just as they have reason when they are not conscious of any activities of that faculty. To affirm that it is simply an operation of the mind, would be to deny its existence when the mind is engaged in other operations. But it does exist always, whether it is engaged in the performance of its appropriate functions or not, just as we have the faculty of sense-perception when we are asleep and have no perceptions. The word denotes something that the mind can do, not something that it performs. When we say that conscience requires the performance of a certain act, the thing required is not what the word is designed to denote. The conscience is something distinct

from its demand. This is a proper operation of conscience, but not the conscience itself. The acts peculiar to it are signs of its existence and of its character, but it has an existence independently of the functions which it performs, and performs these because it exists and has the ability to perform them. The power must be distinguished from the acts in which it is exerted and becomes manifest.

The assertion that man has a conscience therefore simply means that man has the power to perform certain operations of a peculiar kind. The mind is a unit, but it can do various things. This is expressed by saying that it has various powers or faculties. It can cognize material objects through the organs of sense, and it is therefore said to have the faculty of perception. It can recall occurrences that are no longer present, and we say, accordingly, that it has the power of memory. It can compare different objects with each other and decide whether they agree or disagree, and this is expressed by saying that it has the faculty of judgment. It can realize the obligation of divine law, and it is therefore said that it has the power of conscience. In all cases it is the mind which performs the operations. It is the same mind which perceives, remembers, judges, and feels obligation, and it is the whole mind which performs each of these operations. A faculty is not a part of the soul, or a special apartment in the soul. It is the whole soul viewed with reference to a certain kind of activity. The faculty of memory is the mind so far forth as it is able to recall past experiences. The conscience is the mind so far forth as it can realize the obligation of righteousness. The power to do this is the conscience; the operations of this power are the operations of conscience.

B. *This power is not divine* in such sense that all its operations have objective divine authority. Its special requirements may be without divine sanction.

That the predicate divine may, in some sense, be applied to the conscience, is not denied.

1. Man is the creature of God, and this fact leads, in many cases, to the application of the term divine to that which is acknowledged to be merely human. The attribute of the cause is, by a figure of speech, transferred to the effect. In this figurative sense all the gifts and powers of man are divine. Conscience is a power which God has conferred; it may therefore be styled divine in the same sense in which this predicate is applied to the judgment or the imagination, and means no more in one case than in the other. The word, in this case, simply indicates that the power is a divine gift.

2. Conscience, moreover, is a means for the attainment of divine ends. It is given to man for the purpose of moving him to act in harmony with the divine will. This also gives rise to the figurative application of the predicate divine to this human power. The word which properly belongs to the object is transferred to the means by which this is to be attained. But the other endowments of man may also in this sense be called divine. They were all conferred in pursuance of an infinitely wise and good design, and are all means, though not all as important as conscience, for the accomplishment of the divine purpose. The predicate divine, in this case, refers to the end for which they were given, not to their nature.

3. But there is still another sense in which conscience may be termed divine, without implying that it is not a human power. It has peculiar relations to the divine will. It is employed exclusively about this, as our other natural powers are not. Only that which has the divine sanction properly belongs to its domain and office. The intellect may err, and that which is human may thus be brought into the sphere of conscience by mistake; but God designed it to be employed only about that which is divine. That which properly belongs to the province of human liberty, and is therefore, in this respect, called human, as contradistinguished from that which is regulated by divine law, lies

altogether outside of its domain. It has thus an authority which other human powers have not, and which must be recognized as divine, although not in any such sense as to prove all that it does to be the divine will, or its demands to be always the voice of God.

But what is meant by some who thus characterize it is, that the power is not properly an endowment of man, but belongs to God, and that the operations of conscience are therefore not acts of man, but of God, and this not indirectly, but directly. It is thus represented as wholly independent of human nature and of the laws which regulate human activities. The theory is that conscience, although it is not a divine revelation given externally to the human mind, is still the voice of God in the sense that it is a divine faculty placed in the human soul, whose utterances are God's own infallible declarations respecting our duty. In this sense we cannot recognize it as divine.

1) It would be impossible, upon this assumption, to escape the cheerless error of Pantheism. It confounds, or rather identifies, the human and the divine. That which performs the functions ascribed to conscience is, as consciousness universally testifies, the mind, not a something distant from it, which is denominated a faculty. But if that which performs the functions ascribed to conscience is the mind, the predicate divine must be applied to the latter as well as to the former. If conscience is in its nature divine, the mind must be in its nature divine. Then the mind is God, and man is but a mode of Deity. Conscience is a divine faculty and its utterances are the voice of God, because it is itself God. To assert still that it is a human faculty would, according to this theory, simply be to maintain the identity of the divine and the human, the latter being but a modification of the former.

Against this objection the theory is not secured by asserting that the conscience alone is divine, while all the other powers of the soul are human. For if conscience is

part of our human self, at the same time that it is divine in its nature and functions, the inference is inevitable that the essence of what we call human is not different in kind from that which we call divine. The theory under consideration, if it does not mean to claim that conscience is God resident in man without partaking at all of humanity, makes this power divine in the same respect in which it is human, and thus identifies the objects designated by these two terms, so that it is indifferent whether the other faculties be styled human or divine. Conscience cannot be called a divine entity without placing it outside of humanity, or pantheistically confounding this with divinity.

2) Consciousness presents no testimony to the existence in man of a faculty which is not human in its essence. The fact that there is a power which is termed conscience, and that it confronts us with an authority which does not attach to any other power in the same sphere, is clearly cognizable; but we are always conscious that this power is so related to us that we can properly call it ours. Nay more, we are conscious that it forms part of our human self, as certainly as our power to think. That there should be a faculty in the soul which is not a faculty of that soul, but of an entirely different essence, is even inconceivable. We can conceive of the indwelling of God in the heart, with divine operations presenting themselves as such in our consciousness, but not of a faculty in us which is not human, while its operations present themselves as our own. The testimony of consciousness is decisive against the notion that conscience is a divine power. We are conscious of its operations as our own. It is cognized as human, not divine, with the same certainty that attaches to our cognition of all our other mental powers as human.

3) If conscience were the divine faculty which it is claimed to be, it would give divinely authoritative decisions on every moral question that could arise, and these decisions would necessarily be infallible; for the assumption that

errors could be committed within its province would involve the absurdity that Divinity may err, or that human powers could overmaster the divine and constrain it to perform operations inconsistent with its nature. But it is an incontrovertible fact, to which all experience bears witness, that what is usually called the voice of conscience is often wrong, and that men are frequently found who are conscientiously devoted to error and conscientiously pursue a course of wrong-doing. Could this occur if conscience were a divine faculty in which the Creator, not the creature is active? The assumption that it could be divine without giving decisions on all moral subjects, would be an impeachment of its divinity; for the voice of God within us could not be restricted to certain generalities, while we go astray in particulars. This would be postulating a divine faculty which utterly fails to accomplish its design. Not less irreverent would it be to maintain that God in us might be deceived, and thus led to pronounce in favor of wrong, under the delusion that it is right. Such a notion conflicts with the very nature of Deity. The admission that conscience sanctions what is not really right, though mistaken for it, involves the admission that it is not a divine, but a human power. There could be no erroneous moral judgments if conscience were God in us pronouncing these judgments for us.

4. The theory that conscience is a divine faculty, or God in us, conflicts with the Holy Scriptures. These evidently represent it as something distinct from the divine essence and belonging to our human nature, when they say: "Unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled." Tit. 1, 15. For, in the first place, in whatsoever sense the word conscience may here be taken as to its essence it would be irreverent, even by a figure, to impute sin and impurity to an entity that is essentially divine; and, secondly, if it were God in us it could not be so dependent upon the oper-

ations of human faculties as even in its manifestations, to share in the defilement which belongs to these. If it were divine it would always appear pure and holy, in sharp contrast with the weakness and wickedness belonging to corrupt human nature, whether men would hear it or forbear, and never permit itself to be impressed into the service of sin. Moreover, the Bible teaches us that, by the fall, such a separation has taken place between man and God as precludes any possibility of the continued residence of God in us by nature, as the theory that conscience is divine implies. For of the Gentiles, with reference to the period prior to their conversion, it is said: "At the time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world; but now in Christ Jesus, ye who sometime were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ." Eph. 2, 12-13. If all men had God dwelling in them in virtue of their being endowed with conscience, it could not be said of any that they are without God in the world. It is declared, indeed, that "in Him we live, and move, and have our being." Acts 17, 28; and this declaration, all must admit, does not refer merely to those who have been made partakers of the divine nature through faith in Christ, But this does not imply that by nature God resides in our hearts to guide and govern us from within; for such an interpretation would contradict the plain statement made by St. Paul in the passage quoted above. The words simply declare that God, who no longer has His abode in man's hearts since sin has entered into the world, and who now makes his abode with them only when they have been brought to believe in His Son, by whom a reconciliation was effected, is still the Ruler of the universe, and does not cease to control their destinies, though they are inwardly estranged from Him and are permitted to walk in their own ways, and that even for the performance of their own will He supplies all the power. There is no reason whatever for



assuming that God still dwells in man in the form or under the name of conscience, or that conscience is divine in any sense that would be inconsistent with the proposition that it is a human power. It is just as little a divine faculty, in the proper sense, as it is a divine revelation.

It will not be necessary to enter upon the examination of the various opinions which claim for conscience a mixed character, combining in its nature both human and divine elements. So far as they involve elements of truth, their just claims will be recognized as we proceed in our inquiry. That about which conscience is employed is undoubtedly divine. The voice of God furnishes all the authority of the obligation which conscience feels; but the truth of God, the divine commands which we recognize as obligatory, are not the conscience, and do not emanate from the conscience. The fact that divine law is essential to the work of conscience, renders this no divine power. The faculty of the mind is something distinct from that which it appropriates, and remains human though the latter be divine. Conscience is a purely human power; and this, which consciousness so clearly evinces, must be recognized as the first step towards a clear conception of its nature. The phrase "voice of God" can be justly predicated of it only in the sense that its design and function is to feel the obligation of God's voice when this has been apprehended.

M. Loy.

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## LUTHER AND LUTHER'S VERSION OF THE BIBLE.

The Protestant world is greatly indebted to the Reformation of the 16th century for many of the choicest blessings in which she is now rejoicing. It has delivered her from the tyranny and oppression of an arrogant and corrupt priesthood; from the idolatry of saint, relic, and image worship; from the superstitious fear of purgatory; and

from the false doctrine of justification from sin by self-wrought human works. It has secured for us pure sacraments, and that freedom of thought and conscience, that has become the creative and impelling cause of our modern spirit of inquiry and research; has brought about the present advancement of commerce and industry, of true science and the useful arts; and has been the chief agent in the social and moral elevation of the masses of our day. But of all its marvellous results and blessed fruits, Luther's translation of the Bible stands pre-eminent as one of the greatest and the best. "The greatest achievement of the Reformation," says an eminent divine, "was the giving of the Bible to the nations, and the center and throne of this achievement is Luther's translation of the Bible, the greatest single work ever accomplished by man in the department of theological literature. Had it been his sole labor, the race could never forget his name." It is this gift of the Reformation—Luther's German Version of the Sacred Scriptures—that we propose to speak of in this article.

1. Luther began his work of translating the Holy Bible during the time of his imprisonment in the Wartburg. To this place the Elector Frederick, his friend and protector, had secretly caused him to be conveyed, having made him a captive while on his return journey from the Diet of Worms, that here he might rest safe from the wrath and vengeance of the pope and his zealous adherents. Here, in his captivity and isolation, he had leisure for literary labor. How was he to employ this idle time? What was he to undertake, as of first and greatest importance to the cause of God and the spiritual well-being of man? These were his thoughts as he sat meditating in his secluded room in Wartburg Castle. Total inactivity was with him at any time, but especially so now, in the stirring events transpiring a matter utterly out of question. To his active, busy spirit nothing could prove more irksome and unendurable than to be totally excluded from participation in the reformatory

movement, which had been so auspiciously inaugurated. His soul was animated with a fiery zeal, for the honor of God and the salvation of his fellowmen, that would not suffer him to waste one moment in idleness. While thus situated, and while in this state of mind, his thoughts went back to the time, when in the university library at Erfurt he had discovered a Latin copy of the Holy Scriptures. He recalled to mind how, by the reading of this best of all books, divine light had dawned upon his benighted soul, and how, from its contents, he had learned to know the way of life through faith in Jesus Christ. After a long and painful struggle with an awakened and an accusing conscience, the Holy Word had brought peace to his troubled soul. Through its reading he had been made to feel the sweetness of sins forgiven, and the peace of reconciliation with an offended God. By recollections and reflections like these, he felt himself moved to place the precious treasure of the Divine Word in the hands of the German people in their own native tongue. For hitherto, no readable and true translation had been offered them. Some translations, it is true, had been made. A distinguished writer counts no less than fifteen of them, dating back to the time of Luther, and says of them all: "They had a common character, which may be expressed in a word—they were abominable." Priests and people were alike ignorant of God's truth and the way to salvation. Luther longed most earnestly, to see a clearer and fuller knowledge and a better and happier spiritual life, prevailing among his well loved German countrymen, than was the case now. He was therefore thoroughly convinced, that for the accomplishment of this object God's Word must be employed as the instrument. In the Holy Scriptures he recognized the germ and seed from which must come forth the spiritual regeneration and life of the German nation.

To plant this seed in their hearts, to place in their hands the Revealed Word, that therein they might find the way to God and heaven—this he felt himself called to do,

this he recognized as his divinely imposed task, here in his lone confinement.

It was on the first day of November, 1521, that he entered upon the work of translating the New Testament, and with such vigor and industry did he prosecute his chosen task, that by the following February, after a brief space of three months, every portion of this part of the Bible was rendered into pure and lucid German. Soon after this he undertook, and actively entered upon the more extended and difficult task of translating the Old Testament. On his return from the Wartburg to Wittenberg he continued the work begun, and such were, again, the energy and persevering application with which he threw himself upon his labor, that by the year 1533 the wonderful and immortal work was completed. Twelve years did he spend upon the translation, amid various interruptions, and a multitude of other duties. There were friends and helpers who aided him by their own investigations and counsels, but the main burden of the work rested on him. The translation is emphatically his own. Untold labor and unwearied patience were required in its execution. Sometimes he was occupied a fortnight upon a single passage. That he might always hit upon the proper word, to express most correctly the sense of the original, he would go out upon the highways and fields, enter the workshops and slaughterhouses, and there converse with the people, inquire the names of things, and listen to their manner of speech. It was in this way and by this means, that he gathered information by which he was enabled to bring forth a version that spoke the language of his German countrymen in a manner which was intelligible to all, and at the same time conformed most closely to the sense and meaning of the original. But even after having gone to all this immense trouble, and after his work seemed done to perfection, he was not satisfied to rest from his labor. He made his Bible the work of his life, esteeming it evidently the most important of all he ever attempted. For

many years, to even almost the end of his days, he continued to make changes and improvements in it, until at last it stood forth a finished and perfect masterwork. It was a work not only perfect in itself, but a work also by which he had new created and perfected the German language. "The language of Germany has grown since Luther, but it has had no new creation. He who takes up Luther's Bible grasps a whole world in his hand, a world which will perish only, when this green earth itself shall pass away." Thus speaks of this wonderful translation one who is counted among the most eminent sages of our age and country.

3. That Luther had not labored in behalf of an ungrateful people, was evidenced by the eagerness with which all held out the hand to receive Luther's Bible. There was a perfect crowding and scrambling for the new translation. The first edition of the New Testament, consisting of 3,000 copies, was sold in less than three months. Edition followed edition, until by the year 1533 the number of copies sold ran up into the hundred thousands. The people read the treasured volume in their homes, and carried it with them to read it while at their work. It was, on all occasions and at all places, the absorbing subject of their thoughts, and the chief theme of their conversation. Women and children even read and re-read it, until they had committed its contents to memory. No book ever enjoyed a popularity so widespread, or wrought impressions so deep and so enduring. There had arisen in Germany a desire for the Gospel, and especially for the Gospel in Luther's language, that nothing on earth was able to suppress or to arrest. The chief cause of this was, the re-awakened and quickened consciousness of the need of redemption and forgiveness through Jesus Christ. This conscious need could be satisfied by nothing else but the reading and hearing of the gracious Word of God. Since Luther gave his translation to the German people, many and great changes have taken place. Manners, customs, laws, governments, pursuits and sciences:

have undergone changes, and with them has changed the German language. Attempts have accordingly been made to so alter and improve Luther's Bible as to conform its structure and words to these changes; but such is the love and veneration which the German people cherish for the unaltered Bible of Luther, that they will have no other. They reject every revision as an irreverent innovation. After a trial of 350 years Luther's Bible still retains the warmest place in their hearts. The Germans are not all Lutherans. They differ on the subject of religion. In our country they are found dispersed among all the numerous sects that have struck root into our soil. But however widely they may differ in their doctrinal views and teachings, on one thing they are harmonious and united. All make use of the Lutheran Bible, and all profess to cherish for it equal love and reverence. An English Baptist may reject the authorized English version, but a German, be he Baptist or anything else, unreservedly endorses Luther's translation, and unhesitatingly employs it in public and private worship. Luther's Bible forms a bond of union, strong and indissoluble, between all German speaking tribes and nations of the Protestant faith, wherever dispersed throughout the wide world.

4. Luther was a German in the fullest sense of the term, and has impressed on his work the stamp of his own German spirit and character. The book, upon every page, exhibits the depth and the sincerity of the feeling, the simplicity and the joyousness of the faith, and the pious sentiment and chaste imagination, characteristic of the German people. The beautiful German language, so graceful, so pliable and so plastic, so rich and so suggestive, no one ever knew how to touch and how to handle, with the skill of a master hand, as did Luther. He was master of all its treasures, its ruggedness and its tenderness, its fullness and its simplicity, its strength and its depth. Even his adversaries and opposers concede this fact, and admire and praise

his work. By his translation of the Holy Scriptures Luther has become the father and creator of the modern German language. He has reconstructed, enlarged and improved it to an extent that makes it a new language. By doing so he has rendered the German nation a service, which merits their everlasting gratitude. "The felicity of his choice of words says Dr. Krauth, the exquisite naturalness and clearness of his structure of sentences, the dignity, force, and vivacity of his expressions, his affluence of phrase, his power of compression, and the rhythmic melody of his flow of style, have excited an admiration to which witness has been borne from the beginning by friend and foe. When the time shall come, as come it must, when the toils and discoveries of centuries shall be brought to bear upon Luther's version, in changes which shall be recognized by the church as just, Luther's grand work will not only remain in the new as the foundation, but will abide as the essential body of the structure itself. The German nation will never have a Bible for which, next to its great source, can cease to bless Luther's name."

But the greatest obligation, under which Luther has laid his nation, does not arise from his improvement of their language, but from the accuracy of his translation, as regards sense and thought. So pure and so faithful, so correct and so faultless, so clear and so plain, and so fully conformed to the Holy Spirit, is his rendering, that it makes its way directly to mind and heart. Our English version, in many instances, conforms more to the letter than the sense, more to the form than to the substance, of the original. It is too severely verbal and literal, and retains too much of the foreign idiom. Hence many of its passages are rendered unnecessarily obscure and awkward. Luther was less concerned about form, and more about substance. He seized upon the sense and gave it in plain and intelligible German, in such form and order as he deemed best adapted to the purpose. He was a man of sincere and fervent piety, lived

in close communion with the Savior, and was gifted with a profound insight into the deep things of God. With clear vision he penetrated divine mysteries to their profoundest depths. To him it was given, as to no uninspired man before him, to bring to full light of day the hid treasures of God's Word. This gift was not an accident. God had chosen and ordained him for this peculiar work, and had qualified him for it, both by education and by endowing him with the needful talents. It was by means of the firm and fervid faith which the Spirit had wrought in him, by means of the ardent love for the Redeemer which had come to him from Above, and by means of the light and guidance of the Holy Ghost, that he was enabled to open to his people the long closed and sealed up sacred treasure, and to give it a true and proper form.

5. These are the reasons that account for the fact, that in Luther's day his Bible was received with so much openness of hand so much gladness of heart, and that our fathers clung to it with so much ardor of affection. At no price were they willing to part with the sacred treasure. Luther's Bible contributed more than all else to the furtherance and success of the Reformation. It laid a sure and safe foundation for the superstructure of the renewed and purified church of Christ. It awakened and produced a reformation of individual souls, and with that of the church as a collective body. This strong tower of faith and hope has now endured for near four hundred years, it has ever risen higher and extended wider, until now other countries are gathered within its walls, and other nations recline under its shadow. Germans are a wandering people, a cosmopolitan nation. They are found dispersed over all parts of the habitable earth. But wherever their migrations lead them, thither they carry with them their Lutheran Bible. The precious Book is their companion at home and abroad, on sea and on land, in good and in evil days.



Vast and marvellous have been the changes that have occurred during the last 300 years. Many a work, once the admiration of the world, has fallen into neglect and decay and crumbled into dust and ashes. No such fate has befallen the work wrought by Luther. Amidst change and death on all sides, his Bible, by God's gracious providence, has been preserved to us unharmed and undefiled to this day. We are the sons of the sires of the Reformation; to us Luther's Bible has come as an inheritance and legacy, a legacy worthy of our most earnest love and deserving of our highest veneration. To think lightly of it would be to degrade ourselves. To neglect it would be to harm ourselves. For the sake of our Lutheran Bible, it seems to us, we ought to seek to keep alive as long as possible, and extend and spread as far as opportunity offers, the language of the Fatherland, of Luther, and of Luther's Bible. It seems to us that every Lutheran theologian, at least, should feel himself moved to read and understand God's holy, sanctifying, and saving Word, in the language of the world's greatest reformer. God's Word is precious, very precious in any language. May its divine precepts and heaven-born doctrines become ever more the rule of men's faith and the guide of their lives. May it become the aim of all, diligently, day by day, to search the Scriptures; and may, by personal experience, they find that therein they have eternal life.

J. P. HENTZ.

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#### RECENT DISCOVERIES IN BIBLE LANDS.

There never has been an age in which as much as in ours the ruins, remnants and remains of ancient civilizations have been explored and the results and finds utilized for our knowledge of the history and archæology of these peoples. There is scarcely an historic site of any note in the Orient or in the classic soils of Greece or Rome, where pick

and spade have not been useful aids to scholarly research. In some cases, as that of the late Dr. Schliemann, fortunes and lives have been spent in the prosecution of this work. In other cases, as in the excavations of a decade and more in Olympia by the Germans, in the recently undertaken diggings in Delphi by the French, or in the repeated expeditions sent to the valleys of the Euphrates and Tigris by the English, the financial and diplomatic aid of the most powerful governments of Europe has been secured for these undertakings. And a rich harvest has been garnered. The wealth of new data and facts that has been added to our knowledge of these peoples and lands from the treasures found by the explorer is simply marvelous. Not only are the meagre reports of the Classical authors corroborated and enlarged, but in a number of cases, as in that of the Hittites, where these are singularly silent, the inscriptions and other finds made have given us the only extra-Biblical accounts of the existence and great power of a people who played a leading role in the ups and downs of Oriental history. In other instances, like that of the Sabaeans, the Jewish kingdom in Southern Arabia, we have from these sources alone reliable information. Indeed, the classical *ex Oriente lux* is receiving an entirely new interpretation and illustration. The Orient has been giving up its dead in recent decades, and wonderful are the stories which it has to tell.

Even more than classical antiquity, has Biblical history and archæology profited by these researches. The Bible lands have naturally peculiar attractions for the investigator. To some extent this is doubtless based upon the fact that the leading nations who came into contact with Israel and whose relations to the chosen people fill the pages of the Old Testament, such as the Egyptians, the Assyrians, the Babylonians, the Persians, were also the leading nations in the early political history of the civilized world, and were the leading actors on the stage of history long before the

Greeks and the Romans assumed any prominence. The chief reason, however, is that the Bible and its claims to absolute reliability are directly affected by the discoveries made in these lands. The Bible is, considered from its human side, decidedly an Oriental book. There is not any other book or collection of books extant, which reflects so honestly, faithfully and truthfully the historical surroundings of its origin, time and other circumstances, as do the books of the Bible. No other book has so honest a face as the Scriptures have. Literally in thousands and thousands of particulars, the Old Testament and to a certain extent also the New Testament, come in touch with the history, antiquities, geography, topography, ethnology, etc., etc., of the Bible lands and Bible peoples. There is scarcely a single addition made to our knowledge of these lands or peoples by the explorers which does not directly or indirectly come into contact with what the Biblical reports contain. And in this connection it is deeply gratifying and reassuring that all that has been discovered and unearthed has strengthened the claims of the Bible to being the truth, and nothing but the truth. The Bible has only gained by recent finds. Just at this time this confirmation is all the more acceptable, since Biblical criticism, falsely so called, from internal evidences alone, or rather from a misinterpretation of internal evidences, seeks to undermine the truthfulness of the Scriptures. Thus while Higher Criticism to its own satisfaction has demonstrated that the Pentateuch could not have originated in the time of Moses, the thousands of correspondence tablets found in Tell-el-Amarna, in the Delta, dating from about 1400 B. C., as also the more than a thousand inscriptions found in Southern Arabia by the German traveller, Dr. Edward Glaser, and dating from about the same era, show conclusively that even before the days of Moses letters and literature flourished throughout Western Asia and Egypt. All the nations with whom Israel was connected by the ties of politics or kinship

at that time already possessed a literature. The miracle of history now would not be that Israel possessed its Law Book at so early a period, but if Israel had *not* had such a sacred codex. Evidences which are, to use a word of Horace, *monumentum aere perennius*, and evidences that can be seen and handled now testify the conclusions from "inner" data are figments and fiction and not facts. It is, indeed, true that the conviction that the Scriptures are the Word of Truth and of Life, cannot arise from the proof that the historical and other external data of the Bible are correct and reliable. Logic cannot demonstrate that the Scriptures are a Revelation and a power to eternal life. Yet, negatively, if it could be proved that even a single historical statement of the Bible is demonstrably false, we would have no way of drawing the demarcation line between that which is true and that which is false in Scriptures. This is the great and deplorable weakness of the newer theory of inspiration as maintained even by the conservative and confessional theologians in Germany, who teach not that the Scriptures *are* the Word of God, but merely that they *contain* this Word; which signifies, that the human agent, factor, or personality in the composition of the sacred books was not sufficiently under the control of the divine to exclude in externals and circumstantials the presence of human errors and mistakes. The great value of the new corroborating evidences found by scholars is, to ward off attacks made on the Scriptures as a reliable record of history. And in this respect recent discoveries are exceedingly interesting and instructive.

In the period when Israel and Judah were active among the kingdoms of the earth, the Assyrians and the Babylonians were the most prominent nations of the East. Palestine lay on the direct route between the Euphrates and Tigris valleys on the east and the Nile valley in the west. As a consequence it was the battle ground between the Assyrians on the one hand and the Egyptians on the other for a realization of the ideal of all the ancient nations, the es-

tablishment of a world's empire — an ideal realized only by Alexander the Great and by the Romans. In itself Palestine was of insignificant proportions and Israel but a small people. But as a means to an end for their mighty neighbors, Palestine was a land of historic prominence and importance, and as a consequence it is to be expected that mention of it is made in both the records of the Egyptians and of the eastern nations. And this is the case, although not to the extent which we would naturally expect.

The cuneiform literature which has been found in Nineveh, Babylon, and other sites is phenomenal in size and in variety of contents. It is found embedded on bricks dried in the sun, on prisms and cylinders of clay, on slabs of marble and alabaster, on statues, obelisks, colossal bulls and clay tablets of all conceivable shapes and forms. Now already the mass of literature thus found exceeds in compass the entire Old Testament, and covers nearly all kinds of letters known. There are historical descriptions of all possible kinds, giving a comparatively full account of the political ups and downs, the culture, civilizations, etc., not only of Assyria and Babylonia, but also of the neighboring people. Then there are chronological lists of many kinds, such as eponymous lists, chronicles, synchronous lists, tablets of kings, and the kind. Then there is a rich religious literature, such as psalms and hymns, which remind the reader strongly of the Old Testament sacred songs; also prayers, legends of the gods, stories of the creation and the deluge (but *not* of the fall), exorcisms, incantations and the like. There is also a religious epic of twelve books, of which the Biblical Nimrod is the hero. These and astrological tablets, curious lists of secret remedies, oracular deliverances, and the like give us a clear insight into the religion, superstition, and mythology of these people. Then their many mathematical writings, their philosophical tablets, and a list of synonyms, of words derived from the same stem or from similar stems, their paradigms and other grammatical mat-

ter, together with lists containing names of occupations, of slaves, of animals, of plants, of clothes, of wooden utensils, instruments, and the like, give us some details of the thought and daily life of the Assyrians and Babylonians. Further interesting data are found in such tablets as those containing letters, reports of generals and astronomers and scientists, proclamations and petitions, deeds of purchase and sale of every description, marriage certificates, bequests, wills, house inventories, receipts, etc.

A great many of these treasures have been removed to European libraries. Particularly has the British Museum been fortunate enough to secure the bulk of the finds, and the authorities have employed men to decipher the contents. Among the most interesting of these finds are the tablets which contain the Assyrian account of the creation. These were discovered in the ruins of a magnificent castle in Nineveh. They constituted a part of the extensive library once collected in this place by the mighty Assyrian kings. When the city and the palace were dedicated to the flames, the library, which was in the second story, fell to the ground, and thousands and thousands of inscribed bricks were broken. It is a singular piece of good fortune that a large number of the bricks referring to the creation have been rediscovered, although they have all more or less been damaged. Some parts are entirely lost. Much to be deplored is the loss of the part referring to the creation of man. In order to show the character and spirit of the contents, we give here what is left of the fifth tablet, recounting the creation of the stars. We quote from the translation of Professor Sayce, in the "Records of the Past" (new series) p. 143:

- 1) He prepared the twin mansions of the great gods
- 2) He fixed the stars, even the twin stars, to correspond with them
- 3) He ordained the year, appointing the signs of the Zodiac over it

- 4) For each of the twelve months He fixed three stars,
- 5) From the day when the year issues forth to the close,
- 6) He founded the mansion of the Sun god, the god of the ferry boat, that they might know their bounds,
- 7) That they might not err, that they might not go astray in any way.
- 8) He established the mansion of Bel and Ea along with Himself
- 9) Moreover he opened the great gates on either side.
- 10) He strengthened the bolts on the left hand and on the right
- 11) In the midst of it He made a staircase
- 12) He illumined the Moon god that he might be porter of the night
- 13) And ordained for him the ending of the night that the day may be known
- 14) Saying: Month by month, without break, keep watch in thy disk
- 15) At the beginning of the month light up the night
- 16) Announcing thy horns that the heaven may know,
- 17) On the seventh day filling thy disk
- 18) Thou shalt open indeed its narrow contraction
- 19) At the time the sun will be on the horizon of heaven at thy rising
- 20) Thou shall cut off its — [Here the tablet breaks off.]

The historical tablets are particularly full and complete, but are not as reliable as they might be, as they report only the victories of the Assyrian and Babylonian kings, and usually in as boastful language as possible. In this respect the language and spirit of these warriors as reported in the Old Testament are representations of what can be read on all these tablets. They are very careful not to report their defeats. From the time of Shalmaneser II. (B. C. 860-824), who says in his annals, "In those days I received tribute from Jehu, son of Omri," the relations between the people of the Old Testament and the kings of Assyria grew more

intimate, and for Israel more disastrous. The cuneiform inscriptions of that period are therefore of the greatest importance as casting light on the situation of affairs in Syria and Palestine.

But especially it is the reign of Hezekiah, king of Judah, and above all what is told of it in the Bible record, that is wonderfully confirmed and completed by the narratives left by the Assyrian kings, Sennacherib and Esar-Haddon. From the interesting campaigns of these two rulers I translate, word for word, the accounts of the investment of Jerusalem by Sennacherib and the campaign of Esar-haddon against his brothers, who had murdered his father. On the third column of his hexagonal clay cylinder, which was found in 1830 by Colonel Taylor in the ruins of Nineveh, King Sennacherib (*Sin akhe-irba*,—"The moon-god Sin has augmented the brothers") tells us:

"As to Hezekiah (*Khazakia'u*) the Judean, who had not submitted to my yoke, I besieged and captured forty-six of his strongly walled cities, together with innumerable small places in their vicinity, by treading down the walls and the approach of . . . , by battle, . . . by mines, breaches, and tearing down. Two hundred thousand one hundred and fifty people, small and great, male and female, horses, asses, camels, cattle, sheep without number, I carried off and counted as booty. Himself I shut up like a bird in its cage, in Jerusalem (*Ursalimmu*) his capital. Mounds I cast up against him, and whoever came forth from his city, I chased back. His cities that I had sacked, I separated from his country, and gave them to Mitinti king of Ashdod, Padi king of Ekron, and Tsil-Bel king of Gaza, and thus reduced his territory. To the former payment of his yearly tribute, I added another payment as a gift to my lordship, and imposed the same on him. Him, however, Hezekiah, fear of the splendor of my lordship cast down; and the Arabs and his allies, whom he had taken in to strengthen his capital Jerusalem, took fright. Thirty talents of gold, eight hundred talents



of silver, precious stones, . . . great pieces of *lapis lazuli*, beds and chairs of ivory, skins and tusks of elephants, *ushu* and *urkarinnu* wood, everything possible, a heavy treasure, and besides his daughters, the women of his household, musicians and singers, he caused to bring to Nineveh my capital; and he sent his envoy to pay over the tribute and render homage."

This occurred during the king's third campaign, B. C. 701. The Assyrian account allows us to perceive that the close of this war did not turn out very favorably to the Assyrians. The king seeks to conceal by his sonorous phrases the losses described in Isaiah and the Book of Kings. The concluding statement in the narrative, as to Hezekiah's sending tribute to Nineveh, if we are to translate "he caused to bring," is an evident lie. It is true that Hezekiah sent three hundred Hebrew (eight hundred Assyrian) talents of silver and thirty talents of gold to Sennacherib,—but to Lachish, not to Nineveh, and not *after* the siege of Jerusalem, as Sennacherib represents it, but before the siege, and earlier than the battle of Elteke with the Egyptians. The Bible narrative gains in value with every unprejudiced student through a comparison with the wordy description of the siege and the tribute, which was intended for the Assyrian subjects of the great king.

On a number of important Biblical questions these cuneiform inscriptions have given valuable help. It now appears from actual measurements and official reports that the account given by the book of Jonah concerning the immense size of Nineveh is absolutely correct and not in any way an exaggeration. For decades the book of Daniel has been put into the Maccabean period, and its chief contents made a *vaticinium post eventum*. Now the Babylonian inscriptions show that the historical background of the book suits exactly to the time in which it claims to have been written, and that historical evidences strengthen the traditional view of the church. On the interesting and vexed question as to the site of Paradise a mass of new material has been

collected. Professor Delitzsch, the younger, of Leipzig, and Professor Hommel, of Munich, have made detailed investigations, and both reach the conclusion that the old view, which claims the valleys of the Euphrates and Tigris as the Biblical site, is the correct one, in harmony with the tradition as it appears in the inscriptions. The only difference between the two is, that Hommel places the site farther south than Delitzsch, namely, near the Persian Gulf. The material consists chiefly in new information as to the location of "Cush" and the discovery of names of rivers practically the same as the two not easily identified among the four used by Genesis in the description of Paradise. In all of these matters, as is seen, and indeed on nearly all points as far as investigated, the constant tendency is to confirm the old views of Biblical scholars.

It is true that in reference to the chronology of the Old Testament, serious charges are yet made against the Old Testament writers on the basis of the data furnished by the inscriptions. Yet here these latter have not yet been thoroughly examined, nor their merits properly estimated. Placing the beginning of this literature in the fourth millennium before Christ, is only a surmise, which must yet be established. The turn affairs have taken in this regard in Egyptology give us all grounds to feel confident that Biblical chronology will yet come out the victor. For nearly half a century the claims of Egyptian scholars, that the chronology of the Bible was incorrect, because the Egyptian reports all demanded earlier dates, has now been discarded by many. It is now learned that the dynasties and kings whose reigns are reported, were not entirely successive to each other, but that in many instances they were cotemporaneous. In this way the Egyptian system of chronology has in recent years been reduced fully one thousand years, and the reports given of Egypt by the Old Testament in the days of Abraham, Jacob, Joseph and Moses, are now found to agree also with the monuments. Assyriology is comparatively a new science,

and a *festina lente* in case it seems to make claims, even in a matter comparatively so insignificant as that of chronology, counter to the Bible records, is certainly the part of wisdom.

One of the most singular confirmations of the Biblical reports, where the odds seemed to be strongly against them, has been furnished by inscriptions found that teach us the great power of the Hittites even at an early day. On this once so powerful people of Western Asia, the authors of Greece and Rome are almost entirely silent. This was long used and abused as a reason for claiming that the Biblical accounts were false. Now we learn that they are correct throughout. The Hittite inscriptions have not all yet been deciphered, as they are of peculiar difficulty; but enough has been learned, to be certain of the great political prominence of this people at the time when the Old Testament reports its activity among the nations of Western Asia. Less than twelve months ago another mighty city of these people was laid bare at Sindshirli, in Northern Syria, by Dr. von Lushan, who with his corps of attendants went there by the authority of the Berlin Oriental Committee. A powerful city, with double walls all around it, with castles and towers and citadels, barracks &c. was discovered. The diameter of the main city was 700 metres or more. Inscriptions and bas-relief sculptures, consisting chiefly of mighty and colossal lions and sphinx, together with triumphal processions of kings and priests and people were laid bare. One of the inscriptions is next to that of King Mesha, of the 9th century, the oldest Aramaic inscription known, and is valuable in determining the age of our present Hebrew alphabet.

One of the most interesting finds made has been the correspondence tablets at Tel-el-Amarna, in Upper Egypt. Here we have an account of the political condition of Palestine at about 1400 B. C. and many names of cities and towns are mentioned, the names of which are unknown outside of the Bible. The chief interest centers in the repeated men-

tion of the city of Jerusalem. The view long entertained also by conservative scholars that Jerusalem was comparatively a late city, and did not yet exist in the days of Joshua, now turns out to be incorrect. From these inscriptions it appears that it was at that time already the most powerful city in Southern Palestine, and the probabilities are that for this very reason the Israelites did not at that time attempt to take it. Melchisedek, "the king of Salem", now appears really to have been a king of Jerusalem. Among the Tel-el-Amarna letters are a number addressed by a certain *Abdi-Chiba*, prince of Jerusalem, to the king of Egypt, who at that time was the master of Palestine at least in name, attesting his fidelity to the king, but at the same time warning him of certain dangers to his sovereignty in the land. Among those who threaten this sovereignty, the principal ones are the *Chabiri* or *Chabire* people. Who are these? This is at present probably the most interesting question in regard to this whole collection. Are these the Hebrews? In Hebrew the word is *Ibrim*, and there can be no objections from a philological point of view to the identification. If this identification turns out to be correct, then we have the first extra-Biblical account of the march of Moses and Joshua and the people of Israel to take Palestine, the Promised Land. Work on the reading and translation of these finds is progressing splendidly, and it is not at all impossible that new material fully sustaining this identification may be found at any time. Had any person only two years ago ventured the assertion that an account of Jerusalem would be found on cuneiform tablets of the Nile Delta dating from the fifteenth century before Christ, his claims would have been regarded as the height of folly. Yet now no one disputes this discovery, and no man now knows what the next day may bring forth in this regard. It seems that the day of valuable Biblical finds in the Biblical lands has only fairly begun.

In Palestine itself little or nothing has been done, and this simply because the Porte refuses to grant scholars permission to work there. The country west of the Jordan has indeed been surveyed by the British Exploration Fund, and East of the Jordan the Americans have been working. But excavations have begun only in recent months, and these have resulted in finding the Biblical Lachish. What Palestine itself has hidden, not even a prophet or a prophet's son would venture to foretell. Among the cities mentioned in the Old Testament is one called *Kirjath Sefer*, or Book Town. Professor Sayce is of the opinion that in the ruins of this place libraries and books must be buried in abundance. In view of what has been found in the Delta of the Nile, along the Euphrates and Tigris; in Southern Arabia, in the old Hittite towns, why should this not be possible? The Israelites had a literature as early as the neighboring nations. Why should not other remains than those in the old Testament yet be discovered. We know that the Israelites had also a secular literature, and that the old Testament is only a part of what their scribes and learned men wrote. Biblical science has all reasons to look longingly and certainly also hopefully and confidently for new discoveries and new finds.

*Magna est veritas et praevalabit.* G. H. SCHODDE.

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## MISSIONS AS AN EXPONENT OF SPIRITUAL LIFE.

The fact that comparatively little is being done in our Synod for missionary work makes it pertinent to ask whether our people really believe in missions. If some of our laymen should answer, "no," we would not be much surprised, believing the answer to be due to insufficient instruction rather than to a lack of love or of spiritual life. If, however, some of our pastors should answer thus, we would think differently. We would in all probability say that the answer is due either to a perverted notion of the

Christian religion, or else to a lack of religious life. We do not believe that missions can be separated from religion, or from faith, so that one could have the latter without engaging in the former. Our Savior's words to Peter, "when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren," are of general application. With the gift of salvation comes the duty also of bringing it to others. This fact being fully understood, we are inclined to believe that a man's spiritual life may be approximately measured by his interest in missionary work. "By their fruits ye shall know them," will undoubtedly apply here also.

Several things must however be more carefully explained before we can urge the above statement. First, a distinction must be made between two kinds of missionary work. There are missions that are the legitimate fruits of a pure spiritual life, but there are missions also that are the legitimate fruit of a perverted spiritual life. Not every offering that is cast into the Lord's treasury is the fruit of pure love; some are no doubt the products of rank selfishness, or pinches of grudging. So we have good reasons to believe also that all missionary work is not the fruit of holy love. When missions are carried on simply to make converts for self-praise, or when they run into proselytizing, as they so often do at the present day, of what else is such work an exponent, if not of selfishness and spiritual pride? We want the reader therefore to understand by missionary work true missionary work, the product of pure love reaching out to fellowmen. Secondly, we mean by such missions not only missionary work according to the common acceptance of the term, but every effort, whether in public or private, at home or abroad, for building up the kingdom of Christ. Such missionary work we hold to be an exponent of spiritual life.

This may be shown, first, from the Word. Christ gave the commission to His *disciples* to preach the Gospel. This is proof sufficient that missions are to be the work of the

regenerate, and not of the unregenerate. It would certainly be unreasonable as well as impious for a body of men who are not believers to engage in missionary work. "But unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth?" Ps. 50, 16. It indeed happens sometimes that "the wicked" get into the ministry, and it may even occur that some such are sent into the mission field. Those, however, are not independent workers who have their commission directly from God, but they have been authorized by men who are believers and who, had they known that these persons were "wicked," would not have sent them. The work of missions therefore belongs to the believer, to him who has spiritual life. If this work then belongs to the believer, it is quite reasonable to suppose that he will engage in it. Especially, since the Lord not only said that this is properly his work, but also commanded him to do it. If now the believer will not engage in this work, then there are good reasons for thinking that there is something wrong with his faith and his spiritual life.

This becomes still more apparent when we consider those sayings of our Lord when He tells us that true love to Him will manifest itself in beneficence toward our fellowmen. Jesus said: "If ye love me, keep my commandments." The commands of Jesus are many. They involve service to Him direct and service to our fellowmen. Among these commands, "Preach the gospel," is one. If we love Him, we must preach the gospel. Jesus said to Peter: "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He said unto Him, Yea, Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee. He said unto Him, Feed my sheep." Here feeding Christ's sheep, or doing missionary work—for by "sheep" here we are to understand both those in the fold and those yet to be gathered in,—is made to depend directly upon love to Christ. Here it is again made plain that if we have love, we will do this work, and that, if we do not do the work, there must be

something wrong with our spiritual life. Missions may therefore be looked upon as an index to the inner life.

This may be shown also by examples. Here we are led at once to look at the great Prototype of spiritual life and missionary zeal. Both the words and works of Christ show that He did not come to serve Himself, but to serve others. It might be said that because He had no sin and was therefore not in need of salvation, He was not subject to the temptation of caring for self only to the neglect of all others. Yet, though not needing salvation, He nevertheless said, "I seek not mine own glory." There was such glory to seek, but *He* did not seek it. It was the zeal of God's house that ate Him up. When we now look at the apostles, who in a manner took up the mantle of Christ, we find the same spirit at work and hence the same zeal and works manifesting themselves. They caught the spirit of the gospel that it was not for them alone, but for all. It indeed took some time before they broke through the wall of prejudice which the centuries had build up around the Jews, but when the breach was once made, what a sally against the strongholds of gentilism! No elaborately organized societies were required, but the heralds of peace went forth by ones and twos, publishing "the good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people." The greatness of their zeal let such expressions indicate: "Woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel." 1 Cor. 9, 16. "I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsman according to the flesh." Rom. 9, 3. Nor have we any reason to ascribe the great work which the apostles did to any other motive than to love. "The love of Christ constraineth us." 2 Cor. 5, 14. They did a great missionary work therefore, because the love of Christ had been richly begotten in them. Nor did the work stop and then decrease. With some of them it took but a few years until the zeal of God's house consumed them. Yet the work went on conquering



and to conquer. The Church was then in her first love. The entire body of Christians was a missionary society.

Yet the Church began soon to depart more and more from her first love. When Christ founded the church she was placed upon the pinnacle of missionary zeal. She was "a city set on a hill," and she let her light shine. But it is remarkable that as she added centuries to her growth she gradually lost that glowing zeal, until in the latter part of the thirteenth and the forepart of the fourteenth century she was practically cold. A great work had been done. Southern, western, and much of central Europe, south-western Asia and northern Africa had been at least nominally Christianized. But why stop when there was still so much to be done? Millions were yet sitting in the shades of night. Had the command of Christ, "Go ye and teach all nations," lost its meaning or authority? Or had the Gospel ceased to be "the power of God unto salvation," so that it was a useless task to preach it? In neither of these is the cause of their cessation of missionary work to be found, but rather in the Church's lack of real spiritual life. It is remarkable to notice how the decline in missions and spiritual life kept pace. The former, however, was not the ground of the latter, but *vice versa*. The Church at this time was practically unfit to carry on missions. Not only did she not have the life, but she also had not a conscious possession of the truth; on the contrary she taught gross errors. Neither had she a church-practice and polity at all consistent with the word which she professed to hold. With a sickly life, therefore, and hampered by fearful errors and anti-gospel church-practice, missionary work which should be the outgrowth of a pure and free life could not be expected.

But why, if a pure and free church-life will be productive of missions, did not the Protestant church in the years following the Reformation enter more largely in missionary work? Here seems to be an anomaly. But if failure in missions is looked upon as a fault of the church of the

Reformation and as indicative of some radical defect in her life, the conclusion is erroneous. In the first place, the church of the Reformation gradually emerged out of darkness into light and was not set on foot in a day, with three thousand souls and twelve inspired men at its head, as was the apostolic church. Furthermore, the Reformation meant not only a rebuilding of the church from its very foundation, but it also meant a radical change of an established church system, all of which required much time and strength. Then there was the scourge of war also, and last but not least the Reformation itself was a missionary work of the highest order. Yet we do not wish to say that the church was entirely free from blame; especially, considering that when she was firmly established her efforts at missions were still very feeble. And the question becomes still more difficult of solution in view of the fact that the Romish church at this time put forth strenuous missionary efforts. Here was a church corrupt, and we might say spiritually dead, yet energetic as a missionary church, while on the other hand we have a church, pure and spiritually alive, practically doing nothing outside of her own midst. Missions, it would seem, are not an exponent of spiritual life.

Yet here another modifying circumstance must be considered. At the time of the Reformation and for a century or more afterwards the Roman Catholic nations held the supremacy on the seas and had constant intercourse with the outside world, while the German nations and Protestant countries in general had but very little such intercourse. It was quite natural that the Romish Church, seeing on the one hand the spiritual destitution of the heathen and on the other a conversion of a large portion of her membership to Protestantism, should prosecute missions with energy as well to fill up her depleted ranks as to bring the Gospel to the heathen. And when we notice the superficial nature and mechanical manner of her work, it almost seems that

numbers of converts was her object rather than the salvation of souls. If now the Church of the Reformation had had such intercourse with the outside world as Romish nations had and would still not have put forth any stronger efforts for bringing them the bread of life which she believed herself to hold in its purity, then certainly we would have to accuse her with failure of doing her duty.

But granted that the Church at certain times and places, although having real life, did not engage in missions as we now think she should have done, this does not warrant us to believe that a church which at the present day has no interest in missions is a living church. No church now can plead ignorance of the heathen as an excuse for not engaging in missions. Neither can anyone plead hindrance through war, or poverty, or dissension, for although there is still much dissension it is not sufficient to destroy missionary effort. The way is clear: a full knowledge of heathen countries and people, rapid, easy, and cheap transportation, immense wealth compared with former ages, general peace throughout the world, and the command of Christ, "Go ye and preach the gospel to every creature," ringing in our ears through speech and print, it is difficult to understand how a church at the present day could live and let her light shine without joining the army of missionary workers. Of such a church we would almost feel compelled to say that she lacks true love, she lacks the true life.

When we now look at our own synod we find that the secondary conditions of missionary work are at hand. There is money in the synod, there are men here, doors for missionary work stand wide open, yet we do not by far go in to possess the land with the force with which we should. If making a feeble effort at missions may be called "playing at missions," then our synod is surely playing; for I hope no one will call the work which synod is doing a man's work with respect to its extent, however manifest it may be in kind; it is mere child's play. Nor can we ease our con-

science by saying that our work compares favorably with the work of some other church-bodies. The work of other church-bodies is not the standard. The standard is what ought to be done and what we are able to do. Toward this mark we have made but the first step.

If we should now apply to our synod the statement that spiritual life is in proportion to pure missionary zeal, then certainly we would be found wanting. And the writer believes that such is really the case, *if it can be shown that our people have had sufficient instruction in missions.* We cannot conceive how a church body with the opportunities for mission work which our synod now enjoys can, if the people are sufficiently instructed on this point, be satisfied with our present feeble efforts. But the writer believes that our people are *not* sufficiently instructed. It is only a few years now that he has been in some measure in the light on the work of missions, and he is confident that there are thousands in the synod who have not advanced even so far, not because of a difference of spirituality or ability, but because they did not enjoy his opportunities. That such a state of things is a fault we admit. There is no valid excuse for having set the knowledge of missions aside, from whatever cause it may have been done. And it is a serious fault, one that affects our very life, not only in the sense that missions are the church's means of self-propagation, but in the sense also that our spiritual sense would be more rounded, if missionary zeal would always have been at a glow in our midst.

That our love and our spiritual life are not what they ought to be, is evident, and, although the same may be applied to all Christians, yet we are not by any means what we would be, if we had husbanded the resources which our Lord placed at our disposal. To us now there appears but one way of escaping the imputation that we do not do more missionary work because we have not sufficient life, and that is by thoroughly instructing our people in missionary

matters. If this will not help us out, then the writer believes that all need more spiritual strength before we can be expected to strengthen our brethren. But we are firmly convinced that this will help us out. The progress we have made in recent years since missions have become a living issue in our midst warrants this conclusion. All hands to work then. Let us inform ourselves and our people upon this grand theme. But in the meantime let us not forget that there is still plenty of room for growth in grace.

J. SHEATSLEY.

## THE VALUE OF PSYCHOLOGICAL STUDY TO THE GOSPEL MINISTER.

“Know thyself.”—*Socrates.*

‘The proper study of mankind is man.’—*Pope.*

Since psychology is the science of the mind or soul and the pastor's mission is pre-eminently one of mind or soul, he of all men can least afford to lack a fair knowledge of it. He will find it a great advantage *personally.*

All study develops the mind. None more so than psychology. It has a decided advantage as a discipline over scientific subjects. It develops philosophical or reflective consciousness, and thus, while it gives a knowledge of self, it develops reflection as the study of no material science can. Reflective consciousness is a persistent and comprehensive examination of mental phenomena with the purpose of classifying and explaining them by a reference to their powers and laws. Since most of these phenomena are subtle, eluding the notice of the inattentive, the result is that the psychologist is a keen observer and a consecutive thinker. He understands the constitution of his mind and knowing its laws and habits can conform to them, thus enabling him to do the most work with the least effort—a decided advantage to a busy man.

The study of this science will be an advantage to him professionally. Giving a knowledge of self, it enables him to judge others. For successful work the pastor must be a judge of human nature. Our judgment of others is based upon our knowledge of self. We reason from analogy. As we are not able to look into the hearts of men, it is the only course of reasoning that we can pursue. Of course, it is not infallible. We may sometimes misjudge men. None but God can know the secrets of men's hearts. We may know them only approximately, but unless we know ourselves thoroughly, we are even cut off from this knowledge of others. The pastor, who fails to judge men correctly, must blunder or even fail in his calling according to the greatness of his error in judgment.

The pastor is to be pre-eminently a teacher; psychology will enable him to present his work to the mind to the best advantage. His best effort will be dwarfed unless in conformity to its laws. The catechism is to be taught. Without a knowledge of the nature of memory and the process of its development this work cannot be made pleasing and profitable. In his preparation for the pulpit he should be able to judge from the nature of his subject to which mental power it will appeal and he can then arrange his matter according to the laws of that faculty. When to instruct, when to exhort, when to excite, are questions upon which the purpose of the whole discourse hinges. If the preacher does not understand the relations of the intellect to the sensibilities and of both to the will he will strike many blows which will glance off and he will severely tax the patience of his auditors.

For successful pulpit work a knowledge of the intuitions of the mind is necessary. The preacher, dealing with the greatest questions of time and eternity, must know what are the fundamental ideas, necessary entities, accepted by the mind—ideas which are innate. Some things need proof; to prove them works conviction. Some things need

no proof; to make an effort at proving them acts disturbingly and yields vantage ground. We must proceed from necessary to relative ideas. To build securely we must know what stones are fundamental and can be used as a basis upon which to lay others. This information is doubly necessary to the minister as an apologist. Skeptics must largely be met upon their own ground. Frequently the only common ground is the rational intuitions.

The knowledge of psychology enables the pastor to be a real "Seelsorger," a physician of souls. Not until he understands the processes of his own spiritual life, his temptations, his wrestlings, his hopes, his longings, his communion with the Spirit of God, can he be a helper and a healer to others. This private work among souls is the most effective, but it often loses its force because the physician knows nothing about the symptoms.

Sir Wm. Hamilton says that while mental science is valuable to all men it is indispensable to a theologian. All the leading doctrines of the Word of God deal with mind and spirit. There is the fundamental doctrine of God. He is a spirit. We derive our idea of spirituality from our own souls. Man was made in the image of God. He knows, feels and wills. Man's mind is thus a reflection of the divine mind and as we learn of self we perfect our conception of God. True, man's mind, distorted by sin, is a very imperfect image of the divine mind and yet it is the best natural guide we have. It is supplementary to the Word. Our ideas of the doctrine of original sin and illumination must be very foggy until we see by our own examination the natural condition of the *intellect* and its march out of darkness into light. Concupiscence and renovation will be mere terms to us until we understand the natural condition of the *sensibilities* and the process of their cleansing through God's Spirit. The doctrine of conversion may confuse us and lead us into error unless we understand the bondage and liberty of the *will*. The immortality of the soul finds

its strongest supports in the powers and faculties of the soul itself.

We have merely outlined some thoughts. Further reflection may lead some to devote odd moments to this eminently useful and fascinating study. L. H. SCHUB.

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## EDITORIAL.

### DIVERSITIES OF GIFTS.

Poor human nature requires to be reminded, again and again, that what forms the special object of our attention at any given time, or comes into the foreground as a matter of special interest under existing circumstances, or becomes the absorbing topic in individual minds because of their special endowments or callings, is not the only thing that is worthy of man's attention or labor. God has many things to do on earth and many servants employed to do them. There are diversities of gifts, and there are diversities of labors in which they may be employed. No one man has all the gifts and all the callings. Each has his own sphere and his own endowment, and each is to do the work in the place assigned him, without over-estimating his own labor or disparaging the labor of another, whose gifts and tastes and position are different. The aggregate of the work done by each in his station, in fidelity to the Lord's will, is a blessing to the world in the service of the Lord, while the work of each taken separately may seem to the humble mind exceedingly small, and to the mind that has a fond conceit of itself superlatively large. In truth no labor is little that is done in the Lord's name, and no labor is great, as no man is little and no man is great who serves the living God. He alone is great, and all we are brethren, equally great in that we are His servants, and equally little in that of ourselves we can do nothing. It is always a great thing



to do His will, though in the world's eye the station in which it is done and the work in which it is executed seem very low; it is always a small business to emphasize a particular kind of work in the Lord's service, as if that rendered a man more than a king and a priest unto God and thus greater than an ordinary Christian and child of God.

In the early years of the writer's ministry, when zeal was in advance of his knowledge, he was often restless, when night came and retirement seemed necessary, because some souls that he might yet reach were probably not saved. His calling was that of a pastor, as it is not now, and the command to bring the Gospel to every creature rang in his ears and his conscience. Should he not, instead of indulging his weary nature in needed sleep, go out to the slums where the wicked congregate and seek to rescue those who would yet give him a hearing? It is a question that has troubled many a faithful pastor, and we could still wish, for the sake of those whom we abuse in Zion, that it troubled others as it troubled us. But it is all wrong to presume that God has called any one individual to preach the Gospel to every creature. Each must do his part, in the sphere which is assigned him and according to the gifts committed to him, and be content to let the Lord do the managing and fit the work together to the accomplishment of His gracious will. And it is all wrong to presume that the calling given and the opportunities presented trample down all the laws of nature, and forbid all eating and sleeping, that no time may be lost in rescuing souls from death. We do not mean to speak a word in justification of the easy life which so many Christians, pastors and others, are disposed to lead. Our conviction is that as a rule they take it too easy, and that they lie upon their lazy beds of ease and indulge the desires of the flesh when they ought to be doing their Master's will, whose mercy towards them in rescuing them from the unutterable horrors of everlasting death they do not seem to appreciate. We have no word to speak in favor of self-in-

dulgence, for there is enough, and more than enough, of that already. But we do wish to direct our brethren, who have a mind to serve the Lord with all their strength and to be found faithful unto death, to the manifest truth, that He desires us to serve Him in the calling which He gives us and according to the ability which He imparts, not requiring of us what we have neither the physical nor the intellectual strength to perform, nor demanding of us more in a day than can be compressed into twenty-four hours.

But what we desired especially to set forth in this article is the need of a proper recognition of the various departments of labor and the corresponding appreciation of their importance. It is deplorable narrowness, for example, when some members of a congregation become alive to the need of visiting the sick and doing the Lord's will in supplying their wants, on that account bewail the want of spiritual life on the part of those who have become so interested in the condition of the poor and the necessity of helping them that they give but little attention to the sick, except so far as poverty enhances their suffering. It is deplorable narrowness, for example, when some members become alive to the need of educating the children and therefore enter vigorously upon the work of establishing and maintaining parochial schools, deplore the indifference of those who realize the importance of missionary work among heathens at home and abroad and devote their time and money mainly to this needful work. So in the work of the church at large there is no justice and no charity in the mutual fault-findings of those who have the gift and calling to expound and defend the doctrine of the Church and those who are better fitted to attend to the practical work of gathering souls into the congregation and ministering to the bodily and spiritual wants of the brethren. It is a sad thing when Christians become so one-sided that they can appreciate no gift and no work but that with which they are endowed and in which they are engaged.

It is especially sad when some, having become interested in the practical work of the Church, are so stupidly narrow that they can see no good in the work of those who expound and contend for the faith, as if the formalism of doing missionary work or eleemosynary work accomplished the Lord's will even though the truth unto salvation should be ignored or lost in the process. The extreme of this thoughtlessness and narrowness is found where people, who may have started in the Spirit and meant well, become so intent upon the work of saving souls that the preservation of that truth in Jesus by which alone souls can be saved seems to them idle dogmatism.

There are diversities of gifts, and our blessed Lord designs that they should all be used for the common good. Therefore that congregation which diligently studies the Master's will, as this is revealed in the blessed book called the Holy Bible, and so organizes its forces that the various gifts are utilized in the work to be done to execute that good pleasure of their gracious Lord, will be the most prosperous and the most successful, whether appearances be for it or against it. Christians must learn to live by faith, not by sight, and be content to do the Lord's will, whether this seem a great thing or a small thing in the eyes of the world. There are many things to be done: let none suppose that what is assigned to him is the only thing that is worth doing, and that all others are drones because their gifts and work are different.

For years and years a large portion of the nominally Lutheran Church in this country has been pandering and making obeisance to the sects, as if it could live only by their sufferance and considered a great mercy on their part that it was not commanded to lie down and die. For years and years a large portion of the Church that bears the Lutheran name and claims historic connection with the glorious Church of the Reformation and the Augsburg Confession has been deporting itself, in the presence of other churches,

as if it were a shame, perhaps a sin to be a Lutheran, and soliciting pity and begging charity for its misfortune of being, without its fault, connected with such a Church. For years and years a large portion of those who still call themselves Evangelical Lutherans have been accepting the popular errors and adopting the sectarian ways of other churches, accommodating themselves to opinions and practices that have their root in something else than the pure Gospel which the Reformation restored and regarding it as a requirement of liberality to sell their birthright for a mess of pottage. Is there no hope that this time of ignorance and apathy, of cowardly cringing and pitiful slavery to popular opinion will cease, and that at least those who have some Lutheran faith in their hearts will dare to confess it and stand up for it and suffer for it? If those who call themselves Lutherans had always asserted their claims, as Romanists and Wesleyans asserted theirs, it would perhaps not now be such a shame to be a Lutheran and to uphold Lutheran doctrine and practice, whether man will hear or forbear. But be that as it may, can not Christians at least learn that it is better to be a little, despised flock of the Lord than to follow the bannered and belauded multitude to do evil? Has the great Church of the Reformation with her pure Gospel and her comfort and peace to weary souls no rights on earth since the great whore of Babylon is gathering all her forces for the final conflict and Protestant sects, seeking to gain her prestige by aping her methods, are walking with limping gait and feeble step the path that Rome is pursuing with power? Is there no hope that the Lutheran Church, conscious of her divine truth and divine calling, will arise in her strength and again declare the pure Gospel without fear or favor, as she did in the stirring times of the Reformation, and insist upon the blessed truths of the gospel as the one thing needful and the one indispensable condition of church fellowship? The times are sad and the prospect is not bright. But the Lord reigns, and why may

we not hope that He will yet arouse His people who confess the pure truth in the Augsburg Confession, and make them powerful in the might of His strength? "It is time for Thee, Lord, to work; for they have made void Thy law." Ps. 119, 126. Those who are ashamed of the gospel which the Lutheran Church confesses, and of the practice which the Lutheran Church pursues because she believes in her heart what she confesses with her lips, are not bound to bear this shame and are at liberty to step out and avoid what seems to them a disgrace; indeed, if they would rightly consider it they would feel bound to step out and avoid the sin of remaining in a church of whose doctrine and practice they think there is reason to be ashamed. But those who believe, shall they not speak and glorify their Lord, though on that account they should be called on to bear the cross, "esteeming the reproaches of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt?" That is the way of expediency as well as of righteousness, of good policy as well as of good faith, and the only way to go forth in the name of the Lord and win victories.

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REASONS may be unreasonable. What is adduced in good faith as an argument need not on that account be accepted as sound. It may be a flimsy fallacy. False assumptions may lead honest men to false conclusions, and a man is not necessarily a sophistical deceiver if he draws irrelevant conclusions from conceded premises. Reason is given us not only to construct arguments, but also to examine them, and the right to do the latter is as manifest as the right to do the former. There is the popular argument, for instance, from inability, or to phrase it differently, from incapacity. A man can not see that a Redeemer is necessary or that the resurrection of the body is possible; another cannot see that the gratification of his natural desires is a sin or that helping himself to the property

within his reach when he needs it can be a wrong. So another cannot see that the Lord's body is really present in the sacrament of the altar, or that employing the church for making money or furnishing amusement is a violation of the Lord's will. They cannot see it, and that is presented as an argument that settles it. For them, in their present condition, it no doubt does. We are not to presume that they are dishonest. Charity requires that we regard them as sincere. They do not see it, and it would be an attempt to tyrannize over them if we sought to force on them what they do not see to be divinely required. In that respect the argument is valid. But when it is conceded that it is valid in that respect it is implied also that it is only relatively valid, while absolutely it is false. What if a neighbor being blind, does not see the church steeple that rises before him, or another closing his eyes, does not see that there is a church there at all? Of course not. The argument is valid for them. But is it valid for other people? Or when this is adduced as a reason for denying that there is a church there with a steeple on it, is there any reasonableness in the argument? To the individual who is blind, or makes himself blind, there is nothing apparent, although to eyes that can see, the structure is so large and so plain and so obvious that failure to see it seems marvelous. All that seeing persons can do, admitting the sincerity of those who profess inability to see, is to pity them on account of their unhappy condition and endeavor to help them in their misfortune. But it is, objectively considered, as absurd to admit the argument from incapacity as it is to make it. There is more than a little self-conceit manifested in the blind man's assumption that what he cannot see cannot be seen, and in his adducing his inability to see as evidence against the existence of that which his misfortune renders him unable to see; and there is more than a little unreasonableness in those who are led by the protestations of the blind that they do not see it, and by a mistaken charity for the unfortunates who make these

protestations, to doubt or grow weak in confessing what stands out plainly before their eyes in the light of the sun. Ignorance is to be pitied, but must not be permitted to trample knowledge under foot. Our duty is to enlighten it, not to admit its unwarranted claims as against knowledge. If one has not the capacity to see the true and the right, so much the worse for him, but these exist for all that.

