

THE UNION SEMINARY MAGAZINE

NO. 2—NOV.-DEC., 1896.

I.—LITERARY.

THE DIVINE ORIGIN OF THE SCRIPTURES.

The fundamental question of the christian religion is the origin of the Scriptures. It is fundamental because the answer we must give to almost all other religious questions depends on the answer we must give to it. What we are to think about God and his attributes; about the law and its penalties; about sin and its consequences; about Christ and his salvation; about life and its duties; about death and its issues; about the future that lies beyond death, and the destiny that awaits the righteous and the wicked; what we are to think about these and number of other subjects, is determined by the conclusion at which we arrive as to the source whence the Bible has come. If it originated with men in the exercise of their own unaided powers, its contents are merely human speculations, having no more authority than human reason can confer. But if it came from God, and, in all its parts, is a record of divine truth, its teachings on all subjects come to us with authority that precludes all debate, and that demands immediate obedience.

A very important question, then, is, how may the ordinary reader of the Book, who has no acquaintance with its original languages, and who has no time for protracted study of books on the evidences, come to a satisfactory conclusion as to its divine origin, so that he may be able to rest upon its teachings all the weight of his eternal interests without any misgivings that his hopes will at last go up as dust.

EVANGELISM.

In Acts 13:1-4, we have Scriptural authority for this department of church work. The Holy Spirit directed the CHURCH to separate Paul and Barnabas "for the work." These loyal evangelists went out UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE CHURCH. In addition they were ordained ministers of the gospel; and, as duly-constituted evangelists, they did what they had been authorized to do, viz.: organized churches and ordained elders. The attainment of the end in view was not attempted through high-pressure, unscriptural methods, but simple reliance on the preaching of the Word of God. In view of these facts is it not high time for self-constituted evangelists to take their bearing and pay some respect to divine authority?

Is it not high time for ministers and churches that countenance spurious evangelism to heed the admonition contained in II. John, vs. 11-12: "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed, is partaker of his evil deeds?" Instead of SPEAKING "unto the rock," as directed, Moses SMOTE IT; true, water gushed forth, but the divine displeasure was incurred and the consequence endured. In evangelistic work the best results can never be attained apart from a recognition of divine authority.

Let us pass now to the SPHERE of evangelistic labor. This is defined in our Book of Church Order: "When a minister is appointed to the work of the evangelist, he is commissioned to preach the Word and administer the sacraments in foreign countries, frontier settlements, or the destitute parts of the church; and to him may be entrusted power to organize churches, and ordain Ruling Elders and Deacons therein."

Is it not a fact that self-appointed evangelists almost invariably give this sphere of service the "go-by?" Is it not equally true that many duly-constituted evangelists give the greater portion of their time to self-supporting churches? Can we reasonably expect the highest results from evangelistic work while its SPHERE is so sadly ignored? Now, with the right man in the right sphere, which is the wiser policy, that of Presbyterian, or local evangelization? Of course, in answering this question, the size, strength and compactness of the field must be taken into consideration. With the Texas work in view, the conclusion seems unavoidable, that while a Presbyterian evangelist may accomplish great good, the most lasting,

effective work is done by a well-regulated system of local evangelism, i. e., a more restricted sphere of operation. When requested to address the Synod of Texas, at Palestine, on the subject of Home Missions, the writer called attention to the inability of our Presbyteries to follow up the labors of a general evangelist and thus secure the best results. The loss entailed upon our church by reason of this inability is manifest even to the casual observer.

The following plan is respectfully submitted to the consideration of our Presbyteries: When practicable, let one county be the sphere of the evangelist's labors. If there be a church in the county that is able to employ a minister one-fourth or one-half of his time, let the pastoral relation be established and the remainder of the time be given to evangelistic work. If there be stronger churches in the county, let them supplement the salary; if not, let aid be sought from the Presbyterian or Assembly's committee. This plan combines pastoral and evangelistic work, and tends to prevent a one-sided development of ministerial character.

It is undeniable that a long experience in purely evangelistic work measurably unfits a man for pastoral work. Then, too, this plan enables the minister to spend a portion of every month with his books and family. The advantages of this are too obvious to be mentioned.

As the work would come under the immediate observation of the stronger churches, it is probable that keener interest would be awakened, and that they would support the work with greater liberality. For this kind of work "picked men" are indispensable—the MOST EFFICIENT MEN in the church should be employed. When a judicious, consecrated, thoroughly equipped man has been secured, let him be untrammelled in the evangelistic sphere of his work. Let him give his labors to such points as promise greater results. Who is more competent to judge of this than himself? While the plan above indicated is less ostentatious than that of "general evangelism," the promise of more permanent and, ultimately, far-reaching results is unquestionably greater.

Space will not permit the consideration of another phase of this subject whose importance is not fully appreciated, viz.: a plan for the unifying of contributions to evangelistic work. Under the existing plan contributions are made to the Presbyterian, Synodical and Assembly's work. This begets more or less confusion, and means a comparative dispersion of evangelistic effort. With duly authorized evangelists laboring in the right sphere, and contributions

to the cause directed through the proper channel, would we not make more rapid progress in overtaking the destitutions which confront us in this great western country?

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Nov. 5, '96.

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THE BIBLE DOCTRINE OF THE HEATHEN'S FATE.

What is the fate of the adult heathen? Are they all saved? Are they all lost? Or are some saved and some lost? This is a momentous question and one upon which there is great difference of opinion among Christian people. Where shall the answer be found? Only in the Scripture—the last place many people go to find it. In what form? In direct statements and natural and necessary inferences and deductions. In the brief space allowed this article we shall be compelled to indicate rather than develop lines of argument. We give only a few.

“The wicked shall return to Sheol, even all the nations that forget God.”—Ps. 9:17. “All the nations that forget God” are here identified with the “wicked,” and return to one common place. Again, “But he that knew not, and did things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few *stripes*.”—Lk. 12:48. Do the heathen do things “worthy of stripes?” Christ here enunciates a universal principle whose justice is patent to all: Man’s knowledge is the measure and his deeds the ground of his punishment. In Rom. 2:12, the same principle is taught—“For as many as have sinned without law, shall also perish without law.” “And even as they [the heathen] refused to have God in *their* knowledge, God gave them up unto a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not fitting; being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness,” &c.—Rom. 1:28-32. Do people filled with “all unrighteousness,” &c., go to heaven?

The Scriptures clearly teach: 1. That there is no salvation save in Jesus Christ. “And in none other is there salvation: for neither is there any other name under heaven, that is given among men, wherein we must be saved.”—Acts 4:12.

2. That salvation in Christ is through faith alone. “Sirs, What must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus.”