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OUR readers, especially those who have influence in the congregations, pastors and laymen, probably need reminding, that while the THEOLOGICAL MAGAZINE occupies a different sphere from that of the *Standard* and other periodicals designed for the people of our churches generally, it aims, both in the selection of topics and in the manner of treating them, to meet the wants of educated and intelligent laymen as well as those of ministers. There are few congregations in which there are not some members who could read it with profit and whose profiting would appear, if they read it, in the larger interest which they take in the struggles and labors of the Church. It is as false as it is mischievous to regard questions of doctrine as belonging exclusively to the ministry, and to treat the laity as if this were none of their business and their duty in this regard were to let the pastors do all the thinking and examining for them. We admit that not every church member is required to be a theologian, but we cannot admit for a moment that only theologians are required to take any interest in the questions of doctrine and practice and work that are constantly presenting themselves for the consideration and decision of the Church, or that they are excused from all responsibility in regard to such decision. That notion is a rag of popery that we must not suffer the enemy to pin on the Lutheran Church. The command of our Lord to all is, "Search the Scriptures," and it is inconsistent with the Christian pro-

profession to take a profound interest in all sorts of reading matter, outside of that pertaining to one's special calling, and take no interest in such reading as would promote their growth in grace and in the knowledge of Jesus and enable them better to discharge their duties as members of His Church.

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WHEN our Lord said to the lawyer, who in reply to a question had given a summary of the moral law, "Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live," (Luke 10, 25-28), He meant all that His words express. There is no irony and no sarcasm in the saying. It is true, the lawyer could not attain eternal life in that way, and our Lord desired to lead him to the knowledge of this, that he might accept the only feasible way. But the words are literally and strictly true: do what the law commands, and thou shalt live. As man was originally constituted he knew the will of God, was entirely in harmony with it in all the movements of his mind and body, and was happy in his communion with God. Nothing more was needed to make him blest. He fulfilled his mission, and, like all other creatures, was good and enjoyed the felicity which that implies. In his original state nothing more was necessary than that he should live in the holiness in which he was created and in virtue of which all his thought and desire and action was in conformity to the divine will. That will as expressed in God's commandments is the law. If this is done, eternal life is assured. Why, then, should the law not only not be preached as the way of salvation, but such preaching be pronounced futile and false? St. Paul says, "By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight; for by the law is the knowledge of sin." Rom. 3, 20. That which seems a contradiction to the way of salvation by the law is really the explanation of the seeming contradiction. The law requires holiness, and



holiness mankind would have been blest. But sin came. For that it provides no remedy: it promises blessing to those who obey it; it threatens punishment to those who transgress it. "If there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe." Gal. 3, 21. 22. All that the law can do now, since man is dead in trespasses and sin, is to reveal to him a knowledge of his true condition. It does not justify us, but pronounces its curse upon us because we have not fulfilled it. Now it is a hopeless way, not because it is not divine, but simply because sin has rendered it impracticable. Therefore the other way of the Gospel was devised for our salvation. The way of faith in Christ which it points out is the only possible way to escape the damnation which the law denounces against transgressors. "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." Rom. 8, 3. He fulfilled all righteousness for us, doing all that the law demanded of us and suffering all the penalty of our transgressions. All this is imparted to us when we believe in Him. "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." Rom. 3, 28. The way of works is utterly impracticable because of our sin; the way of faith is sure because of Christ's righteousness.

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AN INQUIRY CONCERNING THE CONSCIENCE.

II.

Having shown that the word conscience is not a name for divine communications imparted to man, but a power or faculty of the human mind, we proceed to inquire into the nature of its office and operations.

I. SUMMARY VIEW.

When a divine requirement is brought to our knowledge, we say that our conscience is bound by it. An authority over us is recognized, and the obligation which it imposes is felt in the soul. When that authority is disregarded and the obligation is violated, we say that our conscience is troubled. The terrors ensue which are usually called remorse. When there is no offense committed against the obligation imposed, we say that the conscience is at rest. Nothing occurs to produce any disturbance or distress, and there is accordingly peace of conscience. These statements contain all that common usage attaches to the word conscience and all that such usage indicates as essential, to the conception. Accordingly conscience is that faculty of the soul which feels the obligation of righteousness and which when violated, still insists on righteousness and produces

terror. If any one chooses to add that, when it is not violated, the soul is at peace, we will not quarrel with him, though we think the definition complete without the addition.

To avoid misapprehension and promote clearness it may be necessary to explain some points embraced in the brief summary presented.

1. The soul is so constituted that it must acknowledge an authority over it. This belongs to its nature as a creature. It is not independent; it never can be independent; it cannot even, with all its blindness and perversity, convince itself that it is independent, notwithstanding all its reckless independent action and boast of independency. It is God's creature, and as such is subject to Him and accountable to Him. God has authority over man, as He has over every other creature, and all men naturally feel the obligation which His law lays upon them. This is what is meant when they are said to have a conscience. Not all know the true God who has revealed Himself in Holy Scripture. Not all hear the voice of God as He speaks to them in the supernatural revelation given in the Bible. But the obligation to live in righteousness is not self-imposed. A law that man lays on his own soul he can remove again when he thinks it expedient. He can change his plans and frequently does change them. A purpose formed to-day may be exchanged for another to-morrow, and the voluntary law of action that governed him to-day may accordingly give place to another to-morrow. The violation of self-imposed laws may produce regrets, but never can produce the agony of remorse. Men always feel that there is a power which holds them to righteousness, and they by nature have an intuition of right and distinguish this from wrong, as they have an intuition of cause and distinguish this from effect. They are bound to righteousness by the constitution of their nature, because God has made them in righteousness and for righteousness. In its foundation the

feeling of obligation implies the existence, authority, and requisition of divine law. Not that the true God is always known, or that the law which binds the conscience is always referred to the authority of the true God; but man recognizes a supreme authority that binds him, and that is his idea of God, whatever imperfections may be found in his conception. Hence all men are naturally religious, though naturally their religiousness runs out into idolatry. They feel that there is a power over them, that they must in some way and at some time give account of their life, and therefore they devise some way to conciliate that power and escape its retribution in decided punishment. Conscience implies the acknowledgment of a Supreme Being, however indistinct this may be in the intellectual apprehension. God asserts the claims of righteousness in the constitution of human nature, and therefore man has a conscience, which feels the obligation laid upon him by the divine law of righteousness.

2. While our nature is so organized that the violation of the obligation felt would, if nothing intervened to prevent the result, invariably produce unrest and terror, this result does not always follow. It should and normally does ensue, because such violation not only disregards the supreme authority and subjects the offender to the penalty of his wickedness and folly, but it sets him in opposition to his own nature and brings him into conflict with himself. The soul that sinneth has God and nature against it: not nature, indeed, as it has been corrupted by sin, but nature as God created it. Righteousness is the law of the universe. It is built on the principle of righteousness. And as God, who built it, reigns supreme and ultimately works out His will, that must triumph, notwithstanding the temporary prevalence of wrong. Sin has the Lord of all against it and cannot be the final victor in the conflict with right. The sinner has God against him, and the whole order of creation against him. He is aware that he cannot deceive God and

that he cannot hide himself from God. He is aware that there is no refuge for him in heaven above or in the earth beneath. He has trampled upon the law of the whole universe: whither shall he flee from its curse? There is only one seeming recourse, and that is, to assert his own independency and supremacy, and to defy God and all creation. And that at best would be a desperate refuge. Only a consummate fool could think of success on that line. But even that poor way of respite is closed to him. He is against himself and condemns himself. He feels the obligation which righteousness lays upon him. He must do the right or suffer the eternal consequences of wrong, and nature knows no possibility of exemption or release. That is the natural consequence of conscious violation of right.

But as not all have the same knowledge of righteousness which God requires, and have therefore not the same knowledge of transgression, so not all experience the same activity of conscience. The feeling is more responsive to the cognition in some than in others, and more intense in some than in others. Sin is universal, and has darkened all minds and blunted all moral powers. But while all are equally depraved by nature, they still have a conscience which, like all the other faculties of the soul, is subject to improvement or deterioration. Even in heathendom it does not exhibit the same activity in all men alike. Some by disregarding the obligations which in virtue of conscience they feel, and by carnal indulgences rendering themselves temporarily insensible to the pain which naturally follows violation, harden their hearts and gradually become indifferent to the demands of right and the penalties of wrong. The moral feelings, like other feelings, become callous. Some, on the other hand, by giving due heed to the requirements of conscience render it more tender and more active, and it does the work well for which it was designed. The power of sin being so great in our fallen race, it is no wonder that the moral sense suffers so much from its pre-

valence, and that conscience so often fails to do its normal work. When it performs its office according to its nature and design, pain follows upon the violation of known right.

It will be observed that remorse is rather an effect produced by the operation of conscience than an essential element in its nature. The essence is distinct from the effect. We have mentioned the terror which follows upon the violation of obligation felt, because it is so customary to speak of the terrors of conscience, and because these results produced when it is violated, help us to understand the nature of the feeling. Strictly speaking, however, conscience is simply the faculty of the soul which feels the obligation of righteousness. That is its essence. But it is in virtue of the presence and operation of this faculty that pain ensues when the obligation is violated. The righteousness which is objectively obligatory because it is the law of the Lord of all, and which, when cognized, is subjectively obligatory because we have a conscience, still asserts its claims when a violation has taken place, and shakes the soul with dread of wrath and ruin, from which there is no visible way of escape. The phrase "remorse of conscience" means the remorse which a violated conscience produces in the soul.

3. In regard to "peace of conscience" a word seems needed. In our judgment this phrase expresses no positive element in the nature or working of conscience. The idea intended to be expressed is co-ordinate neither with the feeling of obligation nor with the feeling of remorse. And yet we hold the expression to be perfectly legitimate. It brings to our view a fact that should by no means be overlooked in any earnest inquiry into the nature and import of conscience. The feeling of obligation is that which constitutes the very essence of conscience and which characterizes it under all circumstances. The feeling of remorse normally arises in the soul when the feeling of obligation, i. e. when the conscience is violated. The feeling of peace exists when there is no violation appearing in the consciousness. Some

would prefer to say that it arises when we have the consciousness of having fulfilled the obligation felt. Hence it is not unusual to speak of an approving conscience and of the happiness which it brings. But it should be observed that merit does not in the nature of things attach to the performance of duty as demerit or guilt does to the violation, and that the joy of self-complacency upon the contemplation of duty done is not a pure result of the operation of conscience. Peace is merely the absence of disturbance, and it presents itself as positive happiness only in comparison with the agony of self-condemnation. There is joy in the escape from danger and death. When the sinner writhes under the curse of the law, which he feels to be just and from which escape seems hopeless, faith in the proclamation of the gospel quiets his terrified soul, and he is blest in his peace of conscience. But he has something infinitely higher than a man can have in the mere view of duty performed in an isolated case. In the latter case there is nothing more than an escape from condemnation in an individual act, and the peace seems to us nothing more than a quiet state of mind so far as the relation of that act to the demands of righteousness and the feeling of obligation is concerned. He has peace of conscience because conscience does not trouble him.

After this summary view of the nature of conscience and the explanations deemed necessary for its correct apprehension, we proceed more fully to elucidate the subject. This seems to us, first of all, to require a negative procedure, because conscience is so often, we might say, so generally, treated as a source of knowledge. To the question whether this is so we now address ourselves.

## II. CONSCIENCE NOT A COGNITIVE FACULTY.

That it does not and cannot perform its office without a knowledge of that which binds us, is universally conceded. But this does not imply that it is the faculty which obtains

the knowledge. It does not tell us what is right or wrong, as sense tells us what is white or black, neither is the act of the cognitive powers, upon which its operation depends, strictly an act of conscience, though synecdochically it may be and often is so designated. Conscience in all its operations presupposes cognitions pertaining to righteousness, but it is not a special faculty for obtaining such cognitions, neither is it identical with any of the intellectual faculties by which they are obtained.

A. *Conscience is not the same as consciousness.*—Some eminent thinkers have, indeed, applied the latter name to that which is designated by the former, and have thus given their sanction to a confusion which is singularly unphilosophical. But it is not at all certain that in identifying these terms they gave expression to a settled conviction that the two things which the terms designate are identical. A loose application of words in speaking of an intricate subject, concerning which science has not yet reached a clear conception, is nothing unusual; and it is not always just, in such cases, to put a strict construction upon the expressions of a writer. It is true, moreover, that the identification of conscience with consciousness has some philological testimony in its favor. Both had originally the same name. But this will not seem unaccountable when it is considered that very few, comparatively, have entered into a careful examination of the nature of conscience, and that its operations necessarily appear in consciousness, so that the two may readily be confounded. For practical purposes the two terms are frequently interchangeable, as both imply an activity of the mind in reference to cognitions obtained from other sources. The obligation which is felt in conscience, and the sense of guilt which follows the violation of such obligation, appear in consciousness. By an easy figure of speech, consciousness of obligation and of guilt may therefore be denominated conscience. This might suffice to account for such definitions of conscience as the following:



“The consciousness of an internal tribunal,” the “consciousness of a divine voice within us,” “the self-consciousness in its relation to God,” which, with others of a similar character, are found in eminent writers. But the question is not, what predicates may be applied to conscience in a general way, or in some allowable sense, but rather, what is conscience? That it is not consciousness the following considerations will, we think, render apparent.

1. Such an identification is entirely unsatisfactory, because it fails to set forth the distinctive nature of conscience. It says nothing to the purpose. The expressions generally used rather indicate that even in the minds of the persons who identify conscience and consciousness there is a distinction made between them. The words “consciousness of an internal tribunal” mean nothing more, when closely considered, than that conscience is a certain something of whose operations we are conscious; the expression “consciousness of a divine voice within us” declares only that something recognized as divine appears in our consciousness. What that is of which we are conscious and which is called conscience, is not stated in any such form as to present a distinct idea. It is scarcely to be presumed that, in strictness of speech, it is meant to declare conscience to be the consciousness, and to assert that the two terms are in all respects interchangeable. The seeming definition is therefore simply an evasion of the real difficulty, which is to ascertain precisely what that is which the word conscience denotes. Even the words “self-consciousness in its relation to God” brings us no nearer to the goal of our inquiry. Its vagueness is apparent as soon as we endeavor to form a distinct conception of its signification. What consciousness is we may apprehend, and the expression “self-consciousness” presents no formidable difficulty; but what “the relation of self-consciousness to God,” as something distinct from the relation to God of self, of which we are conscious, may mean, it is not easy to determine. Self is related to God, and we

are conscious of the self, which is thus related; in a certain sense we may say that we are unconscious of the relation; but what is conscience? To say that it is included in that self of which we are conscious, and which is related to God, is undoubtedly correct; but what the specific character of that is which is thus admitted to be a faculty of the mind, does not appear from the statement. It is a grave objection to the opinion that conscience is merely the consciousness, that it is, as usually presented, a mere form of words, by which the question concerning the specific nature of conscience is evaded.

2. But if the words used are really designed to assert that conscience and consciousness are the same, the opinion rests upon a confusion of the thing cognized with the power which cognizes it. The operations of conscience are known as well as those of any other power of the mind, and are known in the same way. They appear not in space, to be cognized by the senses, but in consciousness. Conscience would be to us a nullity if we were not conscious of it: there is no other way by which a knowledge of it could be obtained. About this there can be no dispute. But this affords no more reason for identifying it with consciousness than it does for identifying the latter with any other power whose operations are thus known. In all alike consciousness is the condition under which we cognize them; but conscience is no more the same as consciousness on this account than it is identical with memory. The confusion is of the same character as that of identifying the perception with the material objects perceived, and is scarcely less prolific of error.

3. Conscience has an office which consciousness cannot perform. The latter is merely the power through whose mediation mental phenomena become known to us. It decides nothing and obligates to nothing. It has no moral potency of any kind. A wicked thought or a good resolve, a pleasant prospect or a painful reminiscence appear with equal promptness in consciousness. It can have no cogni-

tion of the moral qualities pertaining to the former before these have been cognized by the appropriate faculty, and it occupies the same relation to the good as to the evil. But conscience is employed exclusively about moral and spiritual qualities. Of the phenomena of the mind, so far as they are morally indifferent, it takes no notice. Its operations appear in consciousness, just as do the other operations of the mind; but the operations which are known by consciousness are not the operations of consciousness itself. It does not furnish the knowledge of which I am conscious. When we contemplate a divine command and feel the obligation to obey it, we are conscious of this feeling, but it is not consciousness that produces it: the feeling is the work of the conscience. When we think upon a mathematical problem, and feelings of pleasure ensue upon our success in solving it, we are conscious of it all, but the conscience has nothing to do with it. Conscience performs functions which do not belong to consciousness, and the latter has a wide field of operation which lies wholly beyond the province of the former. Conscience is a moral power; consciousness is not.

B. *Conscience is not the judgment.* — Far more prevalent than the opinion just reviewed, and, at least in one of its forms, far more specious, is the theory which identifies conscience with the judging faculty. This may be regarded as the view generally entertained by moralists until a comparatively recent period, and is perhaps the predominating one still. By some who hold this theory in its main features, conscience is represented as an act, by others as a faculty; but both agree in pronouncing its functions to be of a judicial character. "Conscience, properly speaking," says Aquinas, "is not a power, but an act: it is the actual application of knowledge to that which we do." The same opinion is expressed in somewhat different words by Budaeus: "Conscience is the judgment of man concerning his actions as related to the law." With slight variations this

definition appears in most of the ethical treatises published prior to the present century, and in a large portion of those of a later date. The principal diversity lies in the answer to the question whether it is a faculty or an act. Those who regard it as the former define it to be the mental faculty which judges of the rectitude of human actions; those who regard it as the latter define it to be the operations of the faculty of judgment within the sphere of morals.

The latter view labors under the special objection of separating conscience from man's nature entirely, by denying that it is a human power; for although the performance of operations necessarily presupposes the power to perform them, the theory explicitly declares that this power does not belong to the conception in the case of conscience, but that the latter simply designates certain products of the faculty of judgment. Conscience is accordingly represented not as something which man has, but as something which he does, and which he therefore may be and frequently is without. The theory in this form is at open variance with human consciousness. But in either form it involves difficulties which are fatal to it.

1. It does not account for the effects of conscience as given in consciousness. That conscience is employed about judgments, cannot be denied. When a decision is made in reference to moral quality, one thing being pronounced right, another wrong, the conscience performs its functions: it is even customary to say that conscience so pronounces. But it is beyond controversy that conscience involves something more than the decision or the power of forming it. When we experience remorse we are conscious that it is not merely the judgment that troubles us. Errors of judgment, as such, do not cause such pain. This is evident from the fact that mistakes made in reference to subjects which are morally indifferent, though they are often productive of grief, never cause such pangs as those which are imputed to conscience. But if the judgment and the conscience were

one and the same faculty, the pain resulting from error in judgment would be remorse. The consequences of a wrong judgment in a morally indifferent matter may be painful, because property, health or character may thus be impaired or lost; but the pain does not result from a mere violation of judgment as such. It is the consequences that cause the trouble; if these could be averted, the soul would experience little suffering in view of the error committed. Judging a blue object to be green causes no pain, if the error entails no disadvantage. But a violation of conscience is productive of suffering independently of any losses that may spring from it. The fact that pain follows one error in judgment and not another, is proof that its source does not lie in the judgment as such. The torment of conscience violated is not the torment simply of an erring judgment. When we suffer the pangs resulting from a violation of conscience, consciousness does not present to us the disagreeable effects of certain judgments as the cause of the pangs. On the contrary, conscience is perceived to require a careful distinction to be made between the pain which arises from a cognition of wrong, and the pain which originates in an anticipation or an actual experience of loss. The latter lies entirely outside of the domain of conscience: it is purely natural, not moral, and can be brought under the purview of the latter only by a subsequent mental act determining the rightness or wrongness of the soul's attitude to the good lost and the pain experienced. The pangs of conscience ensue upon the judgment that wrong has been done, whether the effects of this wrong upon our temporal interests are judged to be beneficial or deleterious. It is not at all the power of judging a thing to be profitable or injurious, nor the acts of judgment in this regard, that we call conscience; and it is not the effect of such judgment that we call the approval or censure of conscience. We feel the obligatoriness of right, independently of the effects upon our interests resulting from its practice. The right is always expedient, as the

Christian, at least, is certain, *a priori*; but whether it can be seen to be expedient or not, even when its performance seems entirely inexpedient, the obligation to practice it is felt. That which feels this obligation is conscience, while the judgment feels nothing and can as a formal power produce no remorse.

2. The identification of the faculty of judgment with the conscience would imply that man's conscientiousness is proportioned to his logical acumen, which is contrary to all experience. The judgment respecting right and the action of conscience are not the same thing. If a man of acute judgment directs his attention to moral subjects, his acuteness will of course not entirely forsake him. But such a man may be corrupt and desperately wicked. Has he then, on account of his intellectual skill, a more acute and active conscience than a man of less penetrating judgment, but of more noble character? If the judgment be the conscience, the answer must, in opposition to the most palpable facts, be in the affirmative. It will be replied, perhaps, that the difference obviously lies in the compliance or non-compliance of the two with their moral decisions. But true as it is that the difference, in a great measure, lies in this, the answer does not meet the case. The question does not turn upon the difference between them in moral character, which is admitted in the outset, but upon the difference in the power of judgment as related to the power of conscience. If the two are identical, the conscience of each must necessarily have the same attributes as the judgment of each, and he who has the best judgment, though a man who is not to be trusted, will have the best conscience. The question must therefore be answered in the negative, which involves the admission that the conscience is not the judgment. Nor will the argument be invalidated by the objection that the bad man's judgment, though confessedly acute on other subjects, will be dull on moral questions in proportion to his wickedness. While it must be admitted

that sin clouds the judgment in the domain of religion and morality, so that bad men sometimes render decisions on such subjects of which they would be ashamed if the question were of a different character, it cannot be denied that numerous instances occur in which bold, bad men refuse to let their reason be the dupe of their passions, and therefore judge correctly as to what is right or wrong, so far as this lies within the scope of unaided reason, even though they choose the wrong in their own practice. Nay, there are men of judgments quick and sharp who renounce all allegiance to virtue; and of some it may even be said that their wickedness has reached such a satanic depth that they are hardened against every remonstrance of conscience and intellectually exempt, in consequence, from many of the deceptious arts of sin. They have no longer any interest in being deceived, as they have sunk below the fear of the pangs arising from violated conscience, to guard against which is the object of self-deception. The judgment on moral questions may thus be clear and acute in persons of the greatest turpitude, notwithstanding the natural tendency of sin to pervert the judgment and render it untrustworthy on such questions. But if the judgment were the conscience, the necessary inference would be that the latter becomes more acute when the lowest depths of sin are reached, while all agree that in such cases it is seared, and remorse is obviated. The two are therefore obviously not identical.

3. The theory which confounds the conscience with the judgment virtually denies the existence of a moral power in man. One act of judgment would then be as obligatory as another, inasmuch as all the obligatory force would lie in the intellectual decision. The judgment that a thing is right, or that it is expedient, would be all that there is of morality so far as the conscience has anything to do with it. Any other power in conscience to enforce the decision, which may have more energy in some and less in others, the

theory ignores. The moral power which is ordinarily called conscience is thus discarded. Utilitarianism is the necessary result, and this is simply systematized selfishness. Whether the intellectual decision shall have any effect in determining the will, is left entirely to its power of enlisting our natural sensibilities, independently of any moral susceptibilities. No room is left for a moral sensibility, as this would be postulating a conscience, though under another name, as something distinct from the judgment. If that which is approved by the latter faculty can awaken a natural desire, it will so far forth become a motive; if it cannot, that is, if its only claim to be carried out in practice be that it is right, it will be rejected without any possible scruple. The judgment that it is right to assist the needy, has no more influence upon our conduct, if there is no conscience distinct from the judgment, than the judgment that this paper is white. Both would be purely intellectual acts. Both might become motives to action; but the ground of action would in both cases be the same, namely, the further judgment that our interest would be promoted by taking a certain course. If the judgment is the conscience, there is no moral character in the decision in either case, and no imperative force for the soul.

It may be objected that the one judgment lies in the domain of morality while the other does not, and that this constitutes the difference. We freely admit the distinction, and regard it as momentous; but those who identify the conscience with the judgment have no right to fall back upon it, as it is inconsistent with their theory. They can appeal only to the judgment, not to the conscience as a power which is affected by a judgment lying in the domain of morality, while it is unaffected by another lying outside of this domain. The reply to our argument issues precisely in what we maintain, and thus confirms it. The conscience is called into exercise in one of the cases mentioned and not



in the other, while the judgment is exercised in both. These two powers therefore cannot be identical.

This conclusion is not rendered nugatory by alleging that the judgment is identical with conscience only so far as it decides upon moral subjects. The faculty of judgment is the same in all cases, notwithstanding the subject-matter about which it is employed is different. That which gives a judgment respecting a matter of right more force upon the soul than another respecting a matter of indifference, is not that the judging faculty is different in the two cases. It is the same faculty in both. But the different judgments appeal to different powers in our nature. In the one case we feel obligation, in the other we do not; in other words, in the one case the conscience is called into activity, in the other it is not. It will be observed, that the difference in the effect experienced lies not at all in the different degrees of certainty attaching to these different judgments. Morally indifferent things may be capable of apodictic proof, and we can be entirely certain of them without feeling any obligation. There is a power distinct from the judgment which decisions in moral questions arouse, and this power is what is denominated conscience. This is a moral power, while the judgment as such is morally indifferent, and may be used morally or immorally, and applied to subjects good, bad, or indifferent. If there is no moral power distinct from the judgment, there is no moral power in the soul at all.

C. *Conscience is not the faculty of rational intuition.*—How some were led to regard the conscience as identical with the faculty by which we have intuitions of supersensual truths, it is easy to understand. The idea of rectitude having been traced to this intuitive faculty as its source, and the judgments formed under this idea having been confounded with the intuition itself, it was as easy to identify it with the intuitive faculty as with the judgment. But this identifi-

cation is without warrant. While the intuition of right is a necessary condition of feeling the obligation, the two are not the same.

1. There are rational intuitions which, by common consent, cannot be referred to conscience. The utmost that could be claimed, with any semblance of reason, is that conscience is a special name given to the faculty of supersensual truths with reference to its function in the domain of morals. When we speak of the faculty of rational intuition, or of reason, as it is sometimes called, we do not think of conscience as suggested by the name. The intuition of time and space is not by conscience. This all admit; and upon this admission we might rest the case. It implies precisely what we claim, namely, that this intuitive faculty and the conscience are not one and the same power.

2. But the idea that conscience is merely a special name given to the reason with reference to its moral intuitions, is equally without foundation. In the first place, there is no evidence that the intuition of rectitude presupposes a faculty different in kind from that which cognizes other supersensual truths, and no reason whatever, if it is not a different faculty, for giving it a different name on account of this special function. If it is an intuitive faculty distinct from the faculty for the intuition of other supersensual truths, the claim of identity with this is abandoned. But that it is such a faculty at all is an unwarranted assumption. If it is the intuitive faculty, it is the same which cognizes other supersensual truths. We find no authority in consciousness for making a distinction. The ideas which the faculty originates, are indeed different from each other; but we do not postulate a different faculty or give different names to the same faculty when the objects differ. A pen and a star are certainly different, but the sense which perceives both has in both cases the same name. The multiplication of names for one and the same thing is needless, and the assumption

that conscience is only another name for reason must be proved before it can be received.

But, in the second place, this is not only assumed without proof, but in opposition to the evidence in the case. Granting that we have the idea of rectitude by the faculty of rational intuition, we appeal to every man's consciousness as a witness in regard to the question, whether that which we call conscience is not something more than the mere intuition of rectitude, or the faculty by which we have that intuition. Never could the error of confounding conscience with the judgment have occurred, if there were any evidence in consciousness that this is all that conscience means. Conscience, as every one must be convinced, if he is willing to observe its operations in his own soul, is something more than a knowledge of right, or a faculty by which that knowledge is obtained. It requires such knowledge as a condition of its activity, but it is not merely a power to know. There are intuitions with which conscience has nothing to do; there are functions performed by conscience which have nothing of the character of intuitions. It is evident, therefore, that conscience cannot be identical with the reason as the faculty of supersensual intuitions.

3. To this must be added that the intuition of rectitude does not even supply all the cognitive materials that enter into the operation of conscience. When the obligation is felt to perform a special act or to pursue a particular course, something more must be known than that there is such a thing as righteousness. The right is felt to be obligatory, but that does not imply that the obligatoriness extends to everything that may solicit to action. Some things are right, some things are wrong. Before the obligation in any special case is felt it must be known to belong to the category of right. And this is not decided by the simple intuition of righteousness, just as it is not decided what is the cause of a given event when we have the intuition of causality. We feel the obligation of right, but this does

not, for example, enlist every wakeful conscience in the cause of prohibition or sabbatarianism. The special question whether an act or a cause is right is altogether distinct from the other question whether right is obligatory. The latter is a matter of intuition, the former is not. But few who have reflected on the subject would venture to claim that intuition determines what is right in individual instances as it furnishes the general idea of rectitude. All experience proves the contrary. We must judge what is right. Following so-called intuitions would often be following prejudices and selfish inclinations. But if intuition does not even furnish the knowledge upon which the action of conscience depends, it would be unreasonable to confound the two faculties.

D. *Neither is conscience a special cognitive Faculty.*—Some of those who insist that conscience furnishes knowledge admit that it cannot be identified with any of the acknowledged cognitive faculties, but maintain that it is a special power of the soul which performs cognitive functions within a sphere peculiar to itself, and that these functions are its distinctive characteristics. This too seems to us unfounded.

That there are peculiar objects which alone come within the scope of conscience, and that to discharge its office there must be an antecedent cognition of these objects, we hold to be unquestionable. The right must be known before there can be an obligation felt to do it. But is conscience the faculty by which that knowledge is obtained? In our view this question must be answered in the negative.

1. The cognitions which condition the operations of conscience are attributable to universally recognized cognitive powers, and it is therefore needless to assume a special faculty to obtain them.

Conscience has a domain of its own. This is conceded on all sides. That the objects about which it is employed are not known by the senses is equally certain. Whether an act be right cannot be known by merely seeing it. Mo-

rality belongs to persons, not to matter or motion. But does it follow from this that we must have a special cognitive faculty for the discernment of moral quality, or that conscience is such a faculty? It is not pretended that we have a power which penetrates into people's hearts and directly cognizes motives and purposes. Not even the most ardent advocate of its cognitive functions claims this for the conscience. It has no intuition of the rectitude of an act. Whether an act is right must be learned from other sources.

There is a revelation of righteousness given us by God in nature and in the supernatural gift of the Holy Scriptures. Both contain matter for conscience, but for neither is conscience the cognitive faculty.

a. That there is information affecting the conscience made to the mind through the works of God may be regarded as a universally accepted truth. The creature points to the Creator, and intelligent spirits thus learn lessons of wisdom and of duty. "The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth His handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge." Ps. 19, 1. 2. That is a revelation made in nature. The man is to be pitied who does not hear its voice and is not moved to adoration. Even with regard to heathen people St. Paul says: "That which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath revealed it unto them. For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse." Rom. 1, 19.20. The invisible creation refers us to the invisible Creator. We see Him not, but we see His works, and trace them back to the eternal power and Godhead as their cause, dimly as the nature and personality of this cause may be apprehended. And in our nature, when we have traced the work to its Author, we feel our dependence upon Him and recognize His authority. There is a revelation of God in nature, however inadequate it may

be for the needs of man as sin has corrupted his heart and darkened his intellect. And this is continued in the works of His providence which daily bless mankind. "He left not Himself without witness, in that He did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness." Acts 14, 17. Our daily bread is a daily declaration of our Father's love, from whom every good and perfect gift comes. And without controversy this revelation of God in nature shows man his accountability to his Maker and his obligation to serve and obey Him.

But does this make manifest that conscience is the source of this revelation? This will scarcely be claimed. It is the heavens, not the conscience, that is said to declare the glory of God. It is the visible things that are made through which we are said to perceive the invisible things of God, even His eternal power and Godhead. It is the good that God does, the rain from heaven and the fruitful seasons, that are said to bear witness of Him. In all these texts of Scripture a revelation is spoken of as made not by the conscience of man, but by the works of God as these are presented to our senses.

If conscience is not the source, is it not then the organ of this revelation? Undoubtedly something more than mere sense is necessary to see God in His works. There are many who behold the heavens above them and the earth beneath them without a thought of Him whose glory they declare, and many who receive the food, by the bestowal of which His goodness is shown, without a recognition of its source and without an emotion of gratitude. The brute too has senses and can see God's works, though it has no ability to see the invisible things of God. So no doubt there are human beings who perceive the evidences without perceiving the God to whom they bear witness. "O Lord, how great are Thy works! and Thy thoughts are very deep. A brutish man knoweth not, neither doth a fool understand this." Ps. 92, 5. 6. The revelation must be understood

before it can become a suggestive fact. The writing is there, but its contents can become our possession only by reading it. Is conscience the organ by which this is done? We think not.

In the first place, a moment's reflection will convince us that the faculty by which the objects in nature are perceived is the sense, and the faculty by which any inferences are drawn from our perceptions is the judgment. When from nature we gain some knowledge of God and His will it is the same faculties that are exercised as when we observe and classify these objects for the purposes of science. The cognitive process is the same, whatever may be the results reached or the uses made of our cognitions. In other words, it is sense that is the power of our intuitive knowing and judgment that is the power of our discursive knowing, whether the knowledge derived from the contemplation of nature pertains to physics or theology, esthetics or ethics. Conscience may indeed be a factor in determining what direction our perceiving and thinking shall take, and certainly has a function to perform when the soul by the contemplation of God's works has been led through them to the cognition of Him as their cause. But this determining influence and moral function is not the organ by which the knowledge is gained. It is not conscience that perceives the starry heavens and infers that the hand that made them is divine. All that conscience does is to direct the proper faculties of cognition into proper channels and hold us to duty when this is learned.

In the second place, if conscience were the power by which God is recognized in nature, the necessary inference would be that the ignorant man who cannot read the writing in the works of God has no conscience, or a conscience so blunted and impaired that it has become practically useless, and that the man of dialectic skill and ready reasoning is necessarily the man of enlightened and vigilant conscience. But the facts of experience show that close ob-

servers of nature and keen reasoners in natural theology are not always the men who are most scrupulously conscientious. It is manifest that the moral character does not always correspond to the intellectual acumen; and it is therefore equally manifest that the two are not identical. Conscience cannot be the organ for the apprehension of the truth which guides us in the path of duty, when many of those who intellectually apprehend such truth show no signs of the work of conscience in their moral life, while many who manifest the power of conscience in this respect exhibit little discursive ability. A man without conscience may have a sharp eye and a shrewd brain in ethical as well as in other questions, while a man of tender conscience may be lame in his logic. Conscience does not cognize what external nature reveals in the domain of religion and morality, but utilizes for religious and moral ends what is perceived by the intellectual powers.

We must remind the reader that we are not ignoring the influence which the moral or spiritual condition of the soul exerts upon its intellectual operations. Not only will spiritual enlightenment enable a person to see what the natural man does not see and cannot see, but the moral character, even on the plane of nature, will necessarily affect the mind's work in regard to moral subjects. But it remains a fact notwithstanding that an unscrupulous man may have a keen intellect in moral as well as in other questions, while a conscientious man may be dull in intellectual work. The work of pure cognition is not the work of the conscience, which is inactive when no effect is produced in the soul by its knowledge, whether this lies in the field of morals or any other field.

Advocates of the theory that conscience is a special cognitive faculty have a great deal to say about a law written in the heart, and thus of a special revelation of righteousness made in our nature to the conscience. Assuming that this law is a clear code that securely directs man through



the mazes of life and forms a protection against straying from the path of right, and assuming further that conscience is the faculty which reads this code and makes it available for moral judgments, nay, that it even furnishes these judgments themselves in all moral emergencies, some writers find it an easy matter to dispose of all questions about the conscience. But assumptions are not evidence. That there is a law written in the heart is itself not so clear as is supposed. We shall later examine more particularly the words of St. Paul that speak of the work of the law in the human heart. But aside from any difficulty on this point, it is certain that what is written in the heart is not a series of moral rules specifying man's duties in the various circumstances of life. The assumption is contrary to all experience. Neither Gentiles nor Christians find such specifications of duty ready made within them. Both find it necessary in many cases to pass through doubts and difficulties to the satisfactory decision of moral questions, and in some cases to remain, after all these debatings, unsatisfied as to what is duty under the circumstances. If the decalogue was written on man's heart before the fall, it certainly is not written there now, else there would have been no need to engrave it on tables of stone and set it before man's eyes that he might know the commandments of his God. The utmost that could be claimed, in coincidence with the testimony of experience, is the existence of a moral nature that makes account of righteousness and without supernatural revelation has some knowledge of right and wrong, however this may be obtained. Nor is there any proof for the assumption that conscience is the faculty by which the law, whether written in the heart or on tables of stone, comes to our knowledge. In the latter case, at least, the knowledge is beyond dispute obtained by reading the law and applying the intellect to understand what we read. Whether it affects the conscience or not is an entirely different matter. And as for moral judgments no one thinks, when he reflects upon

the subject at all, that these present themselves in our consciousness ready formulated whenever circumstances require them, without any activity of the understanding applying the principles of righteousness to the case in hand and reaching the result which we call our judgment in the case. There are moral judgments about which conscience is concerned, but they are not the judgments of conscience itself. The knowledge concerning right and wrong is implied in their formation, but that knowledge is not itself the conscience, neither is this the faculty by which it is obtained. There is knowledge derived from nature that concerns the conscience, whether we get it from within or from without, but there is knowledge derived from the Scriptures that concern the conscience also, and there is no more ground for contending that conscience is cognitive of the one than of the other. It is dependent on the cognition of righteousness, but it is not the faculty that tells us what is righteous. When that is known, and only when that is known, does it perform its functions.

b. The work of conscience needs more knowledge of righteousness than is derivable from nature. But as conscience is not the faculty which furnishes the cognitions derived from nature, so it is not the faculty which furnishes those derived from supernatural sources through the revelation given in Holy Scripture. Neither the law nor the gospel contained in the Bible is furnished by the conscience, nor is conscience the faculty by which either law or gospel comes to our knowledge:

1. As against those who teach that conscience is a special faculty of the soul for the cognition of right, and who make its natural cognitions the test of all righteousness, it may be necessary, in the first place, to give a reason for introducing supernatural revelation at all into an inquiry concerning the conscience. If it were so, that conscience is a cognitive power furnished with a complete code of divine law, and thus a divinely constituted tribunal for the decision

of all questions of right, then we would have to concede that no supernatural revelation could have any authority in its court or in any way affect its decisions. In that case any professed revelation from God must submit to have its claims tested before the tribunal of conscience, and only that which abides the test could be accepted as divine. But that is precisely what we deny. It is not so. These naturalistic assumptions only beg the question, and Christians at least will not be frightened by their pretensions. This is not the place to show that we have ample reason for accepting the revelation given in Holy Scripture. We are writing for Christians who recognize its authority. And this revelation contains the law and the gospel for our learning. Both pertain to the conscience, because both contain the will of God that binds the conscience. Because the light of nature was not sufficient for man's guidance, God gave the law in a written form that he might read it and know it. "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to Thy Word." Ps. 119, 9. That is the rule for a right life. "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." Isa. 8, 20. Nor must the gospel be excluded when we inquire into the needs of conscience. As that which nature teaches is not sufficient to furnish man with an adequate knowledge of God, does not supply the light needed for righteousness in the moral darkness of this world, does not show how the fallen human race can be restored to its original holiness and happiness, and does not furnish the power and the means necessary for such restoration, God in His infinite mercy sent His Son for our salvation, and revealed His gracious will in the Holy Scriptures for our learning and comfort. The truth thus presented is requisite not only for man's deliverance from death, but also for the complete performance of the functions of conscience. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction,

for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." 2 Tim. 3, 16. 17. The supernatural revelation furnishes knowledge which cannot be obtained from natural sources, but which is needed for the work of conscience. The written law is necessary that we may know what the will of the Lord is, so that in conscience we may feel the obligation which it lays upon us. But the gospel also pertains to the conscience. It gives the requisite material and power that we may hold "the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience" (1 Tim. 3, 9) and it gives to the troubled conscience the peace which all nature is powerless to impart. "If the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" Heb. 9, 13. 14. That the conscience is affected by the will of God as revealed in Holy Scripture as well as by the knowledge of right derived from nature is so manifest, that no one thinks of disputing it unless he is impelled by the exigencies of a theory.

2) But conscience is neither the source nor the organ of the knowledge imparted by supernatural revelation.

That it is not the source needs no further proof than that which is contained in the terms of the proposition. The law was given by Moses, not by the conscience, and grace and truth came by Jesus Christ, not by the conscience. The supernatural revelation, whether it pertain to the requirements made upon us and the penalties imposed in case of failure to fulfill them, or to the gracious provisions which God has made for the vicarious fulfilment of these requirements and the vicarious suffering of these penalties, and for our salvation through the obedience thus rendered in our stead, is contained in Holy Scripture, not in conscience. The conscience is not a faculty to which we are to

resort for instruction as need may require for our guidance or for our peace. It is not the conscience that speaks the words which are given by inspiration of God and which give us light in the encircling gloom of earth. It is not the conscience that is meant when we are referred to the law and to the testimony as the rule of our faith and life. It is the Bible, not the conscience, to which we must go to learn our duty and find a Savior from our sin. God speaks, not the conscience; He speaks in the Scriptures, not in the conscience. The action of conscience is only secondary; it speaks when God has spoken, and holds us to that which God has spoken. Its authority is only derivative. God alone rules, and no power of man, or of any other creature, can autocratically possess the authority which belongs alone to the Creator. Nothing but mischief could result from substituting the conscience for the word of God. In performing its functions it employs the word of righteousness and of truth given in the Bible, but it is not the source of that word. God speaks to the conscience, but the conscience does not originate what He speaks. First of all man must hear what God speaks; then conscience can do its work.

But neither is conscience the organ through which the knowledge imparted through the Holy Scripture is obtained. The law certainly appeals to our nature as the gospel, independently of its supernatural power, does not, because there is a natural knowledge of right as there is not a natural knowledge of saving grace. But there is no reason for assuming that conscience is the faculty for the apprehension of either. The evidence is against the assumption.

In the first place, when the Word of God is read or heard, it may or it may not take hold of the conscience, but in either case it must be apprehended before any influence can be exerted. Those who will not heed it increase their sin by setting themselves against the light. In doing this they may offend against their own conscience, because this has sanctioned the right or truth by which they refuse to be

governed. They have the knowledge necessary for right action and it may be claimed that conscience does its work in their case, if not by securing compliance with the obligation felt, at least by holding them to righteousness and causing them trouble for not fulfilling it. But when the Bible is read or preaching is heard without any moral effect; as when a skeptic or indifferentist learns its commands and promises for other ends than that of benefiting his own soul, so that they take no hold upon the heart, has conscience done its work then? Manifestly it has not. It has done nothing. But has the soul on that account remained ignorant of the revelation contained in the Scriptures? This would certainly be the case if conscience were the organ for the apprehension of this revelation. The organ failing to perform its function, the apprehension would be impossible. The fact that some men know the truth and care nothing about it, plainly proves that conscience is not the organ by which the knowledge of that truth is obtained. They have the knowledge, but it has left the conscience unaffected. The faculty by which the knowledge was gained must therefore be some other than the conscience. This comes into operation only when the light enters, is not itself the medium through which this enters. Conscience has functions to perform respecting the revelation contained in the Bible, but the mind may know that revelation when conscience is seared and refuses to act.

In the second place, the entrance of the light is prior to the operation of conscience and is the necessary condition of the performance of its functions. Those who heed and those who do not heed the Word are, up to the point at which the soul consciously decides for or against the truth and the right, in the same moral condition. The conscience cannot act in regard to a duty to be performed or a fact to be believed before a knowledge of them has been obtained. That which we do not know cannot be felt to be obligatory. The knowledge must precede the sanction or disapproval of the

thing known. A proposition bearing on morals or religion is understood by the same faculties which understand propositions touching on any other subjects. That they do not attain their purpose when the conscience is not affected by them is evident. They are given that men may repent and believe and live righteously and godly in this present world, and attain to everlasting life in the world to come. This will not be accomplished if the conscience remains inactive. But the knowing is a different thing from the utilization of the knowledge. Intellectually the truth may be known even when the soul remains spiritually blind. The conscience should apply the revelation, but it is not the organ for obtaining the knowledge which it uses or may fail to use.

That the cognition is not in any case the act of conscience experience furnishes ample proof. When we read the book of nature, the mind cognizes through the senses. The power by which we see and hear the works of God is certainly not the conscience: no one confounds this with sense-perception. If from the cognitions which the mind obtains by this perception, certain inferences are drawn touching the Creator of the objects cognized and His will, it will hardly be maintained by reflecting persons that conscience draws them. The same faculty which draws inferences in the domain of esthetics or politics, draws them also in that of religion and morality.

When we read the book of God's written revelation, the mental process, so far as the cognition of right is concerned, is the same. We apprehend through the instrumentality of the organs of sense the laws presented, and the discursive faculties elaborate the cognitions obtained and make inferences from them, just as they do when the subject-matter is of a different character. It is not the conscience that perceives the divine law, or forms the judgments by which it is applied.

There is no semblance of reason why the cognition of right should be referred to a special faculty, while other cog-

nitions, of such diverse kinds, should be referred to one and the same cognitive faculty. That the conscience is employed about one class of cognitions exclusively, is unquestionable; but it is difficult to perceive why this should be regarded as evidence that conscience is the power by which such cognitions are obtained. Why should the cognition of a moral truth be assigned to a special moral faculty rather than the cognition of a political truth to a special political faculty? The generally recognized cognitive faculties are sufficient to account for our knowledge in the domain of morality as well as for our knowledge of other kinds; and the assumption that a special intellectual faculty is needed for the purpose of cognizing moral objects is entirely gratuitous. Conscience is a power that does deal with moral objects, but it deals with them after they are cognized: to cognize them is not its office.

We do not deny that conscience exerts an influence upon the cognitive faculty in reference to moral subjects. In proportion as this power is sensitive will the intellect be active and wary in the domain of morals. But this is not imputing cognitive power to the conscience. A love for botany will influence the activity of the faculty of cognition in that direction, just as a love for the right will quicken it when engaged on moral subjects. It is a palpable blunder to transfer the cognition from its proper faculty to the sensibility by which that faculty is influenced. However largely the intellect may be swayed by the sensibilities, the intellections belong to the former, not to the latter.

We get our knowledge of the materials which conscience uses just as we get our knowledge of those which it leaves unused. We do not know a thing to be right because conscience enforces it, but conscience enforces it because by the cognitive faculties we know it to be right.

We see one man strike another, and we pronounce the act wrong. Certainly this is not because the wrongness of the man's deed is perceived by the sense of sight. It may



be right for aught this sense can know. A blow may be struck without wrong. An officer may rightfully use force when legitimate authority is resisted; a man may rightfully strike another to defend himself against wrongful violence. Why then is the blow pronounced wrong? Evidently because the judgment has, the circumstances having been considered and an accepted standard having been applied, been moved by the evidence so to decide. Is it then conscience that has formed the decision? This would be simply identifying it with the judgment, not asserting it to be a special cognitive faculty; and such an identification would discard conscience entirely, as it would leave it without an appropriate function. Conscience neither furnishes the norm for forming a correct moral judgment, nor does it discern the character of the act respecting which a judgment is to be formed. Its work begins when the cognition has been obtained. For obtaining cognitions we have other powers.

The opinion which some moralists have commended as especially luminous and satisfactory, entirely fails to give any satisfaction when closely examined. They aver that the general knowledge of right answers to the major premise in the syllogism, while the conscience furnishes the minor premise by cognizing the character of the object in question, so that reason has simply to draw the conclusion. No doubt it is easy enough to conclude that it is right to assist the needy, if it be known that this is benevolent and that benevolence is right. But that conscience furnishes one of the premises is just what is assumed without proof, and what we maintain to be incapable of proof; nay, it is assumed in the face of the clearest evidence against it. The general idea which forms the major premise, it is admitted, is derived from some other source than conscience. The particular knowledge which the minor involves cannot be obtained in the way assumed. There is no trace in consciousness of any such power in conscience as is here

claimed for it. We have no direct cognition of the quality of benevolence or malevolence, in other persons or in human acts, neither by conscience nor by any other power. Our only way to cognize it is by inference from that which presents itself to our senses. Not even when all agree in approving one thing as right or condemning another as wrong, does the approval or condemnation refer to the mere act as cognized by the appropriate faculty. Taking another's life is not wrong *per se*. Murder, which all agree in pronouncing wrong, is not merely taking a man's life: it implies a certain quality of the person who commits the deed, namely malice, without a knowledge of which the term cannot be justly applied to him. When absolute wrong is predicated of certain terms, these terms always denote something more than that which sense can cognize in the objects to which they are applied. This "something more" conscience cannot cognize: it cannot look into others' souls; and it is not needed to look into our own, as that is the proper office of consciousness. The minor premise spoken of is just what conscience has no power whatever to furnish: what the intuitive faculties cannot supply, can be supplied only by inference of the faculty of judgment.

The recognized cognitive faculties furnish all the cognitions in the domain of morals as well as in every other domain, and no special cognitive faculty for discerning the right is needed, and none exists. Conscience cognizes nothing.

2. That conscience is not a special cognitive power appears evident from the fact that we are not conscious of its activity when the conduct of others is under examination. We cognize wrong in them as well as in ourselves, and commend or condemn their acts as well as our own. But it may be said with confidence that, when wrong is cognized as belonging to them, we never experience any activity of conscience. If this cognizes the wrong, why should not

those functions be performed in the case which all recognize as functions peculiar to conscience? If our conscience has nothing to do with his offense, why claim that it is our conscience which cognizes its moral character?

It will be replied, perhaps, that our argument begs the question, because the very point in controversy is, whether there is an activity of conscience when we cognize the moral equality of a person or his acts, while we assume that there is not. But the reply is irrelevant. That there is a moral cognition when we decide upon the rightness or wrongness of another's conduct, is admitted; that there is no corresponding activity of conscience, aside from the cognition, is admitted also. The case then stands thus. The function which is performed belongs to the faculty of judgment: there is not the shadow of a reason for referring it to another faculty. To say that it belongs to the conscience betrays the desire to support a theory at any hazard. What this faculty, according to universally entertained views of its powers, can perform, is not performed in the case in question. The inference is therefore perfectly legitimate, that the power cognizing the right and the wrong is not the conscience.

Nor is this invalidated by the objection, that the person performing the act must be the subject of the operations of conscience, and that in him it does perform its appropriate functions. This is indubitable, but it is again irrelevant. Whether conscience does discharge its proper office, is not at all the question. The point to be decided is, whether it performs any functions in the observer who cognizes moral quality in another's conduct. He may have such moral cognitions. But each one is conscious, when he judges another's deeds to be right or wrong, that he is performing a purely intellectual act, which does not involve the functions universally attributed to conscience. He experiences nothing that by common consent could be referred to this power. Hence it is manifest that it is not conscience which cognizes

the moral quality of another's deeds; and if moral quality is cognized in this case by another power, it is purely arbitrary to refer its cognition to conscience in any case.

*E.* The difficulties in which the cognitive theory is involved have induced many to regard conscience as a mixed faculty with a twofold office. They teach that it belongs to the intellect because it is a power to know, and that it belongs to the sensibilities because it is a power to feel the force of that which it knows. We can see in this no contribution towards a clearer view of conscience.

1. On examination it will be found to be merely an evasion of the difficulties. It accepts the word in the wide sense which is so frequently attached to it, but it leaves the whole question open as to what conscience is in a strict and proper sense. No one doubts that knowledge is necessary for the proper work of conscience, and no one objects when in popular language it is said that conscience tells us what to do and what not to do. It enforces the duty known, and thus by an easy figure may be said to dictate what is to be done. But that does not decide whether the information on subjects of duty is furnished by the conscience or not. So far as we learn the will of God from the Bible, it is not even claimed that conscience is the source of our knowledge. Closely considered, the theory that conscience is a cognitive power usually means that there is a natural knowledge of righteousness, that conscience is the hidden recess in the soul where, this knowledge originates and whence it emanates, and that this natural knowledge is the ultimate standard and test for all questions of right and duty, or of all questions of conscience. And that is fundamentally false. We cannot consent, Christians generally should find it impossible to consent, that the whole work of conscience should be limited to duty as nature teaches it. Conscience has a much wider range and scope. What binds us is the will of God, however we may learn it, and it would be folly to rule out, from the start, what is written in the Scriptures

for our learning, or to subject this to an imaginary tribunal in the soul whence infallible decrees are supposed to proceed respecting all matters obligatory on man. If the cognitive theory means the securing of a natural basis for testing the claims of all religion and morality, it is false in foundation and aim; if it means merely that knowledge is requisite for the functions of conscience, the theory is superfluous, as all cognitions necessary for its work can be obtained and accounted for without resorting to the cumbersome expedient of making conscience cognitive.

2. The doctrine of a mixed or compound faculty is so far from securing scientific accuracy and clearness that it only introduces confusion. It is an attempt to define by accepting the synecdochical as the proper or strictly literal sense of the word, and thus introduces an element as essential that is not of the essence of conscience. The result is a definition that cannot be used for working purposes. Only error could result if an attempt were made to elaborate the subject on that basis. When, for example, a man knows what is right, has his conscience performed its proper office, though he be utterly regardless of the claims of right, nay, though he be so obdurate that he does not even feel the obligation which right imposes? Has half of that supposedly compound power called conscience discharged its office, or has the whole faculty half performed its functions? Is his conscience partly in good condition, so that in part it does its work all right, and is he so far a conscientious man? Is it not rather the simple fact that his conscience has not been reached at all, and that it had nothing to do with the cognition of right, which was obtained by his cognitive faculty? Is he not a person who in popular language would be said to have no conscience, because his conscience in the strict sense performs no function? And when, on the other hand, a man of tender sense of obligation errs in his cognition of righteousness, is his case the same as that just mentioned? Does half his conscience or his conscience half

do its work, or is he only in part a conscientious man, like the reckless fellow who has moral cognitions and is supposed so far to have an active conscience, though he despises the right which comes to his knowledge? The theory of a mixed faculty has nothing to commend it. In the best case nothing could be gained for science by accepting it, no more than would be gained by referring all mental acts to the mind, and thus being done with all difficulties respecting specific powers and their definition and classification. But the best case is not that which usually occurs. The worst case has at least an equal chance. Confusion and error come of such vague theories. Conscience, like will, presupposes knowledge; but, like will, it depends upon the cognitive powers to furnish the knowledge needed. It is not itself cognitive.

M. Lox.

## AN EXCESS OF EDUCATED MEN.

Owing chiefly to the great Educational Congress assembled at Berlin some months ago at the call of the Emperor for the purpose of discussing reform measures for the higher educational system of Germany, and also the appointment of a Permanent Commission of representatives from all the grades of schools to make definite proposals on the subject to the government, education problems have sprung into the fore front of public prominence. The Emperor himself, in opening the Congress with a lengthy address, drew attention again to a problem so unique and peculiar that it scarcely has a parallel in modern annals. This is the question of a "learned proletariat", an overproduction of technically educated men far in excess of the demand, or, to use the words of Bismarck, a "proletariat of college graduates" (*Abiturientenproletariat*). Within recent years the rush into the professions has been so great that the state can utilize only a small per cent. of the University graduates. The facts in the case

speak for themselves. In 1870 the number of students in the German Universities was about 14,000. In 1888 it had risen to 29,267. Considering that the population during these two decades had increased only fifteen per cent, while the attendance at the Universities has increased one hundred and twelve per cent, the existence of this problem is self-explanatory. As a result the country is literally overrun with finely educated men who can find no opportunity to use their talents and splendid acquirements. The Prussian Cultus Minister, Von Gossler, recently gave some statistics in Parliament that give a somewhat startling peep into matters. In 1887 there were yet 1834 candidates for positions in the higher grades of schools, for which there were absolutely no openings. The number of appointments made by the state is only about one-third as great as is the number of University graduates. In other departments even a worse state of affairs exists. Even the theological department is overcrowded. Only a few years ago there was a cry loud and long that the churches of Germany could not find pastors. Now the cry is "Enough", and even for the most undesirable positions in the whole country the applicants seldom number fewer than two or three dozen.

That this state of affairs is a menace to society is almost self-evident. Surprise is often expressed that the ranks of the Socialistic and Anarchistic parties find so many educated and learned recruits. There need be no surprise when we remember that there are literally thousands and thousands of splendidly educated men without occupation and work, who, as the most natural thing in the world, are incensed at a society which fosters higher education to such an extent as to give beneficiary aid in some form or other to fully forty per cent of all the students, but then has no use for those who have spent their best years and their money in securing a higher education. The German government has recognized the existence of this danger, and has been making systematic efforts in recent years to discourage

the University attendance at least among certain classes of the population. We thus have the singular phenomenon of a nation easily marching at the head of the civilized world in the matter of education endeavoring to reduce the number of those who seek the best that can be offered in this line. But necessity evidently demands this, for the law of supply and demand is inexorable here as elsewhere. An over-production of learned men is also a danger to the State and to society. A "learned proletariat" is also a social evil. What makes it all the more so in this case is the fact that the German system is so extremely technical in character, that the graduate of one department, while a wonder in his own field, can seldom adapt himself to the needs of another. He is an expert in one profession, but not even an amateur in any other.

Nor is the existence of this singular phenomenon an accidental feature of the German system of higher education. The German University by no means corresponds in grade to the average American college or university, but to the post-graduate courses and to the professional schools of theology, law and medicine. The German University aims not to give a general culture, but to train only for professional callings and careers. It presupposes the general education which is furnished by a college course and which in the Fatherland is secured in the *Gymnasium*, corresponding to our preparatory school and a classical college course, and by the *Real* schools, corresponding to our preparatory school and scientific college course. Of these feeders to the University there are a round thousand in Germany now. All these facts combine to make the university graduate a splendid specialist, but nothing more.

Nor is Germany the only country in Europe where the complaint is heard and re-echoed concerning an excess of technically educated men. In both Denmark and Greece there has been a rapid growth of a "learned proletariat." Down to the year 1860 the number of students at the Univer-



sity of Copenhagen averaged about 165, and this was sufficient for all needs. In 1870 the number had already increased to 217, and now it is 414. As the total population is only two millions, the professions are more than overcrowded. The status is the same in Greece. Although the population is only about four millions, yet the number of Greek students at Athens, in Germany, Italy, and France exceeds seven hundred.

G. H. SCHODDE.

### SUGGESTIONS ON MEMORIZING THE SERMON.

These suggestions are made upon the supposition that the sermon is written out in full. Writing is indispensable to exactness, a quality to be coveted by the young pastor. A certain amount of memory-work will therefore have to be done upon the manuscript:

The proper conditions of memory according to Coleridge are, *sound logic, a healthy digestion, and a clear conscience.*

Nothing aids the memory so much as lucidity of thought. The time spent upon the exact wording of the theme and its logical division is well invested. The law of memory is "the association of ideas"; i. e., ideas which are related or associated in the relations of time and space, similarity and contrast, cause and effect, will suggest each other. They come to the memory without any effort. It will be found that those paragraphs and parts of the sermon which do not so suggest themselves are generally out of place and cannot therefore fall into line by themselves, but must be forced to take a certain place assigned them.

A healthy digestion, or the proper condition of the physical man, is a powerful aid to the memory. No faculty of mind is so dependent upon the physical condition, or as easily affected by disturbed bodily functions, as the memory. Disturbed states of the body distract the attention, a prime essential in this work. For this reason the use of narcotics

and stimulants is to be refrained from at or before the time of memorizing at least. These excite the nerves and brain, the organ of the mind, and place it at the same disadvantage that a mechanic contends with in using an inferior tool. Tobacco and spirituous beverages are the enemies of the brain-worker.

Ordinarily the gospel minister knows too little of the laws of physiology and hygiene and thus ignorantly disregards them to achieve the greatest results. It is less the amount of time spent at the study table than one's physical condition which determines the quality of the work performed by the memory.

A good conscience facilitates concentration of the mind. The lack of it distracts the attention. Ease of conscience will be assured if we have the consciousness that in the preparation of the manuscript we have done our duty.

The method of deepening the impression, or memorizing, will probably differ with each individual. The following seems to be the normal method. Let the skeleton be impressed first, beginning with the theme, then the parts, subdivisions and sub-subdivisions in the order named. If properly divided these will suggest themselves and can be impressed in a few moments. As the theme and parts are the foci of the sermon these should stand out boldly in the memory.

It will be very slavish work to begin by trying to impress the paragraphs and sentences. The principal effort should be made to catch the train of thought and the paragraphs and sentences will in turn suggest themselves. Where the salient points for the memory are paragraphs and sentences, the danger of confusion is great.

Much time will be gained if the manuscript is impressed as soon as completed. It is a disadvantage to compose the sermon early in the week. Let the material be gathered then and the mind brood upon it. That is most easily impressed, at any rate, upon which the mind has dwelt

longest. If the sermon can be written the day before delivery, so much the better. Then the impression is vivid and memorizing is simply the deepening of this impression. This impression lasts but for a season and then it begins to fade. If too long a time intervenes between the writing and memorizing, the first impression will have faded so much that much time will be lost in reproducing it. The manuscript must be read over in quick succession to obtain the best results. Stones cast into a rapidly running stream, at intervals of a day, will be washed away and will not make a dam. To accomplish this they must be thrown in as rapidly as possible. If the sermon is read over at intervals of a day, half of the work is wasted. It is the cumulative effort which deepens the impression, to be recalled at will.

Psychologists admit that the mind performs various operations best at certain times of the day. The reproductive faculties are at their best in the morning and evening and the discursive in the middle of the day. It is almost wasted time to memorize in the middle of the day. The exercise of the memory depends largely upon the brain vigor, and this is best immediately after sleep. The morning hours are the golden ones for this kind of work.

The mind retains those impressions most easily which come to it through the senses, therefore reading the manuscript will materially assist the memory.

By conforming to the laws and habits of memory the committing of the sermon can be made comparatively easy. From one to two hours time should, after some practice has been gained, be sufficient to do the work.

L. H. SCHUB.

## EDITORIAL.

## WHO IS A CHRISTIAN ?

Our standard writers generally designate the Word and Sacraments as the only infallible marks of the Church. In this they are undoubtedly right. Our Augsburg Confession declares: "The Church is the congregation of saints in which the gospel is rightly taught and the sacraments rightly administered." Art. VII. The Apology says: "We are not speaking of an imaginary Church which is to be found nowhere, but we say and know certainly that this Church wherein saints live, is and abides truly upon earth; namely, that some of God's children are here and there in all the world, in various kingdoms, islands, lands, and cities, from the rising of the sun to its setting, who have truly learned to know Christ and His gospel. And we add the marks, 'the pure doctrine of the gospel and the sacraments.'" ch. iv. § 20. That which constitutes the essence of the Church is not her external organization, or her rites and ceremonies, her worship and work. She is simply the congregation of saints, the body of those who are in Christ Jesus by faith in His name. This body is not discernible by any natural faculty of man. Because we cannot see into the hearts of men we do not know who, among those that profess faith in Christ and gather in visible congregations, are truly believers. But that does not render the Church as defined a mere thing of the imagination. It has a real existence and can be known to have a real existence. In that external organization to which we apply the term church in a wider sense, the Church in the true and proper sense is really found. We never can, in any justifiable use of language, apply to the whole a name which properly designates only a part when nothing of that which the term imparts is present. A measure of grain may be called wheat when it contains wheat, though there may be

rye or barley mixed with it; but it is manifestly an abuse of language to call it wheat when there is no wheat at all among its contents. The external congregations are called churches because there are believers in them. They are congregations of believers, notwithstanding that some who are not true believers are mixed with them, and they have all the rights and powers which God has given to the church, notwithstanding the admixture of such as are not of the church. God knows them that are His, and does not withdraw from them the blessings and privileges of His people because others who are not His have hypocritically joined them in their external worship and work. And that the church is truly there where confessing people gather around the Word and Sacrament is known, notwithstanding our inability to distinguish infallibly between those who believe and thus sincerely confess Christ and those who do not believe and thus hypocritically confess Christ. It is known by faith. The promise of God is given that makes us sure. "For as the rain cometh down and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." Isa. 55, 10. 11. From this and similar promises we have the certainty that the preaching of the gospel and administration of the sacraments is never without effect. The labor of ministers is never in vain in the Lord. There are always some who, when the means of grace are employed according to the will of God, by His power will believe and be saved. There are always some among those who profess to believe in whose hearts the Holy Spirit has accomplished His work. In every congregation of professing Christians where the divine means of grace are used there is a congregation of saints. Believers are assured of this, because the promise of God cannot fail.

The existence of the Church, and its continuance until the end of time, is an article of faith.

But that does not enable us to decide who are Christians in reality. A Christian is a person who believes in Christ unto the saving of the soul. Such believers are found wherever there is a valid administration of the means of grace, through which it pleases God to execute His thoughts of peace and accomplish His saving purpose. But who are they? In the congregations that gather around the Word and sacraments there are, according to the assurance given us by God Himself, some that shall be saved, so that because we believe His promise we are just as sure as His word is sure that among those who confess there are some who believe in Christ. But how shall we know who the individuals are in whom the Word accomplishes that whereunto it is sent? Who are the believers in the mixed mass that presents itself to our view in the visible congregation? We do not know. We have no means of knowing. It is not necessary that we should know. Only mischief grows out of it when men profess to know.

History shows in painful abundance the wrongs and outrages perpetrated by men who imagined that there are sufficient tests by which a believer may be unerringly distinguished from an unbeliever, and who persecuted Christians because they could not be identified as such by those arbitrary marks. Certainly we may know that men are not Christians when they openly reject Christianity. One who denies Christ is not a Christian, and that denial may be so plain in words or so manifest in acts that he may easily be known not to be a Christian. But when a person professes to be a believer in Christ it is not so easy to know that he really is such. The tests that are applied by various sects, such as acknowledgment of the pope by Romanists, conversion after a certain method by Methodists, the cut of the coat and fashion of the hat by Quakers, are undeniably fallible. Even if that which is employed as a criterion were

not in itself a false requirement, it could still not be an unerring mark by which Christians could be distinguished. Supposing that our Lord had required His disciples to acknowledge the pope as their master, as He has not, or to become His followers after a certain method, as He has not, or to wear a hat or a bonnet of a certain shape as constituting the essential mark of the kingdom of God, as He has not, there still would be room for doubt whether these things are not, in the case of some individuals, a mere pretense. If there are men so ignorant of the spiritual nature of Christ's kingdom that they could find the test of membership in some external act or form, independently of any condition of the heart of which such act or form is the corresponding utterance, those who are better informed cannot but remind them of their grave error and refuse to recognize the mere form as a valid substitute for the life. Whether a man is a Christian or not remains a question still after all such arbitrary tests. Even the confession of the truth and the performance of good works, which the Lord has commanded, cannot make us sure that a person is really a Christian, because although these are things that a Christian is required to do and in virtue of his Christian faith will do, they are things which may be so closely imitated by men who are not Christians that they are not infallible signs of the inner life of faith which is the one thing needful, and without which no man can be a Christian in the proper sense. He that believes in Christ is a Christian, but we have no means of ascertaining infallibly who among those professing faith are really believers.

Seemingly our Lord Himself gives us a criterion by which to know His people when He says: "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." John 13, 35. But this is obviously not a mark by which Christians are designed to know unerringly who are true believers, because the mark itself cannot be unerringly ascertained. It is no more possible to distinguish

true from feigned love than it is to distinguish true from feigned faith. For the practical purposes of church organization and work we can know Christians by their profession of faith. A Christian, in virtue of the charity which the Holy Spirit has wrought in his soul, believes the confession of others to be sincere as long as they do not themselves furnish the evidence of their insincerity. So he believes the works that proceed from professing Christians and that accord with the law of the Lord to be works of love. In neither case is he infallibly certain; in either case it is a charitable presumption that may be false, and often is false. But the mark which our Savior gives has evidently a different meaning and purpose. Not only Christians, in their charitable presumption of sincerity, but "all men," many of whom have not Christian charity, "shall know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." The Christian brotherhood makes an impression upon the loveless world by its noble life of love. "Behold how these Christians love one another!" was an exclamation extorted even from the enemies of the church. Whether all who are joined with this brotherhood in its deeds of love are really Christians, is another question. What is said of the glorious works of the visible Church does not necessarily apply to each individual member. The love which the body manifests gives it prestige and wins the world's respect, even though many who join the body and assist in its works of love are inwardly not of it and have not the love in their hearts which true Christians display in their lives. The world sees and admires the manifestations of love among the disciples of Christ, and by this distinguishes those disciples from others who do not manifest it. The deeds of love are thus a distinctive mark of Christ's disciples in the eyes of all men, and serve as a standing argument in favor of the Church, without being at all an infallible criterion by which the true Christian may be distinguished from the hypocrite. Of the same character are the words of our Lord



recorded in John 17, 20. 21: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for those also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one, as Thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent me." The spiritual unity of the whole body of believers on earth and in heaven is not apparent to the eyes of the world. In that sense the oneness of the Church can not serve to convince the world that Christ is the Savior sent to redeem us. The reference must be to that which is discernible by all men, hence to the external manifestation of the unity which really exists among believers notwithstanding all outward dissensions and disruptions which the devil and the flesh may succeed in bringing about. The best of this unity is, in the judgment of Christians, agreement in the faith, because that, not our works, is the means of salvation. But the world applies a different test. It does not know Christ and the truth which is in Him. Its judgment is not according to the gospel, which it does not know, but according to the law, of which it has by nature some knowledge. If Christians "keep the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace," and live in the harmony of love among each other, the world will be impressed by it and will recognize the fact as proof of the divine mission of our Savior. Of course this will not render all the world believers. But it will be a standing argument in favor of Christianity, and will move many to give the gospel a hearing and thus bring them under "the power of God," which may result in their salvation. And of course it will not enable the world to decide who among this united and harmonious company of professing Christians is sincere in his confession and his work. The reference is to the impression made by the unity and harmony of the whole body working together in love, not to the faith and sincerity of individuals. The world, that is influenced by the peaceful and loving co-operation of those who profess faith in Christ to believe that He has a divine

mission, does not care to distinguish between those who sincerely believe and those who only ape the profession which sincere believers make. It is induced by the love prevailing among those who profess to be Christians to respect Christianity, and to think that it is of higher than human origin. The question, whether some of those engaged in the work are not mere pretenders, does not enter into their consideration of the evidence furnished. The world sees that these Christian people live as other people do not live, and therefore conclude that Christ was sent of God. Whether individuals engaged in this life are sincere or not does not affect the argument. There is true love shown by the followers of Christ and by that love the world knows them, notwithstanding that some have only the form of godliness. But just because there are in the company of those whose life and labor of love the world admires some who outwardly join them without being inwardly of them, it is impossible to know from the work done which individuals are truly Christians and which are not.

In reality there is no test by which men could decide this, and in the nature of the case there can be none. It is not given man to see into the heart of another and thus to ascertain whether he is a believer or not. That is God's prerogative. He knoweth them that are His, and that is sufficient. He is the Judge of all the earth, not we. When men profess to be disciples of Jesus, we are only to see whether their confession accords with His sayings, and in charity we are to take them at their word, unless their life gives unmistakable proof of their insincerity. It is necessary, first of all, to preserve the truth which the Lord has given us in His Word, because on this depends the salvation of the individual and the continuance of the Church on earth as the congregation of those who shall be saved and who, having the Word and Sacraments entrusted to them, shall secure the salvation of others until the end of time.

If this truth, which is the power of God unto salvation, is sacrificed, all is lost. Hence the need of contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, and of declining to recognize those as right who commit the grievous wrong of denying it. But when this truth is confessed in words and not denied in conduct, Christians recognize fellow Christians by such confession, and leave the judging of the heart to God, to whom alone it belongs.

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### THE SUNDAY SCHOOL.

Practical topics are not meant to be excluded from our THEOLOGICAL MAGAZINE. All that lies within the range of Christian thought and interest and work, whether pertaining to doctrine or life, to church teaching or practice, is included in our domain. The MAGAZINE aims to be helpful to pastors and people in understanding the principles and doctrines of the Ev. Lutheran Church and in carrying out these principles and doctrines in all the various spheres and relations of the church's calling and work. We are not therefore going beyond our sphere when we speak of Sunday Schools, little as these may at first sight have to do with theology in its various departments. Indeed, they have much to do with it, and we regard it as of great importance to the Christian Church that their claims and their relations to her should be understood.

In this country as well as in England Sunday Schools are regarded as so important a feature in the production and development of spiritual life and Christian character that any hesitancy in joining the laudatives which are given them excites suspicion. But we care for none of these things, desiring only that our gracious Lord's will should be known and done.

Sunday Schools are not indigenious in the Lutheran Church. They are an exotic. The great Reformation began

with teaching the truth as God gave it in the Holy Scriptures. The reformers labored unceasingly and unweariedly in the enlightenment of the people. It was a time of darkness, and it was necessary to give instruction. From the very beginning the Lutheran was a teaching Church. She has always remained so. When the first visitations were held and people were found in such deplorable ignorance, she furnished the means of instruction in the admirable Catechisms of Luther. They have not been equalled, much less surpassed to this day. She still teaches them and by teaching them dispenses spiritual light among the people. What she has always desired is that the light of God should fall into the dark places of the earth. Therefore no church has ever equalled her in her zeal for the education of the people and the establishment of gymnasias and universities for higher education, that there might always be teachers for the people. The Lutheran was a teaching Church from the days of the Reformation, and has continued to be such to this day. Her motto has ever been, Let there be light. Let the light of God shine into this darkness of human ignorance and sin.

But her way was not that of the modern Sunday School. In fact, we find it difficult to harmonize the way of the modern Sunday School with her way. She always depended on God for light. He is the Teacher, we are to be taught. And He rules, and directs all the affairs of the world which He rules. No one has a right to usurp this authority, and it is always an indication of an usurping and therefore of a wrong spirit when any one, well meaning though he may be, sets himself up to be a teacher without having a divine call. God alone is the Teacher of truth unto salvation, and when He wants a man to act in His name and do His work He calls him. "No man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron." Heb. 5, 4. It is a proud and haughty spirit, it is a self-conceited and untrustworthy spirit, that is impatient of restraint and cannot

abide God's will and time. If a man cannot wait until God calls him, and supposes that his talents and abilities are not appreciated because God does not call him, he lacks the essential qualities of a good teacher, he lacks the first essential quality of a Christian teacher. He does not recognize the head of the Church. If the Lord wants a man to teach in His name, He knows where to find him and will, in the way which He has made known to us for our learning, give him a vocation to do the work; if He does not call a person, that person may be sure that his gifts are not needed to do the Lord's work in teaching and that they can be better employed in some other service. For the Master has many kinds of work to be done on earth for the accomplishment of His will, and bestows diversities of gifts and assigns them, providentially and by calls extended in the way of His ordinances, in church and state, to diversities of places and labors that all may co-operate for the common good and for the glory of Him who is Lord of all and governs all, and who makes all things work together for good to them that love Him. Therefore the Lutheran Church, loyal to the Master always and not willing that human reason should interfere with His appointments, to the great detriment of His work, declares in her Confession: "Concerning the ecclesiastical office they teach that no one should publicly in the church teach, or administer the sacraments, except he be rightly called." *Augsb. Conf. Art. XIV.* This is a principle from which the Ev. Lutheran Church can no more depart now than she could in the 16. century, when the great Reformation restored the gospel to suffering humanity. It declares a truth of God's Word and government that is of fundamental import for the preservation of order in the Christian Church. The disciples of Christ cannot do as they please in His kingdom, except as they please by His grace to do His holy will, and each must be content to serve Him where it pleases Him to put them and to do the work which it pleases Him to assign them. They are servants and

stewards, not lords, and do not know Him aright and are not worthy of Him when they have the ambition to be something more.

The Lutheran Church may use the Sunday School, which has taken such deep root in the various denominations of our land, but she must see that it is adjusted to her principles and character. To do this there are some questions which she must examine and in regard to which she must secure clearness. To these we desire at present simply to direct attention; at some future day we may have occasion to contribute our mite towards their elucidation. 1. Is it right to commit the teaching of Christ's lambs to any and every person who may desire to render service by taking a class in the Sunday School? 2. Is it right to leave the appointment of teachers, though it be only for school taught on Sundays, to a few who assume this privilege, instead of giving them a call by the church that must eventually bear the responsibility? 3. Is the Sunday School to be regarded as part of the church's regular work, for which primarily the congregation and then, in virtue of his call to the public office, the pastor is responsible, or is it to be looked upon as a special institution alongside of the church, with special powers and privileges which Christ has not committed to the congregation and for the exercise of which the congregation is not responsible and has no account to render?

These questions, as we have desired to put them, will no doubt in a large measure find a ready answer in the consciousness of those who have the Lutheran spirit. Our purpose is not to excite prejudice against the Sunday School or to recommend its rejection or abandonment. We believe that it can be utilized in the Lutheran Church and made to do efficient work. But we have no desire to conceal our conviction that the old ways of our fathers, in their scrupulous care that the teaching of children in the church be done by persons examined and called by the church and held accountable to the church were better than the loose ways

of the modern Sunday School, in which ignorant zeal and misdirected work does untold mischief, notwithstanding all its well-meant activity. We regard it as possible to use the Sunday School for the work of the Lutheran Church, and as it has become so popular it may be wise to use it. But it can be used effectively only if it is adapted to the faith and spirit of our church. To do that will require some thinking and adjusting.

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MAN can do nothing to effect his salvation. Our help is in the name of the Lord. The very thought of doing something to rescue ourselves from the death which is the wages of sin, and to render ourselves acceptable to Him who created us in righteousness and requires that we should be holy as He is holy, is a work of the flesh. When fallen man undertakes to restore himself and fulfill all righteousness, he displays all that self-deception which, supposing that outward compliance with rules of right is the holiness that God requires, leads a person in his spiritual blindness to think that he is righteous when his soul is in the bonds of iniquity. Man is spiritually dead, and without Christ can do nothing that is pleasing to his holy Maker. "For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." Eph. 2, 8. 9. But it does not follow from this that we should do nothing, or that it will practically be all the same whether we do anything or do nothing. Irrational creatures do by nature what God made them for. They have no choice and cannot do otherwise. Man is not so made. He is endowed with intelligence and will, and if he does not use his gift he suffers for it. He can use it. By the abuse of the power entrusted to him our race has been reduced to slavery under sin. But God pitied us and sent His Son to deliver us. The law is given us that we may know our condition, the gospel is given us that we may

know our deliverance. God alone can give us light, and He alone can give us life to walk in the light. Shall we on that account sit in indolence and give the matter of our salvation no thought and no care? Even in man's natural condition of sin and helplessness is it reasonable, when the disastrous consequences of the fall are manifest in the adversities of our lives and the unrest of our souls, and the church is sounding in the ears of all men the gracious provision that God has made for our deliverance from the body of this death and our restoration to happiness, to spurn without examination the proffered help as a delusion? That is doing something, but it is doing a foolish thing, reason itself being the judge. The Word of God brings life and salvation, and blessed are they that hear it and keep it. Those who will not hear it have no excuse and when they hear it, they can give it that attention which their condition and its claims demand. This work of theirs has no saving power. But faith, which is the work of God, "comes by hearing," and "by grace are ye saved through faith." So when we are believers, we are called to good works for the glory of Him who served us. We are saved by grace, but that does not mean that we shall do nothing.

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PLEASURE is not the end of our being on earth. It is not even one of the ends. Undoubtedly man was designed to be happy as his Maker is happy. And so he was until his sin brought misery. He was happy in righteousness and true holiness, for he was thus in harmony with God. No wonder, therefore, that he still seeks happiness, notwithstanding that everything conditioning it has been lost. But it by no means follows that what delights him must be a legitimate object of pursuit. Sin has made him a slave, and he delights in that which is sinful. The only thing that, according to the Creator's design, and therefore according to the primal law of his own nature, can render him happy, is



communion with God in righteousness, and in this he finds no pleasure. He finds pleasure in self and the gratification of selfish desires, not in God and the execution of His will. It is therefore always an error when pleasure is made a principle of action or a justification of conduct. And it is so not only in man's natural condition, when everything that he does is a work of the flesh, which alone supplies him with motives. It is so also with Christians. They are indeed endowed with new powers for the service of God. "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which He hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Eph. 2, 10. But this does not render deviations from God's ways impossible. The flesh still exists and lusteth against the Spirit. It still exerts its influence upon our action and strives to regain its lost supremacy. Hence it is always a question, when pleasure is held out as an inducement to act, whether it pleases the old or the new man. What displeases God must be renounced, however much it may offer of pleasure to us. The divine rule is, "that ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." Eph. 4, 22-24. Therefore the Christian life is one of continued self-denial, which means that the impulses of our nature to indulge in pleasures contrary to the will of God must be resisted and crushed. And this is required as well when the temptation is strong and resistance painful, as when overcoming is comparatively easy." "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." Gal. 5, 24. "For if ye live after the flesh ye shall die, but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body ye shall live." Rom. 8, 13. Therefore the grave accusation is brought against ungodly persons that they are "lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God," 2 Tim. 3, 4. and "ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wan-

ton." James 5, 5. Christians have joys in the Lord of which the world knows nothing, but they have their cross to bear on earth, and pass through tribulation into the land of eternal rest and happiness. They live to please the Lord, not themselves, heeding their Master's words: "He that taketh not his cross and followeth after me, is not worthy of me." Matt. 10. 38.

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SIN is folly. It violates the original constitution of man's nature, who was made in the image of God, and who can fulfill his mission and attain happiness only in the righteousness and true holiness in which he was created. It is missing the goal of life and making a failure of it. Man is not only made useless in the world by it, but harmful to his fellow creatures, and it not only brings disorder and pain into the world, but misery upon the sinner himself. Every way it is a foolish thing. No possible good can come of it when man goes wrong. God and the whole order of nature are against him. And more than this. So far as he has the intelligence to see the unrighteousness of his conduct, he is against himself. His conscience condemns him. His soul is not at rest, and the various expedients that men in their folly have devised do not allay the turmoil and bring harmony into the jangle that he has made. "There is no peace, saith the Lord, unto the wicked." Isa. 48, 22. The fact that the sinner in his natural state is unwilling to lay hold of the help and the happiness offered in the gospel is not a legitimate reason for ignoring this. Christians can make good use of it in advocating the cause of the Redeemer and in their loving efforts to induce men to come to Him. Those who are in the gall of bitterness and in the bonds of iniquity cannot see that their only hope of deliverance is in the atonement made by the Lamb of God. But they can see that the ways of sin do not lead to the happiness for which their souls long. That can be made clear to them by

the facts of the case, and their own experience confirms them. If the way of righteousness is then shown them they will at least, if they are reasonable people, be willing to hear its claims and examine its promises. They may thus be induced to hear the law with its threats of eternal wretchedness, and the gospel with its assurance of forgiveness of sin and life and salvation through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; and when they hear, the power of God may save them. We do not say that all will thus be led to hear the gospel. Not all men are reasonable: some are brutish, and care for none of these things. Nor do we say that all who are brought to hear the Word will repent and believe. Some will even then close their hearts and block up the way of the Holy Spirit's entrance into their hearts. But if only here and there one soul can be gained by showing the folly of sin, a blessed work is done. The fact that men cannot help themselves at any rate, even if they do see that their whole course is against all wisdom, must not deter us from helping them to see their condition that they may be induced to seek a better lot, though for the time it be but a selfish seeking. To secure the gospel a hearing, that thus it may be possible for grace to do its work in the soul, is always a gain. Moreover, even when Christian souls are tempted to sin, it may be a help to them in their weakness to know that yielding to the temptation is not only unworthy of a follower of Christ, but is a foolish thing in any case. We do not lose sight of the teaching of Scripture that grace alone must sustain us, and that it is only this that can keep us in the way of holiness and preserve us from falling. But neither would we lose sight of the other teaching of Scripture, that we must use the means if we would have the grace which they convey. And the conviction that sin is folly will be an incentive to lay hold of the grace which protects us against it.

THE ESSENCE OF CHRISTIANITY is often represented to be love—love to God and love to man. This sounds well and commends itself to the popular judgment. Love shall remain when this earth shall be no more. God is love, and those who abide in God abide in love. It is that which renders the communion of saints a sweet home of blessedness. And yet it is manifestly an error to assume that when indications of love are found in souls all the requirements of Christianity are satisfied. That is one of the modern ways to do away with the truth in Jesus and to devise a Christianity without Christ. The main thing must always remain the great salvation which was effected by Him and the application of that salvation by the Holy Spirit through the Word and Sacrament. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved," and no other can be. What is too much overlooked is the plain fact that mankind is in a state of death and damnation. The first thing needful is deliverance from this. "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Only Christ can do this. There is no other name under heaven by which the soul can be saved. Unto us a Savior is born. That is the good news which Christianity brings to the world, and he that by the power of the Holy Spirit believes it is a Christian, and his faith in the Redeemer will work by love. Without Christ there is no love because there is no salvation from the sin and death which hold us bound in selfishness and all uncharitableness. Christianity certainly does restore mankind to the happy condition of communion with God and holy love, but only through faith in Jesus' name, by which the curse is removed, the soul is justified through His merits, and peace is brought to the trembling heart. The attempt to make of Christianity merely a new law whose fulfillment is love is a denial of its specific character as the universal religion that saves the people from their sins. The Mosaic law sufficed for all legal purposes. It is a Savior that we need, that we may escape death and serve the Lord in righteousness, and this real Christianity supplies in presenting Christ and Him crucified.

## HOMILETIC RULES.

(From J. A. Quenstedt's "Ethica pastoralis." Translated by Rev. E. Schultz.)

13.—*If the preacher becomes aware that any heresies and errors have crept in among the congregation, he must expose and disprove them thoroughly and concisely.*

The duties of a true shepherd of his congregation not only require that by teaching (*διδασκαλίαν*) he should gather the sheep and lead them to wholesome pastures and rich fountains, but also that he should keep the wolves away from the sheep-fold of the Lord by reproof (*ἐλεγχον*), and keep the herd entrusted to him safe from attacks and persecutions;—that means, he must not only lay the foundation of faith, which is only one, Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 3, 10. 11), but he must also oppose and shut off the many attempts and plans of those that try to bar and close the way, and labor to subvert that foundation in many ways;—he must not only scatter the seed of the divine Word, but also purify the fields of the church from the weeds of false doctrine and error. The Lord commanded the prophet Jeremiah not only to build and plant, but also to pluck out, break, destroy and spoil. (Jer.' 1, 10.) "See," He says, "I have this day set thee over the nations, and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant." On these words Erasmus in Ecclesiast. lib. I remarks: "He has summed up the duties of the pastoral office, which entirely consists in this; in the first place, to pluck out of the hearts of the hearers the roots of wrong opinions and the bad seed of false doctrine, out of which bitter fruits grow forth; to break down the house built on a bad foundation, to destroy the growing weeds, to spoil the badly begun building, and to sow good seed in place of what he plucked out and destroyed, and to build a

house that will not give way before any storm." All the prophets generally, and Christ and the Apostles, in their office, have combined the terrible thunder of the law and the pleasant sound of the gospel. Luther says finely: 'Instruction and destruction (*Lehren und Wehren*) must be used together by a true and pious shepherd and pastor.' A preacher must be a warrior and a shepherd. To fight is to teach, and that is the most difficult art; for this purpose he must have teeth in his mouth, wherewith to make defense and to fight.

The Apostle requires of a bishop before all, "that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers. For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision; whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake." The late Chemnitz says in *Loc. Theol.*: "*ἐλέγχειν* is to show and prove the futility and incorrectness of the opposing doctrine, and *ἐπιστομίζειν* is to produce such arguments, that the opposite party has no chance to contradict with any show of success." Chrysostomus, on account of his powers of speech compared to gold, says in his remarks on this place: "That he may be able by sound doctrine to exhort,' that is, to protect his own and to confound his enemies, 'and to convince the gainsayer'; for if you are not able to do this, everything is lost. For if anyone has not learned to do battle against the enemy, and to take captive all reasoning of the opponent by obedience to Christ, and to upset all his logic (*λογισμούς*), he would better stay away from the pulpit (*πορ' ὧ ἔστω θρόνον διδασκαλικόν*). For everything else, namely to be blameless, having faithful children, to be hospitable, just, and holy, may easily be found among the hearers and servants. But this is it which proves most the teacher (*ὅτε μάλιστα χαρακτηρίζει τὸν διδασκαλόν*), to be able to teach by words and to disprove the doctrine of the opponents."

As the physician's duty is twofold, to preserve the present good health and to restore the lost health, so it is also the duty of those to whom the spiritual care of souls is committed, not only to instruct the hearers intrusted to their care by correct and wholesome doctrine, but also to keep them carefully from all false doctrines, which are like a disease and a canker (2 Tim. 2, 17.). The Apostle prophesied Acts 20, 29, that furious attacks by wolves would come; "For I know this" he says "that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock." The false teachers he calls wolves, taking the term from Christ, the teacher of divine eloquence, who frequently made use of this metaphor in speaking of false teachers (see Matth. 7, 15, and John 10, 12.). Therefore he admonishes the servants of the church to be brave, to do their duty faithfully, and to resist the wolves powerfully, if they attempt to break into the sheep-fold and commit devastation. Here the verse from Solomon's Song 2, 15 is in place: "Take us the foxes, the little foxes that spoil the vines." On these words Augustine gives the following commentary: "What means 'Take us the foxes' other than to overcome the false teachers with the authority of the divine commands, and to bind and tie them with the evidence of the Holy Scriptures as with fetters?" Those priests are reproached that either do not know the difference between clean and unclean, or keep quiet about it and do not diligently enforce it among the people entrusted to them. Ezek. 22, 26. The bishops of the churches at Pergamus and Thyatira are reproached, because they shut their eyes at the false doctrine of Balaam and Jezebel and did not resist them. Revel. 2, 14. 17. 20. Therefore, if the weeds of error grow up together with the wheat of the heavenly doctrine, the preacher must be diligent carefully to divide and separate the valuable from the useless, the lie from the truth, the errors from the doctrines of Christ mixed with them and wrapped up in

them; so as not to reject and condemn the true with the false, the sound with the decayed, the gold with the dross. Jerem. 15, 19. Huelseman quotes some grounds from Balduin, why a preacher must be more trenchant in manner and form, regarding the individual clearer and more distinct, in regard to time quicker and more ready to denounce corruptions of doctrine than corruptions of manners; these are, 1) because false doctrine insinuates itself by an appearance of piety and divine truth, but vices are hated on account of their own baseness; 2.) because errors of doctrine creep along unobserved, whereas vices are apparent to the eyes; 3.) because the first are diligently spread abroad, the latter are diligently sought to be covered up; 4.) because the former are attractive by the novelty of the subject or of their mode and appearance, but the latter have an evil odor; because 5.) they poison the root of all Christian activity, which is faith, while these only consume the leaves and foliage; because 6.) Christ, the apostles, the prophets and all truthful teachers have everywhere spoken more violently against the idolators and corrupters of the faith, than against them that gave offense by their sinful lives. Augustinus says in De Civ. Dei: "We live wickedly if we do not believe rightly in God." Where there is no true knowledge of God, there also is no true love of God.

The *elenchus* (ἐλέγχειν), or the uncovering and disproving of false doctrine, therefore, is not the least part of the office of a preacher. The *elenchus* of *heterodoxy*, that is of the doctrine opposed to heavenly truth, is to be urged, even if the preacher of the Word should meet the greatest difficulties, not excepting banishment and death. Banishment from heaven and eternal death awaits those who keep quiet in such a case, who close their eyes and say *mum, mum!*

In regard to the order of proceeding it is to be remarked: 1.) The teacher of the church must before all else strengthen the hearts of his hearers by making them sure concerning



the true understanding of a doctrine, and after that he must uncover the sophisms and wipe the paint from the false opinions. He must prove the truth of the articles of faith from the Scriptures, their foundation, and after that he must attack and disprove the errors of false teachers. For only after the truth of a doctrine is made certain and sure, may the opposing falsehood be destroyed. 2.) He must not take up arguments to disprove an error, unless the text of his sermon leads to it, so as not to appear rather to seek and enter into uncalled for strife, than to make use of the offered occasion. But if the text is perverted by any opponent, and misapplied as proof of any false doctrine, or if it can conveniently be used against the attacks and errors of an opponent whereby to disprove the false doctrine, the wrong exposition of the opponents may be briefly and dispassionately disproved, and the truth thoroughly proved and guarded against their wiles and inroads. 3.) Most of all he must busy himself with the disproof of such false doctrines as are extensively known, or from which any danger threatens the audience, or which have taken root in the hearts of some of the hearers. 4.) He must especially busy himself with the disproof of such errors before the people, as are fundamental or capital, in other words, which subvert an article of faith, the knowledge of which is necessary for salvation. 5.) He must not introduce erroneous and false opinions that are held and circulated in distant regions, while he carelessly passes by those at home. 6.) Lastly, he must not make a sparring-ground against his opponents out of all his sermons, and convert the pulpit of the church into a place like the reading-desk in the learned schools; but he must always be governed by the circumstances and the condition of his hearers.

## INQUIRY CONCERNING THE CONSCIENCE.

## III.

The subject of our inquiry is not exhausted by showing that conscience is not a relation in which man stands to his Maker, nor a communication from the latter to the former, whether occasional or continuous, for his instruction in righteousness, but a faculty of the human soul, and that this faculty is not in its nature cognitive. What kind of a power is it then? So far as the cognitions of the intellect are concerned there is nothing peculiar in conscience which would entitle it to a place as a special power. All that gives it a distinctive character lies in the domain of the sensibilities. It is the power which the human soul, in virtue of its creation in the image of God, has to feel the supremacy of the divine will and the claims of righteousness.

## CONSCIENCE IS THE SENSE OF OBLIGATION.

I. That there is a class of mental faculties whose peculiar functions are designated by the word "feel", as distinguished in a general way from those other powers whose character is indicated by the word "know," may be regarded as now universally admitted. It may assist us materially in understanding the nature of conscience to take a cursory

view of this class of powers, in order that the character of the functions which they perform may be distinctly apprehended.

The characteristic difference between those mental powers which are assigned to the intellect and those which are classed with the sensibilities is not that the former are active and the latter passive. There is obvious activity in a desire as well as in an intellection. But these activities are distinguishable in kind. The sensibility always presupposes the cognition of the object to which it relates, and implies that an influence is exerted by the latter upon the soul cognizing. Knowledge, as such, implies no such influence of the object upon the subject, except so far as in sense-perception a change is produced in the organ through which the cognition takes place. The mere cognition does not necessarily affect the soul for good or evil, for happiness or misery, although it may be the medium through which an affection is excited. Any change produced in the person cognizing, with the exception of sensations leading to perceptions, must be referred to another class of powers than the cognitive. We have the power to be affected by what we know, as well as the power to obtain knowledge. The former is called feeling, and this in its different modifications is usually called the sensibilities.

The classifications of the functions of this power are various. It is manifest to all who have given any attention to this department of our nature that its character has not been as assiduously studied as that of the intellect, and that it presents a wide field which has been but partially and cursorily explored. There is therefore no standard classification to which we could refer the reader as sufficient for our purpose, as is the case in regard to the intellect. But all that we need lies plainly enough before the consciousness, and perhaps the marks by which one kind of operations of this power is distinguished from another are also

sufficiently evident to secure the recognition of the distinction by merely calling attention to these marks as indicating the different classes.

There are feelings, in the first place, which have their ground in our physical organization, and which are immediately connected with the activity of the organs of sense. To this class belong all those emotions of pleasure and pain which result from impressions made upon these organs without the intervention of reflection, and all those desires which have reference to material objects and physical gratification. All the feelings prompting to the preservation of life, whether of the individual or of the species, are of this kind. They may properly be called the animal feelings, both as regards the impulse which moves to gratification and the pleasurable emotion which arises when the desire is gratified. Such are hunger and weariness, with the pleasure of eating and rest. The only exercise of intellect which they involve is the cognition of the object which affords the pleasure or pain and of the means of gratifying the desire.

There is, secondly, a class of feelings which have their basis rather in our mental constitution, and which are conditioned by a prior exercise of intellect. Such are the affections which are called into exercise by the judgment of the worthiness or the unworthiness of the object, and the desires for objects which are of a mental character, such as happiness, knowledge, power, fame, with the pleasure or pain connected with their exercise. These may be termed rational feelings, notwithstanding the fact that the mind frequently errs in its judgments respecting the objects from whose cognition these feelings arise, and respecting the means by which the desires may be gratified. Both these classes of feelings furnish motives which act upon the will and impel to action through volitions.

But there are feelings which belong to neither of these classes. They are partly designated by the word "ought"

and partly by the words which designate the consequences in the soul of conformity to or violation of the obligation which "ought" expresses. Ought and desire are easily distinguishable. We frequently desire what we ought not to do, and we frequently ought to do that for which we have no desire. There is a feeling of oughtness when the right is set before us and is cognized as right; and when we are conscious of having failed to comply with felt obligation, we have the further feeling of wrong imputed or of guilt. These may properly be termed moral feelings, having their root in the adaptation of man's mental constitution to the service of the Creator. The word conscience, we conceive, designates this feeling of obligation, considered not simply as an act, but as a power of the soul which performs appropriate acts; in other words, conscience is the human mind so far as it has the capacity to feel the obligation of divine law. It is the power of feeling with reference to a particular kind of objects, the peculiarity of which gives a distinctive character to the feeling and entitles it to a distinctive name.

It cannot be justly objected that this is representing conscience to be a special sense upon the same ground which we have found to be insufficient to entitle it to a place as a special faculty in a classification of the cognitive powers. We have argued, indeed, that it can not be a distinct cognitive power because there would be nothing to distinguish it as such but the peculiarity of the objects which are cognized. But we do not assert it to be a distinct sensibility on the mere ground of the peculiar objects about which it is employed. The feeling itself is distinct from all other feelings. We cannot distinguish the perception of a beautiful garden and that of a suffering child into two distinct faculties, because these distinct objects are obviously cognized by one and the same perceptive power. But we can readily distinguish the feelings produced by the cognition of the two objects. The one excites an agreeable, the other a painful

emotion; the one excites a desire to enjoy, the other awakens a desire to relieve. So there is a real distinction between the feeling produced by the perception of right and all other feelings. Not the power of feeling in general, but the power to feel the obligation of divine law is conscience. The operations of the mind are of different kinds, and the various functions performed are the ground of our classification of the mind's different powers. To say that it has various powers is simply saying, in other words, that it can do various things. It can feel obligation as attaching to divine law, and in view of this ability we say that man has a conscience.

II. The cognition of the divine law precedes the exercise of this power. It acts only upon this condition. The power exists in man, whether the conditions of its exercise be fulfilled or not, just as man has the power to feel the force of beauty, though a beautiful object should never be presented. Men have a conscience independently of its operations. Its existence could not be known, indeed, if there were no exercise of the power. But these operations, by which we know it, is not the conscience which performs them. Man can feel the obligation of divine law, but he does feel it only when he previously has a knowledge of that law. This knowledge he has and can have only by the cognitive faculties.

There may be obligations imposed which leave the conscience unaffected. The object must be known, and known to be obligatory, before the conscience is called into exercise. The requirements of a law, even though it be divine, cannot affect my conscience so long as I am ignorant of it. It is said, indeed, that everything which imposes obligation must, on that account, be a matter of conscience. It undoubtedly is so. God has made us unto Himself, and has endowed us with conscience that the obligations which He imposes may be felt and His purpose accomplished. All

the law of the Lord, which is the expression of all rectitude, is designed to influence the conscience. But everything that is a matter of conscience is not necessarily known because it is such; and not being known, the obligation cannot be felt. We may be ignorant in matters pertaining to the conscience as well as in other matters, and we cannot feel the obligation inhering in the right, unless that right be cognized. Not everything that is a matter of delight really excites the feeling of joy in every mind, even though all have the necessary faculties to apprehend the object. The fact that a thing is right by no means secures its subjective apprehension as right. It is obligatory whether we see it or not; it is obligatory whether we feel it or not. Nothing is plainer than this. It is plain, too, that the cognitive power may apprehend it, and that the conscience may feel the obligation after it has been apprehended. But both powers may fail to perform their office. The person upon whom an obligation is laid ought to feel it. He may be responsible for the absence of the condition under which alone he can feel it, as his ignorance of the right may be his own fault. He certainly is responsible if he knows the right and has so hardened his heart that he feels no obligation to perform it. But the fact remains, in either case, that that which is obligatory in itself may not seem so to the individual, and may not be felt as obligatory.

The obligation and the sense of obligation are not the same. Neither are the cognition of the right and the feeling of its obligation identical, although the former is a necessary condition of the latter. Right is always obligatory: no circumstances can render it otherwise. But right is not always known, and then the obligation cannot be felt; and sometimes when it is known the conscience has become so seared that it is still not felt. Normally the cognition of the right and the feeling of the obligation stand to each other in the relation of cause and effect: the conscience feels the obliga-

tion as soon as the right is cognized. But conscience is often in an abnormal condition, and does not act even when the conditions of its activity are fulfilled. Both ignorance and obduracy, therefore, may form barriers in the way of feeling the obligation of right, though such feeling is the proper office of conscience.

The distinction between that which is objectively obligatory and that which experiences its obligatory force, is of essential import for a correct understanding of the nature of conscience. Nothing but confusion ensues when the obligation and the power which feels the obligation are identified, or when the feeling of obligation, in any given case, is assumed to be the same as the obligation which is imposed. The theoretical error leads to practical mistakes of a grievous character. It must frequently result in the denunciation of men as void of conscience whose fault is only want of knowledge or misapprehension of the object. The obligation is imposed by God, and that which is the exclusive office of conscience is to feel the obligation after other powers have performed their office of cognizing it. The right is obligatory, whether we know the right or not, or feel its obligation or not after we have known it. But a man is not without conscience, and thus without character, because he does not feel the obligation of a law which he does not know, or which he has misapprehended. He may be greatly at fault for the failure of his cognitive faculties to perform their work, but the fault is not obduracy, although this may, in some cases, be the reason why the obligation of the right is not felt.

As the obligatory may exist without being felt, so the sense of obligation may exist without a ground in the objectively obligatory. The sense may be excited by that which seems right, although it is not right in fact. Hence, when we say that conscience is the power to feel the obligation of the divine law, or of the right, we do not mean that



it feels exclusively that which is right and which is objectively obligatory as such. It is not rectitude that is felt, but obligation. Rectitude is cognized, and the obligation is the moral force which it exerts upon the soul. It is true, there is nothing besides rectitude that is obligatory, taking this term as embracing all the will of God; and conscience is therefore limited exclusively to the domain which this term defines. But there is no immediate influence exerted by the right upon the conscience, so that what is right must be felt as such without the intervention of any cognition of the right, to mediate between this and the feeling of its obligation. The exercise of the force of rectitude upon the conscience is mediate, being dependent upon the activity of the cognitive power which perceives the right. But the cognitive power may apprehend as right what is in fact morally indifferent, or even wrong. The conscience cognizes nothing, and any error that is committed by the cognitive faculty remains undetected by the power whose exclusive office it is to feel the obligation of right. Wrong, when known as such, is never felt to be obligatory. God has not so made man that he owns allegiance to evil as a duty, when evil is recognized as such; and sin has not so changed the essence of man as to render him helplessly and hopelessly the contented servant of Satan, without even the power to be dissatisfied with his servitude. Although the fall has reduced our race to a state of bondage, so that every imagination of the thoughts of men's hearts is only evil continually, and so that they even willingly stand in the service of sin, yet they never recognize wrong as obligatory, but always attach obligation to that which is apprehended as right, notwithstanding their disregard of its requirements. The service of sin is felt to be an abnormal condition, and the souls of those who are engaged in it are not at rest. "There is no peace to the wicked." Therefore evil-doers suffer the pangs of conscience when they adopt the wrong in

spite of their knowledge of it as wrong. Conscience feels the obligation of right, not of wrong; but it feels the obligation of right as this is presented by the intelligence, whether this has apprehended it correctly or incorrectly. The wrong that is thought to be right excites the sense of obligation, as well as that which is objectively right and is so cognized, while the right that is not apprehended as such by the intellect does not. The obligation felt always attaches to the cognition by which it is mediated.

The opinion that we feel the right immediately is contradicted by facts. That the sensibilities have a certain influence upon our cognitive powers is evident, and has been admitted. The tender conscience renders the intellect vigilant and careful in the examination of subjects belonging to its domain, and thus indirectly contributes something towards the cognition of the right; just as the love of money stimulates the mind to greater energy in devising schemes to accumulate it, and thus promotes knowledge in that direction. But this is not knowing through the power of feeling: it is knowing through our cognitive faculties alone, which are quickened in their activity by feeling. All experience proves that we do not feel what is right without an exercise of the intellect, and that we do not obtain our knowledge of what is right through the exercise of the feelings. Thoughtful men recognize no validity whatever in the argument that a thing is right because it is felt to be so. The attempt to decide a disputed question in morals by the declaration that we feel our opinion to be right, will only provoke a smile in those who reflect. A problem is not proved to be correctly solved by the fact that we feel pleasure in its supposed solution: just as little is our judgment in a moral question proved to be correct by the fact that we feel the obligation of that which we have judged to be right. A man may feel very wise and very virtuous, and be a foolish knave for all that. A person may feel it to be right

to take the property of a miser for the purpose of giving it to those who will make better use of it, but it is wrong notwithstanding. Our nature is adapted to feel the obligation of right; but the cognition of the right must precede the feeling, and this may rest on error. The feeling is therefore no criterion of the right.

To make the feeling a test of right is to open the way for grave practical errors. It leads to outrages both in religion and morals. The fanatic will be sure to justify his extravagances by the plea that he feels himself to be right. Religious enthusiasts are not unfrequently persuaded in their own minds that their mad vagaries are momentous truths, and the appeal to their feelings in proof of their pretension is a favorite method of argumentation. The Hindoo whose conscience has been brought under the influence of false theories, will feel that he is right, as well as the Christian who derives his knowledge from an infallible source. If we admit the validity of the evidence in one case, we must do so in all; for no just reason could be assigned, why the Hindoo has not as good a right to claim authority for his feelings as the Christian. If the false principle be admitted, we must admit its consequences when fairly applied.

The question to be decided, in the investigation of matters of rectitude, is not at all how this or that person feels about it. This can determine nothing. If the intellect can be convinced that murder is right and thus obligatory, conscience will feel the obligation according to the cognition, notwithstanding the enormous error. Conscience does not mark out its own domain and determine the right by its own activity. This would render all truth and right merely subjective, and leave us no criterion for the cognition of either. If we could find the right only by the gauge of our feelings, that being right which is felt to be so and because it is felt to be so, all religion and morality is undermined, and every man's heart is his own lord and rule of life.

No doubt this error has been originated in many minds by observing that the sensations, which are also called feelings, are criteria of the objects producing them. These are confounded with the higher feelings, or the relation between the latter and their objects is assumed to be the same as the relation between the impression made upon the organs of sense and the external objects which make the impression. That an object feels hard or soft, cold or warm to the touch, is certainly sufficient proof that it has the qualities which are thus perceived. That a man feels hungry or thirsty is all the proof that is needed to establish the fact that he is so, because these words simply designate the sensation, not a state or quality of which that sensation is the index. But when the word feeling is used as a designation of such sensations, it is obviously employed in another sense than when it is applied to the effects produced in the mind without reference to our physical nature and without localization in the organs of sense. We do not feel in our bodily organs that a man's conduct is right; we have no physical sensation of rightness. We cognize the right by our intuitive and discursive faculties, and upon this ensues the experience in our sensibilities which we call the sense, or feeling of obligation. As an effect this feeling is proof that a cognition of right has taken place; but whether the knowledge obtained be correct or incorrect, it does not and cannot determine. The cognitive faculties may have erred in the presentation of the object, and therefore the feeling of obligation proves only the antecedent act of the intellect with reference to the right, not the objective correctness of the cognition.

When we maintain that conscience is the power which feels the obligation of the divine law, or of right, we would therefore carefully guard against the theory which represents the feeling as the test of right, and which serves as an apology for all the forms of wrong which have ever found

honest adherents. Whether the mind has cognized the objective right, or whether it has permitted the wrong or the indifferent to be imposed upon it as right, is an important question, which the interests of religion and morality require to be decided in each case; but the conscience is not the judge to decide it. It has no such powers. It feels the obligation when the right is known, and nothing more. The mere fact that we feel the obligation does not make that right whose obligation we feel, and therefore cannot prove that it is right. It only proves that to our mind it has appeared so. Whether it is so in fact, is an open question for every other person, though for us it may be decided, and must be decided before the obligation is felt. The testimony of my conscience has no authority for any person besides myself. I feel the obligation because I have cognized the right; but another cannot feel the obligation because I have such a cognition. Every other person must judge for himself whether that which I feel to be obligatory is right objectively, or whether it has merely seemed so to me.

III. The power to feel the obligation of divine law is universal. There is no human being without a conscience. It is not called into being by the circumstances which condition its activity. The heathen possesses it as well as the Christian. Indeed, it may be said to be the distinctive characteristic of man. No individual could be classed with the human race without possessing it, and none of the brute creation does possess it. Brutes never have a sense of obligation, and never feel remorse upon the consciousness of having violated obligations. They have no duty and no guilt. But in all men these moral powers are found, the most barbarous and most degraded of men forming no exception.

It does, indeed, in some cases seem as if men were sunk so low as to have lost all sense of obligation and all capability of remorse. But this is only apparent. In

reality conscience cannot be lost entirely without a loss of human nature, which is manifestly impossible. There may unquestionably be great degradation of humanity by the debility and inactivity of conscience. The process of brutalization may be going forward by the constantly increasing inefficiency of conscience in the performance of its proper office; but man does not lose the power to feel obligation, even when the feelings, as activities of that power, become feeble and infrequent or even entirely dormant: the possibility of experiencing them always remains as part of his nature. Men approximate brutes in proportion as conscience becomes inoperative. "A brutish man knoweth not, neither doth a fool understand." Ps. 92, 6. But the existence of a conscience manifests itself still, as he sometimes feels that he ought to do this or that which he has cognized as right, however slack he may be in the performance of the obligation, and sometimes the sleeping conscience awakes and shakes the soul with terror. The declaration which is sometimes made, that a man has no conscience, is to be taken in the same sense as the assertion that a man has no reason or sense. The one indicates that the man is a knave, the other that he is a fool; but neither is seriously designed to affirm that he has entirely lost the mental power to which the expression refers.

While all men have a conscience, however, the difference in its power and activity in various individuals is as great as is the difference in regard to intellectual faculties. As some men have sound judgment while others render themselves ridiculous by their follies, so some have a tender conscience while others render themselves contemptible by their knaveries. Conscience is an index of character. One feels strongly the obligation which right imposes upon him, and is thus impelled to pursue it with unflinching purpose. He is a man to be depended upon under all circumstances. He is bound by a moral "must" in his own soul, corresponding

to the divine law which has been presented to the intellect and cognized; and this leaves him no choice but to go forward in the path of right, be the opposing difficulties what they may. An illustration of its force is the sublime utterance of Luther in the time of his severe trial: "I cannot do otherwise; God help me!" Another has the feeling of obligation also when the right is apprehended; but it is so feeble that the right is readily sacrificed to gratify another feeling that is stronger in his soul. He may therefore be found on the side of right or on that of wrong, according to circumstances. He cannot be relied upon in any case, because the force of the influences brought to bear against the requirements of right will determine his position. His character is weak. And still another is so enslaved by his evil lust and therefore so intent upon the gratification of his lower feelings, that he will give but little heed to the claims of rectitude. In many cases, accordingly, he will have no feeling of obligation at all, though the right be plain to his view; in others the feeling will be but languid and transient, his whole attention being absorbed by the less noble feelings which overpower him. He has the power to feel obligation, but the power is often inactive when the proper object to call it into activity is presented. He belongs to the class of men who are said to have no character. All have conscience, but the power varies in different individuals.

IV. That conscience is the faculty of the soul which feels the obligation of righteousness, and that its essential characteristic is accordingly the sense of duty, various considerations tend to evince.

1. To feel such obligation seems to us clearly presented in consciousness as its characteristic. When we observe the operations of conscience we always become aware of a certain feeling, which is easily distinguishable from the knowing that is its necessary antecedent and from the willing that is its possible consequent. This feeling, moreover, is

observed always to have the peculiar character which is expressed by the word obligation. We uniformly experience this when conscience performs its functions; we always refer to this when we use the word conscience; and that word is admitted to be used improperly when there is no such feeling. The cognition of righteousness, upon which that feeling depends, is included in the signification of the term only when this is used loosely, and no person finds any difficulty in distinguishing it from the feeling as something entirely different and as the operation of an entirely different mental power. The volition which may ensue upon the feeling, and often does ensue, is universally distinguished from it. No doubt the reason why the consequent willing and the feeling are not in the same way confounded as are the antecedent knowing and the feeling, is the fact that the cognition always precedes while the volition does not always follow the sense of obligation. Aside from this circumstance there would be the same ground for including the volitional as for including the intellectual element in conscience; for as there is no action of the conscience without moral cognition, so there is no moral volition without action of the conscience. But conscience is neither that on which its action is dependent nor that which is dependent on its action. When my neighbor is in distress, I may or may not feel the obligation to help him. That depends on a variety of circumstances, all of which center in the question whether righteousness, taking this in the broadest sense as including the duties of love, requires it. Conscience does not decide the question. It must be decided before the sense of obligation can arise in the soul. A person may in such a case, seeing the possibility of affording assistance and being moved by sympathy to do what presents itself as possible, run to his neighbor's relief, though his distress is caused by his crimes and the assistance resolves itself into an effort to defeat the course of justice. Does conscience



thus decide what is to be done and declare what is duty under the circumstances, or is the whole process not rather a result of natural affections and carnal sympathies with which conscience has nothing at all to do? It is not always the sense of duty that prompts to what some are pleased to call helpfulness and love and good works. The moral "must" always attaches to the clear cognition of righteousness, and only to that. We cannot without moral suicide do otherwise than conscience dictates, because we cannot do otherwise without renouncing all claims of the righteousness which the intellect knows and the conscience feels. But much of that which is imputed to conscience and is supposed to be certainly known as right from the fact that conscience demands it, is neither known to be right nor felt to be obligatory. It is strongly desired, perhaps only by the flesh, and that is mistaken for a moral imperative. When conscience is really active there is an obligation felt that is wholly independent of any questions of expediency or self-interest, and that feeling always depends on the recognized obligatoriness of the thing demanded. I feel an act or a course of conduct to be duty because it is presented to my soul with divine authority as righteousness, and that power in my nature in virtue of which I feel this obligation is the conscience. That holds me to the right as it has come to my knowledge, and will not relinquish its hold. Whether that knowledge has been derived from a natural intuition of right or logical deduction from it, or from a supernatural revelation or inference drawn from it, is not material in determining the nature of conscience. This is not the knowledge whose content is felt to be obligatory, nor the source whence the knowledge is derived, nor the original authority that imposes the obligation, but the faculty which the Creator has given us, in virtue of which the objective obligatoriness of righteousness is subjectively felt. Knowing the right is the condition of feeling the obligation, and doing

the right is the natural consequence of such feeling, but neither the knowing or the doing is what we mean when we speak of conscience in the strict sense, but only that power in us which holds us to the right as we have apprehended it, whether our knowledge be correct or incorrect, or whether we obey it or disobey it. In witness of this our appeal is to every man's consciousness.

Conscience is not a power that necessitates corresponding action in soul and body. When right is known and its obligation is felt, the appropriate result should be the volition to do right and the performance of the work required. But whether this follows or not depends on other factors than the conscience. Because our nature is no longer in harmony with the righteousness which conscience enforces, and nothing is left of its original moral constitution but this faculty to enforce that for which man was originally designed and organized, the demands of conscience are not complied with and all the resources of reason are called into requisition to justify wrong and excuse wrong-doing. Where notwithstanding this the right is still seen and recognized, the desires of the heart are in conflict with its requirements, and often the obligation felt is violated to gratify the conflicting desire. The result is that anguish of mind which is called remorse. This is commonly attributed to the conscience because of the intimate relation in which it stands to the feeling of obligation, without which it could not arise. Remorse is the consequence of violated conscience. It is the pain resulting from the fact that the feeling of obligation continues though we have failed to comply with its demand, and as it is not satisfied and will not relent, the clash and the anticipated penalties terrify the soul. Peace of conscience is the harmony of the soul's action with the obligation felt and accordingly the absence of that pain which ensues when the demands of conscience are not fulfilled and the penalties of violated righteousness

are dreaded. As man in his natural state never does and never can fulfill the requirements which righteousness makes upon him, it is easy to see that, unless man gives way to the deceptive arts of Satan and of his own sinful soul, such peace is never found in nature, and that it can be found only in Him who fulfilled all righteousness in our stead and whose merit is imputed to us through faith. Both remorse and peace are related to conscience as effects of its operation and may therefore with propriety be referred to it as moral feelings. But in strictness of speech only that is the conscience which feels the obligation whose violation or fulfilment results in remorse or peace. It is worth the reader's while to look into his own soul and observe what is going forward there, when conscience is performing its office, and see for himself whether these things be so.

2. It seems to us that the established usage of the word, as in some manner a manifestation of the common consciousness, tends to confirm the view which is here presented. For obvious reasons no great expectations can be entertained of furnishing convincing evidence from this source. Words are often used in so wide a sense and with such a vague meaning, especially when things are so closely allied as at a superficial glance to seem identical, that their application in common speech can furnish but little help in an inquiry into the nature of things. It would be unreasonable to expect usage in regard to the word conscience to be very precise, considering what disagreements and what confusion prevails even among thinkers in regard to the thing which it signifies. We do not claim that our doctrine is universally held and that all usage of language conforms to it. The subject could not be so intricate and so perplexing if that were the case. What we do claim is that usage largely favors our doctrine. The expressions "sense of right" and "moral sense" are probably used more frequently as synonyms of conscience than any others. Cer-

tainly no designation has ever become popular which implied that the characteristic function of conscience, indicating its peculiar nature, is an intellectual operation. "Moral faculty" is extensively used; but this does not necessarily imply that the faculty is of an intellectual or cognitive character, and the fact that it may more readily be understood as implying this is perhaps a reason why it has never become a favorite among the people, who are conscious of an activity in the sensibilities, rather than in the intellect, when they observe the operations of conscience. According to the common consciousness, moral judgments and moral opinions are not adequate expressions for the phenomena of conscience, and are therefore not generally chosen to denote them: moral feelings, or moral sense, is the expression preferred. There is in all a consciousness that an opinion, or even a conviction, has not the force of conscience. The expressions most commonly in use undeniably indicate that the common consciousness testifies to the propriety of locating the conscience in the sensibilities as the power of feeling the obligation of right.

3. The effects produced by conscience also furnish evidence in favor of the same view. No mere cognitions can directly produce peace or remorse. Two persons may have an equal knowledge of what is right in a given case, while one experiences pleasure, the other pain with reference to the right cognized. It certainly cannot be supposed that the one is so constituted that joyful emotions are the natural result of the cognition, and the other is so unhappily organized that his knowledge of necessity brings him anguish, though the cognition is in both cases the same. Nor can the difference be accounted for by their different conduct relative to the thing cognized, unless something more than the cognition be taken into the account. If one has the desire to do the right and the other to do the wrong, what should prevent their equal enjoyment of happiness in the

gratification of their desire? The mere knowing makes no difference, because they have different desires in spite of the coincidence of their knowledge. What is it, then, that mediates between the common cognition and the joy in the one and the pain in the other? Physical acts, independently of mental action, of course cannot do it. There must therefore be something in addition to the knowledge of the right which exercises an influence upon the subsequent feelings and determines their character. This is the feeling of obligation which follows the cognition of the right. One has the quiet of mind which exists when there is no consciousness of evil-doing, and which is usually termed peace of conscience. He has this comfortable feeling because the obligation felt was complied with, and there is no occasion for rebuke. The other has the pain, not of the violation of right simply; for many violate this without any compunction whatever; but of the violation of his own sense of obligation. No mere cognition could account for the pain without the intervention of some feeling bringing the thing cognized into more intimate relationship with the personality of the individual who experiences it. The motives against the course felt to be obligatory may be so strong as to determine the will in the opposite direction; and yet there is not the peace experienced of a mind satisfied with its choice, because the feeling of obligation will not give way to any other motives, which are all selfish and all necessarily inferior. The activity of conscience as the feeling of obligation alone can explain the difference in the experience of two individuals adopting different courses in reference to the cognized right. If conscience is assumed to embrace the intellection and to be in its nature cognitive, it is impossible to build a bridge across the chasm between the cognition and the peace or remorse which follow its activity. A feeling of obligation must intervene, and this exclusively accounts for the subsequent emotions, and this exclusively

has that moral force which all agree in ascribing to conscience, while the intellection is in itself powerless. If I cognize a thing to be right, but cognize the opposite to be more advantageous at the same time, therefore choosing the latter, what could give me pain but the consciousness that an obligation is violated which conscience has felt? The judgment would be satisfied if the argument of expediency were supposed to be fully on the side of the course adopted. Precisely that is done which the intellect has decided to be most advantageous, even though it has also decided it to be not right: a decision which is contradictory indeed, but which cannot be recognized as contradictory without feeling the obligation of right. If remorse is felt notwithstanding such decision of the intellect in favor of the wrong course, the only possible explanation of the phenomenon is found in the existence of a power which feels the obligation of right, whatever the mind's judgment may be respecting its expediency, and which continues to feel the obligation in spite of all anticipations of pleasure to be derived from disregarding its requirements. There is a moral imperative in the soul, which all are conscious of belonging to the feeling of obligation alone. This is conscience, and is generally recognized to be so in the fact that the peace and remorse, which such a feeling alone can explain, are usually attributed to the conscience.

V. The view here set forth meets all the requirements which science can justly make. While it assigns a distinct office to a power which has a distinct name, it explains all the phenomena of conscience and obviates all the difficulties which have presented themselves in the investigation of its nature and functions.

1. One of the most perplexing of all the difficulties which have been encountered in the efforts made to present a harmonious theory respecting this power, is that of the so-called erring conscience. The benighted heathen is en-

dowed with a conscience as well as the enlightened Christian. But it is obvious that that which the former cognizes as right, and which he therefore feels to be obligatory, is not as likely to be right in fact as that which is so regarded by the latter. The superior means possessed by the one to obtain correct knowledge in the domain of rectitude, gives him a manifest advantage over the other. The Hindoo mother, when she destroys the life of her child from a religious impulse, thinks her conduct right, and the sacrifice which she makes seems to her meritorious. From her point of view it is truly heroic. To a Christian mother the very thought is horrible, and in her the act would be an outrage which would brand her with infamy. But both have consciences, and both may be conscientious. The former may commit the cruel deed to satisfy the demands of conscience, while such an act would be done under protest and followed by bitter remorse if performed by the latter. How a power should have claims to be regarded as of any moral worth, while it manifestly falls into gross error and presents the most contradictory requirements, has seemed to many a mystery. Some have been impelled by the difficulty to deny that it has any obligatory force, and have represented conscience as a mere function of the reasoning faculty. Others have run to the opposite extreme, and have maintained that any particular act which it feels to be obligatory is absolutely right in virtue of such felt obligation, thus making conscience the infallible criterion of right and wrong. Both fail to explain the phenomena of conscience as found in consciousness, and both involve the subject in inextricable difficulties.

All these difficulties vanish, however, when conscience is regarded not as a cognitive faculty, but as the power of the soul which feels the obligation of right. This power in the strict sense never errs, and, in the nature of the case, never can err. The predicate erring can with no more propriety be

applied to the conscience than to consciousness. The mind may err, and err, too, in the domain of morals: about this there can be no question. But the error lies not in the function performed by conscience. This feels the obligation of the right in all cases. To do this is its specific office; if it did otherwise it would cease to be conscience.

Why, then, do we speak of an erring conscience? The reason will be found partly in the confusion prevalent in regard to the nature and functions of conscience, partly in the tendency to use figurative language in reference to the mental powers. The judgment is liable to err, and this error is easily transferred to the power which, the correctness of the cognition being presupposed, feels the obligation of the right as cognized. The conscience never decides any act to be right; it does not investigate and does not judge. It feels the obligation of the right, whatever the act or motive may be which has been cognized as coming under this idea. It presupposes cognitions, but it cognizes nothing. The intellect must determine whether this or that be right. When this judgment is passed, and a particular act or course is thus pronounced right, conscience feels the obligation to perform the act or pursue the course as presented. Whether the judgment be correct, conscience cannot know: it has no power to revise the operations of the intellect. If the judgment erred in pronouncing a thing to be right, the conscience acts just as if the cognition were correct, but the error belongs to the former, not to the latter. It still feels the obligation of the right, not of the wrong which the intellect mistook for right. Conscience never obligates us to the wrong as such. It may lead to the commission of a wrong act, but it will uniformly be to the act under the mind's conviction that it is right. We may be deceived by others, and we may deceive ourselves; but the error always lies elsewhere than in the conscience. It is possible to be conscientious in wrong-doing, but it is not possible to be



conscientious in doing that which is known to be wrong. Hence the efforts of Satan are directed largely to the deception of the intellect, and hence the great danger of error in moral and religious judgments, which deprives us of the agency of conscience in promoting that which is objectively right, and puts this power practically on the side of wrong, by rendering this subjectively right. It is passing off spurious coin under the strong guaranty of the genuine.

When error is attributed to the conscience it is therefore manifest that, strictly speaking, this is incorrect. It is a figure of speech. The mind has erred, but the error belongs to the intellect, not to the conscience. The latter is undisturbed in its office of feeling the obligation of right. The expression "erring conscience" can mean only this, that the judgment has presented wrong by mistake for right, and thus secured the feeling of obligation in connection with that which is subjectively right, but only subjectively so. The conscience acts in relation to error as if it were truth. The process is not unique. If a bad man be admitted into the Church by deceiving it as to his character, an error is committed indeed, and, in a certain sense, it might on that account be called an erring Church. But if this should be taken to signify that the Church sanctions the man's wickedness in the abstract, a sense would be imputed to the expression which cannot be justified. The Church requires uprightness of character even when it ignorantly receives dishonest men into its communion. It errs in its judgments respecting persons, as it cannot look into their hearts; but it is no more in its nature identified with wrong when it receives a wrong-minded man, who succeeds in making the impression that he is right-minded and is accepted as such, than when it receives a man who is what he professes to be. The fundamental decision of the Church remains the same, that only Christian men are qualified for admission; whatever may be the errors committed in the application of the

decision in particular cases. If the law officers make a mistake by apprehending and punishing an innocent person, the law does not err, although it is plain that an error has been committed. The law protects the innocent still and punishes the guilty, notwithstanding that in the special instance an innocent person was brought under its penalties. Just as the Church is on the side of purity and the law on the side of justice, notwithstanding that errors are committed in concrete cases, so conscience always in the abstract feels the obligation of right, notwithstanding that in some cases it practically stands on the side of the wrong, which the intellect has decided to be right and which it has thus presented to the conscience. This is called an error of conscience by transfer to this power of a predicate which belongs to the cognitive power upon which it is dependent, in the same way as the punishment of an innocent person is called an error of the law. Any other explanation of the so-called erring conscience robs this power of all binding authority.

2. The doctrine presented also gives a satisfactory explanation of the variations of conscience. It is a fact which has often caused perplexity in investigating the subject, that what seems right to one seems wrong to another, and that both appeal to conscience as the power which binds each to what appears to him right. Thus it seems to approve and condemn one and the same thing, seeming so contradictory that in the estimation of many it is practically useless. One finds, for instance, any indulgence in recreation on the Lord's day entirely inconsistent with right, and carefully shuns it as a violation of the obligation felt in conscience. Another, equally conscientious, regards himself at liberty to seek it and enjoy it, so far as it does not interfere with hearing and learning the Word of God, and is thankful for the privileges and opportunities a kind Providence has given him. Does conscience act contradictorily when one

feels bound to shun a walk among the flowers or in the green fields as a sin on that holy day, and another enjoys it with feelings of gratitude? If conscience were the cognizing power the answer would necessarily be in the affirmative; and the inference would be legitimate that it is of no moral value. But when we regard it as the power of feeling obligation to do the right as the individual sees it, we answer unhesitatingly in the negative, and conscience is thus left in the position which the consciousness universally assigns to it as the moral guide of the individual. It obligates to the right, and to this exclusively, leaving it to the cognitive faculties to determine what the right is. The variations are plainly seen to lie not in the sphere of conscience, which never stands leagued with wrong. They are variations in the decisions made by the intellect respecting moral questions, and are predicated of conscience only by the transfer of the term belonging to the intellect which cognizes the right to the conscience which feels its obligation as cognized. No theory which ascribes the cognitive function to the conscience can offer any satisfactory explanation of the so-called variations of this power

3. The doctrine which has been set forth explains, moreover, why the utterances of conscience could popularly be called the voice of God, notwithstanding the undeniable fact that it contains no revelations of truth, but merely enforces what is known from the proper sources. That we should reverence the truth, that we should possess the quality of goodness, that we should sanction and perform the right, is God's holy will. As soon as truth, or goodness, or rightness is perceived, conscience feels its obligation upon us as imperative. It is the will of God, and it is cognized as such by the intellect and felt as such by the conscience. The obligation is divine, and by an easy figure of speech we apply to the power to feel the predicate which belongs properly to the requirement whose obligation is felt. That we should

glorify God is the divine will: it is right. This has been learned from the proper source by the cognitive power. It is the voice of God and is recognized as such. But conscience feels the obligation when the cognition has been obtained, so that this voice becomes subjectively efficacious in conscience. It may therefore be called the voice of God, as that which is felt to be obligatory always is so, or is presumed to be so. The expression can thus be adopted without involving the error which so frequently underlies its use, to-wit, that the conscience contains a divine revelation and is thus a source of the knowledge of the divine will. It is the voice of God in a similar sense to that in which we say that the voice of the Christian ministry is divine. So far as the conscience may be said to have a voice it proclaims the right, which is of divine authority.

The popular appellation is liable to be misunderstood, inasmuch as it may be apprehended as indicating that God speaks directly in the human conscience, which is an error; or as claiming for conscience the power to cognize the divine will as it is revealed to us in nature and especially in the Scriptures, which is also an error. Conscience merely feels the obligation which is imposed by the voice of God as He speaks to us in nature and especially in His Word, which is always absolutely right. It is a human power adapted by the Creator to the enforcement of divine authority. But this explains how the appellation originated and in what sense it must be understood. That which is felt as obligatory is really divine, and conscience, which thus enforces God's will, seems to be God speaking to man by this power and urging him to do right. And while it explains the ground of the common appellation, it securely guards against the dangerous misapprehensions to which it is liable, and gross abuses to which it may give rise. If any man would justify his moral vagaries by appealing to the voice of God within him, those who regard conscience as the seat of a divine

revelation, or as the divinely imparted power of cognizing the right, could give no satisfactory reply to his appeal to the evidence of conscience. But according to the view which we have presented of its nature, proof would be demanded to establish the claim that such vagaries are right, as we cannot admit that the mere feeling of obligation makes them right. That which is claimed to be the will of God, or to be positively right, must be capable of other proof than any individual's feelings. Just as the voice of the Christian minister is the voice of God when he proclaims the word given by revelation in the Scriptures, and must be received as such when he can show that what he announces is really the truth there revealed, so the obligation felt in conscience is to be received as divine when that from which it arises is really right in God's sight and can be shown to be right. But whether it is really the voice of God, in either case, is not decided by the fact that the minister has said so, or that conscience has felt it to be obligatory. This leaves it yet an open question that must be decided by an appeal to the proper sources of knowledge.

This explains why conscience, while it is but a human power, confronts us with superhuman authority. Much perplexity has been caused by the universally recognized fact that it has such force. But when we keep in view that conscience is the power which feels the obligation of right, and that rectitude does not impress itself upon the soul with human sanctions merely, the difficulty vanishes. Assuming the cognition of right to be correct, the obligation is divine. But the subject can have the feeling of obligation only on the condition that he cognizes that as right to which the obligation attaches. If he has erred, the error cannot be known to him; for conscience cannot feel the obligation of wrong that is known as such, or even of that which is indifferent and is known as such. To each individual therefore the obligation felt in his conscience must

have the force of divine law. One may not feel the obligatoriness of that which binds another, because he may fail to cognize it as right; and the feeling of obligation, according to the constitution of our mental nature, can arise only under the condition that the right, or the divine will, is known. Thus precisely experience presents the facts. One man's conscience is not the rule for another man. What is felt is the voice of God for him whose conscience feels it, but it is not the voice of God, on that account, to another, who has not the same cognition. The authority is not in the conscience, but in the divine law, or in the right, which conscience feels to be obligatory. The obligating power lies in the right which has divine sanction. The right which the intellect is to cognize, and the obligation of which, when it is cognized, conscience feels, is the voice of God.

4. The relation of conscience to the original nature of man, which, like all the rest of God's creatures, was pronounced very good, has also suggested difficulties. That man is not morally what he was originally, is evident to all who will not obstinately refuse to see. Had he a conscience before the fall? To answer this in the negative would seem to place this power outside of man's original nature and to degrade it to a mere separable accident. Yet there are eminent thinkers who have been constrained by the facts of consciousness to insist that it is of sublapsarian origin. If conscience is the soul's power of feeling obligation as inhering in the right, could this power have existed before that which is called obligation had any existence? That the feeling of guilt and shame, in the appearance of which the existence of a conscience in our first parents became manifest, was subsequent to the fall, is too evident to require anything more than the bare statement. But the fact that certain phenomena of which its existence is a condition were first observed at a given time, is no proof that it did not previously exist. It may have

existed prior to the effect in men's experience by which it became manifest in consciousness. Could it have existed before there was any sense of obligation actually experienced, which necessarily precedes the sense of guilt on account of obligation violated? Certainly a mental power may exist without being engaged in the performance of its proper functions. Our faculties are not always in action; they cannot be all active at the same time. They perform their operations only when the proper conditions are presented, and they perform them because the mind, prior to all action, is endowed with the power to perform them under appropriate circumstances. It has the power, whether this is called into activity or not. That is what is meant when we speak of a mental faculty. The power to feel the obligation of righteousness must have existed before there was any exercise of feeling. Man is so organized by his Creator that when he knows the demands of righteousness he feels their divine obligatoriness and cannot dispense himself from the obligation laid upon him and recognized in his nature. That is only saying, in other words, that he is endowed with a conscience, whether the circumstances occur or not under which, according to the divine purpose, that faculty is called into exercise. We have the power to see, though the light be wanting which is a necessary condition of perception; we have the power to feel the obligation of righteousness though the cognition be wanting on which its activity depends. The power of sight exists when we do not see; the power of feeling exists when we do not feel. That there was no obligation felt prior to the fall of man does not prove that there was in his mental constitution no power to feel it. He had a conscience, even though it were true that in his original state he had no occasion to exercise it, as man is endowed with the faculty of parental affection though he never become a parent.

- But this does not seem to remove the whole difficulty. It is still argued that in man's original condition there was no obligation and nothing that could occasion a sense of obligation; that that which rendered such a feeling a necessity and a reality was the sinfulness which did not lie in the creative plan; and that it would therefore be unreasonable to assume that a faculty was given to man which, except on conditions that are entirely in conflict with the divine purpose, would be absolutely useless. The argument has some plausibility, but will not bear close examination. It would seem strange if a power were conferred on man that is never to be used, and never could be used, though even that strangeness would not convince if its non-existence in opposition to clear evidence of its existence. But that is not the situation in the present case. It is true that the righteousness which is now obligatory was originally a matter of the soul's own impulses. Man was righteous; he was so freely; righteousness was his will and his pleasure; therefore it was not set before him as a demand and bound upon him as a duty. Laying obligations upon the soul always implies a condition of reluctance against that which is made obligatory. There was in man's original state no such reluctance and no need of imposing obligation. But righteousness was the law of his nature, although it did not stand over against him in the form of law. Man was created in righteousness, and was meant to be righteous. While he was so, there was no demand made upon him. When he became otherwise, the divine will in regard to him was not changed. But it then confronted him as law with its impositions of duties and threat of penalties. And now he felt the obligation and the pain of its violation. His conscience became active. Was that a new power created in the soul to adapt it to the new situation? There is no ground for such an assumption, as there is no ground for the assumption that because in the state of integrity



there was no feeling of obligation, conscience could not be the faculty for such feeling. The Creator of all things provided in the constitution of man's nature for the contingency which He foresaw, and gave him the faculty to feel the obligation of righteousness, when this ceased to be his choice and his pleasure. Because man was created in righteousness and for righteousness, he was created with a conscience that should feel the obligation of this righteousness when it ceased to be his possession. He has lost it, but it has not lost its claims upon him, and his endowment with a conscience renders the assertion of these claims possible in his nature. What is no longer his desire is his duty, and his nature is so constituted that he feels the obligation though he has lost the power of fulfilment.

The doctrine which we advocate, in this as in every other respect meets all the requirements of a consistent explanation of the facts of consciousness and history bearing on the subject. There is no trace of any manifestations of conscience prior to the introduction of sin into the world, because obligation could not be felt when righteousness was the man's possession and there was no need of binding it upon his soul as a requirement. As soon as sin entered its operations appear, because man was organized for righteousness and his soul felt that he ought to have what he had lost, and that the loss and the lack are disaster and death. In the experience of Christians, also, who are renewed in righteousness after the image of the Creator, conscience appears in consciousness only in proportion as the desires of the heart are found in conflict with the will of God, because only then can the right confront us as an authority imposing obligations upon us. When we serve God freely we are not under the law: neither its constraint nor its curse is upon us. Only the peace, which is the absence of all jarring and jangling in our nature and in our relations, is experienced so far as righteousness is a possession or the demands

of righteousness are satisfied. Such satisfaction is rendered only by the perfect obedience of our Lord Jesus Christ, and such righteousness we have only by the imputation of His merit through faith, and therefore there is rest for the soul in Jesus only and peace only in believing. Being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, because through Him all the demands of righteousness, whose obligation the conscience feels, are satisfied.

In our inquiry into the nature of conscience we have not overlooked the Holy Scripture and the light which they shed on the subject, although we have not referred to its statements as frequently and treated them as fully as our readers had reasons to expect. It seemed to us best to develop the doctrine in its connection, and to devote a separate article to the teaching of Scripture on the subject. This we propose to do in our next issue. M. Loy.

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## HOMILETIC RULES.

(From J. A. Quenstedt's "Ethica pastoralis." Translated by Rev. E. Schultz.)

14. — *While exposing false teachers, and disproving their errors, the preacher must use due earnestness and counterbalance it with mildness.*

In exposing false teachers and their false doctrine in the pulpit, you must exercise due moderation and wisdom, and reduce your fervor to the proper measure, so as not to overstep the bounds of propriety by undue ardor and harshness, nor must you appear lame by pretended indifference. For Gregor Nazianz in Orat. 26 says: "Both are equally useless, an inactive sleepy tardiness, and rude and excited manner." And in a sermon before 150 bishops he says (Orat. 32): "On this matter my opinion is this, and I state it as a

law for all ministers and preachers of correct doctrines, that they must not embitter the minds of the people by harshness, nor make them proud and forward by too much mildness; but they must act with wisdom and deliberation in matters of faith, and not depart from the straight middle course in these matters." Leonhard Hutter says: "I contend that in a teacher and theologian both must be present, namely, an aim to observe the required moderation as well as to apply due earnestness, so as not to make it appear as though theology would flatter the enemies of truth by too much leniency, and as though she were afraid to defend her position, or as though she would cut off all hope of reformation from the weak, and those that are held captive in error, by unbending noisy harshness."

It is true, the Apostle Paul demands 1 Tim. 5, 13, that "διδάσκοντες ἃ μὴ δεῖ, speaking (teaching) things which they ought not," their "mouths must be stopped" Tit. 1, 11, and he further says in v. 13, "rebuke them sharply—ἀποτόμως," so as to cut off every avenue of escape, and destroy the innermost core of their argument; or as Chrysostomus interprets the word ἀποτόμως "inflict upon them a deep wound, so as to make them sound in the faith," for this is the object of all punishment, since all reproof and disproof must aim at restoring or preserving the soundness of the faith. Yet he combines good will and gentleness with severity of punishment, when he says 2 Tim. 2, 24. 25: "The servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient; in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves," then follows the reason, "if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth, and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will." Huelseman says: "This instruction of the Apostle, as it seems, is also to be applied to the false believers and their teachers, because the description of the persons to

whom gentleness in teaching and reproaching is to be applied by the servant of the Lord, is taken from the word μάχη (strife), and from μωραὶ καὶ ἀπαιδευτοὶ ζητήσεις (foolish and useless questions). Towards such opponents and gainsayers a servant of the Lord is told to be ‘apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing.’” In 2 Tim. 4, 2. Timothy is instructed: “Preach the word; be instant, in season, out of season, (ἐδραίρως ἀκαίρως), reprove (ἐλεγξον), rebuke (ἐπιτίμησον),” — (see the earnestness) — “exhort with all long-suffering” — (see the mildness). Chrysostomus expresses this “not as though in anger, not as opponent, not as though you rejoiced in a fierce attack, not as though you considered it an act of enmity; but you must do it without all that, in love and pain and greater mourning than he (the erring one) has.”

Therefore, we can not in the least approve the ill applied anger of those who, in their dealing with sects, whether they be papists, or Calvinists, or any other denomination, are so inflamed by wrath and violent passions that they lose the thread of their discourse from unchecked excitement, and scarcely know themselves what they are saying;—who traduce their opponents by hateful epithets, overwhelm them with accusations, and persecute them with slander;—who exercise the office of reproaching in their sermons, not as driven by the Holy Ghost, but as being excited thereto by their own carnal mind, more from hatred and wrath again the persons, than from a proper ardor and opposition against the false doctrines. They often do this to such an extent, that they allow their natural inclination and desire, to hurt their opponent, to take the reigns, and satisfy the desire of their wicked heart. Such “have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge (ἀλλ, οὐ κατ, ἐγνώσειν).” Rom. 10, 2. A zeal for God there is, but it is not exercised according to knowledge; it proceeds from blind impulse, without proper thought and reflection. It is “ζήλος πικρός, bitter envying and strife,” bearing hatred, envy, wrath, malice and enmity. (James 3, 14-16.)

We do not deny that even Christ, the mildest of all men, did use severe, piercing, and painful words against the stubborn Jews, the priests, scribes and Pharisees. He calls them "an evil and adulterous generation" Matt. 12, 39 and 16, 4, "ye serpents, ye generation of vipers" Matt. 23, 33, "blind leaders of the blind" Matt. 15, 14; 23, 16. 24, "fools and blind" Matt. 23, 17. 19, "fools" Luke 11, 40, "hypocrites" Matt. 6, 2 5. 16; again He calls them "thieves and robbers" John 10, 8, "children of the devil" John 8, 44, "whited sepulchers" Matt. 23, 27, "ravening wolves" Matt. 7, 15, similar to "bulls", "lions", "dogs" Ps. 22, 12. 13. 16. St. Paul also chastises the false teachers with great vehemence, calling them "dogs, evil-workers" Phil. 3, 2, also "deceitful workers, ministers of Satan" 2 Cor. 11, 13. 15, "vain talkers and deceivers" Tit. 1, 10, "heretics, condemned of himself" Tit. 3, 10, "grievous wolves" Acts 20, 29. He even hurls an "anathema (let him be accursed)" against the troublers of the church, that "would pervert the gospel of Christ" Gal. 1, 7. Also Peter chastises and condemns very decidedly the "false prophets" and "false teachers" who "with feigned words make merchandise of you" 2 Pet. 2, 1-3, and the Apostle and Evangelist John calls the heretics of his day "anti-christs" 1 John 2, 18. 19. 22, "deceivers" and "transgressors" to whom he does not want a greeting extended, 2 John 7, 9. 10. The answer of Polycarp, the martyr, is also known, who, when the smooth-tongued Marcion met him, said to his face: "I recognize thee as the devil's first-born." Ignatius calls the false teachers "basilisks, dragons, mangy dogs;" Irenaeus calls them "dogs;" Clemens of Alexandria "goats;" he of Nazianz "hogs;" Jerome "sows." Cyprian and Augustin call the Novatians and Donatists in one breath: "Anti-christs, wolves, murderers of souls, thieves, robbers, defilers of the sanctuary, etc."

But here we must distinguish clearly between false

teachers, the teachers and leaders of the sects, — and those that are led astray; — between stubborn, willful or stiff-necked opponents, and such as are willing to receive instruction and be corrected; — between those that err from malice, and those that err from weakness, ignorance or incapacity. Christ, the apostles, and the teachers of the early church severely rebuked the false leaders, or leaders of sects, and the stubborn enemies of the gospel in the most bitter words and upbraided them severely; but they brought back with gentle words those that were led astray by false teachers, yet were open to repentance, and led them into the way of truth; and so they teach by their example this doctrine to all servants of the church, that either sharp or mild remedies are to be applied according to the condition of the individual. They are to rebuke mildly those that have been led astray from the path of truth or of virtue through weakness or lack of judgment, and where there is a spark of hope for their repentance and conversion left; but they who stubbornly defend their errors and spread them in every direction, are to be reprov'd more severely and sternly.

There is a difference to be made in the objects (doctrines) that are to be reprov'd and disprov'd; for in theology some errors are less, others more grave; some upset faith or weaken it directly, others indirectly. Errors which do not touch the foundations of faith itself, such as, perhaps, an unsuitable expression, or a not quite correct explanation of a difficult biblical text, or incidental questions (*quaestiones adnatas*, side issues), may be treated more mildly and cursorily. But whatever overturns the foundation of faith and of our salvation itself, and is oppos'd to the symbolical books of our church — such errors are to be treated more severely.

It is also to be observed, whether the heretic, or one led astray by heretics, is to be reprov'd in the congregation to which the preacher of the Word is ministering, or outside

of the same. If the heretics are within the congregation itself, an orthodox minister must use great wisdom and caution, and not ridicule their doctrine with offensive and opprobrious words or with biting and stinging speeches, nor must he pour forth insinuations and offensive language against their persons. For by severe invectives the minds of the opponents will only be the more wrought up and embittered, while by mild and peaceable words they are subdued and quieted. Solomon says, Prov. 15, 1: "A soft answer turneth away wrath; but grievous words stir up anger." Here "soft answer" means such speeches as flow out of a gentle heart, and are free from all cutting and offensive acerbity, free from all proud, threatening, overbearing and offensive manner, where the words as well as also the mode and manner of delivery are captivating and humbly adapted to the mental powers of the hearer. The effect of such a moderate speech is to turn away wrath and ill will, that is, it will not cause the opponent to get aroused and excited for a cause offered him in words, or, if that has happened already, it will cause his anger to abate, and the fury of his excited mind will quiet down and vanish. On the contrary, "grievous words" means a speech that will hurt the opponent by means of pointed allusions, offensive sarcasms, shameful snubbery, and boisterous scoldings. The result of this will be to stir up and call forth wrath and anger, etc., as Dr. Geier shows in his commentary. But if some of the congregation fall into error, and keep the matter within themselves, and do not scatter it abroad publicly, the preacher must try to get these straying members of a local community again into their proper place by gentleness and mildness, Gal. 6, 1; he must teach to the erring ones the better doctrine, and lead them back to sound views.

The beginning is also to be distinguished from further progress. Erring ones and errors of faith at the beginning are to be reproved with humility. If possible, even heretics

are to be reproved privately at first, before they are brought to a public and severe censure, as Dr. Hulseman teaches. For as Christ prescribes several grades of reproof for sinful living, so the Apostle, Tit. 3, 10., commands the reproof against those that err in matters of faith and against heretics to be administered several times, where he says: "A man that is a heretic, after the first and second admonition, reject."

15. *The preacher must quote the arguments of opponents faithfully and truly, and disprove and destroy them from the text before him and from parallel passages, without ostentatious sophisms and sharp practices, and without getting excited, so as to show his love for the truth, and not love of quarreling, in His exposition.*

You must deal honestly and faithfully and without disguise with your adversaries. You must not misrepresent their views, nor weaken the arguments with which they prove their views, so as not to exhibit sinful passion instead of love of truth in your argument.

Therefore a preacher must observe the following rules :

1) He must quote completely the identical words of heretics and of false believers, and not attribute to them opinions not held by them, nor pervert their arguments, nor weaken nor mutilate them. If so, his own arguments will lose their weight and the servant of the Word will gain the reputation of being unreliable.

2) Nor must he produce their objections in a pleasing and well-sounding form, or with the use of many words; for it might easily be, that a thoughtful listener is caught by well-sounding reasoning of the opponents, and does not pay sufficient attention to the explanation and counter-argument immediately following the quoted objections.

3) Some advise, that a preacher should make a plain difference in speaking, between the objection of his opponent and his own answer, so that the hearer can recognize



from the difference in the voice, which are the words of the opponents, and what the preacher of the faith has to reply to heterodoxy from his own mind; because most of the hearers (as Andr. Pancratius in *Method. conc.* says) labor under this difficulty, "that they much sooner will notice and retain the false and impious opinions of heretics, than the true and cogent disproofs of the same."

4) He must give a convincing and sufficient answer to the opposing arguments, so as not to leave difficulties and doubts in the minds of the hearers, and thus cause more damage than good. For this reason he must not use any roundabout or far-fetched arguments, and such as are not readily apparent from the text or are weak, but only such as spring naturally from the text and are evident and cogent and easily comprehended by the people, who are to be considered before anything else. He who does not disprove the views of heretics sufficiently, as much as gives up the heavenly truth and betrays it. Luther says: "To disprove coldly and lazily, what is that but to prove it twice." For this reason some say, it is better in a church living in peace, to keep quiet before the people about the errors and arguments of heretics, than to disprove them coldly and insufficiently.

5) Before all he must busy himself with the disproof of those false doctrines, which a whole sect acknowledges as theirs, and which they openly adopt and defend, or which they profess in their generally acknowledged papers and in their public statements of their faith. He must not impute the private opinion of this or that teacher to the whole body and must not introduce it, unless he is compelled to refer to it. However the minister need not confine himself to the generally acknowledged writings and their public confessions (for the heretics mostly state their opinions indistinctly and insufficiently in them), but he may also form his opinion and judgment on the doctrine of this or that sect from the books of prominent teachers explaining and defending the

common tenets of their people, especially if the views of several or of most their teachers on certain points of their faith are harmonious, and not contrary to the public creeds.

6) He must impute to his opponents only the errors which he has read with his own eyes, and therefore he must read their books himself, and not depend much on quotations made by others.

7) He must deal with his opponents earnestly, not angrily. For "anger always darkens the view and hinders us from seeing the truth."

Some pour forth, when excited by anger, many things for which they are sorry afterwards. He must not use more bitter words than required by the circumstances of the case.

8) He must abstain from all acrimonious accusations, and slanderous talk; from all angry and offensive language; from all painful and unjust words; from all virulent allusions, ironical mockeries, spectacular noises, such as are made by the Papists. For these are in the habit of attacking their opponents with ridiculous grimaces and boisterous mimicry, with rude screechings and rabid accusations, and to mock and traduce them, and thus to show before all the world what kind of spirits they are, Luke 9, 55. He must act in his office as judge, not to raise a quarrel, but to defend the truth, so as not to appear as though attacking the opponent not so much from hatred of the error as of the person. He must take the offensive point out of the calumniations and vituperations heaped upon our doctrine by the heretics; but he must not return the same. In his sermon he must not talk against anybody from personal ill-will, and must not pass from the subject under consideration to personalities. For the heretics look for a happy and certain victory of their desperate cause, if the preacher of the faith leaves the subject matter and is betrayed into personal attacks. By scolding and accusing we will certainly create the suspicion against our doctrine, as though it were not

safe if supported only by argument. With malicious words we will only incite our opponents to defend their opposite opinion more stubbornly in their excitement. Whoever tries to pull down his opponent by scolding, caluminating and accusing, does not silence him, but opens his mouth and provokes him to retort to the accusations, and thus to damage greatly the cause of truth. Brenz tells us of Melchior Adamius, when his opponents (the Papists) defended their errors with untimely noise and by sophisms, and kept up a continual thundering and sputtering forth of their poison, he did not defend his own doctrine with equal violence and did not pay them back in the same coin, but sometimes wisely ignored their offensive speeches and the insult heaped upon him; but when the occasion was opportune, he would briefly and concisely and with clear passages of the Scriptures disprove the doctrines and clamor of his opponents, and show that the Scriptures are opposed to the teachings of the Papists. And so it came about that in the end most of the people abhorred the idolatry, doctrines and superstitions of the Papists.

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#### CONVERSION NOT COERCION.

Originally the controversy between Ohio and Missouri was concerning the doctrine of predestination. The question was whether God elects some persons to life and salvation without reference to faith, while He passes others by and does not elect them, though they are exactly in the same moral condition and stand in the same relation to Christ, or whether He elects those who by His grace are brought to faith in the Redeemer and are thus justified, while He passes those by and does not elect them who by unbelief reject the Redeemer and thus remain under condemnation. Taking into account the fact made known to

us in Scripture, that the election took place before the foundation of the world in the eternal counsel of God, the question assumes this form, whether God from eternity chose certain persons to salvation, without any reference to the individual's faith or unbelief when the gospel should be preached to them, or whether He elected those who, in His eternal foreknowledge, would by the power of His grace, extended through the means, be led to believe in Jesus. It is virtually the same old question that has been in debate between Calvinists and Lutherans for centuries, and Missouri so far as we have been able to see, have added no new argument to those which Reformed theologians have advanced and Lutheran theologians have repeatedly driven from the field.

That, however, is not the point to which Missouri thinks it wise to confine the controversy, or even to keep steadily in view. Its Calvinistic views it hardly dares to maintain before its own congregations. They are a submissive people, but they would scarcely submit to such a burden. The leaders have therefore shrewdly transferred the dispute to a point in the doctrine of conversion. This gives them a better chance of carrying their people with them, because it enables them by sophistical reasoning to muddle the question, and by drawing false inferences from our statements to excite prejudice against us and our doctrine. Indeed, appearances indicate that the predestinarian error into which Missouri has fallen, and which has wrought such injury to the Lutheran Church in this country, is the result of speculation upon a problem in the doctrine of conversion, which it attempts to solve. They reason thus. When the word of salvation is brought to the soul, it has no power in itself to believe it: God must give the faith that receives as well as the gracious truth which is received. But all men are alike dead in sin and can do nothing to effect their salvation. One can therefore do no more than another towards accepting

the proffered grace, and unless God helps, all alike must perish. But if God helps alike, then all alike must be saved. Yet as a matter of fact not all are helped: only some believe and inherit eternal life. Therefore God must make a distinction. He resolves to save some, only some, and to work faith in these and lead them in the way of holiness to heaven. These He elects, exercising His sovereign right to do as He pleases, and these He predestinates to everlasting glory. That solves the problem. Thus the whole mystery in the matter disappears, and all is "as plain as a pikestaff." Thus the requirements of speculative reason are satisfied — if it can be satisfied with the fundamental assumption in the solution, that God is a respecter of persons, and therefore among His unhappy, helpless creatures effectually wills to save some, and lets others helplessly go down to their everlasting doom of weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth, though He could save them if He would.

We are not satisfied with the solution. The Scriptures teach no such "horrible decree," that leaves the largest portion of our miserable race without God and without hope in the world. In our eyes it is a piece of heartless rationalism. Rather leave problems unsolved than follow logic, which in this case is wretchedly lame at any rate, to such merciless conclusions, and that in despite of revelation that declares the comforting will of our merciful Maker and Redeemer, who "will have all men to be saved and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." 1 Tim. 2, 4.

So far as it depends on God alone, without reference to the original constitution of man's nature and the creative decrees of the Maker respecting His various creatures, all men will be saved. "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved." John 3, 16. 17.

The will and purpose of God is not the salvation of a few select persons, but the salvation of the whole perishing world. This is His primal decree. In pursuance of this the only Begotten of the Father took the sins of the whole world upon Himself and suffered the death penalty for all men. He is "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world," not only the sin of a chosen few. "There is one God, and one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself as a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." 1 Tim. 2, 5. 6. "Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." Rom. 5, 18. The redemption is universal, embracing the whole human race without exception. And in accordance with this was the ordinance of God in regard to the proclamation of this divine purpose of grace and of its execution by the Word made flesh. As the gift of salvation was designed for all men and was secured for all men, so it should be offered to all men by the Gospel. The command given to His disciples by our Lord was: "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature: he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned." Matt. 16, 16. The preaching should embrace the whole world, because the will of God to save men and the satisfaction rendered by our Lord's vicarious obedience unto death for men, pertained to the whole world. So far God would execute His will to save the whole human race without interfering with the original endowments of man. He would pity His fallen creatures and adopt a plan to help them, without in any way coming into conflict with the human will which He had Himself bestowed. He would have the plan of redemption accomplished by the sacrifice of His own dear Son on the cross, without despising and crushing the work of His hands as this presented itself

in man's power of choice. He could have the Gospel preached in all lands; and as it was brought to each individual without forcing him to accept it, no violence was done to the will which He had Himself given. So far the saving work of God would be carried on with reference to all men, without ignoring or violating the nature of man as God had constituted it.

If it depended upon the antecedent will of God the work certainly would not stop here. That will is not only that a redemption should be accomplished and by the Gospel should be brought and offered to the whole human race, but that all men should be saved, which is the end for which the atonement was devised and executed. It would be a most marvelous thing if God should be willing at an infinite sacrifice to provide salvation for all men, and then resolve that only a comparatively small portion of men shall have the blessing. Why should He withhold from any what He has, according to the revelation given us of His will, designed and prepared for all? "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" Rom. 8, 32 No human reason, Missourian or other, can refute the argument of the apostle. If God is willing to give His beloved Son into death to save us, He is willing also to give us the grace necessary to share that salvation.

Where then lies the difficulty? The grace of God would save all men, the sin that is in them would condemn all men. But neither are all saved nor are all condemned. Man can do nothing to save himself. Only God can deliver us from death and the power of Satan. "By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." Eph. 2, 8. But man can do something to hinder God's work. He can resist the divine grace. "Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost." Acts 7, 51. This resistance is an

act of man's will. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not." Matt. 23, 37. That is our Lord's explanation of the sad fact, that when God imparts His saving grace so many are still not saved.

But this does not satisfy the Missourians. In the interest of predestinarian views they here start a new difficulty. As the carnal mind is enmity against God and all men are alike carnal by nature, they assume that all must alike resist the grace of God and all be hurled alike into the same pit of destruction, unless God be pleased to make a distinction between men and men, and do something for the rescue of some that He will not do for others. That separates men into the elect who shall and must be saved because God has determined that they shall be, and the non-elect who must perish because without the special grace vouchsafed to the chosen ones they cannot otherwise than resist. That is the Calvinistic theory, which appears in history with various modifications, but the essence of which is always that God has resolved to save a select portion of our lost race who must necessarily be saved, while the rest receive no effectual help and must inevitably perish.

To account for the fact that some are saved and some are lost, while all are by nature alike sinful, the predestinarian theory thus imputes to God a different will towards different individuals. Missouri has much to say about a mystery in this matter. Its leaders still speak of a universal grace and a will of God to save all men, and set it forth as one of the inscrutable things in His ways and judgments that effectual provision is made only for the salvation of the elect. Closely viewed, however, the theory dispels the whole mystery by denying that God has any sincere and earnest will to save all men. The question, how it comes to pass



that, since God has the same will to save all alike and all are at enmity with God, neither all are saved nor all are lost, does not exist for them, because they deny that God has the same will to save all. Instead of that they have made all plain to the understanding by assuming that God, who has all power in His hands and can do as He pleases, exercises His pleasure in selecting some persons for salvation, and exercises His power in saving those whom He was thus pleased to elect. But that which explains the difficulty involves a gratuitous assumption that is not a mystery, but a denial of the express assurance given by revelation that God would have all men to be saved. We can think only with horror on the irreverent suggestion that this assurance means only that God is willing that men should save themselves if they can, but He will save only the elect. And the mystery which Missouri finds, after its unscriptural and comfortless manipulation of the matter, is simply a logical contradiction, which the Bible does not teach and the human mind cannot accept. To say that God indeed has the will to save all men, but has the will really to save only some men, is simply a mystery of iniquity.

But if it is denied that God makes the difference, and the explanation of the fact, that only a part of mankind believes unto salvation, is found in the will of man, the cry of synergism is raised. Lutherans believe and have always taught that God alone can save and that salvation is by grace alone, and Missouri therefore makes some capital out of the cry, and excites some prejudice against us among those who without examination follow its leaders. With those who have sufficient interest in the truth to look into the matter, the cry is harmless, at least to us, however harmful it may be to those who wantonly raise it.

God earnestly wills that all should be saved. He devised the way of salvation for all, sent His Son to redeem all, ordained that the gospel should be preached to all. When

this preaching takes place, grace is offered to all that they by faith may accept the merits of Christ. The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation. It brings with the truth which is to be believed the necessary power to believe it. Some do believe it. So far as there is no resistance, save such as is found in the corrupt nature of all men, that power works faith in all. This is evident from the case of children. They are all regenerated when the grace of God comes to them in holy baptism. The mere existence in them of the flesh, which in its nature is enmity against God, does not render the operations of grace nugatory. Where there is no conscious exercise of the will set in intentional hostility against the work of grace, it will go on and perform its saving purpose. Stubborn opposition in the actual sin of wilful resistance can alone prevent the execution of the divine will, because then coercion would be necessary, and the end would be attained only by crushing the human will. Something more than the mere opposition of original sin in our nature is enlisted when the gospel fails to work faith. The natural hostility is always overcome by grace. If it were in itself an obstacle that rendered the ordinary operation of the Holy Spirit ineffectual, no soul would be saved otherwise than by a coercive exercise of almighty power, because this natural hostility exists in all men alike. But if there were such a coercion by physical force that ignores the will, instead of a conversion by spiritual power that moves the soul without violence to its original constitution, the assurance given us in the Scriptures, that God sincerely wills the salvation of all, would necessarily lead us to the conclusion that such coercion, inasmuch as its application to some persons would prove it not to be inconsistent with the nature and plan of God, would be applied to all and effect universal salvation. But the Bible teaches neither that men are saved by force nor that all are saved. It teaches

just the opposite. Prophets and apostles bid all people to come and drink of the waters of life freely, complain that so many will not come, and rebuke the unbelief that rejects the gracious invitation. Though all men are alike sinful by nature they do not all act in the same way when the Word of God comes to them with the power of grace that is designed to lead them to faith and salvation, as they do not all act in the same way in their dealings with their fellow-men. Each has a will of his own and is individually responsible for its use. If, when God calls them by the gospel, they despise the offer of grace, they perish by their own choice and their own fault. God had made it possible that it should be otherwise. He does not coerce some so that they must believe, nor make the Word inefficacious to others so that they cannot believe. "Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, saith the Lord God. Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions, so iniquity shall not be your ruin. Cast away from you all your transgressions whereby ye have transgressed, and make you a new heart and a new spirit; for why will ye die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in him that dieth, saith the Lord God; wherefore turn yourselves and live ye." · Ezek. 18, 30-32. God does for sinners all that without violence can be done for their salvation, so that if they perish, notwithstanding all, they are wholly without excuse. "Ye will not come to me that ye might have life," (John 5, 40) is our Savior's complaint and exposition and rebuke to those who choose death rather than life.

How it comes about that the power of the gospel produces faith in the one and not in the other, when the power is the same and the natural condition is the same, may be difficult to explain. Psychology has many a problem by which the student is nonplussed. But the facts remain the same, whether we can arrange them into a harmonious sys-

tem or not. Endeavoring to remove a difficulty by denying the fact is pure folly. That God desires the salvation of all men and extends that salvation equally to all when the Word is preached, is expressly told us in the inspired record. That would save all, if no hindrance other than that contained in the natural sinfulness of all souls were interposed. That which prevents the soul's conversion, as well as that which produces the fall and failure of some who were converted, is to be sought in man's action. One will not even go to hear the Word; another is induced to go, but will not give attention. Their conversion is not effected, because no opportunity was given the Holy Spirit to perform His gracious work, and they alone are to blame. Another, who is naturally in the same sin and condemnation, is persuaded to hear and attend to the Word preached, is brought to a knowledge of his sin and his Savior, and faith comes by hearing. Why one is induced to use the means of grace and the other not, though by nature both are in the same condition of sin and in the same need of salvation, may not be an easy question. But the fact is manifest. For such acts of merely going to church and hearing what is preached, natural power is sufficient. But is it sufficient to enable the person who hears also to understand and appropriate the saving truth brought to his notice? We must answer this in the negative, because the Scriptures tell us that "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." 1 Cor. 2, 14. But the natural man can hear and has a grammatical understanding of what he hears. If it were not so he never could be enlightened by the gospel. "The entrance of Thy words giveth light." Ps. 119, 130. And with that comes a power which is not in nature. It is without all warrant in Scripture or in experience to say that such light and power can have no influence on man's action

before the work of conversion is completed and man is made a believer. The light received enables him to understand more and the power received enables him to hear more. He is under the gracious influence of the Holy Spirit, working upon him with increasing light and increasing strength, until he embraces the Savior, and being justified by faith has peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Under the influence of the sin that is in him he may resist the Spirit and stop His work, but there is nothing to necessitate this, as there is nothing to necessitate his refusal to give the gospel a hearing; under the influence of the Spirit through the Word he may be converted, and if he puts no obstruction in the way by adding actual sin to his natural hostility he will be converted. If this were not the case there could be no conversion, but only a coercion by irresistible force, which leaves no power of choice, and which overthrows the whole divinely established order of salvation, because then all depends upon the exercise of God's omnipotent power which saves whom He has the will to save, without giving them any choice in the matter, while those, if any, who are not embraced in that will, must perish without a chance of escape.

Much effort is put forth by Missourians, and Calvinists generally, to render their theory plausible by arguing, that when the sinfulness and helplessness of human nature is admitted and salvation is ascribed to grace alone, it is virtually conceded that salvation must be by a grace that forces its way to the goal; for, it is alleged, that natural enmity that is in the soul of all men cannot do otherwise than assert itself when the gospel is preached, and all men must therefore wilfully resist unless God subdues their wills by a power that is exerted upon some, who shall be heirs of salvation, which is not exerted upon others. Our reply is, in the first place, that the Scriptures know nothing of such a coerced salvation, and know nothing of a grace unto sal-

vation that pertains only to a favored few. "The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men." Tit. 2, 11. We have no respect for conclusions that contradict the Word of God, however specious may be the reasoning by which they are reached. In the second place, salvation by coercion, if there were such a thing, could not be a work of grace in the strict sense, but a work of power that properly belongs to the economy of creation and nature. Salvation would thus be a work of grace only in the same wide sense in which the bestowal of our daily bread is a work of grace. In the third place, it is not true that the sin of our nature necessitates the same action in all individuals in reference to the gospel when it is brought to them. This is merely a gratuitous assumption to serve a theory. As a matter of fact some become enraged, and blaspheme, and persecute the Church; some quietly reject the good tidings and decline to give them a further hearing; some doubt, and hesitate and deny, and assent, and vacillate, and hear again; some hear, see their sin, desire help, attend when help is offered them, and, by the power of the Holy Spirit working through the Word which they hear, believe in the Lamb of God and are justified and saved. This is the fact, however we may explain it. To know just how far man may go by his natural power, whether e. g. he can give attention when the Word is preached, or whether this is already a result of the Spirit's operation through what he has heard, is not necessary. Neither is it necessary to know just at what point the soul becomes free and intelligently uses the gifts imparted to promote the work of grace. The fact is undeniable, that God accomplishes His saving will in men without coercion. They are converted, not forced into a state of salvation without the power of refusing to enter it. Neither are others who when they hear the Word, are not converted, forced into a rejection of the grace of God which bringeth salvation. They had a chance to be saved and it was by

their own choice that they refused to embrace it. They might have been saved. The grace of God converts, but it does not coerce. Those who are saved by it might have rejected it; those who rejected it might have been saved by it. There is no coercion in the kingdom of grace.

But the main implement with which Missourians operate is the sophism that our doctrine of efficacious grace for all men who use the appointed means implies the rejection of the fundamental truth that salvation is by grace alone. Their reasoning runs thus. If, when the grace of God is brought to a soul by the Word, that soul can refrain from wilful resistance and be passive while grace does its work of moving the will to believe the truth, man can do something towards his salvation. It is then not grace alone that converts, but grace cooperating with man's non-resistance. That is the synergism with which we are charged and which is said to refuse to give all the glory of our salvation to God. To this our reply is, first, that it is an abuse of language to call doing nothing a cause of the result produced by an agent whose work might have been hindered if something had been done. My doing nothing to hinder it is not the cause of the light and of my seeing this paper, neither does it in any manner or in any degree divide the glory of creating the light and the eye and giving the ability to see between God and the creature who is blessed with them, though the creature might have closed the blinds or shut his eyes and rendered seeing impossible. We may hinder the operation of a cause, but we cannot ourselves become causes of its efforts by non-interference with its operation. Secondly, the work of conversion, when it does take place is entirely and exclusively God's work. It is wholly by grace: man can do nothing towards it. He may go and hear the word, and that may lead to his conversion. But the power that produces the results is not that of nature by which he went to church. It is that of grace which is exerted through

the Word which is heard. Of course according to Missourian logic claiming for man the ability to go where the means of grace are dispensed, is ascribing to him a share in the result produced by using them, inasmuch as that result could not have taken place without such action. But such logic does not satisfy unprejudiced minds. Whatever man may do or not do, it is always exclusively the work of grace when a soul is brought to believe in Christ and preserved in Him unto eternal life. Man does nothing towards it, even when, under the influence of this grace, he is passive and does nothing to hinder the issue of the work in saving faith.

Missouri, with all its professed antipathy to science in theology, has unhappily permitted a false philosophy to mislead it and thus to make needless division in the Church. It knows of no way in which the will can be converted as will, that is, as a faculty to the very essence of which belongs choice or alternative action. In its speculative system of theology the will, because it is enslaved by sin, must be ignored when the Holy Spirit converts a soul, because in its theory any exercise of will tending towards conversion, though it be brought about by grace, would make the result partly man's work. In short Missouri teaches coercion by God's omnipotence, not conversion by God's grace.

The point in controversy between us and Missouri in regard to conversion is not at all whether it is entirely and exclusively the work of God or not. At least on our part there is no question about that. The Ohio Synod is unanimous in its confession that conversion is a work of God's grace alone, and that to Him all praise is due when it is effected. Our teaching has always been that man cannot by his own reason and strength believe in Christ or come to Him, but that faith is the gift of God. Only the Holy Spirit can give us the needful light, and work in us what is pleasing to God. But the point in dispute is this, whether by



the power of the Holy Spirit, working upon sinners through the Word, those who are converted at all are converted before they believe, i. e. whether the conversion has actually been effected before there is any movement of their will. When God works faith, is that faith in the soul of man, or is it in God? Is it God that believes unto justification, or is it man? That God works it is not questioned by either side. But does God work it in man or in Himself? The question seems ridiculous. But it requires an answer to enable us to understand each other. If it is replied that of course, faith is wrought in man, then it is needful to inquire further, whether such faith, wrought by the power of the Holy Spirit, implies any action of the will of him who is made a believer, and if it does not, whether the person on whom God has wrought, but whose will has not been moved, is in any proper sense a converted person. Does conversion take place without any movement of the will? Can a person really, by a coercive process that leaves his will out of the account, be made to embrace Christ and lay hold of the hope set before him? Is it not manifest that the work of the Holy Spirit, which we call conversion, is a change which takes place in the soul of man, and that that change pertains especially to the will? The change can not take place before grace has produced any result in the will, for that would be assuming, against Scripture and against reason, that conversion must take place before there can be any conversion. That there are other acts of God preceding the movement in the will and the soul's conversion is certain from the Word that enlightens us, but conversion has not been effected as long as the will is not changed. That is the work which the Holy Spirit does when He works faith. In conversion the soul by nature unwilling is rendered willing by grace. But the conversion has not taken place before this is accomplished; it takes place when this is accomplished and by its accomplishment. Man by his

natural power does nothing towards it, though it is undeniable that if he despises the precious gifts of grace that call and enlighten and draw, he will not be converted. But at every step of the divine work man may resist. Neither the preparatory work that leads to conversion, nor the giving of faith in conversion, nor the preservation after conversion, is by coercion. When the converting grace is extended by the Word, there is a possibility of hindering it in every case, because grace is then dealing with will, the very nature of which implies the power of choice. If any one were by an exercise of divine omnipotence, which no creature can effectually resist, forced into the kingdom of God, there would not be a conversion, but an annihilation of the will, and the old heresy is revamped that in conversion God destroys the substance of the rational soul and creates a new soul out of nothing. And as by the power of nature the soul that is converted might have hindered the consummation, so the soul that is not converted might by the power of grace have been brought to believe and be saved. When God offers salvation He means it, and does all that without coercion can be done to attain it. Why, under those opposing motive powers, one is converted and the other is not—why the same grace offered in the gospel, does not influence all wills alike, though by nature they are in the same condition, we cannot explain. We do not know. We do know that some add active hostility to the natural enmity against God, and thus frustrate the work of the Spirit who will not force souls into heaven against their will. But we admit that this leaves unexplained why some wilfully resist while others do not. We do not know, as we do not know why even in matters of this life men of good sense, with all opportunities to know better, sometimes put forth such stupid volitions and act so foolishly. But when Missourians make all plain by imagining that God selects some persons for salvation and necessitates what they call conversion, while He leaves others, who are in the same need, without help, they imagine vain things.

The theory of absolute predestination, that is, of a predestination that makes no account of faith in forming the decree, is at every point in conflict with the scriptural doctrine confessed by the Lutheran Church. It not only overthrows the fundamental doctrine of universal grace, but injuriously affects the whole order of salvation. Faith and justification cannot occupy the position in it which these hold in the Scriptures and the Confession; for it regards the elect as justified and accepted before they believe, as they were chosen to salvation without any regard to faith, foreseen or actually existing. Faith is thus no more necessary to salvation than is holiness, without which no man shall see God, and justification is rather an act by which a person becomes conscious of what has been done in regard to him than a forensic act declaring his sins forgiven. The Word and Sacraments can then have saving effects only on the elect, who are already accepted by a divine decree in the forming of which the result of applying those means had no influence whatever. For those who are not thus elected they bring no grace that could be effectual in their salvation. In such a theory it is not surprising that conversion is supposed to take place before there is any action of the will, that is, before there is any faith, and that it is declared synergism when we say that under the power of grace the soul believes, and that being brought to faith is conversion. Missouri wants coercion of the elect, we teach conversion by grace.

M. Loy.

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## EDITORIAL.

### CHRISTIAN LOVE.

Christians should love one another. Faith works by love. The Holy Spirit does not dwell in the soul without producing love as a fruit. "We know that we have passed

from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death. Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer, and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him. Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." 1 John 3, 14-16. If, as it is claimed by some, love abounds now in the church more than ever; if, as many maintain, this is pre-eminently the age of love, what Christian does not hail the fact with joy? So it ought to be, that the loving lives of Christians might bear testimony to the world of the power of God in the hearts of His people. "A new commandment I give unto you," says our blessed Lord, "that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." John 13, 34, 35. Too much stress can not be laid upon love, in the place which our Lord assigns it. May it abound more and more to the glory of our Redeemer and to the good of our redeemed race! "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. In this was manifested the love of God towards us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world that we might live through Him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another." 1 John 4, 7-11. The nature of God is love, the example which He gives us of love, the power which He confers upon us to love, the command which He gives us to love, the blessings which are dispensed by love, the influence which the manifestation of love exerts on the minds of men, all impress upon us the Christian necessity of love.

But this important truth by no means justifies men in

overlooking other important truths of the Bible and in assigning to love a place which the Lord has not assigned to it.

That which gives love its pre-eminence is its heavenly character as the "bond of perfectness." It embraces all that God's law has desired and required of His intelligent creatures. Jesus said, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." Matt. 22, 37-40. So far as the law is concerned this embraces the whole teaching of the Scriptures. "He that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law." Rom. 13, 8-10.

Disregard of the fact that love pertains to the law is the root of many an error respecting the revelation given in Holy Scripture. Under the law there is nothing higher than love, and in the Christian life, whose rule must always be the revelation of righteousness given in the law, there is nothing greater than love. This is required of all men according to the creative design of God, who made man in His own image, and He is love. And to this requirement man is conformed in the new creation which is in Christ Jesus, so that the Christian, in virtue of the new life which is given him, lives in love, according to the original design of his Creator as that was impressed upon man's nature and, after the fall, was written on tables of stone for his learning. Love is the fulfilling of the law. But the law does not com-

prise the whole revelation given us in the Bible. It does not meet man's want in his present ruined condition. Neither could Christianity meet man's want if it had nothing to offer us but the law. "By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight; for by the law is the knowledge of sin." Rom. 3, 20. That is all that in honest and sincere hearts can be effected by the teaching of the commandments, which all inculcate love. They show us what we ought to be and ought to have, but what we are not and have not. Even when by the grace of God we are renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created us, we are not perfect in love and are not justified in God's sight by compliance with the law of love. Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace." Gal. 5, 4.

It is therefore not only an error, but an error of the most pernicious sort, to substitute love for that which God has set forth as the means of salvation. The substance of the Christian revelation is thus set aside. Law is put in the place of the gospel, and man's work and merit are substituted for Christ's work and merit. Love is the fulfilling of the law, but man is incapable of meeting the requirement, and only condemnation awaits him, if he has nothing to trust in but his own obedience to the law of love. "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." Eph. 2, 8. 9. "Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? Nay, but by the law of faith. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." Rom. 3, 27. 28. Not by our love, which would be by our own fulfilment of the law, but by faith, which is the appropriation of Christ's fulfilment in our stead, are we saved from sin and death; and not unto us, but unto Him who died for us and rose again, belongs the glory of our salvation.

Hence the need of inculcating not only love, but the truth in Jesus as revealed in the gospel, that men may believe and be saved. There is neither wisdom nor piety in the wild talk about the beauty and power of charity as the one thing needful that constitutes the sum and substance of Christianity. When this is not merely sentimental gush, it certainly is zeal without knowledge. If the truth of the gospel, the precious truth that "God sent His Son into the world, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons," is not taught, to the end that by the power of this heavenly truth souls might be led to faith, all teaching of the law and of the love which it requires, but which man does not possess, is vain. Without the gospel of the grace of God men, with all their boasts of charity, must die in their sins; with this all may be saved by the power of God through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus. And then only, when the gospel has been taught and embraced and by it an assured hope of salvation has been imparted, will there or can there be a life of love. First there must be faith which receives the truth in Jesus, then faith will work by love.

Let love continue for evermore. Enjoy its happiness. Bless your neighbor with it. Glorify God through it. Sing its praises. But for sweet love's sake do not consent to have it employed as a cloak for treason against Christ. It is not our love, but God's love that saves our sinful souls. "God commendeth His love toward us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us." Rom. 5, 8. If the great salvation effected through the blood of Jesus and offered us in the gospel be neglected, all is lost. Our love can avail us nothing. It can not atone for our sins. It can effect no reconciliation between God and man. Indeed, it has no existence at all until an atonement is made and a reconciliation is effected. "We have known and believed the love

that God hath to us," and "we love Him because He first loved us." 1 John 4, 16. 19. Our carnal minds are enmity to God and in their selfishness have no love to men. Only the grace of God in Christ changes all and makes new creatures through faith in Him that loved us and sheds His love abroad in our hearts. The only way to secure love unfeigned towards God and man is to teach the truth in Jesus. All praises of charity, as if that were the power that delivers from sin and saves the soul, are vain pretense where the gospel is despised. But where this is set forth in all its fulness and purity, the power of God will be brought to men and the fruits of the Spirit will abound. "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Then love will abound through the regenerating power of the Holy Ghost. "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth." 1 John 3, 18.

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THE MARRIAGE of a member of his congregation is a matter of some concern to the pastor. As one who cares for the souls committed to his charge, he can be indifferent neither to the choice made of a partner for life nor to the home influences when the union is formed. He may have little power to prevent marriages that promise no spiritual good to the persons concerned, but such as he has he should not fail to employ with loving solicitude and earnestness. His faithful teaching and tender counsel will not all be in vain, if they do not prevent an unfortunate marriage, they may do much towards preventing unhappy consequences. And when a new household is established the parties need the pastor's advice, though often they may not feel their need. But too frequently in their young love and bright hopes they forget that which is most important even for their earthly happiness and which is indispensable to their eternal welfare. They do their best to have a cozy if not a



grand home, in which to receive their friends with becoming taste and propriety. But sometimes the Bible and Prayer-book and Hymnal are wanting. The demands of society are not such as to make these essential and therefore they are likely to be overlooked. But in the pastor's eye they must be more important than carpets and curtains, mantels and mirrors. May he not in strict propriety, should he not in loving duty, see that these essentials be supplied? Neither could it be at all amiss to give the necessary instructions about establishing the family altar and conducting the daily worship in the house-hold. In some cases nothing more is necessary than simply to show the young people how to do it. Of course this must not be done by extemporizing the prayer. Use the form of the Prayerbook, showing by example how they should do it. Then try to excite an interest in good reading, especially religious reading of the right sort, instead of effeminating novels and corrupting Sunday papers. Where a new home is established a good church paper is needed. Introduce one or more of our periodicals. Efforts in this direction should not be delayed until habits are fixed that will be a hindrance to church activity and spiritual growth. Pastors should use their opportunities.

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### INQUIRY CONCERNING THE CONSCIENCE.

#### IV.

##### THE TESTIMONY OF HOLY SCRIPTURE.

In the Old Testament there is frequent mention of activities which we are accustomed to ascribe to the conscience. But as these are all referred to the heart as their seat, they furnish no direct information concerning the use of the term conscience. This word does not occur in the Old Testament. Therefore it seems to us best to pass at once to the principal passages in which the term is employed, and endeavor to ascertain from them what the Holy Spirit would have us understand by the name.

We begin with St. Paul's remarkable statement in Rom. 2, 14, 15, not because it says so much directly about the conscience, but because it mentions this in a connection that enables us better to understand its relation to our nature and condition, if it does not define the conscience itself or explain its special functions and operations. In an inquiry into the nature of a power of the soul it is of the highest importance to know its relation to other faculties, the condition under which it discharges its functions, and the limit within which its operations are performed.

The passage referred to reads thus: "When the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained

in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another." Before discussing the particulars bearing on our theme, some remarks on the general scope and context may be helpful.

After the introduction and the statement of his theme the apostle shows in the first chapter that the Gentiles are under sin and condemnation, because they have perverted the knowledge of God which was accessible to them by nature (v. 17-23), and because they are morally wicked and guilty of the vilest deeds. (v. 24-32.) He then proceeds to show in the second chapter, that those who judge them are no better, though they may boast of possessing the law and learning its precepts, and that the righteous judgment of God will come upon all alike, whether they be Jews or Gentiles. (v. 1-11). "For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law, and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law. For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified." (v. 12. 13.) The fact that the Jews have the Mosaic law will profit them nothing if they do not fulfill it. They will be condemned by it. That is the reason why they cannot escape the perdition that comes upon the heathen. But in v. 14 there is again a reason given. It seems to us most natural to connect this with v. 12 also, so that v. 13 gives the reason why the Jew cannot escape, as he shall be judged by the law which condemns when it is not fulfilled, and v. 14 gives the reason why the Gentile shall not escape, as he, though he has not the law written on tables of stone and given by Moses, yet has a law given in his own nature, of which, as was shown in the first chapter, he is a vile transgressor.

It is of importance for a correct apprehension of the doctrine of conscience to note, that men in their natural

state do the works contained in the law. The apostle is speaking of the Gentiles, not of man before the fall, and not of men after regeneration by the grace of God in Christ. They do these works by nature. This gives us light concerning the powers inherent in the nature of man. We must inquire what the phrase "by nature" denotes, and what is meant by the things contained in the law.

The nature of an object is primarily that which it has by its own inherent constitution and endowment, as distinguished from those accidents which are dependent on circumstances or secondarily that which, although not the original endowment, has become a constitutional and universal attribute. A man is not learned by nature. Learning is acquired; some men have it and some have not. Man is sinful by nature. Sin is not acquired; all men have it, because it is inherent in the constitution of man. When the Gentiles do by nature the things contained in the law they do them not by any accidental acquirement of knowledge or motive, but by a power that lies in their native constitution. They have not learned the law which was given through Moses and which was committed to the Jews for their learning and keeping. They have not the law, though they do the things contained in it. What they have and what they do in this regard they have and do by nature. The light and the power needed for doing the things contained in the law they have in their own souls. They do it naturally, as the bee naturally gathers honey.

The things contained in the law are the deeds which it prescribes. God's law commands something to be done. The things commanded are the things contained in it. These the Gentiles, who have not even the law, much less the gospel, do by a power which is not brought to them from some external source, but by a power that is within them. They do them by nature.

To readers who do not search the Scriptures and heed their teaching this seems incontrovertible proof that man is

not so sinful by nature as the Church teaches. He still has the ability to do what is commanded, and the inference appears inevitable that he still has the ability to satisfy all the demands of righteousness and thus to secure his justification before God.

But to readers who give diligence to understand the things which are written in the Word of God for our learning this incontrovertibly proves that what is meant by "the things contained in the law" is not that which satisfies all the demands of righteousness. It is the work of the law to which reference is had. These works can be performed without the spiritual life by which alone the spiritual import of the law can be fulfilled; but such a doing of the things of the law is not righteousness and cannot justify the soul that remains dead in sin notwithstanding the deeds done according to the rule of right. "If there had been a law given that could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe." Gal. 3, 21. 22. The law tells us how we ought to walk and please God, but it does not awaken the spiritually dead and endow them with spiritual power to fulfill all righteousness. "For we know that the law is spiritual; but I am carnal, sold under sin." Therefore whatever the carnal person may do, though he take the law for his rule of action, he does not render himself righteous before God. "By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight; for by the law is the knowledge of sin." Rom. 3, 20. It can show us our sin, and is designed to do this; it cannot remove our sin, and no effort to obey it will change the heart and bring it into conformity with the spiritual requirement. Therefore all who expect salvation by legal obedience are nursing a delusion. "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse." Gal. 3, 10. In this respect there is no difference between Jew and Gentile. Neither the law of

Moses nor the law of nature can help us. "We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." Gal. 2, 15. 16. Doing some of the things contained in the law, and doing them merely as outward works, does not justify.

It is those works of the law, which may constitute a civil, but not a spiritual righteousness, which may justify before men but not before God, that the Gentiles can do by nature.

When the Gentiles do these works contained in the law, they are a law to themselves, showing the work of the law written in their hearts. While they have not a written code prescribing to them what they are to do and what they are to leave undone, they have something that serves as a substitute for it. Their own nature suggests to them what is right, so that they are without excuse when they walk in the ways of sin. But this, in view of the whole depravity of our nature, is not what we would expect. Out of the corrupt heart proceed only evil thoughts, murders, adulteries: whence then can come the doing by nature of the things contained in the law, even though they be but seemingly good works which do not justify?

The question urges upon us the need of a further inquiry into the meaning of the statement, that the Gentiles "show the work of the law written in their hearts."

There is something in the nature of man that corresponds to the written law contained in Holy Scripture. This is evident from the fact that the Gentiles, while they have not the law, are a law unto themselves, and that the work of the law is written in their hearts. Law is the rule according to which a creature moves. The word is appli-

cable to all creatures, not only to those endowed with intelligence. God has given to every thing that exists its own powers and its own sphere. Each one has a purpose to subserve and the Creator has prescribed the way in which this is to be accomplished. That is the law of the creature. Therefore we speak of the laws of nature. Created things can do that which they were made for, and this they must do. We discover that law when we find out what this is. The planets must move as they were appointed; that is the law of their nature. It is not necessary that there be consciousness of a law in order to obey it. Even inanimate beings have their law; they have their own nature. But intelligent creatures are endowed with consciousness and will, and are therefore capable of a relation to law which minerals, plants and brutes do not occupy. To men the purpose for which God made them and the way by which that purpose is to be attained can be made known, and because they are moral creatures it is made known. It pleased their Maker to give them the power of choice and to hold them accountable for its exercise. The planets must move as God made them to move; the tree must grow and bear fruit as God made it to grow and bear fruit; the brute must live and act as God made it to live and act. They have their law, but having no rationality and no choice they are not responsible creatures. Man can know what the will of his Maker is in regard to his course and action. He can know the law. But he can also choose, and is not compelled to move according to the divine purpose. His action is not necessitated by the Creator's order and arrangement. He is a moral creature, and may act in coincidence with God's will and design and thus do right, or may pursue a will of his own and thus go wrong. He can choose, and is therefore responsible to God who gives him the law. He ought to obey, but he may disobey. He may, instead of executing the right, stand in its way, until God Himself executes it and crushes him in the execution.

This divine law was originally not given to man as a formulated code set before his intelligence through the medium of language. Such a law was given in Paradise in reference to the tree of knowledge, by the violation of which our race fell from God and brought death into the world and all our woe. But there was abundant provision in the nature of man for directing him in the way of right, or which is the same thing, for leading him to accomplish God's will in regard to him. He was made in the image of God. What that means may best be gathered from what the Scriptures say in reference to its restoration. We are to "put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." Eph. 4, 24. Believers in Jesus "have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him." Col. 3, 24. If the renewal of the image of God takes place by restoring knowledge and righteousness to the soul, the image must originally have consisted in such knowledge and righteousness. In the possession of that image man therefore had the knowledge of God, was in harmony with His will, and performed that will in all his movements. This was not merely instinctive action in accordance with the law or constitution of his nature, as the instinctive action of brutes is in accordance with the law or constitution of their nature. It belonged to the nature of man to have consciousness and will. Even without a formulated code of laws he could therefore know what he should do to accomplish his Maker's design and purpose in creating him. He knew God, and knew that the impulses of his soul were good as God made them. All the springs of his action were right, because they were created after God's image to perform God's will. Living according to his nature was at that happy time living in righteousness and true holiness. He was not impelled by a blind instinct, but did all intelligently. He had a will; there was no constraining necessity laid upon him; he did all by intelligent choice, though he might have done



otherwise, as is shown by the fact that the unhappy time came when he did do otherwise. He knew the law of his being and obeyed it, not because a legal constraint was laid upon him, but because his will was in harmony with God's will, and it was therefore his pleasure to do it as it was God's pleasure that he should do it.

In that original state of purity it might also be said that Adam and Eve had not the law, but did by nature the things contained in the law. But it would be an egregious error to assume that the Gentiles were in that condition. St. Paul describes them as in a state of abominable and inexpressible idolatry and moral filthiness. They did not do the will of God nor please Him, although they did perform external actions that so far were things contained in the law. They too lived according to their nature, and were thus a law unto themselves, but the result was totally different from that attained in Eden. Nature was not in the same condition in the two cases, although in both it was human nature. In one it was nature as God made it, in the other it was nature as sin made it. By the dreadful catastrophe that occurred when our first parents yielded to the temptation of Satan and ate the forbidden fruit the divine image was lost, and our nature, that originally was endowed with the knowledge of God and true holiness, became blind and corrupt. Of those very Gentiles, who are said to "do by nature the things contained in the law," the same apostle says that they "walk in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart, who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness to work all uncleanness with greediness." Eph. 4, 17-19. So far were they from the righteousness which God requires that by their very nature they were under His righteous curse, and only those who are delivered by divine grace can escape the wrath which is to come. For thus St. Paul writes to the

Christians at Ephesus: "You hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins, wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience; among whom also we had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." Eph. 2, 1-3. The whole world lieth in wickedness; "as it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one." Rom. 3, 10.

We are thus confronted on the one hand by the dismal fact that there is nothing but darkness and depravity in the human mind by nature, and on the other by the seemingly inconsistent fact that man can still by nature know and do the things contained in the law. How can he know them in his blindness or do them in his depravity?

The solution of the difficulty must be sought in the original nature of man. Darkness has indeed taken the place of the spiritual light which man possessed in his creation, and sin has displaced the original holiness. But man did not on that account become essentially a different creature. The devil can spoil God's creature, he can create nothing. Man remained man. He was still a rational being with power of will and moral responsibility. His nature was made for righteousness. He was to do God's will and be happy, and must be miserable if and when he fails. The design of God did not change when man went wrong. He still holds us to the right, and our nature is still organized for righteousness. A watch is made to keep time. When it becomes disordered it fails to perform its work and accomplish its purpose. But it is still a watch, and all its mechanism is arranged for time-keeping. Although it may stop or mislead by indicating wrong time, and thus be worthless, it still does not stand in the same relation to time-keeping as a lamp or a thermometer, which were never made for that purpose. The watch can be

mended; it has all the machinery necessary for time-keeping. The lamp or thermometer cannot be put in order to keep time; it was never meant for this and no mending or rectifying will qualify it to do this. So a brute can never be raised to righteousness. It was not created for that. It would have to be raised first to rationality and moral responsibility, and that means that it would first have to be something else than a brute. Man was made a rational, responsible being, and he remained this when he lost the righteousness in which and for which he was created. He did not become a brute, which is naturally not capacitated for righteousness. Neither did he become a devil who, though originally organized for righteousness, morally incapacitated himself for it and never can be converted. Man still, notwithstanding his darkness and depravity and death, has the possibilities of righteousness. They lie in his endowment and destiny. His nature is adapted to it. Not that he can raise himself to righteousness. He can no more do this than the watch can correct its own disorder. The watchmaker must do that. But he is still a subject capable of it, and God can restore him to his original state.

This endowment and adaptation of our nature to will and move according to the will of God, and thus in righteousness, can not be without effect even in man's life under sin. His powers are all corrupt, indeed, and the imaginations of the thoughts of his heart are only evil continually. What prompts him now to action is not the knowledge and love of God, with whose will his heart is no longer in harmony, but his love of self which, under the instigations of Satan, finds its gratification in the world and the things that are in the world. But he cannot be at rest in this selfishness and worldliness and devilishness. It is not in harmony with the original constitution of his nature, if it is the dictate of the sin that pervades it. He cannot but acknowledge the claim that righteousness has upon him. That claim is asserted in his whole rational organization, and he becomes

conscious of it. The clear and comprehensive knowledge of God, the happy and complete coincidence of his will with the will of God, are all gone, but as he looks around him and sees the handiwork of God and looks within him and sees the jangled powers of his nature and the unsatisfactoriness of the results attained by all their operations, the obligatoriness of right, of which he has an intuition, appears in his consciousness coupled with the dim and imperfect knowledge of Him who lays the obligation upon us and to whom we are responsible. This demand of righteousness does not stand before the soul as a code of laws directing us in all the ways that we must walk to satisfy it, but asserts itself nevertheless as a general obligation to do right and shun wrong, so that man is without excuse when, in spite of the protests of his nature, he perverts the knowledge of God which he has in his natural state and becomes an idolater, and disregards the mandates of right becoming manifest in his soul and wantonly pursues wicked ways and performs wicked works, which violate his original nature, though they gratify its corruption. Even the Gentiles are without excuse when they despise the light that God gives them by nature and "hold the truth in unrighteousness." Rom. 1; 17-32.

This may serve to explain how it comes that Gentiles, though they have not the law as it was written and given to the children of Israel for their guidance, and though there is none righteous, no, not one, still do the things contained in the law. They have departed from God and do not execute His will. But they are conscious, by the constitution of their own nature, of the majesty of right, and while their "carnal mind is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be" (Rom. 8, 7), they construe the right in independence of God and devise a system of morality that makes no account of the sinfulness of the heart and looks only at the external form, in which it is made to coincide with the righteousness which the law of God requires. It thus brings forth that civil righteousness of

which alone nature is capable. These, as we have seen, are "the things contained in the law" which the Gentiles, being a law unto themselves, "do by nature."

From this the meaning of the statement, that the Gentiles "show the work of the law written in their hearts," would be so clear as to need no further remark, if the subject were simply the law. But that which is said to be written in the hearts is *the work* of the law—τὸ ἔργον τοῦ νόμου γραπτόν. It does not seem probable that this form of expression would have been used if nothing more had been intended than simply to point out the fact, that the obligatoriness of right is impressed upon the nature of man, which may be known in consciousness and in consequence of which he is a law unto himself. Unquestionably the work of the law implies the presence of the law, but it leaves the question open whether its work is done by an imperative in the constitution of our nature which presents itself in our consciousness as a general law of righteousness, or whether it is accomplished through a contemplation of the visible creation and thus a cognition of the Creator's eternal power and Godhead and a corresponding sense of obligation to do His will. The difference is in our estimation not of material moment for the purpose of our inquiry; for also in the latter case the work of the law could be done only if there is a moral element in our nature that is responsive to the revelation of God in His work. Merely seeing the things that are made furnishes no knowledge of God to a creature that is not rational, and this could awaken no feeling of obligation in a creature that has no moral constitution and is not organized for moral action. The work of the law can be written in the heart only if the nature of man is such as to feel the obligatoriness of the Creator's will, so that if the reason should decline to recognize its authority and declare itself independent of God, the feeling remains the same in virtue of the organization of our nature. The work of the law, which is to make known God's will, to

assert its authority, and to effect a knowledge of sin and a sense of guilt when it is violated, is done in man and appears like a writing on the tables of the heart. How far the knowledge of the divine will extends in the Gentiles it did not lie within the scope of the apostle to point out. What he designs to show is that the Jew has no advantage over the Gentile by nature as regards escaping the condemnation that has come upon all men through sin, because the Jew, though he has the law, does not fulfill it, and the Gentile, though he has not the law, may render some sort of obedience to it as it becomes manifest in his own nature as a human being, the work or result of its operation being written in his heart. Certain it is that what is thus written is not a formulated code of laws like that given to the Jews, though the general work of the law making known the will of God to recognize His authority and to do right, and to produce unrest when that will as it becomes known to us is violated, is manifest in the consciousness of all men by virtue of their nature.

We come now to the point which is the special object of our inquiry, as this is set forth in the words, "their conscience also bearing witness." These stand in immediate connection with the statement that the Gentiles "show the work of the law written in their hearts." Manifestly they do not repeat the same thing in different phraseology. Man has by nature a disposition to recognize righteousness. He is organized for that, and when cases present themselves for his action this organization asserts itself in the form of a mandate favoring the right. In the present corruption of our nature this is no longer an inclination of the heart. These inclinations are all to evil, not by the original constitution of our nature, but by the presence of sin, which corrupts all our powers, though it has not destroyed our nature or changed its essence. The moral mandate that yet remains can effect no true righteousness, but it can and does effect a recognition of the claims of right upon us that re-

sults, where it is headed, in civil righteousness. Men are by nature a law unto themselves even in the heathen world, and in consequence do the things contained in the law, showing that the workings of the original law of righteousness in their nature are still preceptible in their hearts. To these workings, as they appear in consciousness, the conscience bears witness.

What then is conscience? Originally the word simply indicated the human consciousness. When this was applied to the moral feature of human action it indicated the knowledge of moral obligation, together with the effect of this knowledge upon the soul. Man knows himself bound to righteousness by the will of God, and by the constitution of his nature feels the obligation of righteousness and the unrest which results from its violation. To this form of the consciousness the word conscience came in time to be applied exclusively. The cognitive element was embraced in the original use of the word, as it often is in present usage. But it is not the predominant, nor can we regard it as an essential element in the conception. Indeed, so regarding it is the source of much confusion. Because there is some knowledge of right necessary before there can be any sense of obligation or of its violation, and because the knowledge that is universal in this regard is derived from the constitution of our nature as it asserts itself in an imperative appearing in our consciousness, it is easy to account for the vague meaning so often attaching to the word conscience, which is made to cover the whole power and process involved in the production of moral judgments and states. But our knowledge of that about which conscience is concerned is not derived exclusively or even mainly from this natural source. It deals with righteousness, whether the knowledge of it is obtained from nature or from supernatural revelation. The Christian has questions and troubles of conscience about which the Gentile knows nothing, because the Christian has knowledge of right and duty which is

never presented by nature around us or within us. Communications are made by supernatural revelation which have special reference to the conscience, though naturally man is ignorant of them. Hence it can only result in confusion when the knowledge that is employed in the operations of conscience is itself regarded as a product of its operation. The knowledge of revealed truth is not gained through the conscience, nor is the conscience the organ of its reception, although it is unquestionable that the knowledge derived from Holy Scripture is effective in the activity of conscience. But if the supernatural knowledge which is employed in the work of conscience is not an essential element in its definition, neither is the natural knowledge which is so employed. Conscience holds us to the right. In virtue of its operation we feel the authority of right and the misery of its violation. It is the moral sense, not a faculty of moral cognitions.

Only this do we find in the passage before us. The demands of our nature present themselves in our consciousness. They show their work in our hearts. Sin produces uneasiness. The soul is not at rest. The way of righteousness, for pursuing which all the powers of man were arranged, has been forsaken, and all has gone wrong. The law that declares the will of God in words is not known, but its work still appears in our nature, so that man is a law to himself when he has not the law. To that which in this regard appears in the human consciousness even in the Gentile world, the conscience bears witness. Its testimony concurs with the work of the law written in our hearts—*συμμαρτυρούσης αὐτῶν τῆς συνειδήσεως*. If there were no conscience this mandate of our nature would be powerless. It could have no influence upon our will. But our nature is organized for righteousness, and corresponding to its insistence, notwithstanding all the corruption that sin has introduced, on the requirements of righteousness is the sense of its authority. This may be overridden, and man may refuse



to render such external compliance as is yet possible in his slavery to sin, but this can be done only by violating his own nature and adding brutishness to his human depravity. The moral sense belongs to our nature and responds to the assertion of the law of righteousness in the constitution of our nature, so that what this asserts is felt to be obligatory. The conscience, or moral sense, feels the obligatoriness of the righteousness that comes to the soul's knowledge is a demand of our nature, and bears its testimony concurrently. It is in ethics what the sense of taste is in aesthetics. We are made to feel the authority of right as we are made to feel the loveliness of beauty.

As a consequence of the action of conscience bearing witness to the law in our nature, the thoughts of men the meanwhile accuse or else excuse one another—*μεταξὺ ἀλλήλων τῶν λογισμῶν κατηγορούντων ἢ καὶ ἀπολογουμένων*, their reasonings among each other accusing them or also excusing them. On the basis of the demands made in our nature and the obligation felt in conscience the judgment decides on the moral character of actions, rebukes the violation of right according to the knowledge possessed, and endeavors to find excuses when the moral sense is aggrieved. In these reasonings the sinful nature exerts itself to justify wrong-doing and prevent the remorse which normally follows the violation of righteousness, and often succeeds, in making wrong seem right. Therefore the Gentiles, who are a law unto themselves, may even commit sin while they do the things contained in the law to which conscience bears witness. Not that sin is ever sanctioned by the law or approved by the moral sense, but by the perverting and blinding power of the corruption in our nature the soul may clothe sin in the form of righteousness and not only deceive others but be self-deceived in doing it, the conscience bearing witness to that which seems right, though the mind is under a delusion. The passage does not say anything concerning the correctness of the accusations or excuses in the reasonings of the Gentiles. They may or

may not be according to the truth. What it does set forth is that while the conscience bears witness to the authority of the law working in our hearts, the intellect also works on this basis, seeking to make the life conform or seem to conform to the law. That this activity of the intellect will, when the life is wrong, be directed towards making it seem right is, considering the power of sin in our nature, as natural as that a mere civil righteousness or external appearance of well-doing will receive the approving testimony of conscience, which always depends for its action upon the knowledge possessed. The thoughts that accuse and excuse are not the conscience, but the reason acting upon moral questions under the influence of conscience on the one hand and the depravity of our nature on the other.

What the passage teaches in regard to the conscience is principally this, that there remains in man after the fall some ability to discern righteousness and recognize its divine authority, so that idolatrous and vicious people are not excusable on the ground of ignorance. It does not say that what is written in the heart is the conscience. What is written there is the work of the law. To this the conscience bears witness. The soul has an intuition of right as the will of the Supreme Being, and a sense of its obligation. The two are not the same: the cognition is the indispensable condition under which conscience discharges its office. The cognitions necessary for its functions are not all derived from natural sources, as would be implied if the work of the law written in the heart were identical with the conscience, nor does this as the moral sense confine its action within the limits of natural revelation. We are made in the image of God to glorify Him by living in harmony with His will in righteousness and true holiness, and conscience feels the obligatoriness of that will from whatever source it may be learned; and on the basis of this sense of duty the thoughts act in accusing and excusing.

Another passage that sheds even more light on the nature and special functions of conscience is the following: "Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge; for some with conscience of the idol unto this hour eat it as a thing offered unto an idol; and their conscience being weak is defiled. But meat commendeth us not to God; for neither if we eat are we the better, neither if we eat not are we the worse. But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumbling-block to them that are weak. For if any man see thee which hast knowledge sit at meat in the idol's temple, shall not the conscience of him which is weak be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols, and through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish for whom Christ died? But when ye sin so against the brethren and wound their weak conscience ye sin against Christ. Wherefore if meat make my brother to offend I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend." 1 Cor. 8, 7-13. The passage is all the more instructive because the authority of conscience is presented in a case in which the cognitions underlying its operation are erroneous.

First it will be necessary to have a clear apprehension of the case which the apostle has under consideration. We assume that one of the questions which were presented to him for elucidation was this, whether a Christian could without sin eat of the flesh of animals which heathens had offered in sacrifice and parts of which were subsequently used for sacrificial feasts, sometimes even sold in the markets. The apostle begins his answer by making a distinction between those who are well informed as to the nature of the idols and those who are not. "An idol is nothing in the world;" the figment of the brain to which that name is given has no objective reality; therefore the meat offered to such a nonentity would not in itself have become impure by the offering. "Neither if we eat are we the better, neither if we eat not are we the worse." But that does not decide

all that is involved in the question. If the meat offered to idols is in itself like all other meat, all persons do not subjectively stand in the same relation to it. Some eat it without any scruple and experience no compunction. But others look at it as connected with idolatrous worship and, not understanding the matter thoroughly, are in that respect weak. Therefore when they eat of it their conscience is defiled. In the 10th chapter St. Paul returns to this subject, and shows the wrong of participation in any idolatrous worship through the use of such meat; here he simply sets forth the eating as an indifferent matter, the influence of individual knowledge upon the conscience, and the duty which lies upon brethren in regard to the conscience as determined by such knowledge.

Eating meat sacrificed to idols is in itself an indifferent matter, but when one eats it under the conviction that it is an act of idolatrous worship it is a sin. There is not in every one correct knowledge; some with conscience of the idol, or, which we regard the better reading, with customary usage (*συννηθεία*) of the idol until now, eat it as a thing sacrificed to idols. The flesh was offered by the Gentiles to their idols as a religious service; often the meat was used afterwards for feasts, which sometimes were of a religious character; eating at such sacrificial feasts was also a part of their religious observance and partook of a religious service; this is what was customary, and this was what some Christians had in their minds when the question of eating such meat presented itself. They had conscience of the idol until this hour. If the reading *συνειδήσει* be accepted, the meaning is that up to this time they have had scruples of conscience about idols and could eat the meat offered to them only as a recognition of the idol and of an idolatrous service. "Their conscience being weak is defiled."

Two predicates are here applied that require attention. That in which these persons are weak is, as is manifest from the context, their intellectual apprehension of the case.

“There is not in every man that knowledge.” Are we to infer from this that the conscience is the faculty by which the necessary knowledge in this as in every other case is to be obtained, and that the difficulty under which these people labored was owing to the failure of the conscience to perform its appropriate functions? We can find nothing of that sort in the text. On the contrary, their conscience is excessively sensitive, and the apostle exhorts the others to respect the “weak brother’s” condition and not wound his “weak conscience” “Through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish for whom Christ died!” His conscience is just as tender as yours, and his character, judged by the standard of conscience, is just as good as yours: you are bound to respect his sincerity and uprightness, even if in this matter of sacrificial meat his knowledge is not as exact or as extensive as yours. The brother is weak simply because his cognition is imperfect, not at all because he is morally unsound. The word conscience by synecdoche is made to embrace the knowledge which is the condition under which the conscience proper performs its functions and the guide by which it is directed to perform them aright. A weak conscience is the conscience of a man who lacks knowledge, not integrity, as an erring conscience is the conscience of a man who is mistaken in his cognition, not corrupt in his moral sense.

The case is somewhat different in regard to the other predicate “defiled.” A person who acts against his convictions of right violates his own conscience and makes this moral power a sharer in the immorality as this presents itself to the intelligence. He who eats the meat offered to idols commits no sin by the act itself. That is morally indifferent. “I know and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself, but to him that esteemeth anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean” Rom. 14, 14 Although the eating of meat used for idolatrous sacrifice is like all other meat, with the eating or not

eating of which conscience has nothing at all to do, a person may sin by eating it when, by an error of his understanding, he has put it in the category of things forbidden by divine law. That law he must obey, and he can obey it only as it presents itself to his mind. If he makes a mistake in that respect, it is to be deplored; but as long as he labors under that mistake he must conscientiously perform what presents itself to him as duty, just as well as when his cognition of divine law is correct. His conscience requires him to do right as he sees the right, and when he acts against his conscience he becomes morally bankrupt just as really when he is in error as to what duty requires as when he is correct in his cognitions. The sense of obligation does not attach to the objectively right whether we know it or not, and is not the means of bringing it to our knowledge when we do not know it, but always presupposes the cognition and always adheres to the right as we see it, whether we see correctly or incorrectly. Therefore when a man is led to do what his sense of duty forbids, even if that which he thus does is in itself innocent, he defiles his conscience just as really as when he does what is really sinful. Conscience always acts according to the knowledge possessed, not according to the objective right, and it is defiled when it is violated, whether the cognition of duty was correct or incorrect. The defilement pertains to the conscience strictly; it is not the knowledge that is defiled, as the knowledge is weak when on account of the lack in that regard the conscience is said to be weak, but the sense of obligation is violated and the moral character is polluted.

The person who is in error, but honest and conscientious, must be treated tenderly because of his sincerity and moral integrity. Those who have superior knowledge must not look down contemptuously on those who are weak in this regard. They are free to act or not to act as circumstances and expediency may suggest. "But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumbling-block

to them that are weak." The great danger always is that the influence of those who have knowledge and therefore liberty will induce the weak to follow their example, notwithstanding the protests of their conscience. And the more these free people are esteemed and looked up to, because of their recognized attainments on high positions, the greater is the danger that their example will be regarded as authoritative and be followed by those who think them entitled to leadership. This may be done even when the conscience is uneasy on account of doing that which reverence for the leaders prompts them to do. There is then a conflict between duty as believed to be indicated by the Word of God and duty as taught by the example of men supposed to be well acquainted with the Word. Satan may seek to render such an imitation of the conduct of revered men justifiable, but the effect always is to lead away from the true source of wisdom and righteousness, and put the confidence in men which is due to God alone. Hence it is said that such men are lost, notwithstanding the Savior's work. "For if any man see thee which hast knowledge sit at meat in the idol's temple, shall not the conscience of him which is weak be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols, and through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish for whom Christ died?" The example of the strong leads the weak to do as they do, and to do this in violation of their conscience, which for lack of light forbids it; and such violation of conscience, though its requirement is based on error, undermines the character and leads to destruction. Therefore it is a grave sin against charity to disregard the condition of others and in the exercise of our liberty to be the occasion of a brother's fall. "When ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ"

The wounding has reference to the power of the soul that feels the obligation of right, which is the conscience in the strict sense. It is called a weak conscience because the

person who is its subject is weak in knowledge; but the wounding, as we have seen to be the case with the defiling, pertains to the conscience itself. That suffers as a moral sense when its subject is led by human authority to act in opposition to an authority that it feels as divine, though the intellection to which the feeling attaches is erroneous. The conscience becomes maimed and crippled, and gradually loses power to discharge its proper functions. The violation of the obligation felt in conscience leads to a lack of conscientiousness, which does not mean a lack of knowledge, but a lack of regard for the obligation of right, whether the knowledge of this be correct or incorrect.

The predicates "defiled" and "wound" as applied to the conscience show that this is conceived as an entity of which attributes are predicable. Of course it is the human mind or soul of which everything pertaining to mental and moral life is predicated. It is the mind that gets knowledge and remembers and classifies, and it is the mind which feels the pleasure of grace and beauty and sublimity. So it is the mind which feels the obligatoriness of that which is cognized as the will of God, from whose supreme authority it has no power to escape. Unquestionably it is the mind that we mean when we speak of the power to cognize material objects by sense, or to reproduce the knowledge of them by memory, or to decide upon their agreements or disagreements by the judgment. So it is the mind that we mean when we speak of the cognition of God's will and of the obligation which, by the constitution of our nature, is felt whenever God's will is cognized. When therefore we speak of the faculty of sense-perception or memory, we are speaking of the human soul as a real entity, and of a power in that soul to obtain knowledge and to retain and reproduce it. These powers again have attributes of their own. A memory may be more or less retentive, a judgment may be more or less acute. The meaning of such expressions is that the human mind, as a spiritual entity, has the power to re-



member and to judge, and that in one person this mind remembers well and judges well, in another it performs these functions indifferently or badly. The memory may be imperfect and the judgment may be confused. So the mind of man is organized for righteousness, and whenever the right and the good are perceived it feels the divine authority belonging to this and the obligation resting upon the soul on that account. This is the conscience, as the power to reproduce knowledge in its original form is the memory and the power to classify is the judgment. This conscience may be defiled and wounded, as the memory and judgment may be enfeebled and confused. In all such cases it is the soul that is affected in some of its native powers. To these the conscience belongs as the moral faculty, which may be polluted and become immoral as the reasoning faculty may be degraded and become unreasonable. The conscience, as the apostle presents it, is not something standing outside of the human soul or some operations performed on it from without, but a power in the soul, which may discharge its moral functions in purity or be polluted, which may be sound or crippled, which may do its work well or ill, and which, because it is the moral and religious, and therefore the highest of all our faculties, requires the most tender care both in ourselves and in others.

In the passage under consideration we cannot find the allegation that conscience furnishes the knowledge according to which the moral decision is made. We cannot even discover any such implication. It may be conceded, indeed, that in the case presented there are the three points so often regarded as the functions of conscience. In the first place there is an assumed basis of all moral judgment. Men must do right, which is the same as saying that they must do the will of God. This is so ingrained in our nature that no power of sin can expel it. History presents no case in which the wrong, or unrighteousness, was as such claimed to be the obligatory. There are cases enough in which the

wrong was mistaken for the right, and cases enough in which, such a mistake having been made, men were conscientiously in the wrong. There are numerous instances in which men have decided, from motives of mistaken policy and expediency, unconscientiously to pursue the unrighteous course, notwithstanding the light that warned them of their error. But there is no case on record in which the wrong, fully known as such, was claimed to be a duty the performance of which brought peace to the soul. There can be no such case, our nature being constituted as it is. The utmost that can be claimed is that the thoughts "accusing or else excusing one another" have found an apology for wrong-doing, notwithstanding the original protests of conscience against the carnal desires that prompted the deed. The obligation to do right is always recognized, and by the constitution of our nature the obligation to do wrong can be felt only when the wrong is made to appear right. In the second place, there is in every individual case a judgment as to what the law of righteousness requires in the circumstances. The question in the passage before us was whether the eating of meat sacrificed to idols was right. Conscience always obligates to do right: what is right in this case? The apostle shows that the matter in question does not belong to the category of right and wrong. "Meat commendeth us not to God; for neither if we eat are we the better, neither if we eat not are we the worse." The eating in itself is a matter of indifference. But not all had sufficient knowledge so to regard it. Some had scruples. They regarded the eating of such sacrificial meat as implying a recognition of idol worship and in some sense participating in that sin. So far as this eating was not a religious ceremony of the idolaters, and engaging in it was not a confessional act implicating the eater in the worship of idols, this was a mistake. The eating of such meat has in itself no more bearing on the soul's righteousness than the eating of any other meat. But those who by a mistaken judgment placed

it in the category of right and wrong were bound to do what they conceived to be right. Their judgment made it a matter of conscience, mistaken though it was. Therefore, in the third place, the conclusion was drawn and must be drawn, that the eating of meat offered to idols is sinful and must be avoided. Conscience forbids it. The obligation which is laid upon the soul to do right, or, which is always the same thing, to do the will of God whom all are bound to serve and to whom all must render account, becomes, through the act of the judgment regarding the case presented, the obligation felt to abstain from meat offered to idols. This mental process undeniably takes place in such cases of conscience. But all this conceded, we cannot find that the obtaining of the cognition necessary to judge the case, nor the judgment that decides it in accordance with the knowledge possessed, are functions of the conscience, which does its proper work whether the cognition be correct or incorrect or the judgment decides one way or the other. In the case presented by the apostle those who are weak, and who are therefore said to have a weak conscience, are in error as regards their knowledge. So far is conscience from supplying the cognitions needed for its proper work that it acts on the basis of the error just as if that were truth. The principle of righteousness, to the recognition of whose authority our whole being is organized, remains dominant as the moral regulative, and the judgment decides in harmony with its imperative, but the result is a deplorable limitation of Christian liberty. This result is not due to a failure of conscience to do its proper work or to do it well. It gets into a wrong relation in the case specified, but this is owing to an error in the work of the cognitive faculty, not to any fault in the conscience. The defilement predicated of the latter does not lie in this error of the former. It is of those who "with conscience of the idol unto this hour eat it as a thing offered unto an idol" that it is said "their conscience being weak is defiled." We are free to eat or not to eat; the eating is a

thing of utter indifference morally, and conscience has properly nothing to do with it. But not all have this knowledge, and therefore some, who erroneously make it a matter of conscience, violate their moral sense when they eat. That defiles their conscience, and hence the duty of the strong to exercise tender care lest by example they induce them to eat. The conscience is not represented as furnishing the knowledge necessary for the right performance of its functions, but as binding to an indifferent matter because the cognitive faculty failed to furnish correct knowledge for its guidance. If it should be urged, finally, that whilst conscience does not show what is right in particular actions, it does furnish the general principle that righteousness is obligatory, we reply that there certainly is in our nature such an idea of right and wrong, but that there is no more reason for identifying that with the conscience than of identifying the idea of space or causation with the powers of sense and judgment of which they are the logical antecedents and of whose operations they are the conditions. The cognition of right may or may not be attended by an activity of conscience: that which always characterizes conscience and furnishes its distinctive mark is the feeling of the obligatoriness of right, whatever may be the extent of our knowledge in regard to what is right. The passage before us distinguishes between knowledge and conscience, though it points out their intimate relation in the soul's activities.

The apostle reverts to the same subject in chap. 10 of the same epistle. In regard to the sacrifice to idols he there adds that, while the idol is nothing and, as he infers in the 8th chapter, we have no need to trouble ourselves about non-entities, the worshipers of idols are in the service of the devil, not of God, who alone is the Lord of all and therefore the true object of worship. Hence he says "that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice they sacrifice to devils, and not to God; and I would not that ye should have fellowship

with devils." 1 Cor. 10, 20. Accordingly it would be a glaring inconsistency to take part in any service of idols, which would put us in communion with devils, while we are partakers of the Lord's table and thus profess to have communion with our Lord. The eating of meat, whatever may be the use to which it has been put, is indeed a matter of indifference. Therefore "whatsoever is sold in the shambles, that eat, asking no question for conscience' sake." A Christian need not concern himself about the connection which the meat he buys at market has had with persons and things, religious or otherwise. His only question is whether it is good for food; it would be squeamish to go beyond that. So, "if any of them that believe not bid you to a feast, and ye be disposed to go, whatsoever is set before you eat, asking no question for conscience' sake." Meat and drink are gifts of God to be received with thanksgiving, and scruple about them, when there is no knowledge that could furnish a good ground for it, is unreasonable. "But if any man say unto you, This is offered in sacrifice unto idols, eat not for his sake that shewed it and for conscience' sake: for the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof: conscience, I say, not thine own, but of the other; for why is my liberty judged of another man's conscience?" The case is changed when attention is called to the fact, that the meat was used in sacrifice to idols. That makes the feast in some sense a continuation of the service rendered to idols, which is a service rendered to devils, who are really the false gods represented by the idols, though those objects whom the Gentiles imagine to be represented are nonentities. Therefore Christians must not consent to engage in such a service and must refuse to eat the meat. There are two reasons assigned for this. "Eat not for his sake that showed it." He presumes that the meat stands in relation to the idol; he calls attention on that account to the uses to which it has been put; whether he would entrap you into a participation in idolatrous worship or in-

duce you to make light of a matter that troubles the consciences of some, or warn you not to do a wrong, the Christian must not eat it. If the person had said nothing: there could be no scruple about eating; as he has mentioned the matter, whatever his motives may be, cognizance must be taken of the fact mentioned. For the sake of the person "that showed it" the meat must not be eaten under the circumstances. But the Christian must abstain from eating also for conscience' sake. Not that his conscience need be directly affected by the matter. For himself he need not care whether the meat was offered to idols or not. He knows that these idols have no objective reality, and he has renounced the devil who is perpetuating this idol-worship and receiving the homage which is supposed to be given to imaginary beings. He is free to eat or not to eat. But while his own conscience is unaffected by this matter of indifference, he must in charity have respect to the consciences of his brethren, some of whom are weak and might be led by his example to violate and thus defile their conscience. My liberty is not judged of another man's conscience; that is, what I see to be a matter of indifference and thus a matter of liberty, cannot become a matter of obligation to me because it is to another, who is in error about it and therefore feels an obligation that I do not feel. But while my conscience is not bound by that which he feels to be obligatory, I am in charity bound not to let my liberty become a stumbling-block to him in his weakness, but for his sake, for the sake of his conscience bound by incorrect knowledge of right, to abstain from eating, though if I had only myself to take into consideration my conscience would not be affected by the eating. Conscience here is again represented as dependent upon the individual's knowledge, not as furnishing it, and therefore as having authority only for the individual in any special case. It is no objective authority to which a legitimate appeal could be made for the decision of a moral or religious question in

dispute. Each individual is bound by his conscience, but that is merely the feeling of the obligation as the intellect of the individual presents the right. Whether that presentation be correct or incorrect is not decided by the fact that the obligation is recognized in the individual conscience. In another individual, whose intellect has a different cognition, the obligation felt is different, though the conscience may be just as sensitive and just as active. My conscience is not bound by what another regards as the will of God and feels to be his duty; and he must not endeavor to curtail my liberty by imposing obligations on me, on the authority of his individual sense of duty, which my conscience does not impose. We must respect each other's consciences, but be guided by the right, not by another person's knowledge and consequent feeling of obligation.

M. LOY.

## THE SENSUALISM OF LOCKE AND ITS INFLUENCE: ON RELIGIOUS THOUGHT.

### I.

Among the many philosophical and theological writers of the seventeenth century, whose ideas and opinions exerted a mighty influence in moulding and determining religious thought and sentiment, was the Englishman John Locke, who wrote in the period when Naturalism and Rationalism were becoming more and more prevailing elements in the theological world, and when such general terms as "common sense," "reasonableness," "enlightenment," and the like, became the watchwords or signals of what may be called the "advanced thought" of the age.

The philosophy of this time was empirical, caring but little about theory or system, deficient in keen insight and scientific acumen, blindly following isolated and disconnected observations and experiments, closely adhering to

narrow and limited experiences, and always looking for "something new." However, this philosophy of "enlightenment" became very popular, not on account of its profundity, but because of its "reasonableness."

It was very superficial. A little experience and a few general observations or experiments, without much regard to their causes, reasons and relations, and a popular and easy manner in describing natural phenomena to the general public, were sufficient to make even mediocre minds great philosophers. Deep insight, careful discrimination, keen penetration of mind and perspicuity of thought, joined to severe mental labor and profound investigation of the ultimate causes, conditions and relations of scientific facts, were not necessary to master the principles of this "common sense" philosophy, which may fitly be termed *Sensualism*.

By this name we designate that philosophical idea or doctrine, according to which the operations of the human mind originate in sensation, that is, are impressed upon the understanding through the organs of sense. According to this theory every mental operation is a transformed sensation, effected by the natural senses.

This empirical philosophy, founded upon the experience taught by the senses and upon our reflections on such experience, is very unsatisfactory. Every reflecting mind not only takes cognizance of phenomena, but above all inquires for the causes, conditions and relations of the same. Empirical knowledge does not investigate the harmonious relation between different forms of phenomena; it merely deals with isolated and detached facts, without inquiring after their connection. Truly scientific knowledge inquires for first principles or fundamentals, tracing all effects to the First Cause of all things, — God, who reveals Himself in nature and in the Holy Scriptures given by Divine Inspiration.

The philosophy of Locke, requiring so little study and research, and appearing at first sight so "reasonable," could



not fail to become popular in a time when skepticism began to prevail and many good people began to entertain fears for the future of Christianity an account of the attacks of unbelief. Many were ready to hail with delight a philosophical system which would show that the Christian religion is in perfect harmony with what is termed "common sense." Hence it was that Locke's philosophy was received so favorably, not only in England, but also in many other countries.

Locke's system, with its rationalistic features, so distasteful to every true, evangelical Christian, is besides very indefinite. Sir W. Hamilton writes in his *Metaphysics*, p. 305: "In his language Locke is of all philosophers the most figurative, vacillating, various, and even contradictory; as has been noticed by Reid and Stewart, and Brown himself, — indeed, we believe, by every philosopher who has had occasion to animadvert on Locke." And a little further on it is shown by the same author, that in a particular instance "Locke verbally confounds the objects of sense and of pure intellect, the operation and its object, the objects immediate and mediate, the object and its relations, the images of fancy and the notions of the understanding."

But notwithstanding Locke's ambiguity, it is evident that he attempted to demonstrate, that ideas or thoughts are produced by sensations, i e., impressions made on the mind through the organs of sense and by reflection. He denied "innate ideas," and held that all rational conceptions are acquired by observation and experience.

Tennemann in his *History of Philosophy*, although admitting that Locke's method has much to recommend it, shows that it is very defective in that it ignores philosophical difficulties, instead of trying to remove them by deep and thorough inquiry and research; that in his inquiries concerning the uses and the abuses, as well as the limits of the human understanding, he is too superficial, and that with respect to the principles governing human knowledge

and thought he is altogether unsatisfactory. Denying "innate ideas" and deriving all his knowledge from observation and experience, he demonstrated the existence of God and the immortality of the soul in harmony with his sensualistic philosophy. In ethics he taught Eudemonism, that shallow system of moral philosophy that derives the ground of every duty from its subjective relation to the well-being or happiness of the individual. Thus the idea of moral good or bad is derived from our sensations either of pleasure or of pain. Locke's ethical system is in reality a kind of Utilitarianism, according to which virtue is founded in utility as the sole standard of morality. This system teaches that the happiness of the individual should be the great aim of his life, and that all his thoughts, words, and actions should be directed to this end.

This in its outlines is the philosophical system of John Locke, commonly termed Sensualism. It is necessary to take cognizance of these principles in order to understand their influence on religious thought and feeling. Although Locke confessed an implicit faith in the Bible and in the doctrines of the Christian religion, he was a decided rationalist. He denied the scriptural doctrine of the Atonement. It was said by some that he denied the doctrine of the Trinity, but this is disputed by others. His principal philosophical work is the *Essay on Human Understanding*. His principal theological works are the *Essay on the Reasonableness of Christianity as delivered in the Scriptures*, and his *Essay for the Understanding of St. Paul's Epistles by consulting St. Paul himself*.

Locke's empirical philosophy greatly influenced his theology. In fact, the latter was based upon the former. His aim was to present to the great mass of the people, the "reasonableness" of the doctrine of the Christian religion, to show that these doctrines were in conformity to what was popularly termed "common sense", and thus to show the

agreement between Christianity and "natural religion". About this time Deism was making considerable progress in England through the efforts of Herbert of Cherbury and other writers, who taught that the innate ideas of human reason and what they termed the "fundamental teachings" of the Bible are identical. Religious indifference and latitudinarianism greatly aided in advancing deistical ideas and propagating "natural religion". Open unbelief, infidelity, and corruption of morals constantly increased. In order to stem this flood of evil many theologians wrote Apologies of the Christian religion.

Among the English apologists Locke is one of the most prominent. Tholuck says (*Vermischte Schriften*, I. p. 163) of these apologists and their writings: "If a weak defence is worse than none at all, we certainly cannot feel glad over the majority of these apologetic writings. Most of these English apologists are like that crazy housekeeper, who exclaims, murder! death! whilst he himself is throwing his most valuable household goods out of the window. In order to save the husk they throw away the kernel. Because they lack the right weapons to carry on the war, they try to effect a negotiation and to compromise."

In an article on Apologetics and Apology in the Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia we read: "During the second half of the seventeenth and the whole of the eighteenth century, deism and naturalism reigned widely in England, France, and Germany; and in all three countries the doctrine that natural religion forms the true kernel of all revelation—on the basis of which assertion, first the necessity and value, next the truth and possibility, of a supernatural revelation were attacked—called forth a rich apologetical activity. England produced an enormous number of apologetical works. Some of these apologists, however, were not free from deism themselves; they endeavored to find a ground common to them and their adversaries; they yielded too much to the principle of their opponents (Locke, Whitby

Clarke, Foster and others); they often sacrificed the kernel in order to save the shell (Burnett, Robinson, Archibald Campbell, Williamson, and others)." That Locke was a thorough-going rationalist is evident from an article on Deism in the work mentioned above, where we read: "John Locke (d. 1704) likewise affirmed the sovereign right of human reason to determine not only the reality, but the true meaning of a revelation. Revelation cannot teach anything contradictory of reason, but such things, however, as reason may not have itself discovered. That Christianity is not a product of reason, but in agreement with it, is the fundamental proposition of his work, *The Reasonableness of Christianity*. (1695)."

Locke's theological system was in perfect agreement with his empirical philosophy. If, according to his theory, every operation of the human mind originates in sensation, if every human thought or conception is but a transformed sensation, produced by the natural senses, if all we can know or feel is founded upon our sensation, experience, observation and reflection, without any "innate ideas", if philosophy is simply refined sensualism and morality nothing else than Eudemonism and Utilitarianism, then Christianity is simply the religion of naturalism, "common sense", and "enlightenment".

In another article I purpose to show the baneful influence of Locke's sensualistic philosophy on theology and religious thought and feeling, especially in Europe.

P. A. PETER.

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## THE PROTESTANT CHURCH IN RUSSIA.

One of the most lamentable phenomena in the religious world of our day and date is the bitter persecution of religious Dissenters in Russia. Particularly is the Lutheran Church in the Baltic Provinces an *ecclesia pressa*. All means,

fair and foul, especially the latter, are resorted to for the purpose of suppressing the Evangelical Church and the Protestant cause in the realm of the Czar. In view of these facts, a brief bird's-eye view of the status of the Protestant Church in that country is a work of special interest. The following brief account is based chiefly on the volume of Pastor Hermann Dalton, one of the best known popular religious writers on the Continent, who spent fully a generation in St. Petersburg as the pastor of the Reformed Church in that metropolis.

The Protestant Churches in Russia consist of three groups entirely distinct in origin and history. These groups are the Protestants in St. Petersburg, the Protestants in the Baltic Provinces, the Protestants in the Inner Provinces. The first and last groups are all the descendants of Protestant immigrants, chiefly Germans and Lutherans; while the Baltic group consists as far as numbers is concerned chiefly of Esthonians and Livonians, although leading classes, the aristocracy and professional men, as also the pastors are Germans. There are no Russian Protestants.

The Protestant colony in St. Petersburg came there at the urgent invitation of Peter the Great, who sought Western artisans and skilled workmen for his new capital. They came from all the countries of Western Europe and at first constituted one Protestant congregation. As their number grew separate congregations according to languages and nationalities were organized. At present there are more than 90,000 Protestant Christians in the Russian metropolis. The great bulk of these are Lutherans. These Protestants are organized into twenty-one congregations, to which must be named also five missions. Of these congregations fifteen are Lutherans and six are Reformed. They possess eighteen churches, the disparity between churches and congregations finding its explanation in the fact that in a number of cases two congregations differing in language make use of the same house of worship. The Protestant

clergy number thirty-two. Each congregation thus averages 4286 souls; there is one church for every 5000 souls; and one pastor for every 2813. The increase in the number of churches and of the clergy in the last thirty years has been noteworthy and is in advance of the growth of the Protestant population. During these three decades the number of pastors increased 20 percent; six new churches were erected; the seating capacity of the churches increased 34 percent. The seating capacity is about equal to the needs, since statistics show, that in Germany a seating capacity of 33 percent of the total membership is needed to accommodate the audiences, and in England of 43 percent. In addition to these twenty-one city congregations there is a chain of ten mission congregations around the city in the suburbs, served by ten pastors. Every Lord's Day Services are held in St. Petersburg in nine languages, namely German, French, English, Dutch, Russian, Finnish, Swedish, Esthonian and Livonian. These congregations are virtually independent and enjoy a greater degree of self-government than they do in some of the States of Western Europe. They can be compared in this regard with the Congregationalist churches of England and America. This is especially true of the Reformed churches. For the Lutheran churches of the Empire a Consistory organization was established in 1834, and the congregations of the entire state has been divided into nine consistories. All the St. Petersburg congregations are personal and not parochial, etc. The residence of a man does not determine to what congregation he belongs, but this is a matter of personal choice. Directly or indirectly the congregations select their own pastor and church officials, and these again are answerable chiefly to the congregations. Some of the congregations are possessed of so much property that the income from this source almost entirely covers the expenses. In other cases the members contribute according to their ability; no aid is received from the State just as the State in turn has practically no control over the affairs of the congregations.

The St. Petersburg Protestants are liberal givers. One congregation of 3000 souls has in the last thirty years contributed for various church purposes the sum of 2,292,744 marks. This is an average of more than 25 marks per member annually. Of this sum total 683,500 marks were for a new church edifice. The total sum which these Protestants, or rather chiefly the 45,000 Germans (since the Swedes, Finns, Esthonians, Livonians nearly all belong to the poorer working classes) have given in the sixteen years from 1858 to 1874 for new churches, schools and charitable institutions alone, was 4,914,000 marks.

Educational work is carried on by the St. Petersburg Protestants on a grand scale. They have four congregational gymnasia or colleges, which are so efficient that the government permits their graduates to enter the Universities without any further examinations. Each congregation has its own parochial school or schools, and a number of them have higher educational institutions for young ladies. The leading school has an attendance of 1400, and 180,000 marks were used for current expenses last year. The school buildings are of an excellent character and in a good condition, although they cannot always rival the magnificent edifices erected by the State. The members of the Russian church, at least formerly, appreciated the excellent methods and results of the Protestant schools. A large percentage of the pupils were from Orthodox families. The Russian royal family too has often warmly commended the work of these schools. A great many of the leading men in the government were educated in these institutions, and for decades the sons of the nobility were regularly sent here. The Emperors as a rule selected the tutors of their children from the ranks of the Protestant teachers or upon their recommendation. Within recent weeks the Emperor and his wife have personally inspected the workings of the St. Anna Protestant school and expressed his great pleasure at its efficiency.

In addition to the schools the St. Petersburg congregations all have thoroughly organized their work among the poor. The employment of deaconesses, the care of the the orphans and needy, old and young, are made matters of great importance. All that work which the Germans include in the term "Innere Mission" is managed as thoroughly and efficiently as anywhere in Protestant lands. Especially has this been done since 1848; and from that year to the present eighteen new eleemosynary institutions of various kinds have been established.

In the esteem of the public the Protestants and the Protestant churches of St. Petersburg stand high. Some of the Protestant pastors are very influential in high places, and among the thinking portion of the Established Church, the spiritual character of the Protestant religions is keenly appreciated over against the petrified formalism of the Orthodox popes. There are indeed not absent the dark sides of Protestant church life in Petersburg too, but on the whole the Evangelical Church there is inwardly and outwardly in a flourishing condition. As yet the heavy hand of the State has not touched her.

This can not be said of the Protestant churches of the Baltic Provinces. There she is an *Ecclisia pressa*. These three provinces, Kourland, Livonia, and Esthonia, have since 1523 constituted a solid phalanx of Lutheran Protestantism. Of the two million inhabitants only 200,000 are Germans; but these constitute the wealthy, the educated and leading classes, including the clergy, who nearly all receive their education in Germany. The provinces were Roman Catholic for centuries before the days of Luther, but neither in tradition nor literature have they preserved any reminiscences of the Roman era. At an early date the Germans conquered these lands, and they constituted a part of the German empire down to 1558, when they accepted the King of Poland in order to escape the Russian-Tartaric yoke of Ivan the Terrible. In 1629 the Swedes secured possession



and in 1710 Russia succeeded Sweden. Each new rule in turn promised most solemnly to observe and preserve the religious liberties of the people. This too was done, except in the case of Nicholas I, the grandfather of the present Czar, and by Alexander III, who have bitterly persecuted the Protestants because they see in the Protestant church the chief support and stay of Germanic culture and civilization, which is regarded as a menace to the nationalizing ideas prevailing in the councils at St. Petersburg in recent years. Under some of the Emperors the Protestant churches of these provinces enjoyed a greater degree of liberty than they did under Protestant Sweden. Especially were Catharine II. and Alexander I. favorable to them. One great difficulty in these provinces is that the clergy and the nobility as Germans do not belong to the same nations which constitute the bulk of the congregations, and repeatedly have efforts been made to arouse the native majority against the minority who practically control the destinies of the provinces. Such movements have however failed, chiefly because the German nobility have taken such a deep interest in the spiritual and material welfare of the native Protestants. Serfdom was abolished there nearly two generations before this was done in the rest of the Empire. This was in 1846, and twenty years later the peasants were permitted to buy property. The material and intellectual prosperity of these provinces is greater than that of any other district in the Empire. The Baltic Provinces have always remained in sympathetic touch and tone with the Protestantism of the Fatherland and have passed through all the religious developments in the history of their mother church in the land of Luther. The University of Dorpat takes equal rank with those of Germany.

The ecclesiastical government is in the hands of six consistories, which again are under the head Lutheran consistory in St. Petersburg. The number of congregations is 316 with 342 pastors. The average number of souls to a

congregation is 7197. The Baltic Protestants are very pronounced in their Evangelical faith and the present persecution will not crush them.

The Protestants in the Inner Provinces consist almost entirely of colonists, chiefly Germans, whose ancestors settled there at the invitation of Peter the Great and Catharine II. They are mostly settled in two districts, one being along the Volga, the other in South Eastern Russia, north of the Black Sea. There are however many Protestants scattered in other provinces, in the Caucasus and in Siberia. On the Volga there are about 200,000 Protestants, who had converted these steppes into a paradise, but who by seven years of complete or partial crop failure have now been brought on the verge of starvation. In the South Eastern districts there are about 150,000 Protestants in 34 cities and in 250 larger or smaller villages. They constitute 34 parishes. In 1859 Volhynia had 4825 Protestants; now there are 74,306. In all the Inner Provinces there are about one million Protestants. The great majority of these are Lutherans, the Reformed constituting probably seven or eight percent. Many of the parishes are exceedingly polyglott. Especially is this the case in the Crimea and Siberia, where half a dozen tongues or more are represented in the membership. These Protestants are as a rule sincere and earnest Christians, anxious to hear the Word of God and distinguished over against their Orthodox neighbors by thorough Evangelical life. Their scattered condition often makes it exceedingly difficult to supply their spiritual wants.

G. H. SCHODDE.

## HOMILETIC RULES.

(From J. A. Quenstedt's "Ethica pastoralis." Translated by Rev. E. Schultz.)

16. — The preacher must make himself perfectly familiar with the biblical text to be expounded in the sermon, and must read it in his private study not only in the translations, but also in the originals, and compare it with the Greek and Hebrew concordances. He must diligently consider his theme and divisions, and industriously consult commentaries and expositions, especially those that are orthodox.

The text must be the preacher's guide and rule by which to arrange the whole course of his sermon, — the source from which to derive his arguments, — and the basis upon which the whole discourse is to rest. Dr. Henry Miller in his Orat. Eccl. says: "The text must be the root, basis and rule for the whole sermon, so as to have the sermon flow out of the text as its source, deal with it as its object, and make it the aim and its *scope*" (the thing to be explained and enforced.) Therefore the preacher must:

1) Carefully look at the text which he attempts to explain to others, and read it over repeatedly.

2) Because not the reading but the understanding of the Scriptures is of importance, as Hilarius says to the emperor Constantius, the protector of the Arian party, he must institute a minute and careful investigation of the meaning of the individual words and phrases, and consider them carefully, so as to learn to understand the true and real meaning of the text, and the scope aimed at. For the words designate the things, they are their signs by which to be known, and lack of knowledge of words and language results in ignorance of the things, which produce not only errors, but also dangerous heresies.

3) He must not carry a preconceived opinion into the text but take the meaning from the text. The meaning must be inherent, that is, it must not be taken from some-

where else and applied to the text, but must be innate in the passage of Scripture. Lipsius in his preface "Politic." says: "It is the business of slight-of-hand men, not of readers, to attach to an author a meaning according to their own."

4) He must go to the fountain, that is, he must consult the language in which the Holy Ghost spoke to men, and investigate studiously, by means of a concordance (dictionary), whether there is a particular stress upon the word in Greek or Hebrew; because translations sometimes differ, and do not express the meaning of the Holy Ghost sufficiently, or only imperfectly. The purpose in comparing all translations from foreign languages with the original, is not that the preacher may overwhelm his hearers' ears with Greek and Hebrew words, but to derive the genuine meaning from them.

5) He must closely observe the connection of the text to be preached from, what immediately precedes and follows; since a true knowledge of the matter contained in the text can only be acquired by a diligent comparison and consideration of the context, or of that which includes the text, that is, the preceding and following. To do this he must not only read one or two verses, but often many verses, sometimes one or more whole chapters. The old Hebrews said concerning the reading of the context, or what precedes and follows the text. "Who does not attend to what is written in the Law before and after, prevents the Words of Almighty God."

6) The preacher must pay close attention also to the circumstances of person, place and time, so as to know who is speaking in the text and to whom it is spoken, what is the intention, the aim, at what time and place, etc.

7) He must wisely look for similar passages; for parallels are often plainer. To learn to understand thoroughly the true meaning of words and phrases, and the true meaning of the Scriptures, he will be assisted by the com-

parison of many other, especially related, passages that contain either the same matters or the same words. Luther says well: "This is a peculiarity of the Holy Scriptures, that it interprets itself by the comparison of many places and passages, and can be understood only by the rules of faith (*analogia fidei*). And this is altogether the surest method for reaching the meaning of the Scriptures, if you try to get at this meaning by comparing and observing many passages." (On Deuter. 1, 19-26.)

8) In working at a verse of the Bible, he must make use of the old and new commentaries and expositions, especially those of orthodox interpreters, and select from them the best and most adapted to the text. But where there is diversity of opinions with the teachers, he must adopt that opinion, which is most generally accepted, and which seems to be the most probable. The text, especially one selected by himself for an extraordinary occasion, must not be too short nor too long. Not too short; for texts, consisting of but one or two words, scarcely ever have sufficiently fruitful matter (unless derived from an extraneous source); they themselves are barren and dry. A preacher at Augsburg once pleased himself in making a fool of himself in this way: He wanted to deliver several sermons on the commandment (Deut. 6, 5.) "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God," etc. As text for the first sermon he read only the one word "Thou." Although some appear to parade their ingenuity before their hearers by the brevity of their text, yet sometimes a few words will contain great riches of thought and have the most important meaning, as for instance these words: "Behold the man!" (*Ecce homo!*) "I thirst!" "It is finished!" etc.

9) The text must not be too long, so as not to exceed the due limits of a sermon, preventing a complete consideration of the same. Too long a text will sometimes overburden and obscure the crowded speech by the abundance of matter contained in it. The text must be capable of

being retained by the memory of the hearers and be finished in one or two sermons, unless it is of extraordinary beauty, or contains a biblical story which is read, even if it can not be completely explained or finished in one or two sermons.

10) The preacher must not separate the words of the text in which the question to be treated and the theme with its explanations, proofs and sustaining arguments, the subject with its predicates, the premises with their conclusion, are contained, but he must take them as they belong together.

11) The preacher must impress these texts firmly upon his memory, as well because they form the basis and foundation of the sermon, as also to enable him to proceed in his explanation without stopping and looking into the book.

12.) He must keep inside the limit of the text and follow the lead of the same; he must not follow up extraneous matter and things that lead away from the text. Many lay aside the text together with the book, and this to such an extent that they do not even mention it with one word; and so leaving their foundation and solid ground, they float about in the air, and pass from one subject to another. It is true, there were some fathers of the church in former times, that preached homilies or any *locus communis* (doctrine) without taking a text, for instance, on God, Christ, faith, love, eternal life, etc.; sometimes they would read a text, but as soon as read, they would take another subject for their speech and accommodate themselves to the time and place, especially if a storm had risen and subsided, or anything extraordinary or surprising had occurred. So we find among Luther's writings, and in his church-postil and house-postil some sermons without a text, or where the text is not explained. Such sermons are called *free*, to distinguish them from the *textual* sermons. But this too free and arbitrary mode and manner of preaching (where no text is read, or it

read, is set aside and unnoticed) has long ago been disapproved by our church.

13.) In the explanation of each text the preacher must investigate the principal subject or the principal question and proposition, containing the substance of the pericope (text) toward which all the rest is aimed as its *scope*. For no biblical text can be properly understood or explained, if there is not a principal sentence found upon which all the arguments and parts are directed. Luther has well said in his *Tabletalk*: "He that wishes to teach and console successfully and with good results, must look to the main subject of which he wants to speak."

14.) The preacher must take pains and not only know how to extract the true meaning of the text in hand, but also how to explain it for the benefit of his hearers, and to apply it as doctrine, instruction, exhortation and consultation.

15.) Finally he must analyze the text: *a) grammatically*, that is, he must consider the individual words and investigate their real meaning, accurately weigh the phrases and compare them with parallels; *b) logically*, that is, he must form a judgment concerning the connection and disjunction of words and sentences, pick out the principal theme, and learn what is subject and what predicate, etc.; *c) rhetorically*, that is, he must investigate to what class of subjects the text belongs, weigh the arguments by which the principal theme is sought to be proved, indicate the tropes and figures of speech, if there are any, and analyze and explain everything completely.

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## EDITORIAL.

### THE PAPAL ANTICHRIST.

Rome is making herculean efforts to regain the power and prestige of which it was deprived by the Reformation, and there is much in the present condition of Protestantism

to favor its energetic movement. Faith has grown weak in the churches. There is so much indifference prevailing in regard to revealed truth that Christian assurance, based on plain words of Scripture, is largely regarded and treated as opinionativeness and bigotry. Unionism has taken such a hold upon the people that scarcely anything is regarded as sufficiently certain to be admitted as a barrier to its swift current. Indeed, it threatens to sweep Christianity from the earth, and to leave us nothing but a so-called religion of common sense, which is common heathenism, or the religion of nature and natural reason. Love is given the precedence to faith, and as love independently of the faith once delivered to the saints is mere natural sentiment, insistence upon revealed doctrines that would result in division seems to do violence to Christian principle, because it conflicts with that natural sentiment falsely called Christian charity. Rome knows how to take advantage of this weakness or apostasy. Not that it will yield one jot or tittle of its claims. It yields nothing, though it knows how to court popularity and win favors by adapting itself to changing situations. While men sleep it sows tares. And the flabby sentimentalism of the times objects to any let or hindrance thrown in the way of its nefarious work. Even those who do not like Rome, perhaps have a traditional horror of its crimes and superstitions, do not want to appear uncharitable, and therefore cannot think of condemning fellow Christians, though they be Papists. Thus Romanism grows, and Protestant sects, though perhaps they do not like to see its growth, look on and do nothing. How, from their point of view, fundamentally erring as it is, could they fight against Christian brethren without offending against Christian charity?

Once it was customary even among Protestants who were not Lutherans to speak of the pope as the Antichrist. Now that is changed. It is regarded as one of the marks of progress in our enlightened and philanthropic age that such unkind opinions have passed away. Better times are sup-



posed to have come with enlarged charity that does away with the bitter judgment of former days. But is this not all an illusion? Is there necessarily bitterness and uncharitableness in pronouncing condemnation on Satan and all his crew and work, and in warning against his craft and cunning which seeks the destruction of souls? Is it not true love to rescue souls from the jaws of the beasts and save them from the threatening ruin? The danger is not imaginary; it is terribly real and frightfully imminent. "Let no man deceive you by any means; for that day shall not come except there come a falling away first and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God or is worshiped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God,—whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believe not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness" 2 Thes. 2, 3 4. 9-12 Such an iniquitous power is not to be tampered with, and sentimental pleas for charity will not throw wise men off their guard in their earnest warfare against the enemy of souls.

Our feeble age is scarcely able to understand, much less to appreciate the stupendous struggles of the Reformation against the mystery of iniquity that held the people in its power and under its enchantments. With them it was an intensely earnest question of the soul's deliverance from the chains of the devil and the eternal torments of hell, whilst to the liberalism of our time all that is merely a dark and dubious speculation or an oriental, perhaps a despondent and pessimistic figure of speech that has only poetic value and only on that score merits consideration. When the Antichristian abominations of popery are no longer consid-

ered dangerous, because popery is still regarded as the friend of philanthropy and resplendent in its institutions and deeds of mercy, and thus as possessing and exemplifying the love which is supposed to be the essence of the Christian religion, Luther's indignant and defiant accusation, "You are the very Antichrist", hurled against the pope, who used all his tremendous force and all his nefarious arts to thwart the reformer's every effort to lead souls to Christ and deliver them from death and the devil, no doubt seems the carnal utterance of an excited soul that was selfishly embittered because its will was stubbornly crossed. But the Antichrist was revealed, and whether the mass of Christians in our days understand it or not, there are some who know it and are thankful and vigilant. It behooves these to continue their earnest testimony and solemn warning, and not to grow weary in well-doing, though their labor of love be reproached on all sides as the result of a narrow-minded bigotry which merely aims to revive the prejudice and bitterness of a barbarous age.

We deem it needful and helpful to call the renewed attention of Lutherans, with whom these are not questions of courtesy, but of the soul's eternal salvation, to the testimony of our Confessions concerning the papal Antichrist, and to make this solemn appeal to their consciences, lest these too be influenced by the naturalistic and latitudinarian spirit of an evil time, and grow weak in their faith and vacillating in their confession of Christ and Him crucified. It is invigorating to read the devout witness which our fathers bear against the man of sin, and the sound reason which they give for their solemn testimony.

"The adversaries perhaps require that the Church be thus defined, viz. that it is the supreme outward monarchy of the whole world, in which the Roman pontiff necessarily has the absolute power (which no one is permitted to dispute or censure), to frame articles of faith, to abolish, ac-

according to his pleasure, the Scriptures, [to pervert and interpret them contrary to all divine law, contrary to his own decretals, contrary to all imperial rights, as often, to as great an extent, and whenever it pleases him; to sell indulgences and dispensations for money,] to appoint rites of worship and sacrifices; likewise to frame such laws as he may wish, and to dispense and exempt from whatever laws, divine, canonical, or civil, which he may wish; and that from him the emperor and all kings receive, according to the command of Christ, the power and right to hold their kingdoms. For as the Father has subdued all things beneath Him, this right should be understood as transferred to the pope; therefore the pope must necessarily be lord of the whole world, of all the kingdoms of the world, of all things private and public, and must have absolute power in temporal and spiritual things, and both swords, the spiritual and temporal. This definition, which does not apply to the true Church at all, but very well suits the institution of the Roman pope, is found not only in the books of the canonists, but Daniel the prophet thus describes the Antichrist. Dan. 11, 36 sqq." (*Apology ch. iv. § 23, 24.*)

"The Church can never be governed and preserved better than if we all live under one head, Christ, and all the bishops, equal in office though they be unequal in gifts, be diligently joined in unity of doctrine, faith, sacraments, prayer and works of love, etc., just as St. Jerome writes that the priests at Alexandria together and in common governed the churches, as did also the apostles, and afterwards all bishops throughout all Christendom, until the pope raised his head above all. This article clearly shows that the pope is the very Antichrist, who has exalted and opposed himself against Christ, because he does not wish Christians to be saved without his power, which nevertheless is nothing, and is neither established nor commanded by God. This is, properly speaking, to 'exalt himself above

all that is called God,' as St. Paul says, 2 Thess. 2, 4. This indeed neither the Turks nor the Tartars do, although they are great enemies of Christians, but they allow whoever wishes to believe in Christ, and they receive bodily tribute from Christians. The pope, however, prohibits this faith, saying that if any one wishes to be saved he must obey. This we are unwilling to do, even though on this account we must die in God's name. This all proceeds from the fact that the pope has wished to be considered the supreme head of the Christian Church according to the divine law. Accordingly he has made himself equal to and above Christ, and has caused himself to be proclaimed the head and then the lord of the Church, and finally of the whole world, and simply God on earth, until he has attempted to issue commands even to the angels in heaven. And when a distinction is made between a dogma of the pope and Holy Scripture, and a comparison of the two is made, it is found that the dogma of the pope, even the best, has been taken from imperial and heathen law, and treats of political matters and decisions or rights, as the decretals show; afterwards it teaches of ceremonies concerning churches, garments, food, persons, and of shows, masks and comedies above measure, but in all these things nothing at all of Christ, faith and the commandments of God; and in the end is nothing else but the devil himself, while over and against God he urges his falsehoods concerning masses, purgatory, a monastic life, one's own works, and fictitious divine worship, (for this is the true papacy, upon each of which the papacy is altogether founded and is standing,) and condemns, murders and tortures all Christians who do not exalt and honor these abominations of the pope above all things. Wherefore as we cannot adore the devil himself as Lord and God, so we cannot endure his apostle, the pope or Antichrist, in his rule as head and lord. For to lie and to kill, and to destroy body and soul eternally, is a prerogative of the papal government, as I have very clearly shown in many

books" (*Smalc. Art. Part. II. Art. 4, § 9-14. Comp. App. § 39 sqq.*)

The papacy has not changed since our ancestors raised their voices against it. If it ceased to be the Antichristian usurpation it is, it would cease to be the papacy. That the attitude of Protestantism has changed towards it is an omen of evil. Let those who love the Lord Jesus Christ and sincerely seek the salvation of souls through His precious name, beware of Rome with its "deceivableness of unrighteousness."

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#### NON-RESIDENT MEMBERS.

Pastors are called by the flocks of which they are to take charge and of whom they are to give account. By such call God, who alone rules in the Church, appoints them to the pastoral work. Therefore concerning the ecclesiastical office our churches teach "that no one should publicly in the Church teach or administer the sacraments except he be rightly called." *Augs. Conf. Act. XIV.* When God wants a man in the public ministry He calls him through the church in which the ministerial duties are to be discharged. Accordingly the command is given, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God which He hath purchased with His own blood." Acts 20, 28.

This implies that he has special duties and responsibilities in regard to the people who have called him to be their pastor. The general commission to preach the gospel to all men of course concerns him also, as it concerns all Christians. Every believer as such is a missionary, and the pastor of a church is the leading missionary in that place because he is the representative of the congregation of believers. But his official duty is to feed the flock that has called him. For those belonging to this he has an official responsibility

which he has not for those who are not members of the congregation committed to his charge. They concern him in an especial manner. "It is required in stewards that a man be found faithful" 1 Cor. 4, 2. They must give account of their stewardship to the Master. Hence too the command is given to the people. "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves; for they watch over your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you." Heb. 13, 17. Both pastor and people are to recognize the relation into which God has placed them, and both will be held to their duty as it is involved in that relation. No pastor has a right to neglect any member of the congregation that has been placed under his charge, and no member of the congregation has a right to ignore the call that has been given him and to treat him as if he as the called pastor had no rights and duties that do not belong to all Christians. The pastor is to care for the souls entrusted to his care, and must be deposed if he will not discharge his duty; the member of the flock commits himself to the pastor's care, and must be dismissed from the fellowship of the church if he will not recognize the call which the church has given and declines to submit himself to the pastor's care. The pastoral relation is not an arrangement of human conscience which the parties concerned may use or refuse to recognize according to their taste and convenience, but a divine ordinance to which both pastor and people are bound.

But when, as in our country it is so often the case, people move away from the locality where their pastor officiates, what is to be done? They are far beyond the pastor's personal reach, and they cannot be expected to be present where he administers the means of grace and to enjoy his ministrations, nor can he be expected to follow them in their wanderings and minister to their spiritual wants. The situation is abnormal, and presents to the conscientious pastor some questions that are not without difficulty. Does

his responsibility in regard to them cease when they no longer take part in the public services of the congregation to which he is called as pastor and to which they have hitherto belonged? Does removal in itself sever the tie which binds a person to his congregation and its pastor?

We presume that at least among Lutheran Christians there is no question about the church's duty of looking after those who become careless or cold, and in consequence absent themselves from the house of God. Neither can there be any question about the pastor's duty in the premises. He is called as the minister of the church. At least no intelligent Lutheran would think of accepting the heartless and indolent theory of those who are at ease in Zion, that if a member does not attend public worship and thus deprives himself of the means of grace, the loss is his own and therefore no one else need care. The pastor who at once regards such a person as self-excluded from his supervision and is therefore willing to do nothing to rescue him from the paths of danger, has not the mind of Christ and is not a faithful steward. No carnal reasoning about the rights of individuals to do as they please, about the renunciation of the pastor when one will no longer come to hear him preach or to receive the sacrament at his hands, about the danger of casting pearls before the swine when the pastor goes to those who will not come to him, about letting them go to the dogs if they have not sense enough to live among Christians, will satisfy the conscience of a true Christian. All stuff of that sort may commend itself to the lazy and spiteful flesh; but men who love the Lord and the souls purchased by His blood will spurn it as a fabrication of the enemy. It may be that such careless persons will refuse to hear when the word of life is brought to them, and that after all efforts are made to save them they will choose death. But to assume this without earnest labor to rescue them, and on the ground of such assumption to regard them as removed by sin beyond the church's care, is unfaithfulness to the trust com-

mitted by the Lord to His people. "O son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth and warn them from me. When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood will I require at thine hands." Ezek. 33, 7. 8. The charge and responsibility of the church and its pastor can cease, in such a case, only when the Lord's commands have been complied with, and all efforts having failed to reclaim the erring, he has been declared to be no longer a brother in the congregation, but a heathen man and a publican.

The case, it is true, is entirely different when a member moves to another place and thus apparently places himself beyond the jurisdiction of the pastor and congregation where he formerly resided. But the principle governing the case is the same. As long as the removing person is not dismissed to another charge or expelled from the communion of the church, the former relations continue. He is still one of the flock which has been placed under the pastor's charge and for whose soul the pastor is to exercise all the care which the unfavorable circumstances will admit. Where everything is as it should be such a person will ask for a dismissal to the congregation of the same faith in his new home, if such a congregation exists there, and he will thus be transferred to another charge and to another pastor's care, on whom the responsibility henceforth must rest; or, in case there is no church there which confesses the same faith and with which he can therefore unite, he will retain his membership in his former home, go there to communion when this is possible, and request his pastor's assistance to secure the administration of the means of grace in his neighborhood, and be ready to make sacrifices in order to establish a congregation there. And the pastor will be ready, as he is in duty bound to be, to make such provision for the



wants of non-resident members as lies within his power. He not only has the general duty of charity towards such scattered sheep, which prompts him to do missionary work, but the special duty of his calling as their pastor to see that they are properly cared for and committed, as soon as may be, to the charge of another who is in circumstances to give them more attention and to do more for the promotion of their spiritual welfare.

Right views of the relation between pastor and people, not overlooking the continuance of that relation until it is dissolved in an orderly way, will always be conducive to right measures and effective work. There is not only much sinning in this regard, but the sin results in damage to the discipline of congregations, and in hindrance to the work of missions. The Word of God and the Lutheran Confession give no countenance to the crude opinion that the tie between the pastor and the sheep of the flock can be severed when and as either party please.

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### CRITICISM OF PUBLIC MEN.

Public work subjects the workman to public criticism. It is not reasonable to complain that people have their opinions about the faithfulness and skill with which work is done in their presence, and that they on fitting occasions frankly express their opinions. It appeals to their judgment, and he who is too sensitive, perhaps we should say too selfish, to endure candid criticism is lacking in an important qualification for public positions. Neither good sense nor a right spirit is manifested when public places are accepted with the tacit understanding that the public shall have nothing to do with them, and especially shall not presume to have or express any opinion touching the public officer's public performances. When a man walks and talks before the people they must be expected to see and hear him, and

exercise their judgment in reference to what he does and says, and how he does it and says it. If he is not willing to submit to this, let him take to the woods: the trees will have and express no opinion about his movements and speeches

Not only does it lie in the nature of things that public work will be judged by the people, but such judgment is ordinarily a duty. The executor of a public trust is not alone to decide whether he is faithful in performing his commission. So far as his own peace and comfort is concerned his own conscience must, of course, have a voice in the matter. But it is a tyrannical disposition that regards this as absolutely derisive and will give ear to no convictions, conscientious or otherwise, of the people who have entrusted him with his office and whom he is bound to serve in the position assigned him. An officer of the State who pays no regard to the laws in which the people have given expression to their sense of right is derelict in public duty, though he be of the opinion that the laws are wrong and his decisions are right. And when the people cease to criticise public servants and passively resign themselves to the pleasure of those whom they have entrusted with office and power, the days of liberty are numbered. When people concede to their rulers the exclusive right of opinion in regard to what is proper and expedient and just, and admit that it would be arrogance on their part to subject their servants to criticism, especially adverse criticism, despotism has won its dreadful victory and the people have submitted to slavery, even though nominally the government still be a republic. The right of free speech belongs to the people, and its maintenance, and when circumstances demand it, its exercise, is a duty which cannot be surrendered without disaster. Neither reason nor righteousness can sanction the fanatical or tyrannical claims of men who demand exemption from public criticism while they occupy public places.

It is true, the right of judgment may in this, as in all other cases, be abused, and adverse criticism may be unjust and harmful. No doubt wrong is often done in the judgments pronounced upon the work of public men. Their actions and their speeches are often condemned without right and without reason. But this is the necessary consequence of the sin that has come into the world and rendered human life such a bundle of contradictions. The rights of man cannot be exercised righteously, because there is none righteous, no, not one. And yet these rights remain. It only adds sin to sin to deny them or seek to deprive men of them. They are the gift of God, and notwithstanding all the abuse to which they are subjected on account of man's defection from God, He has not revoked them. His mercy endureth for ever. If harm results from the unreasonable and unrighteous use of the right to judge public servants, we must therefore not seek to remedy the evil by presuming to be wiser than God and seeking to enslave poor, fallen creatures because they are not in a fit condition to use their privileges without error and sin. Rightminded men will see at a glance that those who claim the prerogative of setting them right and keeping them in subjection are no better than they, and are just as likely to go wrong as they. The sinfulness of man is universal, and there is no more guaranty that the ruler than the ruled will go right. The best thought and judgment of the people generally is better than the thought and judgment of the individual who supposes that he alone can think, or has a right to think, and to decide what the welfare of the community requires. Let us reason together. The man who will not submit his words and actions to the criticism of others, but imagines that he alone is capable of judging what is expedient and right, is not fit for public office. He has the elements of a self-conceited and cruel tyrant, not the virtues of a humble steward. The public officer is a public servant, and those who employ him have a right to demand that he do his

duty, and to judge whether he does it, and whether he does it well or ill. The right of examining and passing judgment on public work belongs inalienably to the public, and he who will not submit to this must decline public positions.

Seemingly this is subject to material modification when church work is under consideration. Much of this is gratuitous, and it seems not a little hard to work for nothing and be criticised when the best work possible is divine. But we are not able to see that this forms an exception. When education and missionary and publication boards do hard work without compensation it seems a heavy cross to bear if brethren, who perhaps have not even informed themselves sufficiently to be capable of an intelligent judgment, find fault with the action taken in particular cases. One is especially impressed with the requirements of one situation and another with that of another. Their judgment is narrow and partial, while the board has been governed in its action by a larger view and a better acquaintance with the wants of all situations. Unjust censure is thus passed. But what can be done about it? The boards are public servants, and if unreasonable opinions are sometimes expressed and unjust criticisms are pronounced, shall the boards on that account be made autocrats who shall no longer be subject to the judgment of their brethren, and do as they please without being called to account? Shall they be constituted lords over God's heritage and clothed with despotic power because they receive no compensation for their hard work? We see nothing to be done in the case but that brethren be admonished to be just and charitable in their criticisms, and that when there is injustice and uncharitableness, as the writer has more than once experienced it in the judgment pronounced upon the administration of his offices, patiently to bear it as a cross that circumstances render inevitable. He who is not willing to bear such a cross lacks one of the elements of a sound Christian character. Surely all of us, considering the

boundless mercy that our Lord has shown us in redeeming us and calling us by the Gospel to be His and to live under Him in His kingdom, should be willing to follow Him through evil and through good report, and not to grow weary in well-doing because some fail to appreciate the work done.

It is wrong to judge public servants harshly and unkindly, and to find fault with their work when they have done their best, and done it perhaps much better than their critics could have done it; but it is equally wrong on that account to deny the right of criticism or to abandon work because some do not appreciate it.

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HERESIES will spread. It is the nature of a cancer to eat around it. The retiring Moderator of the Presbyterian General Assembly in 1890 said: "The number of candidates for ordination who reject some of the fundamental doctrines of our creed is said to be on the increase. Some of these do not hesitate to assail the doctrine of inspiration, our Lord's miracles, the necessity of the atonement, and the eternal punishment of the finally impenitent." Considering that teachers are permitted in that Church to undermine its faith while they draw their salaries from its treasury, this is nothing incomprehensible. When the Church through her appointed agents teaches human error instead of divine truth, it would be a marvelous thing if many of the candidates for ordination would not prove errorists "who reject some of the fundamental doctrines of our creed." It would be preposterous to expect anything else. "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. But shun profane and vain babblings; for they will increase unto more ungodliness. And their word will eat as doth a canker." 2 Tim. 2, 15-17. The Church must maintain and spread the truth given by inspiration of

God for man's salvation, and her teachers have no calling but faithfully to do her work. If one is unwilling to do this he must be silenced. He is a steward, and it is required of stewards that a man be found faithful, "holding fast the faithful word, as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers. For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision: whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake." Tit. 1, 9-11. The repeated and solemn warnings given should make Christians wise, and induce them to abandon the absurd thought that courtesy and charity forbid any interference with the wanton work of men who in the name of the Church undermine the Church's foundation. If errorists are sincere in their heretical opinions, and are constrained in conscience to renounce the Church's creed, they should not be asked to do violence to their convictions and to profess what they do not believe. Let them honestly say what they think. For doing this no intelligent Christian will blame them. But there is no honesty, there is not even decency in assaulting the Church which they are appointed to defend and which supports them as workmen to build it up while they are laboring to break it down. If reverence for the Lord and His Word will not induce churches to stop the mouths of such errorists, self-respect at least should be an inducement. They may spread heresy, but not in the name of the Church.

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RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE is justly rebuked by Protestant Churches. But in this, as in so many other respects, there is often a lack of clearness in conception that works against the truth and the right. Luther in his day pointed out with force and fervor that the temporal sword could not reach the seat of sin, and that it is folly to attempt the

extermination of heresies by physical violence. The spiritual power of the Word is alone effectual for that purpose. False religions should be tolerated, as they are in our free country, and only their products in the form of inquiry or nuisance should be punished, and that not at all because the religion is false, of which the State is not the proper judge, but because citizens' rights are violated, which the civil power is called to protect. Romanism is intolerant, and cannot in consistency with its principles claim to be otherwise, because it arrogates to itself civil as well as spiritual power, and therefore treats dissent from its decrees not only as a sin to be spiritually rebuked, but also as a crime to be corporeally punished. The Lutheran Reformation exposed the error and introduced religious liberty. But now confusion creeps in from another direction. Religious liberty is regarded as freedom from all restraints, divine as well as human; the right of private judgment and individual conscience is assumed to be the privilege of renouncing all authority in faith and practice and of being an absolute law to one's independent self; and religious intolerance is taken to be the refusal to grant such preposterous claims and the resistance of such revolutionary and anarchistic principles and ruinous misapprehensions. Thus the last error threatens to become worse than the first. Even men who have given proof of devotion to the Lutheran Church and who mean well have joined in the thoughtless cry of intolerance against those who, while they heartily approve of tolerating not only Christian sects, but even Antichristian religions in our land, will not admit that there is any other name whereby we can be saved than that of Christ. and that there is any other authority whereby the truth can be surely known than that of the Word of God. Christianity must give up all its claims if it ceases to be exclusive. There *is* no other way to heaven but Christ. Whoever rejects Him and His Word cannot be of His people. It is muddling things to call that intolerance.

THE BOAST OF SUPERIOR LEARNING will not avail much with those who do their own thinking, and will avail nothing with those who recognize a higher authority than that of the "higher critics." What if the Rationalists do claim to be the only people who exercise reason in divine things and laugh at those who recognize a higher authority than human reason in matters beyond its ken? What if Scientists do allege that they alone are conversant with the secrets of nature and wink at men who have a faith and a hope beyond these things of earth? What if the so-called higher critics, applying their narrow earthly thinking to the wide field of revelation, do look with contemptuous pity on those who take God's Word as He gave it and rejoice in its light? No doubt some Rationalists are better versed in logical forms than the common people who accept the Bible in implicit faith. No doubt some Scientists know more of the matter and force that nature displays than the simple souls that do the work of their calling day by day in Jesus' name and find their consolation in Jesus' word. No doubt some critics have larger learning in ancient manuscripts and monuments than the plain people whose dearest book is the Scripture given by inspiration of God in which is all their delight. But what of that? Must a person know all about the composition and chemistry of bread before it will satisfy his hunger? And are those who eat and are satisfied, who thank God and are happy, to be pitied rather than those who, stumbling in their superior intelligence at some perplexing question about the history and mystery of the growth of bread, sadly shake their wise heads and starve? And after all, with all their boasts of erudition, acumen, and all that, do they know half as much about bread as those who eat it and experience its nourishing and invigorating power? The comforting truth of God's Word is known best by receiving it and letting it accomplish its work in the soul. Jesus says, "If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God, or whether I



“speak of myself.” John 7, 17. The truth that is given by inspiration is not of the same sort as that given in nature, and is not subject to the tests of natural reason. But it is adapted to our wants, as all who receive it know. Those who reject it have no means of testing its power and its excellence. All the more is it in bad taste to boast of their superior wisdom, which is of the same nature as the blind man’s boast of his superior skill in distinguishing colors. Not even on the ground of natural learning and intellectual ability is it true that the infidel party excels, though it must be admitted that in boasts of superiority it has the advantage. But is there any sense or any honor in such boasting?

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THE PREACHER should desire no honor that does not include his preaching. If men despise this, he must be content that they should despise him. There is a snare in bad men’s laudation of preachers. It is certainly true that a holy life will win the respect of the community, not excepting the bad people in it. Virtue commends itself to man as a moral being, as vice does not. Even the wicked pay their tribute to righteousness. There would be no hypocrisy if virtue had not a recognized superiority. The world will not respect a minister who leads a worldly life. It expects of him that he will consistently practice what he preaches, and will not honor a man that seems insincere. The world will hate the man whose godly walk as well as whose godly doctrine rebukes its sin, but it will not despise his sincerity nor his righteousness. But it is otherwise with the gospel which he preaches. That is foolishness to those who reject it, and the man who is identified with it is in their eyes a fool. In other things he may seem to them wise and good, but in respect to the gospel he seems to them a fool that is wrapped up in his foolishness. And this he should be content to be in their eyes. The gospel must be to him the chief thing, with which his whole lot is cast. The disciple seeks no honor of those who despise the Master.

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### THE CALL TO SELF-DENIAL.

Glorious things are promised to the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. "As it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him." 1 Cor. 2, 9. The gospel is a revelation of good news, which give to the believer peace in time and unspeakable blessedness in eternity. "Blessed are they that hear the Word of God and keep it!" Not all the crowns and jewels and wealth and honors of this world are worthy to be compared to the treasures which our heavenly Father imparts to us through His beloved Son.

But not all this glory is realized in the Christian's earthly life. "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory." Col. 3, 4. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. And every man that hath this hope purifieth himself, even as He is pure." 1 John 3, 2, 3. Some, misunderstanding the ways of God and expecting heaven upon earth when they profess faith in Christ as the Redeemer, are disappointed. They would fain wear the crown, and lo, they must bear the cross. There is no reason for such disappointments. Our Lord has plainly told us what we are to expect

in this world. We must pass through tribulations to the blessedness in store for us. First the cross, then the crown. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God; and if children, then heirs: heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ, if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together." Rom. 8, 16, 17. From this suffering we cannot be exempted whilst we sojourn here, because we are not exempt from the sin that is in the world and that brings suffering. Indeed, this sin is still in us, as well as around us, and therefore the call to the Christian life is necessarily a call to self-denial, as well as to renunciation of the world that lieth in wickedness.

Those who are truly believers in Christ as the Savior of their souls need not be told that the Gospel is a regenerating power as well as a revelation of truth unto salvation. A living faith purifies the heart as well as finds comfort in the merits of Christ which it embraces. He who boasts of his sound doctrine while he excludes its power from his own soul is in the same condemnation as he who boasts of his virtuous life without the truth in Jesus. He is the way and the truth and the life, and faith clings to Him as the Gospel presents Him, and to all His saving work as the Gospel presents it. There is no living faith that deals either in dead orthodoxy or dead works. All such things belong to the category of shams, which all sincere followers of our Lord hate. By the grace of God we are in Christ Jesus, "who of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption; that, according as it is written, he that glorieth let him glory in the Lord." 1 Cor. 1, 30, 31. Whoever rejects the sanctifying power of the Gospel should heed the apostolic admonition: "Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" 2 Cor. 13, 5. The true Christian is one who believes and lives as the Word of God teaches, trusting in Christ as his Savior and honoring His name.

The Christian life of holiness is described as one of self-denial. "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all then were all dead: and that He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them and rose again" 2 Cor. 5, 14. 15. Our blessed Lord, "true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the Virgin Mary," took the place of sinful mankind and suffered in our stead the wages of sin, which is death. This has therefore in the eyes of God the same effect as if all had died and paid the penalty of their sins. But this requires a personal appropriation by faith before the individual is declared justified, as in the plan of God salvation is never forced upon His intelligent and morally responsible creature. Only he that believeth shall be saved. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." 2 Cor. 5, 19-21. When this righteousness of the Savior is imputed to the sinner through faith, the love wherewith the Lord loved us, now known and believed, constrains us no longer to live to ourselves, as we did by nature, but to live unto Him who hath redeemed us to this very end that we might "be His own and live under Him in His kingdom and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness." Self can no longer reign where Christ is enthroned. "If any man be in Christ Jesus he is a new creature," who recognizes Him alone as Master, "casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." "There is now no condemnation to them which are in Christ

Jesus." Rom. 8, 1. That is the Christian's daily comfort and joy. But let no one overlook the description which is appended of those who are in Christ Jesus and to whom there is no condemnation, namely, "who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." "Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." Rom. 8, 12-14 Living to self is continuing in the old state of nature in which men are without Christ and without hope.

It is not only incidentally that selfishness is rejected and condemned. The Christian principle is wholly against it. We cannot serve two masters. The choice is between Christ and self. Our Lord will not share the throne with another. Ye cannot serve two masters, whose will is not in harmony. "If it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose ye this day whom ye shall serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." Joshua 24, 15. God places us in a position to decide. Blessed are they who, under the guidance and by the power of the Holy Spirit, decide to serve the Lord. If any man refuses this, he refuses to be a Christian, and forfeits the high prerogatives which are secured only to Christians. "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost." 1 Cor. 12, 3. But Christ died for us that we might be His, and the Holy Spirit is given us so that we might recognize Him as Savior and Lord. "Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of His." Rom. 8, 9. This much at least is necessary to constitute a Christian life, that the will subject itself to the will of the Lord, whatever reluctance there may be in the flesh, and whatever weaknesses and shortcomings may exist and manifest themselves in the exe-

cution of that will. We cannot be true disciples of Christ and yet hold our own will to be the law for the government of our lives.

The call to follow Jesus is essentially a call to self-denial. It implies that we must cease to regard our own will and pleasure as supreme, and pray and labor that His will, not ours, may be done on earth as it is done in heaven. "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God." Rom. 12, 1, 2. Man has gone astray from the path which his Creator had marked out for him, and his only help is in the return to that path, as this is made possible through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus. But this necessitates the renunciation of his own erring will, that the good will of God, which alone brings blessedness, may be done.

Hence it is that the Christian life necessarily imposes the denial of self. Not only is self-will to be repudiated as it sets itself against the will of the Lord in the form of highest authority and law as a principle of action, but also, because it is not the proper law of our being, in its special impulses and decisions as these come in conflict with the will of our neighbors. There is only one will that is recognized as law in the kingdom of Christ, and all wills of its members are subject to that. That will seeks the good of all alike, and therefore no one does the Lord's will when, seeking his own welfare and unwisely supposing that he promotes it when he ignores the purpose of the Lord that doeth all things well, he disregards the interests and welfare of his neighbor. Because the Lord's will, not our own, is to be done, and that Lord's will is the welfare of all alike, the Christian who, as such, subjects himself to the Master's will and has no law but that, does not prefer himself to others,

as if he were something more and something better than they, but seeks their welfare as well as his own. "Let no man seek his own," the Holy Spirit saith, "but every man another's wealth." 1 Cor. 10, 24. With God there is no respect of persons, and there should be none with the children of God. As He seeks the equal good of all, so should we, who subject our wills to His. "Let nothing be done through strife or vain-glory, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." Phil. 2, 3-5. It seems a very hard saying, but it is undeniably the law of Christ's kingdom, and those who will not recognize it should take their bearing and see whither they have drifted. There is one Lord, and He will not give His glory to another. He saves us; He alone saves us; but He saves us that henceforth we should not live unto ourselves and pursue the path of unrighteousness that leads to death.

The whole life of the Christian stands in contrast with that life which belongs to him by nature. "I am crucified with Christ," says the apostle; "nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me." Gal. 2, 20. Regenerating grace has made all things new in the soul. The old life has lost its dominion, and the new powers introduced from the fullness of Christ, who is the way and the truth and the life, now prevail. This the justified person recognizes, and voluntarily entering into the purposes of His Lord he lives in Him and under Him. "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." Col. 3, 1-3. What grace has wrought in the heart enters into the consciousness of the

believer, and the will of God, which is our sanctification, becomes his will and therefore his voluntary aim and effort and struggle. "Then said Jesus unto His disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me. For whosoever would save his life shall lose it, and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it." Matt. 16, 24. 25. If a person will not subject himself to his gracious Master's will, even to the extent of surrendering not only his earthly pleasures and treasures, but even his life itself for His sake, he is not a true disciple of Jesus, who laid down His life to save us. "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit." Gal. 5, 24. 25. Self-denial is a law of Christ's kingdom from which no one can be exempt.

Man is a moral being. God made him as such and treats him as such. He can know and choose, and he is responsible for his choice. What he does is not done by natural necessity: he might do otherwise and in many cases ought to do otherwise. There are creatures that move as they do because they are so made and have no choice: They have no will and cannot order their own action and their own course. Therefore they have no account to render. They are not free agents and have no responsibility for their action. They are not moral beings. But man can know and exercise choice. By nature he asserts his choice in favor of the affections and lusts that sin has introduced into his soul. He lives after the flesh, that is, according to his nature; not as God made it, but as sin has corrupted it. He has turned away from God and declared his independence of Him, for whom he was created and under whom alone he can attain the end of his creation and be blessed and happy. In such stupid and wicked assertion of independence he knows no authority and no sovereignty but that of self. He liveth unto himself; and as the almighty Maker of heaven and earth still reigns, notwithstanding the



puny creatures' rebellion and usurpation, he rushes to destruction. "For when ye were the servants of sin ye were free from righteousness. What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death." Rom. 6, 20. 21. Fighting against the everlasting law of righteousness and defying the Omnipotent to arms, who maintains righteousness in the universe, is a hopeless undertaking that must end in ruin. From this dreadful result the Son of God came to deliver us. He redeemed us, that henceforth we might not live unto ourselves, but acknowledge His right and sovereignty, and live under Him in His kingdom of truth and righteousness. "As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name, which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." John 1, 12. 13. There is a new creation in Christ Jesus. He has not only paid the penalty of our sin, but introduced a new life with new moral powers for the accomplishment of the original design in man's creation. "Now, being made free from sin and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life." Rom. 6, 22. These new powers of grace are antagonistic to the old powers of our sinful nature, which are still in us and which during our earthly life never cease to contend for the supremacy. "This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." Gal. 5, 16 17. Christians, in virtue of the very fact that they are Christians, renounce the will of the flesh, and pray and labor that the will of the Lord, against which the flesh relucts, may be done. In these efforts to execute the divine plan and purpose there is many a fault and many a shortcoming, but there is always the resolve to do the Master's bidding, so that even when there is failure

in the accomplishment the fault is not in the will. "Ye cannot do the things that ye *would*." The believer denies himself that he may serve his Lord.

This denial of self embraces the surrender of everything that in our nature controvenes the Lord's will. "Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple." Luke 14, 33. When His call comes to follow Him, there must be a decision for Him or against Him. He requires a surrender of self, and that without condition and without reservation. He who will not submit all to the will of the Lord cannot be His disciple. "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross and followeth after me is not worthy of me." Matt. 10, 37. 38. This explains the demand made upon the rich young man who thought that he had kept the commandments. "One thing thou lackest," our Lord tells him; "go thy way, sell whatever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow me. And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved: for he had great possessions." Mark 10, 21. 22. It is no more inconsistent with the Christian life to have great possessions, considered in itself, than it is to have father or mother, son or daughter. We qualify our statement by the clause "considered in itself," because there are accidents respecting the means of getting and ways of using great possessions that ordinarily make wealth a "mammon of unrighteousness" and renders it a "temptation and a snare." It is the love of money, not money itself, that is a root of all kinds of evil. "They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition." 1 Tim. 6, 9. A man can be rich and be a Christian; but he cannot be a Christian and refuse to put wealth at the Lord's disposal. To consecrate the heart to

the Lord, but at the same time to fix that heart's affections upon the gold of earth, is a contradiction. "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." The call of the gospel is to deny self, not to qualify its selfish and therefore ungodly desires. "Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life." Tim. 6, 17-19. When money takes the place of God in our affections, there is no safe course but that of parting with it for the Lord's sake, that by the crucifixion of the flesh the idolatry may cease. The harder this may seem, the more necessary it is; only when we are ready to submit everything to our Master's will and use all in His service can we be good stewards of the goods committed to our care. Whatever stands in the way of such service must be renounced, however painful such mortification of the flesh may be. "If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee; for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off and cast it from thee; for it is more profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell." Matt. 5, 30. 31. The man stultifies himself who still clings to that which is manifestly leading him to destruction. All must be forsaken, not only gold and silver, but even father and mother, son and daughter, that stands in the way of devotion to the Savior. That is taking up the cross and following Him. The easy-going Christianity that knows no self-denial is not the Christianity of the Bible.

We are not advocating the asceticism that withdraws from the work and runs away from the battle of life in

order to remain unspotted from the world and unscarred by its assaults, as that imposes burdens and inflicts pains which the Lord has not commanded and which lie not in the path of duty which He has appointed. That too is false, and is only will-worship in another form. Uncommanded and therefore needless and bootless self-flagellations and fastings are not bearing the cross and following Jesus. "In vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." Matt. 15, 9. What the Lord requires is not that we should have our way, even if that way is painful and hard, gratifying self by making a rough and rugged road in the flattering assumption that the merit of traveling it will be sure to render it a way to heaven but that we should deny self and take His way, which alone can lead to glory. Choosing our own path is just as sinful when that way is painful as when it is pleasant. In either case it is self-gratification, not self-denial — bearing a self-devised and self-imposed cross, not the cross of Christ: "Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, (Touch not, taste not, handle not, which all are to perish with the using), after the doctrines and commandments of men? Which things have indeed a show of wisdom in will-worship and humility and neglecting of the body, not in any honor to the satisfying of the flesh." Col. 2, 20-23. The apostle thus warns us against those devices by which men, according to their own will and wisdom, inflict severities upon their bodies without crucifying the flesh and renouncing their self-indulgences. What Christianity requires is that we should not live unto ourselves in any form, but unto Him that loved us and gave Himself for us. This does not imply the abandonment of all natural relations and all the order of Providence in the arrangement and government of this world, nor a going out of the world to escape its contamination. On the contrary, it requires Christians to live and move among men, faithfully to dis-

charge the duties which God has laid upon men in their relations to one another, and to introduce the sanctifying power of the gospel into all human relations and transactions. Believers are thus a light in the world and the salt of the earth that preserves society from putrefaction. In the family and in the state, in business and in the social circle, his calling is to deny the will of his natural self that he may in all things do the will of his Lord.

Neither should place for a moment be given to the thought that by self-denying labor in the service of the Lord the Christian life is originated and the soul's salvation is secured. Man does not regenerate himself, and the works of the regenerate constitute no claim of immunity from the wages of sin. "By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Eph. 2, 8-10. God bestows the new life from the fulness of Christ, who loved us and gave Himself for us. It is a supernatural gift by the Holy Spirit, who works that faith in the soul which man's power cannot produce and which alone lays hold of the merits of Christ unto salvation. "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we that are dead in sin live any longer therein? 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 into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in the newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection: knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." Rom. 6, 1-6. Christ has died for us, and is risen again. By His death He

paid the penalty of our sin, the wages of which is death, as by His holy life, being made under the law, He actively fulfilled all the demands of righteousness. It was a vicarious life of work and suffering, ending in a vicarious death. He was raised from the dead on the third day by the glory of the Father, who thus declared that the work of salvation which His only begotten Son had undertaken was accomplished and accepted. Christ "was delivered for our offences and raised again for our justification". Thus all righteousness was fulfilled "for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on Him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead," Rom. 4, 24. 25. The righteousness acquired by our Lord in His life and death is imputed to the believer. It constitutes His merit, which faith embraces unto salvation. Therefore faith alone saves, because faith alone appropriates the righteousness which alone is accepted and renders man acceptable. But this application of the redemption is also the work of God. By our own reason and strength we cannot believe in Jesus Christ or come to Him. It was God the Father that so loved the world as to give His only begotten Son to be our Savior. It was God the Son that was made of a woman and made under the law to redeem them that were under the law by fulfilling all righteousness in their stead. It is God the Holy Ghost that calls us by the gospel and enlightens us by His gifts that we may embrace Christ with all His merits and have eternal life through His name. He plants us into Christ by baptism, that we may have share in all the perfect righteousness of His holy life and suffering and death and be acquitted in His glorious resurrection. All this is ours by faith in His blessed name. But in this work of the Holy Ghost, who regenerates the soul and enables us to believe in Jesus, the power of a new life is imparted. If this prevails, the old life of self, which is inconsistent with it, can no longer have its way. The grace that saves us from death saves us also from the dominion of self.

Such a renunciation is not the annihilation of self. "For whosoever would save his life shall lose it, and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it." Matt. 16, 25. The sinner's personal identity is preserved. A regenerating power, specifically different from that which operates in his corrupt nature and supplies its impulses, enters into his soul and constitutes a new life. In conversion the sinner becomes conscious of this and personally appropriates it unto his sanctification, as he personally appropriates unto his justification the righteousness which Christ, who is our life, acquired for us by His work of redemption. "As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name." John 1, 12. "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." Gal. 2, 20. The person upon whom the grace of God acts and the person who, under the power of that grace, acquiesces in its impulses and purposes, is the same. The old self is brought into subjection to the new will. The moral result is the voluntary denial of self. The new self denies the old self, which still manifests its presence in the individual. That is, the nature of man is not destroyed by the new life which regeneration introduces, but the corruption which is in it is subdued and gradually removed, that our nature may be purified and restored to the original state in which God made it and designed it to live in happiness forever. "Put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." Eph. 4, 22-24. The evil in us is not at once eradicated. It still moves in the direction of selfishness and worldliness and devilishness. But it cannot have its way where the Spirit of God dwells in the heart. The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and causes the Christian many a conflict and many a pain. But it cannot reign without destroying the Christian life.

“Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin; but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. For sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the law, but under grace.” Rom. 6, 12-14. So necessary is the daily contention against the sin remaining in us and therefore the constant practice of self-denial that the preservation of life is dependent upon it. We repeat the apostle’s words, for it is of the utmost importance that all Christians should take them to heart: “if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.” Rom. 7, 13.

To have the consolation which believers are designed to possess in Christ we must not overlook the great difference between the righteousness of our Lord acquired for us and the life which He imparts for righteousness in our own life. The obedience of Christ in our stead is perfect: it lacks nothing in the performance of the law’s requirements, nor in the suffering of the penalties due to our transgressions. His is a perfect righteousness, and when that is apprehended by faith there can be nothing lacking for our justification. This is therefore complete in the very moment when we believe. Faith appropriates the whole perfect righteousness acquired by our Lord. “Therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Rom. 5, 1. But it is otherwise with our sanctification. The new power from the fulness of Christ enters into our souls. As a life-principle this is as perfect as the obedience rendered by Christ to all the requirements of righteousness. The nature of our Lord is as pure and sinless as His work. He fulfilled all righteousness because He was righteous. But the power of His holy life encounters obstacles when it comes into our hearts. He could do all for us that the law required, so that the righteousness imputed to us by faith is lacking



in no point and defective in no respect. But He cannot, in accordance with His plan of creation, treat men as though they were not endowed with intelligence and will. They are moral creatures, and the new life that is introduced is adapted to their nature and has respect to the original design of God respecting them. They are not made holy in an instant by the exercise of almighty power upon them, as they are not converted to Christ by a coercive force that has no regard to their original constitution as moral and therefore responsible creatures. When grace is not wilfully and obstinately resisted, it works faith in the Savior of our souls and brings the will into harmony with His holy will and purpose. But the flesh relucts and resists and strives to gain its lost dominion. Therefore the struggle and conflicts of the Christian goes on during life. "I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing; for to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not, but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." Rom. 7, 18-20. That is the old self that must be denied, and be denied constantly, if we would lead a Christian life. The new self in Christ, with its principle of holiness, is arrayed against the old self in Adam, with its power of sin and death. Meantime the comfort remains, that our salvation is dependent upon the perfect obedience rendered by our Lord, which is made ours by imputation through faith, not upon our obedience that is always imperfect, notwithstanding all our self-denial. But let not the solemn truth be disregarded that where there is no denial of self there is a denial of Christ. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Rom. 8, 1.

The call to follow Christ in the daily renunciation of sin and service of righteousness is a call to daily self-denial. That is the true life of the children of God, who embrace

Christ's merits by faith unto justification and whose faith works by love unto sanctification. Let us not deceive ourselves. Those who have no regulative of life but their own pleasure are not on safe ground, however vehemently they may profess their attachment to the Christian faith and the Christian Church. That will bring no daily sorrow and repentance for sin, and no life of earnest labor to accomplish the will of God in holiness. He that is not willing to forsake all, even to sacrifice his life for the Lord's sake, is not worthy of Him. How needful is it not, in this avaricious and self-indulgent age, to call to mind this teaching of our blessed Master! "The Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you: to this end He may establish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints." 1 Thess. 3, 12. 13. M. Loy.

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## INQUIRY CONCERNING THE CONSCIENCE.

### V.

#### THE TESTIMONY OF HOLY SCRIPTURE.—(*Concluded.*)

When the apostle says in reference to obedience to the divinely ordained powers in civil government, "Ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake" (Rom. 13, 5), he shows the ground of this duty of subjection and the reason why obedience is not merely a matter of expediency. "The powers that be are ordained of God." He has commanded obedience to them, because they are powers which He has placed over us. "Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God." He is a minister of divine appointment for our good, and disobedience would prevent that good and bring evil

consequences. Obedience is expedient. But that is not the only reason for being subject to the power. Even if we could see no good in submitting ourselves to the divine ordinance, it is God's will, and therefore the conscience, if it is not seared, must feel the obligation. That it is expedient, enlightened reason might see; that it is right and therefore obligatory the apostle shows by declaring it to be the will of God, as civil government is His ordinance. If conscience properly performs its functions it will feel the obligation to obey the civil laws when civil government is once known to be a divine ordinance. The text does not say that all men have that knowledge in virtue of their having a conscience, or that all who have the knowledge act in accordance with it. Nothing more is said than that obedience is objectively right and obligatory and should therefore be subjectively known as right and felt to be obligatory, i. e. not as a matter of expediency merely, but as a matter of conscience. By the constitution of our nature the feeling of obligation attaches to that which is the divine will when it is known as such, but does not connect itself with matters that are left to our own judgment under the general law of love, and are therefore free. Obedience to rulers is not such a matter of liberty, but a command of God which pertains to the conscience.

St. Paul's words in 2 Cor. 4, 2 does not express or imply a different doctrine. He says: "We have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness nor handling the Word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God." There is no ground for assuming that the apostle here presupposes in every man a natural knowledge of the truth, in virtue of the conscience, to which he appeals in testimony of what he says. There is according to his teaching in Rom. 1, 19 ff. a knowledge of righteousness derivable from nature, although he does not represent this as a possession or acquisition of the conscience.

But this would only pertain to the law. The gospel is not known by nature and cannot be thus known. It has been alleged, indeed, that there is in our nature a sensorium for the perception of divine revelation, and that this is the conscience. But if by this be meant that human nature is so organized that by virtue of the conscience the mind at once discerns what is true or false, right or wrong, as by virtue of sense it discerns whether an object is white or black, hard or soft, we unhesitatingly declare that neither in this passage nor in any other portion of Holy Scripture is there any ground for such a theory. It is true that when the mind sees the true and the right, it at once feels the obligation which this lays upon the soul. To do this is the proper function of conscience. And such obligation always implies the divine authority of that which is laid upon us and felt as duty, even when the knowledge of God is only of that imperfect kind that is derived from natural sources. But the feeling of obligation is consequent upon the cognition of truth and righteousness, not antecedent to this and not the criterion by which these are known. The conscience is not a standard of right and wrong according to the law, much less of truth and error according to the gospel. We have seen that according to St. Paul's teaching an error of the cognitive faculty leads the conscience to feel the obligation of that which is not obligatory, though it is regarded to be so. That apostle does not appeal to the conscience in its natural state in testimony of the truth of the gospel which he preaches. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." 1 Cor. 2, 14. An appeal to sinful human nature would always result in the verdict that the gospel is unreasonable. Not that it finds absolutely nothing in man's moral constitution of which it could take hold and in which it would find a lodgment. All theories which deny that the gospel reveals a want of our nature and appeals to its pro-

foundest aspirations are only speculative results of a morbid or of a traditional fear that the door might be opened for the unscriptural naturalistic and synergistic opinions which detract from the power of grace and the merit of our Redeemer. There is a longing in our nature for something better than the world or the devil or the flesh can furnish. This longing men seek to gratify by endeavoring to acquire wealth and fame, or living in the pleasures which the world affords; but the result is uniformly disappointment. The perishable cannot satisfy the wants of an imperishable soul. The world and all that is in the world cannot take away the bondage which the fear of death imposes, and cannot still the hungering and thirsting after immortality. The gospel proclaims exactly what our condition requires. But that does not prove that conscience at once sees it to be true and so pronounces. The soul can feel the want which lies upon it, but under the influence of the sins which beset it the folly is committed of rejecting as foolishness what can alone help and adopting as wisdom what has no power to help. The understanding is darkened; and this leads to errors in all directions. The conscience is not exempt from this obscuring and depraving influence. It still performs its function of feeling the obligation of God's will, as all other faculties of the soul continue to perform their office, but it feels the obligation as that will is presented, without being exempted from the will power of intellectual mistakes. To such a faculty the apostle would not submit the authoritative decision of the question whether the gospel is true or not. He knew it to be true, though they might regard it as absurd and as such reject it.

Christians, directed by the power of the Holy Spirit who revealed the truth contained in the gospel, could receive that truth and find the rest for their souls which nothing else could give. The gospel brings with it the power that enables men to believe it. It works faith in all who do not stubbornly resist. If it be contended, and we will not for

our part condemn the contention, that every man's conscience is affected whenever the light of the gospel shines upon his soul, and that in this way the apostle commends himself to every man's conscience by manifestation of the truth, there is still no reason to believe that conscience decides whether it is true or not and that such decision is the ground upon which it is received as true. The light of the Word shines upon the soul, and with its enlightening power comes the power to convert. But is every man who hears the gospel so influenced by the grace, or supernatural power, which it carries with it that he knows it to be true and necessarily sins against his conscience if he refuses to believe it? Can a man refuse to accept as truth what he knows to be true? He may indeed resist its power upon the heart and decline to let it mould his character and direct his action; he may furthermore deny that he believes it to be true and claim that the evidence furnished is not sufficient for rational conviction and therefore go hand in hand with infidels; but intellectually he must be convicted, and all his conduct while he disclaims this must be that of a hypocrite, if by the power of conscience he knows it to be true. Is it the fact that every one who hears the gospel is convinced that what he has heard is true, and that he acts against his own conscience when he refuses to confess it and live according to it? We concede that when it is proved that there have been upright and conscientious Gentiles who never had the gospel the proof is not furnished that there may be upright and conscientious infidels who reject the gospel. The cases are not parallel. The entrance of God's Word always brings light, and against this the infidel who hears the gospel sins as the heathen who never heard it does not. This too we concede, that no man would reject the gospel if its acceptance involved nothing more than an intellectual process. It always carries with it enlightening and convincing power, and when it fails to convince this is owing not to a lack of evidence, but the soul's perverseness in closing its eyes to the

light. The conscience would do its work of enforcing upon the soul the obligatoriness of God's will, if this were once recognized; but the eyes are often closed before the conscience is reached, and the light necessary for an activity of the conscience favorable to the gospel is excluded. It is not the conscience that renders us certain of the truth of the gospel, but the Holy Spirit through the Word gives us the knowledge and conviction of the heavenly truth, the divine authority of which the conscience feels. The conscience does not supply the proof that God's Word is true; it enforces that Word as obligatory upon the individual when it is known to be true and only when it is thus known. Knowledge precedes the operation of conscience: we feel a thing to be obligatory when we know it to be right, we do not know it to be right because we feel it to be obligatory. The gospel brings light to the soul and thus affects the conscience.

Nothing appears in the apostle's words that affords the least ground for the doctrine, that the gospel must receive the sanction of man's conscience before it can confront the soul with divine authority. Not only is it impossible for man's mind to devise and discover the marvelous plan of salvation revealed in Holy Scripture. Much more than this must be maintained. There is nothing in the mind that could serve as a criterion to test the truth of that revelation when it is brought to his notice. Neither in the world around us is there any indication of the provision made for the redemption of fallen man. The creation was built on the plan of righteousness, and of this traces are still visible within us and around us, notwithstanding the dreadful catastrophe that disrupted the glorious work of God and threatened to destroy the whole divine purpose. But that catastrophe was not part of the design and does not appear in the work as it proceeded from the Maker's hand. Provision was indeed made for it in the mind of God, who from eternity foresaw all that would occur in time. But sin is an

entirely foreign element that had no place in the original creation, the ruins of which therefore could show no vestiges of a provision made for its remedy. There is no gospel of salvation from unrighteousness written in the works of God, as there is a law of righteousness. There can therefore be an appeal to men's consciences in every question of righteousness, and as the law sets forth the righteous will of God, all preaching of the divine law commends itself to every man's conscience in the sight of God. But the preaching of the gospel, which sets forth the divine way of deliverance from unrighteousness and the death which it brings by the substitution of the Son of God made flesh to fulfill all righteousness even unto the death of the cross in our stead and by the imputation of His righteousness through faith, presents a consoling fact which finds no response in the organization of our nature, except so far as it supplies what is felt to be needed in our ruined condition. Whether the good tidings of great joy are true and the righteousness thus secured avails for the lost race and avails for the individual sinner to whom it offers a way of escape, cannot be determined by an appeal to the natural conscience. That is decided by the work of the Holy Ghost through the power of the gospel, which is the supernatural power of God. He works faith in every soul that hears it and does not obstruct its operation by wilful resistance, and when such faith is wrought its contents become a matter of conscience, not before. If the apostle's statement that "by manifestation of the truth" he commends himself to every man's conscience have any reference to the contents of that which is manifested, it could, according to the general tenor of Scripture doctrines, refer to the gospel only in this sense, that by the power of God exerted through the gospel men are led to believe the truth which he preaches to be the very truth of God and thus to recognize its authority in conscience. It is much more probable, however, that if he refers to the matter of his preaching in testimony of his divine calling and sincere purpose, he



refers to his exposition of the law, whose demands of righteousness do find a response and sanction in man's nature and the obligatoriness of which is felt in conscience. But to us it is doubtful whether he refers at all to the matter of his preaching. The context as well as the words of the passage rather indicates that he appeals to their consciences in regard to his honest and straightforward manner of doing his work. The Corinthians could see that he and his coadjutors renounced the ways of shame and dishonesty, that they practiced no deceit in handling the Word of God, that they adhered to the truth as this was given to them, without perverting it to gain any man's favor. Their own sense of right could be witness to this.

Of the same import are the words in the next chapter: "We are made manifest unto God, and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences." 2 Cor. 5, 11. God knows the sincerity of their hearts and the uprightness of their intentions, and their entire walk and conversation was such that they have reason to hope that this has become apparent also to the Corinthians, so that their sense of right must approve the course pursued.

This testimony of the conscience in regard to uprightness of the individual's purpose and conduct is repeatedly mentioned in Scripture. In the nature of things it is primarily a testimony of the individual's conscience to the righteousness of his own course, because the individual can directly know only his own motives, while those of others he can gather only by inference. "Paul, earnestly beholding the council, said, Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day." It was a comfort to him, whatever opinions may have been formed by others of his conduct, that his own sense of right was not violated in the work which he did and which gave rise to so much opposition. He did what he felt to be his duty, and thus had a good conscience, though many condemned his action and persecuted him for what he did with the assur-

ance that it was right before God. "Herein do I exercise myself," he says in another place, "to have always a conscience void of offence toward God and toward men." Acts 24, 16. The right as God requires it and men recognize when they see it, he seeks under all circumstances to perform according to the light and the ability which God gives him. He does not here, as he does not elsewhere, represent conscience as a faculty that makes known the right and serves as a rule by which to test it, but it is the feeling of obligation in his own soul to do what has become known to him as the will of God, and what therefore, as it seems to his mind, God and all men's consciences will approve. "I say the truth in Christ," he writes to the Romans, "I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, that I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart." Rom. 9, 1. 2. His love for his kinsmen according to the flesh and his sympathy for them in their sorrowful condition of unbelief in the Messiah are so great that he is willing to sacrifice even his life for their sake. For the sincerity of his assurance in this regard his conscience bears him witness, and that conscience is under the influence of the Holy Ghost, who is a Spirit of truth and reproveth all hypocrisy and pretense. "For our rejoicing is this," he says in another place, "the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-ward." 2 Cor 1, 12. The sense of obligation is satisfied and no self-reproach is experienced in the soul. Consciousness of sincerity in a walk and conversation that was not suggested by carnal policy, but directed by the grace of God, afforded the apostle joy, because such a life accorded with his sense of right or feeling of obligation. He was conscious of being sincere, and that his conscience approved. The conscience is not the faculty by which he knew his uprightness, but knowing his uprightness his conscience

which feels the obligation of this as right, gives its approving testimony. The witness of conscience, as far as this is not referred to the sanction which the soul gives the right in the feeling of obligation which, by the constitution of our nature, attaches to the right as soon as it presents itself as such in the intellect, is always primarily of a negative character. It is the power in our souls which feels the divine authority and obligatoriness of the right and good whenever and however these may be known, and in this respect it may be regarded as the positive witness which conscience gives to the imperativeness and supremacy of righteousness. But when it is appealed to in testimony of the honesty of a person's conduct under the rule of right as that presents itself to the soul, the testimony has not that positive character. Conscience recognizes all righteousness as duty and holds me to duty when and as I know my duty. But when any special act or course is in question and the testimony of conscience is adduced to prove a person's integrity, this testimony is simply the absence of any unrest in the soul arising from a disharmony with the feeling of obligation. The apostle was conscious that he acted in sincerity of heart and honesty of purpose. That sincerity conscience approves, and all men's consciences must approve when they recognize it, because that belongs to the constitution of our nature. But the apostle does not refer to conscience in proof of the proposition that sincerity is right. That is assumed as known of all men. His conscience testified that he acted in accordance with the right which all men recognize as such. Whether the special act in question accorded otherwise with the rule of right is not here under consideration. Even those readers who are not agreed with him as to the divine obligatoriness of his whole ministerial work would admit the obligation to be sincere. That he was so is his claim, and to this his conscience bears witness inasmuch as its claims were satisfied. There were no accusations against him in his own soul. He has complied with his feeling of

obligation and has thus a good conscience. To such comfort the Scriptures refer in various passages. "The end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart and of a good conscience and faith unfeigned." 1 Tim. 1, 5. First of all it is necessary that there should be honesty of purpose in the Christian calling, else neither law nor gospel will be of any avail. If there is not a good conscience neither love nor faith can be right, because there will be no sincerity in either. Christians may make mistakes, but they cannot be dishonest. A good conscience is the sense of obligation unviolated and the consequent freedom from the unrest which violation brings. This is confirmed by the same apostle's words in 1 Tim. 1, 18. 19. He says: "This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare, holding faith and a good conscience, which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck." The good conscience is the peace of mind accompanying the consciousness of compliance with the sense of duty. The judgment pronounces the conduct in harmony with the feeling of obligation, and the demands thus made in conscience are satisfied. But what is especially noteworthy in this passage is the relation which it indicates between the conscience and the Christian life. Some have made shipwreck of their faith by putting away the good conscience. Not that this is identical with faith, so that the former could not exist without the latter. The heathen too have a conscience. But when a person violates his own feeling of obligation and stands self-condemned before God, he has lost all moral character. He is a bad heathen, in whose soul Christian faith can have no abode. The Christian who persists in sins against his own conscience falls from grace and loses faith. This is indicated also in the words "holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. 1 Tim. 3, 9. The truth in Jesus, which is communicated in the gospel and apprehended by faith, enlightens and sanc-

tifies. It purifies the heart. Any resistance of its influence upon our thoughts and affections, our words and works, endangers its possession, and when the requirements of conscience, as this is determined by the light which the gospel gives, are disregarded or violated, the conscience is not pure. If such a course is persisted in, the mystery of the faith is gradually lost and the soul sinks back into the natural state, where conscience may still act under the law, but not under grace. Hence the apostle lays much stress upon it that he served God from his forefathers "with pure conscience," and the assurance of "a good conscience, in all things willing to live honestly." 2 Tim. 1, 8; Heb. 13, 18. And St. Peter pronounces it "thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully." 1 Pet. 2, 19. It is a commendable thing when a man complies with the requirements of his conscience, which feels the obligation to do God's will, although such compliance may bring him suffering. Therefore he exhorts Christians: "Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear; having a good conscience, that, whereas they speak evil of you as of evil-doers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ" 1 Pet. 3, 15, 16. Christians are to be sober-minded, thoughtful people, who know in whom they have believed and can give a reason for their glorious hope, but whose meek and modest deportment must commend them to the approving judgment of honorable men. Thus they will have a good conscience, without rebuke from within their own souls, whilst their walk in accordance with their own conscience in uprightness and sincerity will put to shame their slanderous enemies.

The testimony of conscience may accordingly be regarded as threefold. In the first place, the "categorical imperative" which dominates the soul when righteousness is cognized, is a testimony to the everlasting and inexorable

law of right. Conscience feels its obligation, and no power can release us from its demand. What is right is not thus revealed to us. But there is a natural intuition of right as there is a natural intuition of cause, and when any case is presented to the mind this assigns to it its place under the category of right and wrong, according to the knowledge which it possesses. The judgment may hesitate in this assignment when the knowledge is not clear or not adequate, and men may therefore be in doubt as regards a question of conscience; but it is never doubtful whether right or wrong is obligatory. The conscience is that power which, by the constitution of our nature, feels the obligatoriness of right, as taste, by the constitution of our nature, feels the pleasure-ableness of beauty. In both cases the cognition precedes and conditions the exercise of the faculty, although in the case of taste, whose import is only temporal and therefore of no such tremendous consequence to the welfare of humanity, there is no standard presented as there is in the Word of God respecting righteousness. The activity of conscience is a testimony to man's mind that the right and the good are of supreme importance in his life and destiny. Secondly, conscience is a witness to the righteousness or unrighteousness of human action under the general intuition of right. In the whole conduct of man, whether in his natural condition or in his converted state, conscience performs its functions as a power inherent in our nature, feeling the obligatoriness of right from whatever source it may be known and holding the soul inexorably to its performance. If that is done which the judgment has decided to be right in the case in hand, the feeling of obligation is satisfied and we are said to have a good or impure conscience, which bears witness to our uprightness by the absence of inward disturbance and trouble. The conscience is at rest, and the soul has peace. If that is done which in the judgment of the individual concerned is in conflict with the right, the feeling of obligation refuses to abate or relax its hold upon the

soul, and trouble ensues. The soul is in conflict with itself; the conscience is not satisfied with what has been done in gratification of unrighteous desires; and that misery ensues which we call remorse, or that greater degradation, though the pain is less felt, of brutishness or moral obduracy. The testimony in this second case is recited by the intervention of the judgment pronouncing upon the agreement or disagreement of actions with the law of righteousness, and is a testimony to the individual, on the basis of the universal feeling in man of the obligatoriness of right, that in the special case contemplated his action satisfied the sense of duty. This is the witness of a good conscience. Thirdly, there is an indirect testimony borne to others by the conscientiousness of an individual's conduct. While others cannot see into his heart and therefore cannot directly discern whether he loves righteousness and seeks in all things to conform his actions to its requirements, they can see his patient perseverance in well-doing, and therefore can appreciate his assurance that he sincerely strives to do right as God enables him to see the right and his appeals to his conscience and theirs on this behalf: to his conscience by giving the assurance that it is satisfied and causes no trouble in his soul; to their conscience by pointing them to the righteousness of his life, which must commend itself to their own judgment of right as conscience, his and theirs and all men's, requires and approves the right.

There is, however, another aspect of conscience which requires notice and concerning which the Scriptures give us some information. Unquestionably there is a difference between the activity of a heathen's conscience and that of a Christian, between conscience under the direction of nature and under the power of grace. In itself it is in all circumstances the same faculty, as the sense or the judgment is under all circumstances the same faculty, whether the person who exercises it be a Jew or a Gentile or a Christian. But it does make a difference, as regards the employment of

the mental faculties and the results attained, whether a person be the one or the other. A Christian does not judge like a heathen, though his faculty of judgment be essentially the same. So there is a difference in the power and scope of the conscience between the natural man and the regenerated man. In all the faculty is the same power to feel the obligation of righteousness, but the knowledge of righteousness and the consequent judgment of acts in the light of righteousness are not the same. Nor is there the same regard paid in all to the obligation felt, or the same sensitiveness in the feeling. There is thus a large field opened for further investigation in regard to the nature and working of conscience.

St. Paul says of those who give heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils that they have their conscience seared with a hot iron"—*κεκαυτηριασμένων τήν ιδίαν συνείδησιν*, cauterized as to their consciences. The context indicates that the apostle does not refer to the pain which is caused by a violated conscience, but rather to that condition of the heart in which it ceases to feel on moral subjects. The conscience is not the subject, but the object of the cauterization. It is seared, burned to hardness, so that the persons so characterized are such as, "being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness." Eph. 4, 19. That is not the natural condition of the human heart, at least not necessarily and therefore universally so. The fact that one nature is corrupt does not imply that it is without conscience or any manifestations of conscience. Nothing in the Word of God countenances such a theory, and history disproves it. There have been men in heathendom who sought to do right, and who set themselves against all unrighteousness as they were able to see it. If this were not so St. Paul could not have spoken of some Gentiles who "do by nature the things contained in the law," (Rom. 2, 14), and of others who "hold the truth in unrighteousness"—*τῶν τήν ἀλήθειαν*



ἐν ἀδικίᾳ κατεχόντων, who restrain the truth by unrighteousness. The nations generally who go their own way without God in the world have their understandings darkened in regard to God and righteousness. There is nothing to direct their attention to the invisible things of God which He has manifested to them in the things that are made, and led by their own carnal inclinations they turn from them to the gratification of their selfish desires. But they have an intuition of righteousness and recognize in all human action the difference between right and wrong. Therefore they are without excuse, notwithstanding all the traditional and carnal influences that operate against the appropriate work of conscience in their hearts. Even the worst of them know of moral distinctions, and although they disregard them they never sink to such a depth as to feel the unrighteous to be obligatory. There have been moral heathens, in whom conscience was active, and who were restrained by it from sinking into beastliness. And there are such people among unbelievers in Christian lands, who indeed have more inducement to pay attention to moral distinctions because the customs of a Christian community are favorable to it as those of pagan people are not, but who still are guided only by nature as distinguished from grace. Conscience is not created by Christianity. It is not a product of that supernatural power which is introduced by the gospel. This brings it into wider and stronger activity, but does not add it as a new element in our nature. Even among unbelievers there are differences in moral character. There are unconverted men who cannot easily be induced to violate their sense of right, and who can be trusted as securely as some weak and vacillating Christians. We do not overlook the specific difference between man by nature and man under grace. That difference is one of kind, by no means only one of degree. But there are morally strong unbelievers and morally weak believers, so that in morals the line of distinction cannot be drawn with mathematical

accuracy. Inwardly the difference is still of vast importance because it is that of a soul that has a Savior from sin and death and that of a soul that has none. There are men and women who without faith in Christ and therefore without the righteousness that avails before God, prefer a clean moral life to wallowing in the mire of lewdness, as there are some who prefer culture and its enjoyments to animal appetite and its pleasures. In neither case is the soul pleasing to God and just in His sight. That is not the point under consideration. Both are without Christ and therefore without salvation from sin and the dreadful curse that is upon it. But there is a difference, even though it is of effect only in this life. And conscience has something to do with that difference. One is guided in his actions by a sense of right, the other by his appetite or taste, which take the place of supremacy that properly belongs to conscience in one organization. The one stands higher than the other in civil righteousness, though both are in the gall of bitterness and in the bonds of iniquity, and neither has spiritual righteousness.

The natural man, when he disregards his feeling of obligation, sinks lower and lower, until his heart becomes callous and he cares nothing for moral distinctions, aiming at nothing but selfish gratification, whether his pleasures be higher or lower in the sphere of man's nature. The Christian, when he disregards his feeling of obligation, sinks to the level of the natural man, does despite to the Spirit of grace, and falls back to the sphere of mere nature. In both cases the conscience is seared and ceases to perform its proper functions, although the case of the fallen Christian is so much the worse as he had more light and more power and therefore does the greater violence to the righteousness which he knew and the conscience which gave it the sanction of his own soul.

Noteworthy on this point are the words of St. Paul to Titus: "Unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure, but even their mind and conscience is defiled" — *μεμίανται αὐτῶν καὶ ὁ νοῦς καὶ ἡ συνείδησις.* Tit. 1, 15. The pollution extends even to the motive powers and the moral sense. How the conscience is defiled the text does not say, and we must gather such information as we can from other sources. As we view it the apostle means more than that the feeling of obligation in some instances, by reason of errors in judgment, comes to stand in connection with sin. Our nature is so constituted that conscience sanctions and enforces only that which is right. But it is a subjective faculty whose authority extends only to the individual. It is dependent on a person's cognition of right, and as he may be mistaken in that cognition he may feel an obligation that has no objective reality. That defiles the conscience, though it is only indirectly. But there is a deeper pollution of which the conscience is capable. When the soul becomes brutish, so that all uncleanness is wrought with greediness, the cognition of right becomes dim and confused, and the sense is sluggish in responding to the cognition. The conscience never changes its nature as the moral faculty. Like all the other powers of the mind it always remains essentially the same. But as the judgment, under the influence of fleshly lust, may be directed only to objects of sensual gratification, or may cease to be called into exercise in a reckless life, so the conscience, under the power of evil lusts that war against the soul, may become seared and inactive, and the flesh may usurp its place. This is possible to such an extent that selfish desires may even, under the defilement of the mind, scorn the dictates of conscience, and thus the conscience as well as the mind is defiled and pressed into the the service of sin. The former, when it acts at all, always imperatively demands the right, but the whole soul may be in such a state of pollution that the sense of right is sullied, and that anomolous condition has set in which the apostle

describes in the startling words: "As they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient," "who, knowing the judgment of God that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them." Rom. 1, 28-32.

Conscience is thus presented as a faculty of the soul which, like all the other faculties, has its peculiar office, but which, like all the other faculties, is subject in its operations to the moral conditions and character of the subject. It is indeed true that conscientiousness makes moral character. A man has uprightness and integrity in proportion as he obeys the dictates of conscience. He makes moral shipwreck when he becomes indifferent to his sense of duty: he is a moral bankrupt when he disregards his feeling of obligation. In that condition he has no longer any restraint to his selfish propensities. But conscientiousness again is itself relative. A conscientious heathen and a conscientious Christian are not morally the same. They differ not only in regard to the extent of their knowledge touching righteousness. There is indeed a marked difference in this regard. To the Christian, with his wider knowledge of the will of God, which is the absolute rule of right, many things are matters of conscience which are not such to the unbeliever. There are many Christian duties, especially in the sphere of religion, but also in the sphere of pure morality, which are not recognized as such by those who have no knowledge of the Redeemer or who have no faith in Him and His redeeming work. There will be no feeling of obligation where that which is presented does not appear to the mind as the will of God or the law of righteousness, to the cognition of which, by the constitution of our nature, conscience always adheres and by the cognition of which its action is always conditioned. The difference in the degree of knowledge in regard to the divine will or to the righteousness which it requires will always constitute a moral difference among men even

when they are equally conscientious. But they are not always alike in conscientiousness. The unbeliever lacks the quickening power of the Spirit which actuates the believer. In the latter there is not only a knowledge, but also a moral power, which the former does not possess. He is regenerated, and therefore has springs of righteousness in the grace of God which man in his natural condition never can know and whose influence he never can feel. Not only the religious life, as it excels itself in the worship of the Triune God through the mediation of Christ, but also the moral life, as it exerts itself in the service of God by doing His will among men in Jesus' name and power, is new in the disciple of Christ. The heathen may be conscientious, but his heathen conscientiousness never makes him a Christian, though it may prompt him to give the Christian revelation a candid hearing when it is brought to his notice. And both among Christians and Gentiles there are degrees of conscientiousness, and this again not only so far as they differ in knowledge. One heathen has cultivated morality as the other has not, and has attained a civil righteousness which the other, in his pursuance of lower secular interests and gratification of the less noble cravings of his sinful soul, could not attain. There are honorable and there are dishonorable pagans and unbelievers. So there are Christians who daily strive to honor God by doing His holy will, endeavoring with ardent desire to do all their deeds in the name of the Lord Jesus and to the glory of God, while there are others who have the spirit of regeneration indeed, and who are, though precariously, in a state of salvation, but who do not watch and pray as they are commanded, and do not in all things seek only to glorify the Savior. The sense of duty is stronger in some than in others, more sensitive and more alert in some than in others. The conscience is the indicator of the whole moral condition of the person. When a man under the influence of conscience has the fixed purpose always to do right, and is therefore pained whenever

he discovers that he has done wrong, he is a conscientious man, and this conscientiousness has a reflex influence upon the conscience, keeping this tender and active. Wh y e person is brought to such integrity of moral character while another with apparently the same advantages is controlled by other motives than those of righteousness and is entirely untrustworthy, is a difficult question upon which we do not deem it necessary to enter in this place. Heredity, environment, education may all assist in solving the problem, but will still leave much that presents itself to human thought as a mystery. The fact, however, stands out clearly in human conduct, that some are conscientious men and some are not, that is, some are resolved to conform their lives to the feeling of obligation that presents itself in their own souls, while others, whether they have stifled that voice within them or merely conveniently set it aside, by reasoning or otherwise, when it contravenes their selfish purpose, have another principle than that of rectitude that is dominant in their hearts. And these persons are not strictly separated from each other by the lines of nature and grace. Conscience is a natural power, and within the sphere of nature also that power is exerted. There is a natural morality and a natural religion, and there are persons who under the influence of their natural conscience are moral and religious men. It is true, the great body of men is not. But neither are all who are under the influence of grace thoroughly conscientious people. What is shown by this notable fact is not that there is no power in nature or grace to produce respect for the voice of conscience, but that the influence of neither is irresistible. Neither does it follow, when it is claimed that there are conscientious men outside of the pale of Christianity, that the grace of God furnishes nothing in regard to morality that nature does not possess. It furnishes a new life, introducing a love of righteousness where it did not exist before, and lifting the conscientiousness, where it did exist, into the

sphere of the spiritual, where righteousness is no longer pursued as the best choice among human ways, but as the will of Him who redeemed us and rendered us accepted in the Beloved.

Therefore it is, too, that Christianity alone can give peace to the conscience, that is, relieve us from the troubles which lie upon an earnest soul in view of the failure to satisfy the feeling of obligation. Such troubles come in their intensity and terror when the written law is presented and exercises its power upon the conscience. This indeed is also different in different persons, and we are thus again confronted by the mystery of humanity in individual volition. But the fact is plain to view, that some souls are brought to remorse when they violate their sense of duty, and some, since conscience will not relent, are driven to despair. If the conscience is not seared or hardened, so that its voice is no longer heard or at least no longer heeded, this is the effect which the law will produce. There is in nature no escape from the curse pronounced upon unrighteousness, and from the misery caused by the testimony of our own conscience against the wrong done and the feeling that all the curse pronounced by the law is merited.

In this respect also the Scriptures give us information respecting the conscience. "The way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing; which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices that could not make him that did the service perfect as pertaining to the conscience." Heb. 9, 8, 9. We learn from this that not only must the heathen, who may earnestly have sought righteousness, be entirely without peace for their souls when they have violated the demands of conscience, but even the Jews, who had manifold types and prefigurements of the coming Savior, could not find rest in the sacrifices offered for their sins. These adumbrations could not make the conscience pure. The sin was a reality, and the requirement of God,

enforced by the conscience, was a reality. The sacrifices offered, though real, were not adequate to the atonement. They could not satisfy the righteous requirement. As shadows they indeed indicated the coming body that cast the shadow. But those who trusted in these shadows found no help and no comfort. That help and comfort are only in Christ, who, "being come an High Priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building, neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." Heb. 9, 11. 12. The adumbrations and prefigurements of the Old Testament could not of themselves render the troubled conscience quiet and easy, because they could not fulfill the demands of right nor render satisfaction for the wrong when these demands were violated. This could be done only by Him of whom all these ceremonies were shadows. So far as the conscience was concerned it still demanded righteousness of the sinner, notwithstanding all the ceremonies of the law, and in view of these it could not find peace.

Therefore the inspired word continues: "If the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge the conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" Heb. 9, 13. 14. The whole ceremonial law was only a shadow of the coming atonement made by the Son of God manifest in the flesh. Its ordinances could effect ceremonial purity, and nothing more. They could not purify the conscience from dead works to serve the living God. This indicates that the conscience needs purging, that that from which it is to be cleansed is dead works, and that that by which the purging takes place is the blood of Christ. That power in the soul which feels the obligatoriness of righteousness and impera-



tively enforces its authority is not satisfied by ceremonial performances nor by mere actions of any sort, because righteousness is an attribute of the soul and only derivatively of the deeds to which it gives birth. Dead works are actions which do not emanate from a corresponding inner life. Man is spiritually dead by nature, and therefore, although the conscience holds him still to all righteousness as he is able to see it and prevails upon many to "do the things contained in the law", he cannot bring forth spiritual acts. The result of all his moral efforts is "dead works." These may satisfy self-righteous souls for a while in their blindness, in some instances may even satisfy until death, but when the light falls upon them and they see that the law is spiritual while they are carnal, the conscience is not at ease. The demands of righteousness are not satisfied, and when the knowledge of these demands is obtained the conscience is not satisfied. While in the times of ignorance these works are supposed to meet the requirements of righteousness, the conscience, misguided by error and thus in league with carnality, is impure; and when the knowledge is gained that such dead works are not the righteousness which the divine law requires, it produces the sense of guilt and causes the soul to feel its burden of sin. Release from this is effected only by the blood of the spotless Lamb of God, who made perfect satisfaction for our sins and fulfilled all the righteousness which conscience requires. Through faith in Him the conscience is purged from dead works and we become spiritually living beings to serve the living God.

The same thought is set forth in the next chapter, where it is said: "The law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshipers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins." Heb. 10, 1. 2. The typical sacrifices of the cere-

monial law could not make an atonement and could therefore not cleanse from sin and give the conscience peace, else their continual repetition would not have been necessary. The use of the word conscience in a wide sense which some interpreters regard as identical with consciousness, points to the important fact that the medium through which the cognition of righteousness results in the consciousness of guilt is the conscience, which inflexibly holds the soul to the right as divinely obligatory.

In a subsequent verse the application of the atoning blood to the cleansing of the conscience is described in these words: "Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water." Heb. 10, 22. The sacrifice made for the sins of the world and the satisfaction rendered to the righteousness of God is an accomplished fact. The redemption of the human race is effected by the Eternal Son made manifest in the flesh, who shed His blood for the remission of our sins. That is the precious truth to which we should cling, the Holy Spirit of God supplying the needful power when He supplies the needful knowledge of the comforting truth. As all is in readiness for us and we are certified of it by the Gospel, let us adhere to it with an undivided and undoubting heart, the atonement made by our blessed Lord satisfying all the demands of righteousness and of our conscience that enforces these demands, and our baptism assuring us of our interest and participation in the redemption. The clamorings of conscience, demanding that all righteousness shall be fulfilled and showing that we have not fulfilled it, are thus silenced by the vicarious work of our Lord which is imputed to us by faith. It is an "evil conscience" from which the soul is thus delivered, because the obligation of righteousness which conscience enforces has been violated and the consciousness of guilt has entered in consequence. The conscience is evil, not because of its nature, which al-

ways stands on the side of right as we see it, but because of its effect, which always is the painful sense of guilt when wrong has been done.

One more passage of similar import to the last mentioned contains the word conscience. It is that in 1 Pet. 3, 21, where the apostle writes: "The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us, (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." The *συνειδήσεως ἀγαθῆς ἐπερώτημα εἰς θεόν* is the negotiation or covenant entered into through baptism, by which the conscience, in view of the death and resurrection of Christ, is satisfied and thus quieted. God has provided the atonement, through the holy sacrament imputes the righteousness of the Redeemer, and works the faith that trusts in the promise annexed, so that God pledges His grace in Christ unto salvation and man by the power of the Holy Spirit believes it and has a good conscience.

We have thus passed in review all the passages of Scripture that give us information concerning the nature and functions of the conscience. The result is more of a negative than of a positive character. The inspired record gives us no definition of conscience, and no materials that definitely settle the question as to what activities of the soul are included in its conception. But the main ethical questions that arise in contemplating it seem to us answered, and that none the less satisfactorily, when that answer is given in the form of a negation. The Scriptures do not teach that man has a guide in his own breast that intuitively decides all matters of right and wrong, and that relieves us of all intellectual trouble to reach a decision in such matters. They do not justify our appeal to the individual conscience in proof of the correctness of a doctrine or the righteousness of a purpose or action. They show that a person may be in error in both respects and yet act in accord with his conscience. His knowledge may be at fault while his

moral sense is sound. The cognitions and judgments on moral questions may be false, while the conscience discharges its function of impressing and urging and enforcing moral obligation readily and faithfully. The reason is that the cognitive faculty is not the conscience. The latter is not a revelation of God's will as to the material contents of moral cognitions and decisions. It is the voice of God only in the sense that when we have cognitions of righteousness, from whatever source they may be derived, they come to us, in virtue of our organization for righteousness, with divine authoritativeness. Conscience is the moral power in our nature that feels this obligation. That such obligation is felt in any given case does not prove that the thing felt as obligatory is really so: it only proves that our intelligence has so presented it. Whether it is really so still remains a matter of investigation. But what appears to the individual as right and therefore obligatory he cannot be dispensed from. Conscience is a subjective, not an objective standard of right.

M. LOY.

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## THE SENSUALISM OF LOCKE AND ITS INFLUENCE ON RELIGIOUS THOUGHT.

### II.

In this article it will be shown that Locke's rationalistic philosophy had a very pernicious influence on the religious thought of the age in which he lived. Indeed this evil influence has by no means ceased to affect much of the theology of our day.

Concerning Locke's "Essay on the Reasonableness of Christianity", Tholuck says (*Vermischte Schriften*, I., pp. 164, 165): "Locke's book directly attempts to place the Christian religion on a level with so-called 'common sense', in order that this 'common sense' may not be obliged to believe in anything superior to itself. To bring this about,

it is merely necessary to believe but one distinctive doctrine of the entire Christian religion, namely that Jesus is the Messiah, as His miracles prove. The 'benefits' which the human race derives from this Messiah are as follows: 1. Man had at first but an imperfect knowledge concerning God and moral precepts. Jesus has taught him perfect ideas with reference to the Deity, and given him the sublimest instructions concerning duty. 2. The other 'great fault' which should be corrected, was the religious worship, overburdened as it then was with ceremonials. Christ taught man to worship God in Spirit and in truth. 3. Virtue found but few admirers, because it does not always make man happy in his present life. Jesus gave unto virtue a good motive by leading man to believe that he will be rewarded hereafter. 4. Jesus has promised man that in his conflicts against vices He will support him by His Spirit, although man cannot tell how the Spirit operates within him.— Any Deist could easily swallow such a diluted Christianity as this, without being troubled at all about it in his stomach."

Again, Tholuck quotes the German translator of Locke's book as follows: "It is an error, almost universal among the Reformed and more especially among English theologians, to confound human reason and knowledge and the wisdom of this world with the wisdom of God, to mingle supernatural mysteries with natural sciences. They make that to be a fundamental principle which should merely be an inference. They make for themselves articles of faith from natural reason, and form first of all certain systems, according to which the interpretation of the Scriptures must be shaped, instead of starting from the Scriptures themselves by admitting their self-interpretation. In this book (*Reasonableness of Christianity*), Mr. Locke tries to gain the praise of all Christian denominations. Hence he attempts to affect a union of light and darkness. It is his main endeavor to lessen the number of articles of faith and to change them nearly into mere ciphers."

The majority of English apologists followed Locke in his weak defense of the Christian religion. Of course there were some honorable exceptions. Among these is Philip Skelton, who wrote an excellent work against the Deists, in which he bravely defends the fundamental doctrines of Christianity. Referring to the feeble theologians of his time, Skelton says: "On the other hand our new apologists of Christianity often defend it with deistical principles and are moreover too ready to mould their own articles of faith in new forms, thereby hoping to gain fresh advantages for their cause. Among those who yet adhere in a general way to primitive Christianity, and who yet contend for it in the best manner, there are those who well understand the free-thinking spirit of our age, and to some extent hesitate to have a free and manifest intercourse with their enemies. They therefore assume an air of leniency, strive to soften the reasons for observing the Divine laws, lessen the number of mysteries, and try to make the requirements of religion less burdensome."

In England Deists and latitudinarian apologists of Christianity met on a common level about the time of Locke, who taught a "reasonable" religion, which to all intents and purposes was nothing more than deistical naturalism. The English Deists could very well be satisfied with a religion which set up "common sense" as the supreme judge. Neither the apologists of Christianity, who followed Locke, nor the deistical disciples of Herbert of Cherbury, considered for a moment, that in consequence of sin the reasoning faculties of the *homo naturalis* have been corrupted and weakened. That this was possible, does not seem to have once presented itself to their minds.

We need not however wonder at this superficiality. According to Locke's sensualism the soul is a blank leaf, an unwritten page, until we choose to write something on it. Our ideas, so he tells us, are "neither true nor false, being nothing but bare appearances in our minds." We receive

all our knowledge through sensation and reflection. Hence we must arrive at the inevitable conclusion, that "common sense" decides everything in religious as well as in temporal matters. A system as shallow as this, that brings eternal and heavenly mysteries down to a level with the distorted conceptions of a corrupted and weakened reason, must have been very acceptable to the advocates of a mere natural religion.

Considering the general prevalence of Locke's sensualism, we need not wonder that such English apologists as Clarke, Jackson, Waterland and Sykes taught erroneously concerning the doctrine of the Trinity; that Whitby held that original sin is not imputed to man, and that Tillotson, Stillingfleet and Taylor opposed the scriptural and churchly doctrine of the satisfaction rendered in our behalf by Christ. The scriptural doctrine of the Trinity was vitiated by some English apologists in consequence of the error of Subordinationism.

Locke's empirical, rationalizing system led to free-thinking and eventually to the denial of revealed religion. The new philosophical ideas, requiring but little research, investigation and thought, became very popular with all classes in England. An anonymous writer of that time says: "The instances I have lately seen of free-thinking in the lower part of the world, make me fear, they are going to be as fashionable and as wicked as their betters. I went the other night to the Robin Hood, where it is usual for the advocates against religion to assemble and openly avow their infidelity. One of the questions of the night was—whether Lord Bolingbroke had not done greater service to mankind by his writings than the Apostles or Evangelists?—As this society is chiefly composed of lawyer's clerks, petty tradesmen, and the lowest mechanics, I was at first surprised at such amazing erudition among them. Toland, Tindal, Collins, Chubb, and Mandeville, they seem to have got by heart. A shoemaker harangued his five minutes upon the excellence of the tenets

maintained by Lord Bolingbroke; but I soon found that his reading had not been extended beyond the idea of a patriot king, which he had mistaken for a glorious system of free-thinking. I could not help smiling at another of the company, who took pains to show his disbelief of the Gospel by unsainting the Apostles, and by calling them by no other title than plain Paul or plain Peter. The proceedings of this society have indeed almost induced me to wish that (like the Roman Catholics) they were not permitted to read the Bible, rather than that they should read it only to abuse it.

“I have frequently heard many wise tradesmen settling the most important articles of our faith over a pint of beer. A baker took occasion from Canning’s affair to maintain, in opposition to the Scriptures, that man might live by bread alone, at least that woman might; for else, said he, how could the girl have been supported for a whole month by a few hard crusts? In answer to this, a barber-surgeon set forth the improbability of that story; and thence inferred that it was impossible for our Savior to have fasted forty days in the wilderness. I lately heard a midshipman swear that the Bible was all a lie; for he had sailed around the world with Lord Anson, and if there had been any Red Sea he must have met with it. I know a bricklayer, who, while he was working by line and rule, and carefully laying one brick upon another, would argue with a fellow-laborer that the world was made by chance; and a cook, who thought more of his trade than his Bible, in a dispute concerning the miracles made a pleasant mistake about the first, and gravely asked his antagonist what he thought of the supper at Cana.” Such shallow, frivolous and ridiculous unbelief as this was, no doubt, greatly furthered by Locke’s teachings of a “reasonable Christianity.” When depraved and corrupt human reason is made the highest authority in religious matters, freethinking and infidelity are sure to follow.



In Holland similar conditions prevailed as in England. By commercial connections with England and France, free-thinking and infidelity spread among the staid and sober Dutch burghers. The philosophical systems of Des Cartes and Spinoza were also very effective in spreading unbelief among these otherwise cautious and conservative Hollanders. The latitudinarian and deistical writings of the English soon found their way to Holland. Unbelief rather followed the pantheistical naturalism of Spinoza, than the shallow Deism of the English.

We will now take a view of Germany. Locke's book, "Reasonableness of Christianity," appeared in a German translation, in the city of Brunswick, in 1733. The opinions concerning this work were very much divided. Chancellor Pfaff put Locke, this so-called apologist of the Christian religion, in the same class of writers as the pronounced Deists, Shaftsbury and Toland. However the philosophical and theological tenets of Locke found ready acceptance with many German theologians, and greatly advanced that form of religious thought and teaching known as *Aufklaerung*, Illuminism or Rationalism. About this time the philosopher Christian Wolff began to popularize the philosophy of Leibnitz and to mould it in a compact form for German students. Wolff more than any one else led German theologians into rationalistic habits and methods of thought. The philosophy of Leibnitz was too high and lofty for the masses of the people, therefore Wolff sought to simplify it, in order that it might become popular. He sought to show the reasonableness of Christianity in the same way as to demonstrate a mathematical truth.

English Deists, German Illuminati and French Infidels had denied the idea of a supernatural revelation and attacked the supernatural origin of the Holy Scriptures. Wolff, who was a supernaturalist in his own convictions, but a rationalist in his methods, undertook to defend the supernatural origin of the Scriptures and the reasonableness

of the Christian doctrines in a rationalistic manner. We read in the encyclopaedia Britannica under the article Rationalism written by Rev. J. F. Smith, as follows: "He (Wolff) made the old distinction between natural and revealed religion of fundamental importance, and maintained that *demonstrable* truths alone can be regarded as part of natural religion. Revealed religion he drew solely from the Scriptures, and sought to prove by a chain of reasoning and historical evidence their divine origin. Thus in reality the intellect alone was constituted the faculty for ultimately determining the truth of the revelation as well as for constructing a natural religion. The general adoption of the distinction between natural and revealed religion, of the appeal to logical and historical evidence and argument for proof of the truth of both, and of the supposition that the truths of natural religion could be demonstrated while those of revealed religion were above, if not contrary to reason, and rested solely on the authority of Scripture, naturally divided theologians into two hostile camps, and proved contrary to Wolff's expectations, more favorable to the naturalists and rationalists than to the supernaturalists. If it was admitted by all that the appeal in the contention was to be the understanding, and the religious nature and higher reason were left out of account, and if, moreover, the truths of natural religion — God, duty, immortality—were supposed by all to be demonstrable, supernatural revelation was certain in that age to be put to great disadvantage. The result of Wolff's philosophy was a natural theology, a utilitarian system of morals, without any religious fervor or Christian profundity."

One of the most active propagators of Rationalism in Germany was Semler, professor at Halle. He attempted to prove that the Canonical books of the Bible were not brought together according to a fixed, definite plan, but by accidental considerations. He even went so far as to deny that the

Scriptures were designed to be a rule of faith for all men. He steadily repeated that Christ and the Apostles *accommodated* themselves in their teachings to the "local ideas" of the country, and the popular opinions of their day. Although learned, Semler's style is confused. In his writings there is much triviality. Of our Savior he writes in one place: "Jesus is called the Soter, the Redeemer of all men, merely with respect to their former unhappy condition. He that personally accepts the doctrine of Christ and applies it in his highest relations to God and man, truly believes on Christ." Again he says: "The great sole purpose of Jesus was to convince men that they cannot worship and love God as they should in their many peculiar observances and in their austere strictness, unless they employ (in this worship) all the powers of the soul and internally submit themselves to Him and to His manifest purpose." We observe in these ideas of Semler concerning Christ and His work the same shallowness as in similar sayings of John Locke, the would-be apologist of Christianity.

By his peculiar rationalistic methods Semler discovered in the Scriptures what he termed "local ideas" and "accommodations" to the prejudices of the days in which they were written, and reduced the number of doctrines necessary to be believed to the smallest minimum. Other rationalistic writers contemporaneous with Semler, who greatly influenced German theology, were Teller, Eberhard and Steinbart. All these agreed in confounding religion with a utilitarian morality and reducing Christianity to a level with the "natural religion" of the English Deists.

The seed sown by Wolff, Semler, Teller and others, soon bore an abundant harvest of dangerous errors. Rationalistic theologians labored incessantly to bring down all the doctrines of the Christian religion to the low standard of "Common sense," to Locke's "reasonableness." The Savior was represented as a "messenger of Providence," sent to show men by his teaching and example how they might save

themselves. The word of God, the volume of Divine Inspiration, the only rule of Christian faith and life, was degraded to the rank of a human production. The mysteries of religion were brought down to the same plane with the teachings of "Common sense." The doctrines of the Church on sin, grace and redemption were set aside for pelagianizing theories. The miracles of the Bible were explained away with amazing ingenuity. Thus it was taught, that when Korah, Dathan and Abiram were swallowed up by the earth, Moses had previously undermined the ground on which these rebels were standing. Jacob's wrestling with an angel was said to have been a dream, and a rheumatic pain in his thigh made him think that an angel had touched him there. The feeding of the five thousand in the wilderness was said to have been an easy matter, inasmuch as a passing caravan with plenty of provisions supplied the starving multitude with food. Christ, it was said, did not walk *upon* the sea, but *along* the sea-shore. These are only a few of the numberless absurdities of vulgar Rationalism.

Notwithstanding the fact that a reaction set in against Rationalism in Germany about the beginning of the present century, there is still a great deal of this cavilling, shallow and negative form of unbelief prevailing among the partially cultured, whilst profounder thinkers of all classes, and of every shade of religious belief, laugh at the ridiculous monstrosities of vulgar Rationalism. In 1828 Dr. Pusey said that the school of Rationalism "had had its day." In the third decade of this century Hase said, "that Rationalism failed to recognize the historical forces that condition all religious life and progress; that it necessarily issued in a barren religion of the intellect; that in the last instance it drew its decisions, not from the depths of the soul, but from a shallow popular philosophy which overlooked the rights of religious feeling; that on that account it kept its God of the outward Universe as far removed from men's hearts and lives.

as possible. (Art. Rationalism in Encyclopaedia Britannica, by Rev. J. F. Smith). But the very fact that Rationalism is so superficial, makes it acceptable to many who are either too lazy to think for themselves, or unable to think at all, on religious matters.

In France Locke's empirical philosophy greatly aided in producing atheistical Materialism, as it was developed and formulated by Condillac, De la Mettrie, Helvetius and others, who on their march did not halt at the half way stations of English Deism and German Rationalism, but plunged at once into open and avowed unbelief.

P. A. PETER.

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## HISTORIC CHURCHES IN THE EAST.

Throughout the Orient are found the remnants and remains of Christian communions bearing names of prominence in the history of the church, but which are now both externally and internally only the shadows of their former greatness. The various sections of the Armenian Church, the Nestorians or Chaldee Christians of Persia together with their brethren, the Thomas Christians of India, the Monophysitic Copts of Egypt and their associates of the Abyssinian Church, as also the other modern representatives of the Early Christian Church of the East live virtually on the grand reminiscences of a glorious past, and have retained little more than the name and forms of those pioneer days of Oriental Christianity.

The East is the original seat of Christianity. *Ex Oriente lux* expresses one of the most far-reaching truths in the annals of mankind. Both historically and in written revelation Christianity is Oriental and Semitic in character. Yet Christianity did not remain the permanent possession of the people among whom it first arose and who were seem-

ingly so well endorsed by nature for its receptions and exceptions. The Christian nations of to-day are nearly all of Aryan origin and are Western people. The Spiritual inheritance of Shem has come into the possession of Japhet. Partly through miner decay, but chiefly through the Mohammedan crusade of death and destruction Oriental Christianity has practically become a thing of the past; the petrified formalism and mechanical faith being yet mute witnesses for a former life and greatness.

Prominent among these modern representatives of the Primitive Church and of the East are the Nestorians. Their origin is well known. In 435 the Syrian Nestorian Church was organized. Seleucia or Ktesephon were the chief seats of their hierarchy and the occupants of these sees wore the title of Patriarchs of the East. A vast and energetic mission enterprize was developed. They occupied a large portion of the present state of Persia, were strongly represented in Mesopotamia and Arabia, had Metropolitan seats in Syria and Cyprus and one of their Bishops was stationed even on the island Sokotra on the African shore. Then the Syrian Christians of Malabar in Hindoostan were Nestorians, and churches of this creed extended to the Trans-Oxus country into Chinese territory and in the distant regions of Mongolia, where the Grand Shah of Tartars was Presbyter in the Nestorian church. The famous Chinese Nestorian stone which was discovered 1625 in Singan-Fu, China, and contains the names in Syrian and Chinese, of seventy Bishops and Priests of the Nestorian church, who before the year 781, A. D. when the tablet was set up, had been engaged in missionary work among the Chinese, has lately been examined anew and scholars are practically a unit that the statements of the stone are correct. In 1551 a portion of the Nestorians accepted the supremacy of the Pope, and these constitute the so-called United Nestorian or the Chaldee Christians. They number some 20,000 souls, but observe the Greek Rite, their Patriarch, who resides at Diarbekr,

is appointed by the Pope. The non-United Nestorians are found in Mesopotamia, Persia and Syria, and the Mountain Nestorians live in the almost inaccessible valleys on both sides of the Great Zub. They are also found throughout the territory of the Hakkari, on the high plateau of Albagh and on the Urimeah Sea in Persia. In the midst of these valleys, not far from Dshulamerik, at Kotshhannes in the heart of Kourdistan is the seat of the Patriarch. He has not only spiritual but temporal power and in case of necessity can muster a fair-sized army. In general their condition is anything but enviable. The rapacity of the Mohammedan ruling is often beyond endurance.

The Nestorians accept only two sacraments, namely Baptism and the Lord's Supper. They do not venerate the saints. Their priests marry, with the exception of those who occupy the higher ranks. Especially the Patriarch or "Melek", as he is called, is not allowed to marry or to use animal food. Subordinated to him are Priests or Presbyters, called Kashisha, and deacons, or Shamshona. The Nestorians adhere rigidly to the forms of their worship, which have almost the simplicity characteristic of Protestantism. They would rather suffer severely than violate one of the ordinances of the Fast. Yet their religion is practically one of the letter and not of the spirit; it is a dead formalism. Even the most cultured of their clergy seem to have no conception of regeneration and spiritual life. In educational matters about a similar status prevails. Only the clergy can read; and of these only a few can do more. Their services are conducted in a language no longer understood, namely the Syriac, and in this language the Scriptures are also used. Morally the Nestorians do not stand high; especially are falsehood and desecration of the Lord's day frequent evils. Sunday is chiefly a day of pleasure and business. Intemperance to a terrible degree prevails, and the temptations in this direction are all the greater, because whole districts are almost literally one great vineyard. The excuse offered by the Nesto-

rians for these vices is the suppression and oppression practiced by the Mohammedans. The only improvements in this direction have had their origin in the work of the Protestant Mission, especially Smith, Dwight and Perkins.

Another unique Oriental Church is the Abyssinian, the modern representative of the Ethiopians of history. The Abyssinian is the only one of the national churches of the East which has not been practically crushed out by the Mohammedans. Against fearful odds the mountaineers of the "Switzerland of Africa" have maintained the struggle for political and religious existence with the fanatical devotees of Islam. In the Abyssinia of to-day we have practically a petrified Greek Christianity of the fourth and fifth centuries. At that time the Abyssinians were converted. Soon afterwards the Monophysitic controversy caused them to sever their connection with the Church in general and the capture of Egypt by the Moslems completed the isolation. For nearly one thousand years the Abyssinian church had not again come into contact or touch with the Christian churches of other lands. During these centuries the conservative Semitic instincts of the Abyssinian kept them in *statu quo*, and the Abyssinian is now probably the most remarkable ecclesiastical ruin in the world. The outward forms, liturgy, dogmas and ceremonies have been handed down from generation to generation, entirely uninfluenced by what was going on in the rest of the church and of the civilized world. A complete spiritual petrification took place; the living spiritual element of the church is gone. This is the reason for the strange admixture of barbarism and loud professions of faith that there exist side by side. A Greek Christianity was implanted on a Semitic soil, and to the present day yet the untamed Semitic heart, as best seen in the Arabic Beduin, is found closely allied with a fervency of prayer, fasts and religious observances of all kind, that would be too enigmatical to be understood, were not the history and isolation of Abyssinian Christianity so



peculiar. Efforts to revive a spiritual Christianity and to give life to these bones have often been made within the last fifty or sixty years, but with little success. The representatives of Western Christianity have again and again been expelled. Now after an exclusion of many years, the country has in recent years been reopened to the Swedish workers. Some of the most successful gospel work has been done among the "Falashas", or Black Jews of the country. But to reclaim Abyssinia to a higher and more evangelical Christianity will be a herculean task.

But in many respects the enforced and voluntary isolation of the Abyssinians has been the source of much good to the Christian Church even if not to the Abyssinians themselves. That people have had the honor of preserving for Christian scholarship a large amount of good old Christian literature which otherwise would have been lost to the Church. In the terrible ups and downs of wars and rumors of wars in both Western and Eastern Christian nations, many noble monuments of Christian literature were lost. Most of this has been preserved in the Abyssinian seclusion. In the flourishing period of Ethiopic history, beginning with the fourth Christian century and extending, with some slight interruptions, through more than one thousand years, the Abyssinians had displayed a remarkable activity in the literary field. It cannot be said that they evinced originality to any marked extent; for even that portion of their literature which does not consist of translations, is modeled after Greek, Arabic and Coptic copies. There is no national Ethiopic literature with clearly marked individuality, such as we find in the literature of other nations. But what they lacked in originality, they made up in diligence. Quantitatively Ethiopic literature is of vast extent, and qualitatively it is important, not only because the works themselves have merit, but because the Greek originals of the majority of them have been lost. It has been the singular good fortune of Abyssinia, in its seclusion and isolation of ten and more

centuries to have preserved in good translations a number of valuable and, in their way, classical works, which in the conflict of nations in the Greek and Roman world were lost to literature. The rediscovery of one of the best translations of the Septuagint Version of the Old Testament; of the Book of Enoch, the only one of that vast number of Jewish apocalypses extant in the days before Christ which has been quoted in the New Testament; of the Book of Jubilees; of patristic works of prime importance; and of other rare literary remains of equal value, stamps the literature of Abyssinia, as it is being opened up more and more, as one that consists not of mere curiosities, but which has substantial value for research in more than one department. It is indeed chiefly a literature of translations, but almost entirely of rare and valuable works. Within the last twenty-five years a number of these works have been edited and published by European scholars, especially by Platt in England and by Dillmann in Germany. The latter has also prepared a grammar and a dictionary of the language as complete and as scientific as it is possible for comparative philology of modern scholarship to write. But hundreds of Ethiopic manuscripts still lie unedited in the large European libraries, while thousands are yet in Abyssinia. Missionary Krapf sent his collection to the University of Tuebingen; Rueppel presented his to the library at Frankfurt on the Main; the d'Abbadie brothers deposited theirs in Paris; the Napier Expedition of 1868 brought back several hundreds for the British Museum; and there are also quite a number in Rome, Berlin, Dresden, Oxford, Cambridge and other places. No better testimony to the flourishing condition of Abyssinia in its older and better days can be found than the existence of so great and varied a literature, which contains works in almost all the departments of thought known to the civilization of earlier centuries.

We add here a few translations which will best illustrate the characteristic features of Ethiopic literature. The

most popular class of work in Abyssinia to this day is the *gadel* or ascetic. The reverence for the witnesses and martyrs of the Christian faith is most intense in the Abyssinian church, and has given birth to a long calendar of saints, portions of which are regularly read in the churches. As specimens the following, may suffice :

Concerning Abba Salama.—On this day (it is the 26th of Chemle) died Abba Salama, the revealer of light, Bishop of Ethiopia, and the following is his history: There came a man from the land of Greece, whose name was Mirobopjos, a prince of wise men, and with him were two children of his race; the name of the one was Frumentius and of the other Adesius, but some called him Sidrakos. And they came in a ship to the shore of the Ethiopians, and he (i. e. M) saw all the good things his heart wished for. But when he desired to return to the sea, they came over him as enemies, and slew him and all that were with him; but these two small children were left. And the men of the city took them prisoners, and showed them the deeds of murder, and gave them as presents to the king of Axum whose name was Elaadad. And the king made Adesus keeper of the servants-house and Frumentius watcher over the laws and scribe of Axum. And afterwards the king died and left a young son with his mother, and Aznan ruled them, and Frumentius and Adesius remained educating the child, and taught him the faith of Christ—to whom be glory—gradually; and they built for him a chapel and gathered around it children teaching them psalms and hymns. And when this boy had reached the proper age, they asked him to send them to their city. And Adesius went to Tyre, near the sea, to see his relatives, but Frumentius went to Alexandria, to the Archbishop, Abba Athenasius, and found him new in office, and he announced to him all things, and also concerning the faith in the land of the Ethiopians, how they believed in Christ—to whom be glory—but had neither bishop nor elder. Then the Abba ordained Frumentius as a bishop for

the land of the Ethiopians, and sent him away with great honor. And going to the land of the Ethiopians in the reign of Aberha, he went and preached the peace of Christ—to whom be glory—in all the provinces, and therefore his name is Abba Salama. And after he had taught the people of Ethiopia he rested in peace.

Hail! with a voice of joy I cry  
Extolling and lauding him,  
Salama, the portal of mercy and grace,  
Who opened Ethiopia to the splendor of Christ's light  
When before that in it was darkness and night.

This extract has historical value, showing that the common account given by Greek historians of the Christianization of Ethiopia in the time of Constantine the Great is recognized by the native church and finds expression in her literature. Abba Salama is the great national saint of the Abyssinians.

Students of patristic lore will read with interest the following allegorical homily:

The homily of Severianus, the bishop of the city of Gablon, concerning the faith in the Trinity, which he explained with prayer, after the reading of the Gospel. A teacher in the Christian Church is like a physician who possesses medicines for the multitude and variety of diseases, and gives medicine to every sick person, according to the nature of the sickness. Thus it happens that some come into the hospital of the Christian Church ulcerated with pride and taken captive by vain glory; and having taken the medicine of humility they are cured of this ulcerous sickness. And others rush in who are burning with the disease of anger, and these having been mollified by the lesson of patience overcome the disease of the flame of anger. And others there are who are driven by the lust of fornication, and coming they take medicine in abstinence and in purity bridle their flesh. And now behold, my beloved, he who

was the first teacher in faith cures the souls of those who are sick in the faith, and we will follow in his footsteps; and I think that many who stand here desire to hear concerning faith, not as if they did not know it, for they are instructed, but they desire that those who are sick shall be cured by this instruction, for many who are healthy in themselves are not able to cure those who are sick. And on this account, my beloved, I will now explain to you that which was just read in the gospel, and having satiated you with the spirit in it will end them. And, I will treat, as I have already said, of faith, and those who desire may stand and listen, since it behooves us, the disciples of the Apostles, to be everything to everyone, that we may turn everything to advantage. And I entreat you, my brethren, to pardon me if I make a mistake, for those who speak from their mouths extemporeously, and do not first write down, may make a mistake, and are not capable of the clearness and perspicuity of books and to ornament their words. But ye, direct to me your innerman, which is your hearts, entirely, that all which will be spoken be not only heard, but see it also with the eye of your heart, and understand the force of each word. First, faith in God is something which cannot be touched or grasped or compared, but is held in silence and is worshipped in the heart, a faith which begins with the Father, proceeds to the Son and, is completed in the Holy Spirit, a faith which is strength to the soul, a foundation for life and a root which does not die. But the root of faith, the life of the Father, is the Trinity which is not abridged or vituperated or mentioned or divided in equality or in power or in action or in the godship or in greatness; only in number and in names is it divided; but in power and action the Trinity is united, as it was before the world, and did not come into existence in time, but is without end in its being, and does not become old nor take an associate nor die, nor is it disturbed nor does it cease, but always as it has been, it will be forever a Trinity. Nor has it been now

discovered in order that it be worshipped, but before the world it was worshipped by the angels in heaven, and was glorified by the fathers on the earth and was honored by the prophets and was preached by the Apostles and exalted and glorified by the Christian Churches until now. We will begin, my beloved, with the heavenly hosts, and will see that *one* is the Godship of the Trinity and the Lordship and the adoration and the greatness. Thus is the Trinity of the powerful angels, the Seraphim and Cherubim; Holy, Holy, Holy with never-ceasing tongue and with one song they exalt the glory of the one Godship. Our father Abraham saw three angels, while he was under the oak-tree, on a seat near his cottage; but one Godship and one glory to the Trias. Three angels and the oak-tree and the cottage and Abraham are the Trinity, the cross, the Christian Church and the seed of man. And Abraham made a trip of three days in order to sacrifice his son Isaac to God. And the wandering of Abraham for three days, and Isaac to be sacrificed in three days are the sufferings of the Only-Begotten on the cross. Thus our father Abraham saw the mystery of Christ in Isaac as the gospel says: (John 8, 56) Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and saw it, and rejoiced. And again the departure of Moses for three days to sacrifice, saying to Pharaoh: We will go a journey of three days to sacrifice to the Lord, our God (Ex. 5, 3. 8, 23). And Sarah, taking three measures of flour and made cakes; and these three measures of flour and Sarah and the cakes, are the united faith in the Trinity and the Christian Church, which is guarded in the secrets of the heart. And Jacob, taking three sticks, placed them in the water and caused the sheep to drink; these three sticks and the water and the drinking sheep are the Trinity and baptism and the people that are baptized. Three days and three nights Jonah lived in the belly of the whale; the whale, and three days and nights, and Jonah, are the stay of the Only-Begotten for three days in Hell (Sheol). For this it is, says our Lord in the gospel (Matth. 12, 40): As Jonah was three

days and three nights in the belly of the whale, thus will the Son of man remain three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The people of Nineveh, having fasted three days, lived; and the three days, and the fasting, and the people of Nineveh remaining alive, are the Trinity, light of light, the departure of evil, the faithful and the everlasting life. Three times did the prophet Elijah pour water over the split wood, and the portions of the oxen when fire from heaven descended upon them. And the water measured three times, and the split wood and the portions of the ox, and the fire from heaven are the Trinity, baptism and the cross and the head of Christ and the light (of the gospel) from heaven. Three times daily did Daniel open the windows of his house towards the East to pray, which teaches the mystery that, opening the eyes of our souls to the Father and Son and Holy Ghost, we should direct our prayer to the East. Three youths were placed in a flaming furnace to be burnt, but none of them was burnt although the Chaldees were. And the three youths who escaped injury, while the Chaldees burnt, are the Trinity without blemish, and the Chaldees are the demons who will be condemned and destroyed. Three virtues Paul attributes to the Christian Church (1 Cor. 13, 13) saying: Faith and hope and love: but faith is concerning the Father. hope concerning the Son and the completion of the law is the love of the Holy Spirit, for he says: (Gal. 5, 32) The fruit of the Holy Ghost is love. And this same Paul petitions the Lord three times (2 Cor. 12, 8) saying: Three times have I asked the Lord. And see the wisdom of the man, briefly collected in words, he does not say: Three Gods have I petitioned, but three times have I petitioned God, i. e. the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, one God

One of the strongest species of literature that the human mind has ever conceived is the so-called *Clavis* or *Physiologus* literature of the ancient and medieval Church. Its characteristic feature was animal and plant symbolism, in which, in the most grotesque manner imaginable, the nature and habits of animals and plants were made to teach moral precepts and inculcate Christian doctrine. The origin of this

kind of work must probably be sought in the mystical schools of heathenism and Judaism in Alexandria immediately before the time of Christ; but afterwards they were all modified by Christians and adapted to their wants. Lately (1877) an edition of the Ethiopic *Physiologus* has been published by Dr. Hummel, of Munich, and it proves to be a valuable addition to our knowledge of Ethiopic. In order to give an idea of the work we will quote a few chapters.

Chap. 7. Concerning the bird whose name is Phenix.—Our Lord said in the Gospel: I have the power to leave my life and to take it again. But the Jews murmured against His Word.—When the Phenix is 500 years old he goes upon the trees of the Lebanon, and fills his wings with a good smelling stuff, which is called Abda. And he announces this to the priest in the city of the sun, in the month Magabit, or in the month Migazja, and he goes to the altar to fill it with the wood of the vine. But the bird comes to city of the sun, while the priest places frankincense on the altar, and the bird burns himself and turns into ashes. And when the priest examines the altar on the next day, he finds a worm in the ashes, and on the third day he finds a young bird. And on the fourth day he becomes a large bird, and appears to the servant and salutes the priest and returns to its old place of abode.—But if this bird has the power to kill itself and again to live, why is it that the Jews murmured against our Savior, when He said: I have the power to leave my life and to take it again? The Phenix is a picture for our Savior; He has filled His two wings with frankincense and power. And He has come to us, but we will reach out our hands to Him, that we may fill our good citizenship with the frankincense of His mercy.

Chap. 22. Concerning the animal whose name is Manokerites (= γυνόκερωτος Unicorn).—Which is the Reom (אֶרְוֹם) which is the Unicorn. He says in the Psalm: My horn will be exalted like that of a unicorn.—Such is its nature: It is a small animal and is like the goat and is tame; but the hunter is not able to touch it on account of its strength; and its single horn is in the middle of its head. In what manner now do they catch it? They adorn



a beautiful maiden with beautiful ornaments, and have her to look at it, and it comes to her, springs at her and is caught in the bosom of the maiden, and the maiden takes the animal as a present to the king and receives for it great riches.—The unicorn is like the Savior, who has taken upon Himself for us the horn of our salvation from the house of David, His servant (Luke 1, 69), and the powers which are in heaven were not able to touch Him, but He dwelt in the lap of the virgin Mary. “The Word became flesh and dwelt among us.”

Another section of the Oriental church that is grand even in its ruins is the Armenian, to which special attention has been called of late by their election of a new Patriarch, whose official seat is in Edshmiazin, in the Caucasus. The Armenians are scattered over the entire East, although Armenia as a political state has ceased to exist long ago. They call themselves the Armenian Apostolic Church, but by others are generally termed the Armenian Gregorian Church. The Armenians claim that their church was established by the special intervention of the Savior Himself, who, after the Armenians had been sufficiently prepared by the preaching of the Apostles Thaddeus and Bartholomew, came again upon this earth for the special purpose of founding this church. The Armenians have for centuries been a suppressed people, and the only surprise is that notwithstanding the oppression of Persians and Greeks, Arabs and Tartars and Moslems the Armenian Church exists at all yet.

As at present organized the church has a number of Patriarchs, only two of whom bear the distinguished title of Katholicoe. From a political point of view the Patriarch of Constantinople is the most influential, as he represents his people and his church at the court of the Sultan. The Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem dates from the seventh century, and this people are so strongly represented in the Sacred city that it has an *Armenian Quarter*. The Patriarchs are quite independent of each other; the special prerogatives of the Catholics at Edshmiozin being more formal than real. Armenian literature is chiefly Christian, but is not large now and much of it has been translated;

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INQUIRY CONCERNING THE CONSCIENCE.

VI.

THE GROUND OF ITS AUTHORITY.

Conscience, as the power of the soul which feels the obligation of right, is clothed with authority. But it is evidently not autocratic. The Creator formed it for His glory, and it is subservient to His will. From Him all its authority is derived. It is one of the instrumentalities used in the administration of the divine government. God's will is to be done on earth to the praise of His name and to the welfare of His creatures; and conscience enjoins the performance of that will. All its authority is divine, but mediate and dependent. It rests on the will of God and is of objective force so far as it enforces the divine law. But the objective right in which the authority inheres is not always correctly mediated. Therefore that may appear in conscience which is not authoritative; and when the cognition is correctly obtained and the authority is really divine, it is not irresistible, as the will of man may be moved by other forces in opposition to the will of God.

Man was endowed by the Creator with nobler gifts than other earthly creatures, and was designed to rule over them.

“God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing, that creepeth upon the earth.” Gen. 1, 26. This dominion of man is instinctively recognized by all the brute creation in its submission to his rule. But this lordship is not absolute. Man recognizes One that is superior to himself, and to whose dominion he is himself subject. In such dominion over the inferior creatures and subjection to the infinite Creator, he owns all men to be his equals. He has no superior among earthly created beings, to whose authority he could, by a law of his nature, feel bound to bow. The authority of conscience can therefore be recognized only as an enforcement of divine authority, which alone can be acknowledged as over all.

I. *The ground of the authority exercised by conscience over man is not human.* It receives its sanctions neither from ourselves, nor from other human beings standing on an equality with ourselves.

1. A self-imposed obligation is an absurdity. He who can impose a law can also dispense from it. If a certain act becomes a duty because I demand it, it ceases to be a duty as soon as I cease to demand it. It is vain to attempt to understand the mystery of the human soul while such contradictory elements are admitted as are implied in the notion of a self-obligating moral power. The soul can feel no ultimate obligation to do what it alone has enjoined: the thought is at variance with our whole mental organization. If something is enjoined upon ourselves, we have the power to enjoin the reverse just as soon as sufficient motives are presented. We may impose laws upon ourselves, but we cannot feel bound by them on the ground that we have imposed them; and when we do consent to obey them, on other grounds than that we must submit to our own authority, we do not for a moment resign the right to change the law as soon as sufficient reasons present themselves to

our minds. Properly speaking, such so-called laws imposed upon ourselves are not laws. They are resolutions formed for our own guidance, which have force just as long as they remain our resolutions, and not a moment longer. They are not obligations, but choices made, in accordance with which the will moves until these choices are supplanted by others. Conscience is not such a resolving power; its acts are not such choices or resolutions. Its authority continues, as every man's consciousness testifies, in spite of all motives for choosing in opposition to the obligation felt, and in spite of all resolutions formed in accordance with such motives to pursue a course contrary to its requirements. We must, by the constitution of our nature, recognize its authority, whether we choose or do not choose what it enjoins. It is a power that makes itself manifest in our consciousness as an imperative, whatever may be our attitude towards its utterances.

Man recognizes no law as obligatory which is merely human in its authority. To recognize the binding authority of conscience, if its obligations were cognized as imposed by the subject who possesses it, would involve a psychological impossibility, and reason would only ridicule its attempted enforcement. The idea is preposterous.

All the theories which derive the obligatoriness of that which is felt in conscience from certain operations of our own minds, whether as single acts or as productive of habits by frequent repetition, lie open to this objection. How can an act of the soul, whether it be an intellection, an emotion, or a volition, be recognized as binding so long as the consciousness remains that we are free, and may therefore have other intellections, emotions and volitions?

A. There can be no binding authority in an intellection. I have certain labors to perform to-day in my vocation. I must perform them. My conscience feels the obligation. Why has this feeling authority for me? Is it because my intellect has power to impose an obligation?

Some reply in the affirmative, and it is worth our while to examine the various methods pursued to account for it.

In the first place, there are some who maintain that the feeling has authority because the intellect has perceived the necessity of that which is required, as a means to secure happiness; the obligation is supposed to spring up as the result of this cognition, and to rest solely upon this intellection. But if my personal comfort is perceived to be best secured by omitting the work which conscience feels to be obligatory, how could the obligation be any longer felt? The experience of men is uniform, that the feeling of obligation remains, whatever opinions may be entertained as to the question whether obedience or disobedience would secure the greater amount of enjoyment.

Moreover, if the obligation were dependent upon my cognition of the comfort that would accrue to me by performing my labors, I have the liberty to forego my comfort, and therefore the liberty also to renounce the supposed obligation based upon its attainment. But the obligation remains whether the result of compliance with it be pleasure or pain. It is impossible to find a ground for the obligation in the action of the intellect promising happiness as the effect of a certain course. The obligation is no greater if we do perceive that complying with it will produce happiness, and no less if we perceive that obedience will only subject us to pain. All are conscious that the obligation is wholly independent of such calculations.

Secondly, there are others who assert that the obligation is upon me because the performance of these labors is perceived to be necessary to promote the happiness of others, so that I feel it to be obligatory because I perceive its utility. But how do we know this? Our minds are not capable of foreseeing the results of our actions upon mankind in general. As far as we can see, the performance of duty frequently seems to give pain, and the consequences of it seem often deplorable. Does this, though it is felt to be obliga-

tory, then cease to be a duty? Do we, as a matter of fact, cease to feel the obligation when we fail to see the benefits to mankind of doing what conscience dictates? Doing our duty does secure happiness to ourselves and to others: we do not doubt this. But we know it to be so only a priori, not a posteriori: it does so because God's will always leads to happiness. This we know by the revelation which He has given us of Himself and His purposes, but we cannot know it from our experience of the seeming results of individual acts. We have not the data for a reliable judgment in the case without taking the promises of God into the account. No one can have the knowledge, from his own observation, that any act will necessarily secure the greatest good to men, and if he feels obligation only as a result of such knowledge, he can feel no obligation at all. The fact is, however, that all do feel obligation quite independently of any such considerations, and often feel it when the immediate consequence will seem to be others' pain.

However, if our decision should be that the greatest good to the greatest number is secured by performing a certain act, how should that any more originate the feeling of obligation in the soul than our decision that agriculture is more beneficial to mankind than manufacturing? What authority is there in any act of judgment over against personal liberty? What makes the distinction between the authority of right and the force of expediency? Manifestly there is a limit within which human liberty is confined, beyond which necessity is laid upon us. There is a higher judgment than that of man, in subjection to which we were created, and our subjection to which is recognized in our whole mental constitution. Man can lay no yoke upon himself which he cannot freely throw off again. But the obligation which conscience feels he cannot throw off at pleasure; its recognition is a mental necessity, not at all dependent upon the intellect's decision respecting the beneficial results of the obligatory course.

Finally, the opinion that the obligation arises from a perception of the benefits which the obligatory course would confer upon others, overthrows all objective distinctions between right and wrong. If an act is supposed to be beneficial it would, according to this theory, be right, even though it were a direct violation of divine law. It would be very easy to persuade some persons that a cunningly devised scheme to defraud the rich for the benefit of the poor would contribute to the happiness of the greater number, because want would thus be relieved in some without entailing suffering upon others. The influence of such a scheme would indeed be dangerous, as right is always expedient and wrong inexpedient; but there are many who would not see this; and certainly it would not be difficult to evade all objections that could be made on the mere ground of ability. According to this theory any course is absolutely right which any one judges to be expedient, and such a thing as right, independently of any judgment respecting its consequences, has no existence.

It would be vain to reply that the theory does not leave the judgment respecting the utility of an act to the individual who performs it. Who, then, is to be the judge? Whether a thing is right I must determine for myself, another cannot determine it for me without reducing me to slavery. If utility to others is the condition under which we have the idea of right, I must perceive that utility before I can feel any obligation. This renders right not only a subjective sentiment simply, but even makes its cognition impossible, because only omniscience could determine what is absolutely beneficial to the greatest number. Hence there is no alternative but that what God declares to be right is so, whether its expediency be apparent or not, or that what man regards as useful is right, whether it coincides with God's will or not. But what man regards as expedient, man is often constrained to pronounce wrong; and when the two seem to conflict, it is not in accordance with the nature of

the soul to admit the authority of expediency over that of right. Morality would, according to this theory, be but a refined species of selfishness. With such a subjective foundation for right and obligation, rectitude could consist only in that which the desires of the heart suggest as expedient.

Against this whole view, which is subversive of the very foundation of morality, the fact stands forth clear in consciousness that there is an imperative in conscience which remains unaffected by any judgment respecting the effect of acts upon our own or others' happiness, and which is governed only by the cognition of right, whether this seems to be beneficial or injurious.

Thirdly, there is still another class of persons who are content with referring to the rational intuition of right, supposing that this furnishes a sufficient foundation for the authority of conscience. That this view commends itself more favorably to thinking minds than the utilitarian theory, is readily admitted. But that it solves the problem of the authority of conscience we cannot concede. The intuition neither furnishes a standard of rectitude, nor explains why such intuition should confront us with the superhuman authority which attaches to conscience. Is giving alms to the needy obligatory because we have a general intuition of rectitude and perceive that this special act is to be placed in this category? Its rightness is no more originated by the cognition than the whiteness of this paper is so originated. Neither the intuition nor the act of judgment arranging an act under the intuition, can create the right. The cognition presupposes the right as an object to be cognized. What, then, is right? No thinker would accept as a satisfactory answer the statement that whatever presents itself to us under the sanction of conscience is right. The ground of the authority which is found in conscience is the very subject under investigation.



Besides, all admit that wrong sometimes comes clothed with this authority.

Just as little can we be satisfied with the answer that everything placed under the so-called intuition of right is right; for, admitting that there can be no mistake in the general intuition, no one will be ready to admit that there could be no mistake in the judgment when it subsumes particular acts under the general idea. We certainly have no direct intuition of the rightness or wrongness of each motive or act: if we had, there could be no more diversity of opinion respecting right and wrong than there is respecting black and white. We judge a thing to be right by applying to it a certain rule. But that which gives the cognition authority is not at all the fact that it is based upon an intuition or upon any intellection whatever. Conscience does not feel the obligation of any cognitions as mere cognitions. The authority lies in the thing cognized; and if the intuition does not originate right, it cannot be the ground of the authority which attaches to conscience. The utmost that could be said is that the faculty of rational intuition is used in perceiving right, and this always excites the feeling of obligation when perceived. The feeling of obligation arises spontaneously in the soul, in virtue of the power which is called conscience, whenever there is a cognition of right; but when we account to ourselves for the obligation we cannot find its ground in the intellection by which the knowledge is obtained; and we cannot adduce such intellection as proof that that, the obligation of which is felt, is objectively right, as would be the case if the intuition were its ground. Not because an act seems to me right is it objectively binding, although that is the reason why its obligation is felt in conscience. It is binding because it is the expression of a will which is supreme and which all men, in the very inmost recesses of their souls, recognize as supreme. Not even if we had a knowledge of right and wrong in each case by intuition, as we certainly have not,

the ground of our feeling of obligation could not, ultimately, lie in the power of such intuitions, though the feeling would be mediated by them.

Fourthly, if there were any power which could be recognized as absolutely authoritative, most persons would probably agree that this distinction justly belongs to the discursive faculty. Some therefore seek the authority of conscience in that domain. But even reason cannot lord it over man, and especially not in the sphere of morals. The mere fact that it has decided upon a certain course does not make action coincident with the decision morally imperative. Reason cannot set aside liberty. We may do what reason dictates, or we may leave it undone, without committing a moral offense in either case. Reason does not make morality, although its instrumental use in moral questions is indisputable. I may choose to-day to work twelve hours, as this may commend itself to my judgment as best under existing circumstances; to-morrow I may decide that six hours will be sufficient for the purpose. But if it is a question of mere pleasure or profit, or adaptation of means to ends, there is no immorality in changing my choice and altering my decision. There is a sphere within which we may move with perfect freedom. Reason may select one course without making another wrong by the selection; it may subsequently choose the other without making the first wrong by the change. So far as reason is a legitimate legislator at all, it is only within the sphere of liberty; where there is no liberty of choice it is itself bound. Man cannot make a law which absolutely binds him, or which could excite the feeling of obligation in his breast on the simple ground of his reason's authority. He does what seems best to him; but what seems best to him may not seem so to another, and may not seem so to him at another time. His choice never becomes morally obligatory by the mere fact that reason has made it. There are, of course, cases in which its decisions are obligatory, because they are judg-

ments pertaining to right, and thus lie within the sphere of conscience; but this is owing to the subject-matter: they are never so merely in virtue of its own autocratic power. Where they are so, it is because a general law is given to which we acknowledge allegiance, and reason simply decides a certain thing to be enjoined in that law. That I must give to him that needeth when I have aught to spare, is very clear. Reason has no law to give in the matter and can grant no dispensation from it. It is a law which is obligatory upon me, and reason has no more to do with it than to understand its grounds as well as it can: it is a law that is binding whether I can comprehend its design or not. But when a person asks me for money on the plea that he is in need, I am not at once obliged by the law to give it to him. Reason must have a voice in deciding the question. I investigate the case and find that the person is really in need of assistance. Reason accordingly arranges the case under the general law, and draws the inference that to give to this person is a duty. But am I bound to do it because reason requires it? The answer is certainly plain. The mind can impose no obligation upon me. I am bound to do it because an authority greater than man's requires it of me. It is the will of God, which reason can no more render obligatory than it can release from. When the choice is within the sphere of God's commands, it is necessarily obligatory, because all these commands are so; but when it lies within the sphere of mere human reason, where no law renders any course imperative, it is free, and no decision of reason can render the action obligatory which is decided upon.

*B.* If the ground of the authority of conscience cannot be found in our intellections, much less can it be found in our emotional nature and its operations. To say that we have a special sense which inwardly apprehends the good and the right, distinguishing them as such by its very activity, contributes nothing to the elucidation of our subject.

For, so far as the feeling of obligation is concerned, which all find in their consciousness, it presupposes the cognition of right as the indispensable condition of its activity; and the feeling itself therefore cannot be the means of determining what is right or what is wrong. As to a special internal sense for the cognition of right, there is not a shadow of evidence that it has any existence. Facts prove that it does not exist. If it did, the want of agreement among men in reference to moral questions would be inexplicable. An appeal to such sense would decide any disputed question at once, just as certainly as an appeal to the sense of sight would decide a dispute as to whether an object is round or square. And if there were such a sense, it could only furnish the cognition of right, but give no reason to the mind for the authority which lies in the right so cognized. We might know a thing to be right by such a sense, but we could not know by it why the right comes to us with such an imperative power that we cannot release ourselves from the feeling of obligation. An act is not right because we feel it to be so, just as one cannot admit it to be right because another thinks it to be so; nor can we, on that account, know it to be right by the evidence of our feeling that it is so. The feeling is no criterion of the right, and if it were it would not explain why the right has such authority and why it excites the feeling of obligation.

Nor is the theory any more satisfactory when the feelings are assumed to originate the perception of right by means of association, and the ground of all obligation is assumed to lie in the very existence of such feelings. It is not to be doubted that there are emotions excited in our souls by the conditions and actions of voluntary agents who come under our notice. We experience gratitude towards a benefactor, pity for the suffering, resentment towards the cruel. We may transfer these feelings, at least in some of their elements, from the agent to his acts. The approval or disapproval, the admiration or scorn felt toward a person in

consequence of his conduct, may give rise to habitual judgments respecting the character of the acts which it involves. So far it might be admitted that the association theory coincides with facts. But how is this to explain the authority which all find in conscience? If the agreeable or disagreeable emotion awakened by a person does render the acts by which the emotion was caused lovely or hateful, and if this loveliness or hatefulness even be regarded, though without reason, as that which is meant when the terms right and wrong are used, how should that feeling of obligation which we experience in conscience be accounted for? A rose excites agreeable emotions: we admire it, and may be moved to take good care of the bush upon which it grows: but there is no consciousness of moral obligation in reference to it, and we experience no remorse if it is neglected, although we may regret its loss. If right is merely the quality in a person which excites benevolence and which, by association, is ascribed to his acts, why is not the quality which excites agreeable emotions, though it be found in an inanimate object, right also, and why does the feeling of obligation not attach to any impulse which may result from such emotions? Does it satisfy any mind that reflects to affirm that an act is right because we love the agent on account of it and, by association, love the act also, or to maintain that it is wrong because we hate the agent and therefore hate his act? If this were all that is involved in the conception of right and wrong, it would be utterly impossible to find ground in the cognition for the authority with which it presents itself to the mind and for the obligation which the mind feels.

The explanation by the feeling of sympathy with others has the same fault. Granted that we do approve the feelings of another when we adopt them by sympathy, and that we impute merit or demerit to acts which excite gratitude or resentment in us by sympathy with those who receive benefits or injuries, what follows? It is vain, from

respect for eminent men who thus endeavor to explain the phenomena of conscience, to strive to suppress the question which is fatal to the whole theory: is the thing right because, under the influence of sympathy, we approve or disapprove? Does the obligatoriness of that thing rest upon such a feeling? We cannot thus have a satisfactory foundation for the idea of right, and if we did succeed in persuading ourselves that such a feeling is just what the term right designates, we would find it impossible to give to ourselves any intelligible account of the imperative force which the cognition of right exercises in the soul. The facts of conscience would still remain unexplained. But is benevolent feeling towards one who has gratified a desire of our hearts, or resentment towards one who has prevented such a gratification or has given us pain, really right? It may be, or it may not. Whether it is or not manifestly does not depend upon the existence of the feeling, but upon the character of that which causes it: in other words, this question must be decided by other criteria. If we have a wrong desire, he who gratifies it does wrong, even though the gratification should excite our gratitude and, by sympathy, the gratitude of others who occupy the same moral position with ourselves. Whether the feeling is right still remains a question after the sentimental school, with all its various shades of opinion, has finished its analysis and made its explanations. It fails to furnish the light which the intellect seeks, and therefore fails entirely of the end which a theory must have in view. The mind will still urge the question "why," when such feelings are represented as having authority to impose obligations, and it will not be satisfied with such a "because." One man insults another, and the latter feels the impulse to smite him on the mouth. Those who were auditors and spectators of the act may have their sympathies strongly enlisted in favor of the insulted person. Is therefore the act of the one wrong and the impulse of the other right? Is there such authority in the

feeling that we must condemn the one and command the other? May not both be wrong? Certainly the question whether the feeling is right will arise in the mind in spite of every endeavor to suppress it by the pretense that it is itself the criterion of right; and the conscience will feel the obligation only when the mind has been satisfied that what the feelings demand is really right.

Why *must* I do what conscience enjoins? We cannot, in the very nature of the soul, recognize the authority of any feeling over our whole personality. Consciousness bears witness that our feelings are summoned before the forum of the intelligence for trial, and that they are never obligatory apart from some intelligible ground for the authority claimed. Never do we acknowledge the right of the sensibilities to exercise dominion over the intellect. To admit such authority would be degrading, as it would be setting aside the only powers which can know, and making ourselves the sport of those impulses and desires which are blind, and which require the constant supervision and direction of the intellectual powers; the more so as the feelings, though originally noble, have become debased by sin. Not even the feeling of obligation, which is the highest and the least subject to the influences of Satan, is capable of rendering that obligatory which it feels to be so. Not even this can set aside the intellect as needless within its domain: to do so would be to destroy all certainty and to render man the helpless football of circumstances. As acts of the intellect can, as such, impose no moral obligation, much less can the sensibilities, which are designed to be subject to the intellect.

C. Influenced by the truth of that which has been said, many, unwilling still to seek for the ground of the authority of conscience in a power more than human, have endeavored to find it in that product of repeated volitions, under the influence of thought and feeling, which is called habit. That this has a powerful influence in moulding the

opinions of men is a fact of constant experience. But the imperative character of conscience certainly cannot be thus accounted for. The adoption of certain customs, and the constant complying with them in thought and feeling and action, does not render that which has become habitual at the same time obligatory. Our habits often determine our choice; but when reason sits in judgment upon these habits, it does not recognize their authority to determine it, and cannot consent to pronounce that right which has been chosen, if no evidence can be presented than the mere fact of such determination. It cannot acknowledge their right to dictate. They are pronounced usurpers just as soon as they would presume to control the understanding. So far is the intellect from recognizing the existence of a habit as sufficient authority to control our whole being, that, when such claims are put forth, it repudiates them as utterly preposterous. All reasonable men agree, when they reflect at all upon the subject, that it is silly to attempt the justification of a course of conduct by making the plea that it proceeds from habit: what must we then say of a theory which not only justifies acts because they are habitual, but which even represents them as obligatory because they are habitual? If a man has formed the habit of daily worship, is this right because he has formed such habit? Such habits ought to be formed; doing God's will should be constant and thus habitual; but does the right grow out of the practice? Another man has formed the habit of gambling, to his great temporal and spiritual injury. Is this also right because it is practiced habitually? Habit has in itself no moral quality; we may become accustomed to vice and look with favor upon it because accustomed to it, but it does not thus become virtue. The intellect recognizes no authority in habit to impose obligation upon us; it goes back of the practice to ascertain the ground of obligation. We may gradually be led into habits which, just because they have become habits, seem to us all right; but this cannot satisfy us that they



are so when we once begin seriously to inquire into their moral character. There are some which, upon close scrutiny, become manifest to us as wrong, notwithstanding the sanction which custom has given them. Just as universally as the mind recognizes the authority of conscience, it refuses to recognize the authority of mere habit: it rejects the principle in the abstract; even when it is swayed by habit in particular cases. No mental act, however frequently repeated, or however powerful may have become its influence upon the will, has any such binding force as all men experience in conscience. Every theory which finds in conscience nothing more than a human power of self-obligation, conflicts with the testimony of consciousness and bears its absurdity upon its face.

2. There are some, however, who, while they concede all this, still persist in the claim that the authority is merely human. They deny that man has a self-obligating power, but still maintain that some men have authority over others, and that the exercise of this authority gives rise to the feeling of obligation in those who are placed under it. That there is no more foundation for this theory than for that just considered, will become manifest upon reflection.

A. We appeal to every man's consciousness in proof of the statement that we never feel obligation when commands are issued arbitrarily by our fellow men. The fact that my neighbor is a man renders him my equal, not my superior; and it is not in human nature to feel any obligation to submit to his will as a man. When he seeks to lord it over me the inquiry is forced upon the mind: by what authority does he claim to be my master? If he can show that he is a representative and minister of the Being whom I recognize as my Lord, cheerful submission is rendered; but then it is not the man's own authority to which I submit: the obligation is imposed by a higher power. Even when men have a servile spirit, their circumstances having been such as to prevent the development of a clear consciousness of

human dignity and as to dispose them to be menials, they are never so abject as to feel the obligation to be every man's slave who may arrogate dominion over them. They may cringe when tyrants usurp authority; they may be driven into a craven obedience; but they cannot feel the obligation to obey unless it is through some error of the understanding by which either the tyrant has been exalted above humanity or they have been degraded below it. But if the authority of conscience rested upon anything human, the exercise of that upon which it rests would necessarily produce the feeling of obligation wherever there is a conscience. As it is impossible to point out anything in man which does produce that feeling, the inference is inevitable that the authority has a super-human foundation. We may respect a man's wisdom or goodness, and be strongly influenced by these to comply with his wishes. But we are not bound by his mandates. We feel no obligation to do his bidding; we are conscious of being free even when we find it expedient to do what he desires. Nay, when he would arrogate authority over us, instead of feeling obligation to obey, we may consider it a duty rather to preserve our self-respect by making it plain to him that we are not his slaves, and that he cannot secure his ends by presuming to lord it over us. The man is wanting in true manliness who becomes the pliant tool of another, because that other has the effrontery to claim dominion over him. If he feels obligation to submit, it is obvious that his cognitions are at fault, and that he is governed thus by an erring conscience. In no man's consciousness can the mere authority of man be presented as the ground of feeling obligation.

B. But it will perhaps be replied that men not only do submit to the dictates of other men in fact, but that they also feel the obligation thus to submit, as is proved by the willingness universally manifested among men to obey the governments under which they live. Experience has shown

that the more faithfully conscience performs its functions, the more deeply the obligation is felt to be subject to "the powers that be." This is readily admitted. But it by no means proves that the authority of conscience rests on a human foundation. So far as the administrators of the government present themselves before us as mere men, alleging no authority beyond that which belongs to man as such, we feel no obligation to obey them. Wherever there is such a feeling under such circumstances, it rests upon an error of the intellect. A king or a president, considered as man merely, is not superior to the peasant and has no right to exercise dominion over him; nor will the peasant who is conscious of his rights, acknowledge such dominion if it be usurped—least of all will he inwardly acknowledge it in conscience. Nor can the authority of human laws, regarded simply as the expression of human will, give a satisfactory reason for the feeling of obligation. The will of a thousand men has no more binding force upon our souls than the will of one: it has no more authority over us when made public as a law than when given us privately as a command. This is a truth so well established in the minds of men that even heathen legislators perceived the necessity of enforcing their laws by a sanction higher than that of human authority. To secure obedience they found it expedient to represent them as embodiments of the divine will. Merely human law has no force in conscience: conscience does not feel obligation when it is imposed by mere human authority. All men who are conscious of their liberty claim and exercise the right of subjecting such laws to criticism, and of deciding for themselves whether they are just or unjust. We do not assume that they are right because the civil authorities have promulgated them—not even when we recognize these authorities as merely the ministers of Him who is Ruler of all, and therefore as having only delegated authority. As men, the officers of the government have no authority whatever over other men; as powers that are ordained of God, they are

respected and obeyed because of the divine ordinance. We feel the obligation to obey within the limits which God has Himself prescribed, because so far their authority is not merely human, but divine. But they have no power to regulate conscience—to make right or wrong by legislation. When they claim authority in this domain, we resent their presumption. Let the reader ask his own soul whether the right, whose obligation conscience feels, is ever recognized as such simply because men have pronounced it so and have enforced it by penalties. External obedience may be secured by threats of punishment if law be violated, but never do these effect the cognition that that which is thus enforced is positively right, and thus produce the feeling of obligation. We recognize the authority of conscience independently of all human laws. What is known to be right, conscience enforces, whether human laws sanction it or not. What is known to be wrong, conscience feels the obligation to reject, even though human laws have given it their sanction. Obedience to the laws of the country is a matter of conscience only because God has ordained governments and commanded submission: the authority is divine. Man cannot, according to the constitution of his soul, recognize an authority as binding that is not superior to that which he finds in his own nature. What is merely human lies in the sphere of human choice and liberty.

C. That men sometimes do submit to their fellowmen, where these are not clothed with superhuman authority, is a fact which proves nothing against our proposition, as is plain from what has been already indicated. On the contrary, the judgment which mankind pronounces in such cases confirms our view. For there is rarely any difference of opinion on the question whether submission is a duty, when the only claim urged in its favor is that some man demands it. All agree that before obedience can be felt to be obligatory, he must show his authority for demanding it. The declaration that he is a man and claims it in virtue of

his superior human powers, only renders him ridiculous. If such persons succeed in enforcing obedience by physical force, they are universally branded as usurpers and tyrants. No man declares himself to be bound in conscience when he has been coerced. Such coercion is possible, but it never produces a feeling of obligation to do what is done by compulsion. It is manifest, therefore, that when there is obedience to the will of another who has nothing more than human authority, it is either because deception has been practiced upon the mind, so that there seemed to be some authority above the human, or that the obedience is merely external which is not referred to a feeling of obligation as its motive.

II. *The ground of the authority of conscience is wholly divine.* Man is subject to his Maker, and is so constituted that the recognition of such subjection is a necessity of his nature. He may refuse to act in accordance with the obligation felt in his own soul, but he cannot refuse to feel the obligation of all that he recognizes as divine. That the human conscience stands in some relation to the Creator, who has assigned to each creature its station and office, and in whom we live and move and have our being, is a fact of universal experience. Reason cannot recognize any man's claim to lordship over his fellows in virtue of superior human endowments, nor of independence of all higher authority than his own; nor can any man set up such a claim without being recognized, by that very fact, as presumptuous. The feeling of dependence is innate in every soul, but it is recognized, as soon as it becomes clear in consciousness, as dependence upon a power that is higher than man's. It manifests itself in infancy as well as in manhood. In early years it impels the soul to submission where there is no authority to demand it; but this is because the intellect does not yet so conceive the personality in its relations as to have a clear idea of the source of authority and of the instrumentalities through which it is exercised. As the

child grows in intelligence and becomes conscious of its own dignity and destiny, and of the liberty which the gracious Creator has bestowed upon it, it asserts its independence of every merely human authority, and this the more energetically, the more fully it becomes acquainted with the Lord of all, to whom alone it is subject.

Not all, indeed, even in maturer years, have a clear knowledge of their relation to God in its bearing upon their relations to their fellow men. Conscience does not presuppose the degree of intelligence in man which would secure him against errors. Such perfection of knowledge exists in none. But the fact is indisputable that all men, in all ages and countries, recognize their dependence on powers above them. It is the feeling which underlies all religions. Not every person is brought to a knowledge of the true God, who endowed us with this feeling of subordination for the purpose of leading us to happiness through its instrumentality; but all men, when they exercise the power of reflection, make some account of the fact that it exists, and find some power in reference to which it is exercised and to which they accordingly feel obligated to submit. Hence the attempt to secure independence of the true God as He is revealed to us in the Holy Scriptures necessarily leads to idolatry, because those who acknowledge no subjection to the Lord of all, will still be subject to some power which serves as a substitute for Him. To assert liberty over against the dominion of God inevitably leads to slavery. Man cannot divest himself of the feeling of subordination. It is part of his mental constitution, and is instinctive in its character. He violates the law of his own soul and merely exposes his dishonesty when he claims to be supreme lord himself. He feels that this is not true, even when he has succeeded in obtaining the assent of his intellect to the claim by sophistical arguments. He has the feeling of obligation towards a higher power, whatever he may conclude that higher power to be. If he commits the

egregious error of casting off the obligations of divine law, to which he was designed by the Creator to be subject, the result must be, as it has uniformly been in such cases, that he becomes a servile tool of men. If the true Ruler of the universe, the God and Creator of all, is not known, or, being known, is rejected, some being will be substituted for Him by the mind, whether that being be real, as in the worship of the creature, or imaginary, as in the worship of the offspring of men's own brain; or, to state the same fact in its objective truth, if God is not recognized as Supreme Ruler, the devil usurps His place and makes men his deluded instruments, taking advantage of the human necessity of being governed by some power which is recognized as superior to man. Men have thus, in all times and climes, been made the dupes and slaves of the malicious father of lies, who compasses his ends, not by an open defense of godlessness or rebellion against Jehovah, which the conscience could never sanction, but by the arts of deception

The fundamental truth upon which the authority of conscience rests is that there is a God and that He must be obeyed. Beyond this our inquiries cannot extend. God has made us thus, must be the answer to all further questions respecting the reason why it is so. The soul has peace when it lives in subjection to the Creator's will, because in this way its mission is accomplished and its end attained: it cannot be at rest when the law inwrought in its very nature is disregarded. The ground of the authority of conscience is the will of Him who is supreme, which is right, and which has the soul's sanction as right. ♣

It might be supposed to follow from this that conscience must always obligate to that which is God's will, and that therefore the very feeling of obligation, in any particular case, would be the best criterion of the good and the right, as showing that that to which we are obligated must be God's will. The activity of conscience would thus be the means of cognizing what is the divine will, and accordingly also

of what is right. This is urged as an objection to the doctrine presented. But it is entirely unfounded. We have shown in a previous article that conscience cannot determine its own sphere and that its activity cannot be the criterion of right; because if it did this, there would be no erring conscience, and its utterance in one person would be a law for all. We have seen that the cognition of the good in concrete cases always precedes the feeling of obligation to perform it. The doctrine that conscience merely enforces God's will does not imply the assumption that what it feels to be obligatory is always right, although it is beyond controversy that God's will is always right. Its whole activity is certainly based upon the divine will. In the abstract it never obligates us to anything else but the will of God. We never feel the obligation to do our own will, or the will of our fellow-man, or the will of the devil as such. Conscience uniformly feels the obligation to do the will of God; that is, in our nature we never recognize any other authority over us, except so far as it is delegated, than that of the Creator, who has made us for Himself. But what His will is in any given case is not revealed to us in the constitution of our nature; nay, it is not even made plain to us who He is. That there is a Supreme Being, and that His will is obligatory, we cannot otherwise than acknowledge in our own souls. But we may fail to identify Him, and we may be deceived as to what His will is even when we know Him from the Holy Scriptures. We must use the means given us to ascertain that will in each particular case. What is known as commanded of God is at once recognized as authoritative, and conscience feels the obligation to obey; but what it is that God commands conscience does not show. The cognition is the antecedent of the feeling of obligation. The possession of a conscience does not relieve us of the necessity of using the faculties with which our Creator has endowed us to find the right in the concrete. The right is obligatory, whether we know it or not; but it can be felt as



obligatory only when we know it. We are bound to do God's will, as an objective fact; and we cannot otherwise than recognize the obligation abstractly. But in any particular case we must first know whether the act in question is really the divine will, before we can recognize its obligatoriness. The obligation, as a subjective experience, is founded upon the cognition of the right. I am bound to do God's will because it is right; but I can feel bound to do any particular thing only when I know it to be God's will, and therefore right. I do not know it to be right because I feel obligation, but I feel obligation because I know it to be right. The obligation exists prior to cognition, but conscience cannot feel it unless the cognition precedes. The intellect may mistake the wrong for right, and thus bring conscience into a false position; but the obligation always rests, as a subjective experience, upon the conviction that what is felt to be obligatory is right, even though this should be an error. When we say that conscience forbids deception and that it enjoins charity, we presuppose that the intellect has cognized the one as wrong and the other as right; and we revolt at the statement that the one is wrong or the other right simply because of this activity of the conscience. We see at a glance that this would involve the pernicious error of predicating the rightness of deception or the wrongness of charity in itself, if the mind should fall into the error of judging thus. If religious fanatics, for example, deem it right to deceive for the purpose of accomplishing their own ends, which present themselves to their minds as divine, they no doubt have the feeling of obligation to do this; but it is easy to perceive that this feeling is no satisfactory proof to any sober mind that this deception is right.

But just because mistakes are made by other powers upon which conscience is dependent, it is necessary to have a rule by which the good may be ascertained with certainty. God is the only absolute Source and Judge of the good and

the right; and our feeling of dependence evinces the consciousness of our own inadequacy in the sphere of morals and religion. We feel the need of an authoritative guide; we are so constituted as to accept such a guide; we require the authoritative guide to be good and right, and we assume the existence of a Supreme Being who is absolutely good, and whose will is absolute authority. If sin had not entered into the world, we should have known God fully without a supernatural revelation, and we should have known the right unerringly. But sin has entered into the world, rendering it necessary that we should have light from without, and exposing us to manifold error in its apprehension. An appeal to conscience in a disputed case is therefore entirely unwarranted. The conscience of him who says yea is just as authoritative as that of him who says nay. Conscience, in the abstract, certainly sanctions no wrong, and it therefore cannot sanction the wrong, as such, which some individual has assumed to be right and of which, as subjectively right, he feels the obligation. But the point to be decided is, which is right and which is wrong. This cannot be done without appealing to a standard which both parties in a dispute recognize as authority. And all do recognize the will of the Supreme Being, to whom all are subject alike, as the authoritative Judge. The intellect cognizes what is right by ascertaining what is the will of God, and the cognition of this arouses the feeling of obligation. If a mistake is made in the knowledge of the Being who is supreme, or in the cognition of His will, this does not render the right wrong or the wrong right; but it does give rise to false actions under the sanctions of conscience. The whole difficulty arises from man's liability to err since sin has entered into the world; but man's adaptation to feel the obligation of divine law, and the office of conscience thus to feel, remains clear; and equally clear is the objective ground of all authority of conscience in the will of God alone.

That there is in all men a certain remote knowledge of a Supreme Being, to whom all men are subject, is too plain from each individual's consciousness and from the consent of all nations to be controverted. The heathen writers bear ample testimony to the existence in the soul of a certain fear of superior powers and of a certain propensity to adopt some kind of religion and engage in some form of worship. It is not at all material to our present inquiry whether unaided reason can find the true God, although the testimony of history is plain enough upon this point. It is not to be disputed that the truth which man has, be it much or little, he holds by nature in unrighteousness. Professing themselves wise, men become fools. St. Paul reasons with the Athenians, showing them how irrational was their idolatry, though the principle from which it logically followed is true, namely, that there is a God to whom homage is due. They know this by nature, and they might have known that their idolatrous religion was inconsistent with the knowledge which they possessed. "God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that He is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands, neither is worshiped with men's hands, as though He needed anything, seeing He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; and hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after Him, and find Him, though He be not far from every one of us: for in Him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also His offspring. Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device." Acts 17, 24-29. He argues that the heathens are therefore inexcusable in their wickedness, inasmuch as they did not live according to the light which God gave them

independently of the written revelation.—"For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse." Rom. 1, 19-21. The cognition of God's will, as the authority whose obligation conscience feels, is to some extent possible among all men, whether they have the full light which shines into our souls from the written Word of God or not. The law which the Gentiles feel to be obligatory is divine, and is recognized as such: it seems to them divine even when, by reason of the blindness of their hearts, that is felt to be obligatory which is not so in fact. They could no more feel the obligation of a law which is known to be merely human than could the Christian, although they could more easily be deceived as to what is divine law. "For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another." Rom. 2, 14. 15 The law whose work is written in heathen hearts is the same which was written on tables of stone. It is only the means of knowing it that are different. The source of knowledge is no more the conscience in the one case than in the other. But the conscience alone feels the obligation of that which is cognized as divine, however the knowledge may have been obtained, and feels the obligation of that only which is so cognized. Its activity thus certifies us that God has created us for His service, and that we are accomplishing our destiny only when we live in subjection to His will, who is the Supreme Lord. Conscience does not

reveal to us what is right in the concrete, but it does reveal to us our subjection, in the very constitution of our nature, to Him who has created us. Whenever the will of God is known we feel obligation; we never feel obligation when that which is enjoined does not rest, really or supposedly, on the will of God. Idolatry grows out of man's mistakes as to who the Supreme Being is, which mistakes of course have their ultimate source in the corruption of the human heart; the so-called errors of conscience result from mistakes as to what is the will of the Supreme Being.

The notion that anything else but God's will could awaken the feeling of obligation, and that therefore the authority of conscience could ultimately rest upon anything else, is in conflict with the experience of all mankind; while the proposition that all recognized authority lies in the Creator and addresses itself to us as His will, is coincident with every man's consciousness. Conscience has no authority aside from this. If it can be shown in any case that obligation is felt by an individual without a ground in the authority of God, the feeling has no validity as proof of the objective obligatoriness of that which is felt to be obligatory. Whatever seems to us authority which obligates us, must first be recognized as the will of the Being to whom we recognize absolute subjection.

Our Savior said to one who addressed him as good: "Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is God." Matt. 19, 16. Whatever He wills is good and right; and He has so constituted us that we can feel the obligation only of that which is known as good and right. Conscience is the power to feel the obligation of right, which is God's will; but the authority of the right is always recognized, when its foundation is investigated, as lying in the Divine Being who created us for His glory and accordingly formed our nature for submission to His will.

The ground of the authority with which conscience confronts us is always the will of God; and the only reason

why anything else is ever regarded as authoritative is that the understanding is darkened by sin. Men "professing themselves to be wise, became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and to four-footed beasts, and creeping things." Rom. 1, 22. 23. The semblance of authority is in these, the reality in God alone.

Placing the authority of conscience in anything else than the divine will, is tearing man away from his God and rendering him a miserable slave of any creature that has the hardihood to arrogate dominion over him; for man is not an autocrat, and will be in subjection to some being. Conscience points us to God as exclusive authority; "for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve." Matt. 4, 10

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## THE FORMULA OF CONCORD.—AN HISTORICAL SKETCH.\*

In many respects the Formula of Concord is the most unique and significant among the official confessional writings of the Lutheran Church. No other brings out into greater detail the genius and spirit of the Church of the Reformation. It is the full fruit of more than six decades of Evangelical thought and history. In origin, character, contents and history it is a singularly interesting and important document. It has become such in a special sense of late in the Lutheran Church of America through discussions and controversies which have brought it into the forefront of theological and inter-synodical debate. As is well known the General Synod officially accepts only the Augsburg Confession and unofficially Luther's Small Catechism. All the rest of the Lutheran Church of America with one

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voice accept the entire Book of Concord, although they do not all agree upon the interpretation of each and every portion and upon the practical bearings of the principles laid down. The General Synod in its rejection of the Formula can indeed point to historical precedence, such as the Church of Denmark, which never accepted the document *ex-professo*, but has done so as far as the contents are concerned. There is, however, no precedence in the history of the Lutheran Church for the rejection of other symbolical writings outside of the Formula of Concord. Tacitly or formally the rest have all been accepted by our church everywhere. In this respect at least the General Synod has broken entirely with the history and standpoint of the Church, while in its explicit and pronounced rejection of the Formula of Concord it can appeal only to a small minority, and to a refusal of these chiefly for other reasons than objections to the doctrinal Contents of the Formula. The fact that a strong agitation has begun in the General Synod in favor of a more pronounced, historical and confessional Lutheranism, has led the antagonists of this new and happy departure to take a determined stand against the Formula of Concord as the expressional exponent of strict Lutheranism. They see in the new agitation a movement in favor of the position of the General Council and others who accept the Formula of Concord. The Formula accordingly has fallen under the fire of criticism, and it is claimed that an acceptance of it is not necessary to vindicate one's claim to being a genuine Lutheran; that on the contrary, it furnishes no basis for a union and an agreement of Lutherans, and that it contains doctrines unknown to the older Confessions and to Luther. In other words, the Formula is declared to be not a further and fuller development of the principles laid down in the Augsburg Confession, but has made additions to the faith of the Lutheran Church and has been in truth what its enemies at its publication claimed it to be, a *Concordia discors*. There can be no doubt about it that there was a Lutheran Church

before there was a Formula of Concord; and consequently a full and frank acceptance of the Augsburg Confession without an *ex-professo* subscription to the Formula suffices to the claim of Lutheranism. But, on the other hand, a rejection of the Formula of Concord on the ground of its doctrinal contents vitiates the claim, for the simple reason that a full acceptance of the Augsburg Confession involves the acceptance of the Formula of Concord also, the latter being professedly or in reality only the full development of what is contained in germ or general statement in the former. This a survey of the origin of the Formula we will make clear.

The Formula of Concord grew out of the controversies which arose chiefly after the Reformer's death in the Lutheran Church itself. It aimed at a settlement of these and almost in every case *did* settle these. It actually did unite and not separate. It was a declaration of peace, not one of war, and to claim it as the latter shows gross ignorance of its history. After Luther's departure in 1546 the Evangelical Church entered upon a period that endangered her very existence. Her organization as a church was greatly imperiled by the Smalcaldean war and the Augsburg Interim; her inner development was in danger of destruction by the violent doctrinal controversies of the theologians. The beginnings of some of these antedate the death of Luther and had been suppressed or restrained only through the great power of his personality and his clear-headed conservative and evangelical principles he inculcated. The danger that the Reformation would degenerate into a Revolution was present from the beginning, and the development of a radical and extreme reaction to Romish error in some quarters was the most natural thing in the world. It requires but little knowledge of psychology or the philosophy of history to understand this. Such movements as those of Carlstadt or the Zwickau prophets are the natural products of a period which breaks with old lines and enters



upon new departures. That the Reformation did not thus degenerate, but was strictly and exclusively a restoration of old gospel truth and did not set up new error against old, this is owing to the fixed and firm adherence of Luther to the Scriptures. Only the recognition of the wonderful power which the formal principle of the Reformation, that the Word of God is the sole source of Christian doctrine and also the absolute rule for Christian teachings, enables us to understand and appreciate the great and good work of Luther. That he was able to resist the temptation and not pendulum-like swing into an opposite extreme of error to that which he recognized as wrong, is one of the most remarkable phenomena of history, for which he does not always receive the credit he deserves. Herein he showed himself a man of God and herein consists a leading element of his greatness.

In this respect he had no successor fully his equal. Had this been the case even the political turmoils into which the Protestant Princes became involved immediately after the death of Luther might not have interfered seriously or permanently with the healthy development of the Evangelical Church. The greatest dangers were not those from without and from the Romish party. The blood of the martyrs has always been the seed of the church, and even in those days when the church was so intimately united with the State and its weal and woe seemingly depended so much upon the protection and defence of the Sword, the existence of the church could and would not have been permanently endangered even if the political protectors of the Protestant cause had been crushed by the superior armies of the Roman Catholics, Phoenix-like the Evangelical Church would have risen from the ashes, for she represented God's cause. Temporary and local embarrassments or worse might have followed, but in the Providence of God, the gospel work would have prospered again. Rather, the great danger to this cause came from within and largely hovers around the

revered name of Melanchthon. Noble man though he was and much as he did for the Evangelical cause, it is not going too far to claim that he never independently was a firm and consistent exponent of Evangelical principles. What he did was done as Luther's lieutenant: in the battle itself he never was an independent leader. The weaknesses of his education, which was chiefly classical and humanistic, as also of his character, which inclined to peace and compromise even at the sacrifice of principle, incapacitated him for independent generalship. During Luther's life these tendencies had been held in check by the word and example of the Reformer, though they were not unknown to him, as his criticism of Melanchthon's alterations in later editions of the Augsburg Confession sufficiently shows. His intense love for the *Magister Germaniae* and his appreciation of his talents and work caused Luther to treat with extraordinary patience and indulgence these weaknesses of his coadjutor. But when after the death of the Reformer, the spiritual leadership in the Protestant cause quite naturally fell to the lot of Melanchthon, and this leadership became all the more difficult on account of the political perplexities of the times, then Melanchthon's natural propensities unfolded themselves without hindrance. Soon two parties were antagonizing each other in the Lutheran Church; the Melanchthonian, or Philippistic, ready to make concessions both to Rome and to the Calvinists, and having its headquarters at the University of Wittenberg; and the strictly, sometimes too strictly, Lutheran party, which had its headquarters at the newly established University of Jena. Both parties appealed to the Augustana, although the Philippists appealed only to the *Variata* edition; but the parties differed in their interpretation of this Confession. Melanchthon's interpretation of this document in the direction of Reformed theology was such that in 1558 Calvin wrote his thanks for the document prepared by Melanchthon

at the close of the Frankfort Diet of Princes, and the Roman Catholic writers of those days demanded that the State withdraw the rights granted the Protestants on the basis of the Augsburg Confession on the ground that the Protestants themselves had proved untrue to this confession. This weakness of Melancthon, that compares so drastically with the firmness of Luther, is acknowledged on all hands by the historian of every school, although not one would dream of charging the gifted author of the first Evangelical Confession with treachery or an intentional departure from the principles there inculcated. The character and education of the man, the trend and developments of the times all combined to make him too yielding and submissive and too easily deceived by the false promises of meeting him half way made by the adversaries.

Even a man like Dorner, a leading representative of Mediating Theology in Germany, and accordingly rather inclined toward the compromise-loving position of a Melancthon, in his *Geshichte der Protestantischen Theologie in Deutschland* (p. 331 and 332) gives such a presentation of the matter. In fact this departure from Luther's standpoint is a fixed fact in history, although it is not always interpreted in its correct bearings and results. The new rationalistic school of theology in Germany, that of Ritschl, which claims to have rediscovered the original Luther and distinguished him from the later Luther whose "scholasticism" has left its imprint upon the Evangelical Lutheran doctrinal system of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, make this dissent and departure of the later Melancthon a point of prominence. In fact there can be no doubt on this subject, although it would be a crime against history to make him directly or intentionally responsible for all the erroneous teachings which tried to find its way into the Lutheran church and which were rejected by the Formula of Concord. Certain, however, it is that the school which with more or less reason called itself by his name, was in general opposed

to the truly Lutheran views, although the latter school too allowed itself to be driven into certain extremes. The Formula of Concord is not an anti-Melanchthonian doctrine throughout. In fact some of the positions maintained by him were there given symbolical expression. . This will appear when the controversies, which eventually made a document like the Formula an absolute necessity, are looked at more closely. Thomasius (*Dogmengeschichte*, Bd. II, p. 237 sqq.) divides them into three groups. The first stands in direct connection with the fundamental principles of Protestantism and includes the *Antinomistic* (dealing with the relation of the Law and Gospel and their relation to to each other; the office of the law in conversion as a means to produce repentance as also its office for the converted) and secondly, the *Osiandrian* controversy, dealing with justification, its nature and the character of the righteousness which we secure thereby. The second group of controversies sprang out of the Interim matter, including the *Adiaphoristic* (concerning the bearing of the Ceremonies or *Adiaphora*), then the *Majoristic* (on the necessity of good works), the *Synergistic* (on the relation of faith to the natural will of man and of the activity of the latter in the work of regeneration) and also the *Flaccian* connected with the Synergistic (on the question whether original sin belongs to the essence of fallen man). The third group of controversies circle around the doctrine of the Lord's Supper, of the Person of Christ and Predestination, and deal accordingly with Reformed and Reformanizing tendencies. The subject of Christ's Descent into Hell was also brought into consideration here. All of these controversies are the subjects of separate articles in the Formula of Concord and on the basis of Scriptural and in further development of the principles laid down in the Augsburg Confession decides these cases and thus restored harmony to the almost dismembered Lutheran church. Such a settlement by the *whole* Lutheran church became absolutely necessary because the efforts made

in detail by the separate Lutheran States threatened to do more harm than good, however noble the intentions were. In order to counteract the evil leaven almost every Lutheran prince, princelet, country and city had prepared a *corpus doctrinae* of its own covering more or less the debatable territory. In this way the number of State and local confessions were fast becoming legion, and the conditions for even a more powerful process of disintegration were at hand. The preparation of a general document, moderately and scripturally formulated, which could express the true doctrines on the lines of the earlier confession of the church, became an historical necessity for the existence of the church. Unfortunately the centrifugal forces in the Lutheran church have generally been more powerful than the centripetal, and such a work of love and reunion as was the Formula was a blessing to the church. Only ignorance of the antecedents of the Formula can fail to see the hand of Providence in the preparation and character of the document.

The Antinomistic and Majoristic controversies extended from the years 1527 to 1559, and a final settlement was not reached until the publication of the Formula of Concord. The question at stake was the exact relationship sustained by the moral element to the religious or the Christian system according to the principles of the Reformation. The emphasis laid upon salvation as a free gift of grace without merit or work on the part of man may, superficially judged, lead to a false conception of justification which excludes the necessity of moral regeneration and may content itself with an idle and inactive enjoyment of the redemption given to faith. The danger of a suppression of the moral and ethical element, owing chiefly to a reaction against the undue prominence and false position assigned to it in the Roman Catholic system, easily tend to a false Antinomism. To the present day yet the standard argument of the Roman Catholic theologians against the Evangelical doctrine of

justification by faith alone is, that this leaves a wide open door and portal to an immoral, godless life, and to an ease and security inconsistent with a living Christianity. Doelling, in his earlier writings, brought out strongly this view. The Antinomistic teachings within the Protestant Church of the Reformation period were chiefly of two kinds, the one represented by Johann Agricola, who denied the necessity of the law and of repentance *before* faith, because a conscious act; and, secondly, by Nicolaus Amsdorf, who denied the necessity of the law and of good works *after* faith had become a reality and fact in the heart of the believer. Georg Major then went to the extreme of claiming that good works were necessary to salvation.

Agricola felt fully convinced that his standpoint was perfectly consistent with the material principle of the Reformation; in fact, was the logical outcome and result of that principle. If faith is the central sun of the system, he thought that even in the preparatory work of salvation the Law has no province or work. Luther himself has strongly emphasized the difference between the Law and the Gospel. "They are as different", he says, "as heaven and earth." Agricola attacked Melancthon, when the latter in his Visitation articles of 1527 assigned to the Law and to repentance as the basis of the Law a position *before* faith. He maintained that this destroyed the oneness and entirety of faith if anything was acknowledged as good which did not proceed from faith. The Law of Moses he did not regard as necessary for doctrine, either in the beginning or at the middle or the end of justification. The Gospel is all-sufficient through the Holy Ghost, who without the aid of the Law can effect the conversion of men, simply by holding up before men the sufferings and atonement of Christ Jesus. Indeed, the Law can scarcely be called the Word of God, and sin does not consist in the transgression of the Law but in offending Christ. The Law belongs in the Court house but not in the Church or the pulpit; its office is only

to effect an outward order and discipline. God judges only according to faith or unfaith, hence He cannot judge according to the Law, for there would then be two witnesses. Nor is it the province of the Law to prepare for the Gospel; the Law can effect only despair; it is God who prepares for the reception of the Gospel. These were the sentiments of Agricola and some of his followers translated these principles into practice and lived in fleshly ease and security, especially since they endeavored to secure a basis in teaching the *liberum arbitrium*.

To the surprise of Agricola, Luther took a determined stand for Melanchthon, and on this occasion published his celebrated expositions of the relation existing between morality and religion (cf. Walch, XX). In 1536, when Agricola appeared on the arena a second time, he wrote his Six Disputations. Luther concludes that without the Law faith is a *deus ex machina*, and that the undue exaltation of the view in the Gospel was Manichæan. If there were no Law there could be no sin and no guilt, and punishment for sin would be unjust and Christ's work of atonement unnecessary. The denial of the Law is thus a relapse into heathendom, and such an unethic doctrine he calls a "Spiritual Epicurianism". It is poisoned by eternal unrepentance and spiritual boldness. Then too faith would be a good work, indeed the only good work. On the contrary, the Law is a schoolmaster to Christ by arousing the conviction that without Him all is lost. Also *after* the generation of faith the Law has a work to do. Sin, by justification is removed only in so far as guilt is concerned; from this guilt, not from the punishment, must we first be relieved. Of sin however the Law brings the correct knowledge. Agricola himself in 1540 recalled and recanted his error.

Melanchthon continued to emphasize the importance of the law and of morality in the Christian life. Later, after the controversy with Cordatus 1536, he maintained that new spiritual obedience was necessary to salvation, since

such an obedience *must* follow reconciliation with God. Good works are not meritorious causes, but are the negative condition of salvation (*conditio sine qua non*). Luther did not approve of this sentence of Melanchthon, and the latter dropped it, but he continued to teach with renewed emphasis that the free will must be active in the work of conversion in such a degree as it has been made free by grace and can do good works. His object was not to assign to works merit or position in salvation, but to oppose an inactive passivity in the work of salvation. But when the compromising plans with the Roman Catholics were begun in 1540 at Regensburg and still more at the Interim of 1548, he conceded that in those who are to be saved there must be a begun obedience, which his Romish opponents however did not restrict to the obedience of faith, as he did. Going still further than he, Georg Major in 1552 maintained that good works were *necessary* to salvation, although *not* to justification; to which Justus Mening added that they were necessary to the *maintainance* of faith. Neither wanted good works to be regarded as meritorious; but they could easily be understood in this sense and were thus understood. Naturally these views aroused wide opposition, which even led to the expression of the statement that good works were *harmful* or dangerous to salvation. This was the view of Amsdorf, who uttered it in 1559. Andreas Musculus said that the Law was indeed necessary *before* faith, but was useless *after* faith. This was a new form of antinomianism, which excluded the Law entirely out of the process of sanctification. Both parties appealed to Luther.

The Formula of Concord (702, 591) gave the Evangelical and Scriptural answer to this controversy, namely, that good works are necessary because they have been commanded and are our duty and because they are the natural expression of faith and gratitude. For the Christian, however, they are no forced necessity and are not to be mixed with the article of justification. They work neither justifi-



cation nor salvation, but are the effects of justifying faith, but the necessary results. Good works have influence only on the degree of salvation. The Formula recognizes in the Law a *usus politicus* in civil matters; a *usus paedeticus* or *elencticus* in awakening repentance; an *usus normaticus* or *didacticus* for the Christian in directing and guiding the development of his spiritual life. See the articles in question.

The Osiandrian controversy began as early as 1549. The subject of the controversy was the nature of justification whether it was a forensic act or making just, and the relation of sanctification to justification. In contrast to the Romish teachings Luther had recognized a double act of God in the work of the salvation of man. He made a distinction between the justification of man as an act of God *for* man, and the sanctification as an act of God *in* man. The former consisted in this that since Christ has once for all been sacrificed on the cross for the sins of the world, the merit of His death is ascribed to each and every believer. Justification is a juridic act, man is *declared*, not *made* just. The latter follows the former and continues throughout life never absolutely completed as long as man is flesh and blood. A beginning of this controversy was made first in antithesis to the teachings of Melancthon, emphasizing strongly the merits and work of Christ and also in this respect fully represented the Evangelical doctrine of Luther. The point attacked was the view that our guilt had been atoned for by the suffering obedience of Christ; and this in 1563 drove Parsimonius (Karg) of Ansbach, to claim that the active obedience of Christ had no part or portion or merit in the work of salvation. The Law demands either fulfillment or punishment; not both. If the active obedience of Christ is to be accounted for our benefit, then there needs be no obedience on our part. The active obedience of Christ accordingly has no vicarious worth. He recanted in 1570. In a similar manner, and as early as 1551 Franz Stancarus said that Christ's work for us was the pay which

He had made for us through the sufferings of His human nature: therefore not Christ's divine nature, but only His human nature came into play in the work of redemption. For if the divine nature of Christ here comes into consideration, then a contradiction would arise, that this nature would be both the offended party and the mediator. Naturally Melancthon protested against such caricatures of his views, but still with strong emphasis of the suffering obedience of Christ over against the active, in so far as he in no way connected sanctification with the vicarious life of Christ in us, but placed it under the point of view of the freedom of action restored to man by Christ.

Andreas Osiander, since 1549 Professor in the University of Koenigsberg, developed in contrast to this a seemingly or really Romanizing view of justification. He could not agree with the exclusive emphasis upon historic action that took place in Palestine fifteen hundred years ago, and that only Christ's work but not Christ's person was brought into the foreground. He declared the doctrine that because of the forgiveness of sin we are reckoned righteous and not on account of the righteousness of Christ who lives in us by faith, to be a doctrine colder than ice. True righteousness must be something positive and living. If righteousness consisted only in being bought free, then the merely external act of Christ in paying the ransom would justify us just as we buy a slave from the Turks, and man would be justified without his consent, knowledge or faith. The will of Christ alone without the sinner's acceptance would suffice. But the Scripture teaches a higher kind of righteousness; it is not merely the absence of guilt, but an essential good, such as God has in the beginning created in man; it is making man just. This good is God's gift; it is an infusion of righteousness, and justification is not a forensic, but rather a remedial act. The sacrifice of Christ's death is only the negative condition of justification; its positive condition depends upon the human nature of Christ

(Menschwerdung) the condition of which in man constitutes justification. Osiander opposed the evangelical view because he claimed that the religious subjective element in the work of justification had been ignored by Luther and his friends. He demanded a *justitia essentialis*. The controversy was conducted with more than ordinary vigor and even rancor. Count Albrecht of Prussia called in the two Swabian theologians Brenz and Binder to pass on the merits of the case, who in the main decided against Osiander, although the latter had often been misjudged. Osiander had however died already in 1592; but the controversy continued for 10 years longer. His chief defender, Court Preacher Funck, was beheaded but not on account of his adherence to this view. He had been engaged in political trickeries. Martin Chemnitz was appointed to draw up a teaching norm on the points in dispute and his *Corpus Doctrinae Prathenicum* presented the Osiandrian view as heretical. The Formula of Concord (585, 6), places the active and passive obedience of Christ in the right proportions. The actual obedience of Christ, transferred to the faithful, render them just before God. Faith itself, however, takes hold of the person of Christ, in the manner in which Christ has been revealed in His work. Through Christ's vicarious merits we are not only free from guilt, but also stand as holy ones before the Lord; not indeed because we have a holiness of our own, but through the vicarious obedience of Christ which is ours through faith. But Christ dwelling in us is not inactive; rather He works in us a living righteousness. The good works are always present with true faith. But these are never our justification; this is to be distinguished dogmatically from Renewal and Regeneration. The former is effected through the highpriestly total obedience of Christ, the regenerative points to the royal activity of Christ, the granting of the Holy Spirit.

The *Adiaphora* controversy, (1548-55) on the question whether certain Roman Catholics without ceremonies should

be permitted in the Evangelical Church, arose in connection with the Leipzig Interim, and in Romanizing tendencies and concessions. This "agreement" or *modus vivendi* between the two contending parties agreed that the majority of these ceremonies were to be regarded as "Adiaphora," or Middle Things, not affecting faith. The pronounced Lutherans resisted this view, maintaining that things in themselves *Adiaphora* can under circumstances become of greatest importance for doctrine and faith. The matter under controversy fell away of itself through the religious Peace of Augsburg, but this Formula of Concord nevertheless lays down the evangelical principles in the case in a special article, the tenth.

The Synergistic Controversy extended from 1555-67, and the subject under dispute was the co-operation of the human will in the act of conversion. Luther already in his discussions with Erasmus and in harmony with Melanchthon's first edition of the *Loci* had denied to man all independent power of appropriating saving faith. In later editions of the *Loci* and the Augsburg Confession Melanchthon had conceded a certain degree of co-operation to the human will; and finally in the edition of 1548 had defined this as the ability of appropriating the preferred grace (*facultas se applicandi ad gratiam*), and in the Leipzig Interim had dropped the Lutheran Shibboleth *sola* in connection with Christian faith, although all along denying any merit to man in the work of salvation. Luther had patiently borne with the weakness of Melanchthon, but had rebuked him for making changes in a book which was no longer his, but was the public confession of the whole Church. After the Leipzig Interim the controversy broke out, and the stricter Lutherans, such as Amsdorf, Flaccius and Wigand, of Jena, worked out a document representing the Lutheran views. The ups and downs of the leaders in the debate were many. A final settlement was not effected until it was accomplished by the Formula of Concord. Extreme views had been expressed by

both parties, Flaccius even going so far as to claim that sin had changed the *essence* of man. The Formula (581, 677) pronounced against all Synergism and Semi-Pelagianism and brought back the doctrine to its Scriptural character.

The Crypto-Calvinistic Controversies of 1552-1572, and their relations to the doctrine of the person of Christ, especially on the ubiquity of the glorified body and the *communicatio idiomatum* are the best known of all the discussions of that day. They all sprang from the fundamental differences between the Lutheran and the Calvinistic views of the Lord's Supper, and history has certainly justified its refusal of Luther at Marburg, rejecting the hand of Zwingli with the words, Ye have a different spirit from ours. Probably the greatest danger that threatened the Lutheran Church of that period came from this insidious source of Crypto-Calvinism, and the Philippistic or Crypto-Calvinistic party succeeded in poisoning for a time the Evangelical Church in the land of its birth. The intrigues and fate of the Crypto-Calvinists is one of the saddest chapters in the annals of the Lutheran Church.

These controversies compelled the lovers of the Evangelical Church to do something to restore peace and harmony, and the movement inaugurated with these intentions ended in the preparation of the Formula of Concord. It was however a work of long and patient toil, and the extreme caution and care with which the friends of the movement consummated the task was evidence enough that the peace of the church was the leading motive and incentive in the agitation. Very few if any other church confession has had such friends of peace behind it as the Formula had. The chief honor under God for this belongs among the theologians to the excellent character of the Tuebingen University, Jacob Andreae, and among the Princes to the Elector August of Saxony, whose bitter experience with the Crypto-Calvinists had led him to learn and love the purity of Gospel truth. Asked by Count Julius of Brunswick in 1568, in conjunction

with the "other Martin", i. e. Martin Chemnitz, to make a visitation in Saxon lands, and thus by a personal inspection of the chief scenes of the controversies to see and hear for himself the actual status of affairs together with the efforts at a reunion, e. g. at the Frankfort and Nannborg Diet in 1558 and 1561 and at the Augsburg Colloquium of 1568, Andreae already in that year (1568) prepared his *Entwurf aus fuenf Artikeln zur Wiederherstellung der Eintracht in der Lutherischen Kirche*, which document, together with the recommendations of Julius of Brunswick and Wilhelm of Hessen to the Elector August, he presented to the professors at Wittenberg, then the leaders of the Philippistic party. However on account of the lack of honesty and fairness on the part of these all conventions and discussions remained fruitless down to the year 1574, when the first suppression of the Crypto-Calvinists took place. Now first the way for the reunification of the Church was prepared. In 1573 Andreae had already published Six Sermons on the Discussions in the Evangelical Church, but these had not resulted in any permanent fruits. Now these were revised and formulated into eleven positive and negative propositions, which, corrected according to the suggestions of Chemnitz and Chytraeus, bore the name "Swabian-Saxon Concordia Formula" and were subscribed by many of the Wittenberg and Lower Saxony divines. This document is the first basis of the later Formula of Concord. A second is found in the so-called *Maulbronner Formel*, prepared by the two Wuerttemberg theologians Lucas Osiander and Balthasar Bidebach, which the Count of Henneberg asked to have prepared for presentation to the Elector August and did send to him in February 1576. The latter in the meanwhile had sent his well-known letter, of November 21, 1575, on the subject of the reunion of the churches, to his Privy Councillors and had given a new impetus to the movement and very correctly attacked the various *corpora doctrinae*, which had been adopted by different Lutheran countries, as a hindrance to

this work of restoring harmony. He demanded that they should be put aside and a common *corpus doctrinæ* for the whole church, containing the three Symbols, the Unaltered Augsburg Confession and its Apology, the two Catechisms of Luther, the Smalcald Articles and a further document prepared by moderate and peace-loving theologians on the articles which had come into controversy since the publication of the Augustana. In other words, it was the sketch and plan of the future Book of Concord. After consultation with other Evangelical Princes and States it was resolved that a convent should be held for this purpose. Accordingly, in May 1576, eighteen Lutheran theologians, among them Musculus and Koerner of Frankfort on the Oder, Chytraeus of Rostock, Andreae of Tuebingen, Chemnitz of Brunswick, and others, in the presence of the Electoral Confidential Secretary Johannes Jeutsch, met in the Castle Hartenfels, near Torgau, to prepare the document in question. The result of these deliberations was the so-called "Torgische Buch", the full title being "*Torgisch Bedenken, welchergestalt oder massen vermoege Gottes Wort die eingerissene Spaltung zwischen den Theologen Augsburgischer Confession christlich verglichen und beigelegt werden moechten. Anno MDLXXVI*", which was prepared on the basis of the two documents mentioned. It contained already the twelve articles of the present Formula of Concord and in the same order. After a close examination by the Elector and his Advisors the document was sent to the other Evangelical leaders and States and cities for examination and criticism. Twenty-five different opinions were sent in and these in conjunction with several that were received later, were submitted to a close examination at a new convention held in the cloister Bergen, near Magdeburg, by the three theologians, Chemnitz, Andreae and Selnecker, who at the same time prepared an extract or summary, namely the later Epitome of the Formula, in order to meet the objections which then as now were raised against the length of the proposed new confes-

sion. The final form of the new symbolical writing was given to it at a third convent held at Bergen, at which the three theologians mentioned were assisted by Mûsculus, Chytraeus and Koerner, 19th to 28th of May 1577. The first official publication of the document in the Book of Concord did not take place until 1580, and not until a number of other conventions had been held in the matter with other representatives of the Evangelical Church, and at a convention at Jueterbogk in 1579 the Préface had been prepared by the revisors of the *Torgische Buch*. The name Formula of Concord it received at once, and soon crowded out the other names *Buch der Konkorden* and *Bergische Buch*. The German is the authentic text. The Latin translation by Lucas Osiander and revised by Selnecker and Chemnitz was in its final form not published until 1584. Cf. for the details of the intricate literary history of the Formula the Conservative Reformation of Dr. Krauth

The Formula of Concord is divided into two chief parts, the *Summarische Begriff* or *Epitome* and the *Gruendliche Erklarung* or *Solida Declaratio*. Each of these two parts has twelve articles, of the same title and contents, the one giving in brief, the other in detail and with argument, the proposition laid down, the former giving 1) the *status controversiae*, 2) the *Pars affirmativa* or the true proposition, and 3) the *Pars negativa* or antithesis, the false doctrine condemned. The *Solida Declaratio* has not this threefold division of the articles, but furnishes rather the arguments and proof, both the *dicta probantia* of Scripture and the citations from the Fathers. Both parts have also an Introduction on the principle and methods according to which theological controversies are to be judged, and the second part has also a brief Préface.

The first article of the Formula treats of Original Sin, condemns the extravagant claim of Flaccius that sin has corrupted the substance of man, and shows that this conflicts with the three articles of the Creed. The second article



treats of the Free Will, condemns Synergism and gives all the glory to the Holy Spirit in the conversion of man, so that conversion does not spring from three causes, the Spirit of God, the Gospel, and man's will, but only from the first two, while the will of man is at first passive or resists until God's Word has changed it. The third article treats of the faith that justifies before God, and is regarded as the apple of the eye in the Lutheran system of doctrine. This article is directed against the views of Osiander and Stancarus, and the view is rejected that Christ is our justification either according to His divine or according to His human nature alone, since He had rendered obedience according to *both* natures. To justify signifies not to make just, but to pronounce just, and sanctification must not be mixed with justification. Then, indeed, as the fourth article shows in detail, good works must follow, as fruit grows on trees, although the expression that they are *necessary* to salvation, or that they are dangerous to salvation, must both be rejected. Article fifth treats of the Law and the Gospel and article sixth on the so-called third use of the Law, and then deals with the Antinomian controversy. The first of these two articles discusses the use of the word "Law" and "Gospel", and emphasizes the fact that the latter does not preach repentance and punishment, but rather that which condemns sin is the Law. And as the Law leads to Christ, it too is a means of grace in the hands of the Holy Spirit. The regenerated too cannot dispense with the teachings of the Law; for by it he can learn what kind of good deeds are acceptable to God and he avoids the danger of adopting his own methods of worshiping and serving God, which could be dangerous, as he still is in the flesh. The seventh article treats of the Lord's Supper and is directed against the Reformed system and defends the Lutheran. The eighth by a natural transition treats of the person of Christ, and especially brings out in bold relief the glorification of the human nature and the doctrine of the *Communicatio*

*idiomatum.* The ninth, a short article, treats of the Descent of Christ into Hell, and shows that the whole Christ entered hell, and that as a triumphant conqueror. The tenth article treats of the *Adiaphora* controversy, and the eleventh of Predestination. And the twelfth of the other churches who have never accepted the Augsburg Confession, such as Anabaptists, Schwenkfeldians, Anti-Trinitarians, etc. Then follows as an appendix a *catalogus testimonium* for the doctrines of the Person of Christ, by Chemnitz and Andreae, after the writings of the Fathers, which however is a private document and does not constitute a part of the Symbol.

The Formula of Concord was accepted by almost the entire Lutheran Church, and when, as in Denmark it was not formally accepted, it was not because it was thought to contain un-Lutheran teaching, but for local or personal reasons. In the very beginning it was subscribed to and accepted by 3 Electors, 20 Princes, 24 Counts, 4 Lords, 38 Imperial cities, and about 8,000 pastors. Some States accepted it later. With regard to the principles and doctrines inculcated, these are the further elucidations of what the earlier confessions had laid down. Thus the Formula of Concord itself states and claims. Its authors aimed to reunite the Lutheran Church on a Lutheran basis, all the controversies having sprung from the fact that a leaven foreign to the genius and character of the Church had been introduced. Cf. on this fundamental matter the distinct statements of the Formula itself, namely the *Praefatio* to the *Solida Declaratio*, then the section *de regula atque norma fidei*; *Sol. Dec.*, § 19 and 20, and especially *de aliis haereticis et sectariis*. *Sol. Dec.*, § 1-6. The plan of the Formula problem has in its more modern aspects been discussed recently in a manner highly satisfactory to the friends of genuine and historic Lutheranism, by Professor Jacobs, of the Philadelphia Seminary, in the Magazine of Christian Literature for June, 1892, p. 177-188. It is in reply to the article by Professor Richards, of the Gettysburg Seminary, in the same journal for April, 1892, p. 1-11, in which an attempt

was made to defend the General Synod's rejection of the Formula on the ground that the latter stood in conflict with the entire confessions of the Church and could not furnish a basis for a union among the various sections of the Lutheran Church. The reply of Dr. Jacobs is complete and exhaustive and a most notable contribution to Lutheran theology. The richest storehouse for the study of the theology of the final confession of the Lutheran Church is of course Professor Frank's *Theologie der Concordienformel*.

GEORGE H. SCHODDE.

### POLITICS IN THE PULPIT.

In our form of civil government so much responsibility rests upon the citizens, that Christians must needs give some thought to political questions. These involve duties from which right-minded citizens of the kingdom which is not of this world cannot, as living and laboring in the world, think themselves exempt. And ministers of the gospel too are men moving among men, with human rights and human duties. They unquestionably share the responsibility of other citizens. But their position is such that the exercise of their influence in the domain of politics may easily give offence and create disturbance in the church. Hence it is that the question about political preaching and the minister in politics so often recurs in current discussions.

No doubt much confusion is introduced into these discussions by the frequent failure to distinguish between the preacher and the citizen when the rights and duties of the minister are under consideration. It would be an inexplicable thing if a man should lose his rights in the state by becoming a pastor in the church. The injustice of such a procedure is plain to every mind that is capable of forming an intelligent judgment in the case. The pastor remains a citizen, and is amenable to the laws of the land in which he lives, just like other people; and he, like other people, is bound to give unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, as he

is bound to give unto God the things that are God's. "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God." Rom. 13, 1. True Christians can have no sympathy with the fanaticism that confounds the kingdom of Christ with the kingdoms of this world, and regards the establishment of the former as the displacement of the latter. "Concerning civil affairs they teach," says our Confession, "that such civil ordinances as are lawful are good works of God; that Christians may lawfully bear civil office, sit in judgments, determine matters by the imperial laws and other laws in present force, decree capital punishment according to law, engage in just wars, act as soldiers, make legal bargains and contracts, hold property, take an oath when the magistrates require it, marry a wife or be given in marriage. They condemn the Anabaptists, who forbid Christians these civil offices. They condemn also those that place the perfection of the gospel not in the fear of God and in faith, but in forsaking civil offices, inasmuch as the gospel teaches an everlasting righteousness of the heart. In the meantime it does not abolish civil government or the domestic state, but requires urgently the preservation and maintenance thereof, as of God's own ordinances, and that in such ordinances we should exercise love. Christians therefore must necessarily obey their magistrates and the laws, save only when they command any sin; for then they must obey God rather than man. Acts 5, 29." *Augsb. Conf.* Art. XVI. The doctrine that when men are sanctified by the grace of the gospel they ignore all temporal orders and relations and withdraw from all the business of life, is based on a total misapprehension of the divine economy. Christians are to be the salt of the earth. Their calling is not to retire from the society of men and from the work which men are to do for earthly subsistence and protection and comfort, whether they are Christians or not, but, with the peace of God in their hearts and the purpose to serve the Lord for the glory of His name and the good of their fellow-men, to do this work more effectually by obedience to His holy will. If some men who are not Christians engage in the business of the world in a worldly

spirit and thus corrupt all their work by the sin that is in them, that is no reason why men who are Christians should refrain from that work, instead of doing it in the spirit of love and thus rendering it a holy work acceptable to God. There are voters and office-holders who are not God-fearing men, just as there are husbands and fathers, mechanics and merchants who are not God-fearing men, but obviously that does not prevent a Christian, who is a God-fearing man, from being a husband or father, a mechanic or merchant. Christianity does not do away with social relations and order, but enables men to live in them according to the divine intent and to do their duty in them as a divine service. The best Christian will be the best citizen. And the minister, like every other Christian, will not regard himself as divested of the civil rights or exempt from the civil duties which belong to all men, whether they are Christians or not, or whether they are ministers or not. So far those are in the right who plead for the political privileges of preachers.

This would imply that a pastor has not only the right to vote, as he has the duty to be subject to the powers that be, but also to use his influence for the promotion of good government. As in our country the power and therefore the responsibility rests with the people, he has a right, with voice and pen, to advocate measures which seem to him best adapted to promote the public welfare and the elevation of men who seem to him best qualified to secure the adoption of such measures. The rights which he has as a citizen are not curtailed by his calling as a Christian or his special calling as a pastor.

How far he may deem it wise to use these rights is, however, a different question. The rights must be conceded, and no one should, from considerations of expediency in their exercise under varying circumstances, deny their existence. The Church would do a wrong if it forbade the minister to cast his vote at the polls. It would be an interference with his rights as a citizen, at the very least; it is a debatable question whether it would not even be an interference with the performance of his duty. He cannot safely submit to such an infringement, and the

church is at fault if trouble arises from his refusal to subject himself to its usurpation of powers which the Lord has not given it. So also he has a right to have an opinion on any question that is submitted to the vote of the people; and why should he have less right to express and advocate his opinion than any other citizen? There is no scriptural ground for denying such right. But the minister can and should exercise his judgment in the use of his liberty. He can deny himself many things that the State does not deny and the church has no authority to deny him. In our opinion he is wise to forego even the right of voting if in his estimation, taking the spiritual as well as the temporal welfare of man into an account, he can accomplish the greater good by declining to cast his vote. And on the ground of expediency it hardly seems to us a debatable question, whether wisdom does not forbid his advocacy in public speech of political measures that have become subjects of party controversy. Ignorance and prejudice, not to mention fanaticism and malice, will be almost certain to use his work against him, however well intended it may be, and will seek, not without success, to cripple his influence in the church. The good that he may accomplish, or expect to accomplish in the state will thus be far overbalanced by the evil that results in the church, and his well-meant efforts only end in mischief. Therefore while the church cannot justly forbid such action by the minister on the ground of divine law, it can appeal to his love and his prudence to prevent such an exercise of his rights, and he can, in the exercise of his Christian liberty, refrain from it. He is not bound to make political speeches, and will not, if he has charity and wisdom, use his liberty to the prejudice of his ministerial work.

But the question assumes an entirely different character when it pertains to politics in the pulpit. What is to be preached by the Christian minister is not a matter of human liberty, but of divine command. He may have his opinions on all sorts of subjects, like other men, and as a man of education and culture, who observes and reads and thinks, he will not fail to exercise his judgment and form

his convictions on current questions of thought and life, especially as these pertain to the intellectual and moral improvement of mankind. But his opinions in literature and science, in social reforms and civil policy are not that which it is his calling and mission to preach. His commission as a minister of the gospel is to preach the Word which was given by inspiration of God, to teach the people all things whatsoever the Lord has commanded, so that they who hear him hear the Lord Himself, from whom there is no appeal, and thus to give knowledge of salvation to His people by the remission of their sins. He is not called to be a teacher of science and art and literature in the Christian pulpit, but a preacher of the good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people. He has a right to his opinions on political questions and to the influence which he may exert as a citizen to give them practical effect in the laws of the land and their faithful execution. But in the pulpit he is a messenger of the Lord of hosts and a representative of the Christian congregation. There he has no right to advocate any cause or any opinions that lie outside of the commission which he has received to preach the gospel of salvation through Jesus' blood. It is not only unwise, but it is rebellious usurpation to assume the authority to deliver another message than that which the Lord sent him to deliver and the Church in the Lord's name called him to deliver. One who does this is an unfaithful steward. "Thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God: he that heareth, let him hear; and he that forbeareth, let him forbear." Ezek. 3, 27. "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." Isai. 8, 20. "I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: Preach the Word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves, teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto

fables." 2 Tim. 4, 1-4. When the Lord in His infinite love sends men forth to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ unto the saving of souls, it is not a slight offense that those men profess to go with these divine credentials and clothed with divine authority, but instead of preaching the gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation, preach their own opinions, which have no power to save or sanctify the soul. "The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; and he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord. Is not my word like a fire? saith the Lord; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces? therefore, behold I am against the prophets, saith the Lord, that steal my words every one from his neighbor. Behold, I am against the prophets, saith the Lord, that use their tongues and say, He saith" Jer. 23, 28-31. Even if that which these prophets of their own thoughts announce to the people were truth as this may be drawn from nature and reason, it would still be a grave offense against God and man to substitute this, in its impotence to save, for the blessed gospel of grace which bringeth salvation. It frustrates the merciful purpose of God, who offers eternal life through His Word, and robs the people of the gracious gift which was designed for their reception. Therefore even supposing the opinions inculcated in political preaching to be correct, they are not the power of God unto salvation which the Lord sent the minister to preach; they form no part of that supernatural revelation which he is to set forth with all authority in the Lord's name, and they do not bind the consciences of men, so that there is no escape in time or in eternity from the obligation which they lay upon us. Only God's Word can save, only that has authority in the church, and only that must be preached.

The violation of God's will and command in this regard not only deprives souls of the blessings which He designs to confer upon them by the gift of His truth and brings them under the bondage of human opinions and commandments, but it cannot fail to cause dissensions and make trouble in congregations. In the first place, there will no



doubt always be some, and where the Scriptures are diligently studied it is to be presumed that there will be many, who cannot be content to accept the husks of human notions in lieu of the bread of heaven, and who for conscience' sake will not submit to the imposition in silence. Have they not a right to inform the minister that they did not call him to be their teacher in questions of political expediency, and that they cannot recognize the duty of paying him a salary for doing what they never wanted him to do, and neglecting what they expressly required of him? Are they wrong when they declare that if they want a teacher in any branch of human science and learning they will select and appoint one for the purpose whom they regard well qualified for that kind of work, but that they have not chosen him for it, and would not think of calling him to the ministry for any such purpose? And if the minister in his confusion should insist that his political preaching is consistent with his ministerial calling, he would undoubtedly secure a following, and dissension and division would be the probable outcome. In the second place, there will no doubt always be some who do not agree with the preacher in his political opinions and who therefore, even if they do not deny his right to bring politics into the pulpit, will protest against the policy advocated and the advantage that is taken of the pastor's position in the Church to promote objectionable measures in the State. Of course the pastor will have followers to defend his views, and the result will be the introduction of political quarrels into the congregation and ultimately divisions. The departure from the Lord's rule that His Word shall be preached, and thus only that which can be enforced by divine authority, cannot otherwise than be ruinous in its consequences as it is sinful in itself.

We are aware that political preaching is sometimes advocated in a form and under restrictions that seem to guard it against the objections that have been urged. It is said that if the minister preaches the whole counsel of God, the law as well as the gospel, he cannot avoid setting forth the duties of rulers and citizens, and that this is not only his right but his duty. Certainly: there can be no dispute

about that on the basis of Holy Scripture. If by political preaching is meant the inculcation of God's law in regard to those who govern and those who are governed, we have everything to say for it, nothing against it. When the preacher has a "Thus saith the Lord" for what he proclaims, he need fear nothing; whether people will hear or whether they will forbear, he can be of good cheer: he speaks on the Master's authority, and the Master will take care of the consequences. But the things which God has commanded are not properly matters of state policy, but of divine law, which is right and good, whether we can see the expediency of the course prescribed or not. To insist that Christians must be subject to the powers that be, which are ordained of God, and that we must not resist the power, even though it should be froward and make demands that seem to us unreasonable, is not political preaching in the proper sense of the phrase. That is the Lord's command, and neither the ballot-box nor the legislature can make it otherwise. Advocating in the Christian pulpit tariff or free trade, prohibition or non-prohibition of intoxicants, war measures or peace measures in complications with foreign governments, direct or indirect taxation, and a thousand other topics of a similar sort, is political preaching; for these are matters of policy in civil government in regard to which Christians, who are heartily agreed in their absolute submission to the Lord's revealed will, may differ as citizens. They are matters which the Lord has not decided in His Word, and in regard to which the minister has therefore no word of the Lord to announce; they are matters which do not pertain to the work and welfare of the church, and in regard to which the church has therefore no need and no calling to give a decision, to which the minority would be required, for the sake of love and peace, to acquiesce in silent submission; they are matters in regard to which every citizen, whether Christian or not, may have his opinion and exert his influence, but with which, as a matter of state policy, the church and its pastor as such have nothing to do. Such political preaching is a grievous sin against the divine law respecting the duties of

the Christian ministry, and a mischievous mixing of Church and State that can only prove injurious to both.

Doubtless much of the modern disregard of the solemn divine authority of the Christian minister and subjection of the sermon in its contents to the same criticism of reason which is passed upon all other public speakers, is due to the impious conduct of but too many ministers, who use the pulpit to ventilate their opinions and give expression to their sentiments on all sorts of popular questions, instead of preaching the Word and publishing God's thoughts as revealed in Holy Scriptures, which allow of no diversity of opinion, because they are not subject to our judgment and require absolute faith and obedience. Political preaching is only one of the forms in which this unfaithfulness to the ministerial calling is exhibited, to the great injury of souls and of the Church in her glorious work. Let ministers keep in mind that they are commissioned to do and to teach, and they will preserve the dignity and authority to their holy office and make full proof of their ministry in saving souls.

M. LOY.

## EDITORIAL.

### OUR MAGAZINE.

In closing the twelfth volume of our periodical we may be permitted to say a few words about its past and present and future.

The MAGAZINE was begun because of a profound conviction that in the providence of God the Ohio Synod had a call to propagate and defend the pure truth of the Gospel which He has committed to her, that to make the best use of her opportunities and gifts she must do this by means of the English as well as of the German language, and that such a publication as this was necessary for the purpose. Its design was purely to render services in the cause of truth as by the grace of God it was given to the great Church of the Reformation to believe and confess it. With all its shortcomings our MAGAZINE has kept this end steadily in

view, and with all the imperfections attaching to its work, it has not been in vain in the Lord. Love's labor has not been lost.

Are the reasons which moved to the commencement of the periodical still in force, or could now the labor spent upon it be more effectively employed to promote the same end through some other channels? So far as the error of absolute predestination is concerned, the advocacy of which by a synod with which we stood in those fraternal connections threatened danger to our churches, the battle is fought and won. Missourian Calvinism has little power and influence within our synodical bounds, or in the English Lutheran community generally. So far as that is concerned we might consider the work of our *MAGAZINE* accomplished and the necessity for its continuance removed. But that was not all that called our theological journal into existence. The needs for a maintenance and defense of the pure Gospel as the Evangelical Lutheran Church possesses and confesses it is as great as ever; and our conviction remains unchanged that our Ohio Synod is called to do this in the English as well as in the German. As we see it, we would not be found faithful if, instead of pushing the work in all directions, we consented to abandon it in any department.

Considering that our Synod has not spoken of discontinuing the *MAGAZINE*, it is due our readers that we give a reason for even hinting at such a result. So far as we have been able to observe there is little or nothing done to secure a larger circle of readers among those for whom the periodical is especially intended, even many of the ministers of our own synod who read English failing to take it. In consequence of this the periodical is published at a pecuniary loss to synod. But that is not the worst feature in the result. Under such circumstances intelligent people will not wonder that some come to the conclusion that such an English periodical does not meet a want in the Church and therefore involves a needless expenditure of strength which could be utilized in other directions. But that is not our only motive for speaking of the matter. The demands of the *MAGAZINE* have been too exacting upon the editor to be

long endured. Those in our synod who have a message to deliver through such an English publication are apparently so few that doubts arise on this ground whether the periodical is needed. We will not dwell on the painfully suggestive subject. But this it is due to say, that the present editor, worn out and weary, can not be expected to bear burdens as he was wont to bear them in earlier years.

Our heart's desire is that our MAGAZINE may continue to live and to give a reason for the hope that is in us as Evangelical Lutheran Christians. But to this end we have an earnest request to make of those who believe the truth which we advocate and who therefore never doubt that this truth of God will be a power also among the people who speak the English language. This request is twofold. In the first place this, that when they meet with brethren, privately or publicly, at conferences and synods, they speak a good word for our publication and seek to extend its influence by increasing the number of its readers. In the second place this, that our ministers study the Bible and the Book of Concord and the grand theology of the Lutheran Church until their hearts burn within them and they *must* testify of these things. It is sad that apparently so few can find the time, or have the inclination, to pursue learned studies and become helpful to others in seeing and doing the Lord's will. Some surely could, if they would; and these ought to bethink themselves, that the talent was not given them to be hid away in uselessness, but to be employed in the service of God and of their fellowmen. Modesty is all right, but it is not in place when it is a barrier in the way of confessing Christ and declaring His truth. See that you have the heavenly light, then let it shine before men.

We hope by the help of others to improve the MAGAZINE in the coming years, and solicit their help in the good work of teaching the Lord's will. And may He bless it to the glory of His name!

## THE LIBRARY AND ITS CHIEF BOOKS.

We are always glad when we hear of young pastors who are diligently striving to gather a good working library. It is an evidence that they appreciate the great importance and high responsibility of their calling as teachers of the people, and that they are not disregarding the instruction of the apostle: "Give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine; neglect not the gift that is in thee"; "study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." 1 Tim. 4, 13. 14; 2 Tim. 2, 15. While much can be done by observation and meditation to advance in knowledge and in power, without books the best possible progress can not be made and the best possible work can not be done. It is much more profitable for the young minister to have a good library than to have a richly furnished parlor.

Of course books are not to be collected for display, but for use. Little good will come of it if money is spent for finely bound volumes to be placed for show in costly cases. There is better use for money than that, as there are nobler aims for ambition than that. The pastor needs books for study, not for display, and they are valuable to him in the proportion in which he uses them and profits by their use. If a minister is not studious, his good opportunities only render superficial and uncertain teaching less excusable. If, on the other hand, he has a mind to work and to make the best of his opportunities, his profiting will appear, even though his circumstances are such as to keep his library comparatively small. He will at least have some books, and among these will be the best that the world has.

First and foremost among these is the Bible. That is *the* Book to be studied. All the rest are merely auxiliaries. From it the minister is to derive all the matter which he is called to teach. He is to give the children the sincere milk of the Word; he is to give the advanced members of the congregation the strong meat of the Word. He has nothing to bring to the people but the Word of God as it is given by inspiration in the Holy Scriptures. "Teach them to observe

all things whatsoever I have commanded you." Matt. 28, 20. "I charge thee therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom, preach the Word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." 2 Tim. 4, 1-4. The truth which we may know from our own mental constitution and from the employment of our mental powers upon the world around us, which, as God's work, is a manifestation of God's power and, so far as the work shows the mind and purpose of the Maker, a revelation of His will, is not that which the Christian minister is sent to teach. There seems to be no end to the confusion into which men, blinded by sin, fall in this regard. There is some truth which science and philosophy can teach. But a person need not be a Christian to learn it, except so far as the supernatural revelation throws light also on nature, which is indeed more considerable than infidels know; and one need not be a Christian to teach it so far as nature reveals it to the mind unenlightened by the revelation given in the Bible. That is not at all what God sent prophets and apostles to teach. They were sent to proclaim to a lost world the truth unto salvation in Christ, about which and about whom nature teaches nothing and knows nothing, and about which and about whom it is therefore in no respect surprising that science and philosophy knows nothing, though it is to intelligent Christians, who have through the supernatural revelation learned what natural revelation could not teach and was never meant to teach, somewhat surprising that men otherwise showing power to reason logically should argue from their ignorance to the non-existence of that which they do not know, though others know it very well, which is as when the blind man argues that color is impossible because he sees none, though others see it and are daily gladdened by its beauty. The word given by inspiration of God, and which as a revelation

of God's mind and purpose in regard to our lost race can be known only by such inspiration and revelation, is the message which the Christian minister is to deliver. This he is to teach, and only this. And this is contained in the Holy Scriptures. It is contained with divine authority only in the Holy Scriptures. It is all contained in these and nothing else is contained in them. They are the Word of God which is to be taught to a perishing world, and by which the perishing world is to be rescued from sin and death. It is therefore impossible that a Christian minister should faithfully discharge the duties of his office if he does not study this Word. If he does not bring that, he furnishes no bread for the souls entrusted to his charge, and they must famish. If he does not study the Word, he fails to possess himself of the very thing which the Lord sends him to communicate to His people, and he is an unfaithful ambassador of Zion's King. The Bible is the treasury whence he is to draw the precious pearls to enrich the congregation. With the study of that he is to be occupied daily all the year round.

And next to that, in the esteem of a Lutheran pastor, should stand the Symbolical Books. Laugh, if you choose, but listen. These books are well-nigh four hundred years old, you say, and are therefore antiquated and out of date. How could a pastor keep abreast with the times by studying such rusty, musty old tomes? What do they know of our modern improvements? Let us admit it: they are old. They know nothing of railroads and steamships, telegraph and telephone, mowing machines and sewing machines, and all that. They were written before the time of Spinoza and Kant, of Bauer and Strausz, of Darwin and Wellhausen, and philosophy and science and criticism have made tremendous strides since their time. Admit it all; then go to work like men of sense and study your Book of Concord! The world is progressing, certainly, perhaps progressing most of all in worldliness; and those whose business it is to teach science and philosophy will fall behind if they do not learn what modern investigations and researches have brought to light. But the minister is not a teacher of these things. That is not his mission and his calling. His busi-



ness is to preach the Word. And that is in the Bible. With all respect for the enlightenment of this century, it is only in the Bible. It was there too in the sixteenth century, when our symbols were written. And all the science of this century of progress has not been able to add one jot or tittle to the revelation which is given in Holy Scripture, or correct or modify one thought or word of the living God, or take aught away from it. Therefore "continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; and that from a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." 2 Tim. 3, 14-17. To these Scriptures our fathers gave earnest heed, and they knew whereof they affirmed when they confessed and declared their faith in those precious writings which we call our symbolical books. Study them; next to the Bible they are worthy not only of repeated reading, but of earnest study. The proof of this will be found in the practice and the resulting profit. They will make many a point clear that seemed obscure, and the firm confidence which they exhibit in the promises of God and the triumph of His cause will strengthen the soul. Often the very objections that are raised against our Confessions show great ignorance of their contents and manifest the need of studying them in order to understand clearly the precious truth which they set forth and defend.

Our pastors should be diligent, industrious men, the importance of whose work should guard them against the temptations of ease and indolence and self-indulgence. And a good share of their work must needs be done in the study if they would be efficient and successful workmen. To this end books are needed. Be intent on gathering a good library for constant use. And that the right use may be made of it, let the Bible always be the chief book for study, and next to it the chief of uninspired books, the Book of Concord.