

The Presbyterian



Christian Advocate and Journal

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL	3-6
The New Gospel—The Christian Endeavor Movement — Jerusalem-ward — The Central Presbyterian on the St. Louis Report, etc., etc.	
WHAT FATALISM IS	7
By Prof. Benjamin B. Warfield, D.D., LL.D.	
ARE WE CUMBERLAND PRESBYTERIANS IN DOCTRINE?	8
By Rev. John Fox, D.D.	
LESSONS FROM THE SIX-WINGED SERAPHIM	9
By Rev. William Henry Bancroft.	
THE FAITH THAT SAVES.....	10
By Rev. Theodore L. Cuyler, D.D.	
IS THE HIGHWAY READY?.....	11
By Rev. Arthur Hicks.	

PHILADELPHIA, MARCH 16, 1904



ATIONS
merica
ge, Edinburgh.
Prof. Davidson.
on of Hebrew
phases, and to
menon in the
stratingly and
his previous
e, Edinburgh.
"The Called
TURES
New College.
Laws
promulgated
on, B.C.
C. H.
HING
lay School
B.S.
ANK BALL-
mo.
country
y. Mr.
orough-
beliel.
ory of
Chris-
ple of
rk
y the
party
re to
sion
ings
here
an-
mp-
als:
nt-
et-

THE PRESBYTERIAN

VOLUME 74

PHILADELPHIA, MARCH 16, 1904

NUMBER 11

The New Gospel.

Paul, in his day, magnified the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and denounced those who preached, or sought to introduce "another Gospel." But in our age there are those who think they have discovered a "new Gospel," and are quite enamored with it. They label it "the Social Gospel." They describe it as Christianity in a new form, and predict that it will, in due time, supersede the old Gospel which seeks specifically to convert and save souls and to fit men especially for heaven. They exalt the temporal aspects of religion. They would have ministers leave the other world in the background and give their main attention to the present world. They demand that theological students shall be adequately instructed "in the economic causes of poverty, poor-law administration and all the details of practical sociology." They maintain that the Church must deal with every-day affairs and right the wrongs of men; that she must bend her energies toward procuring better sanitary regulations, better homes, better civic government and better morals. They hold that she is dying, because she has her eye more on the soul than on the body, more on heaven than on earth, more upon the spiritual than upon the material. They would reverse things, and make earth first and Paradise second. Man, it is alleged, is here, and the Church should labor pre-eminently toward making the life that now is the best possible. Working along this line, she will draw to her the laboring classes and all who are anxious to better their present existence.

This is making religion almost wholly a matter of selfish interest. It is reducing it to "the bread and butter" standard; or at best, to the needs of the physical, intellectual and moral nature. It is placing the emphasis on the earthly condition and relation.

But there is no warrant for this dominating perspective in Christianity. The religion of Jesus Christ concerns itself with the entire man for time and for eternity. Its great business is to save the soul, to effect in it a radical change, to redeem it by the blood of Jesus Christ and to sanctify it by the truth and grace of God. The Christian religion deals with two spheres—the present and the future. It does not ignore that which pertains to human betterment here, but it emphasizes the necessity of a spiritual birth and life, and of a preparation for eternity. Our Lord so taught; the apostles so preached; and the Bible so teaches. The Christian Church has sought to follow in the path thus marked out for her. In proportion as she has done so, has she been successful.

Our new lights tell us that she has been so taken up with the spiritual and the eternal side of the Gospel that she has overlooked its social side. But this accords not with the test of observation and experience. The truth is, those who have been the most concerned about the conversion and salvation of souls have been usually

among the most active and persistent in seeking and promoting the best interests of society. This they have done by word, example, influence, agency and benefaction.

The Church, as a whole, has been foremost in bettering life in all its relations. On the day of Pentecost, when three thousand persons were converted, one of the first significant results was the selling of the possessions placed at the apostles' feet and the distribution of the proceeds as each one had need. Subsequently, as the Church grew, and occasion demanded, provision was made for widows and orphans. It is true social conditions were then different from what they are now, but the principle is the same. The twentieth century has developed a fiercer conflict between capital and labor; the struggle for a living is more sharply drawn; the sanitary, housing, and wage questions have become more acute; still, there were social problems then of special moment, and they were met in a Christian, brotherly and philosophical way. Ever since the Church, while magnifying the Gospel in its spiritual and eternal aspects, has had regard to the relieving of bodily and mental needs. She has been the friend and ally of education. She has given birth to nearly all the ameliorating agencies of mankind. She has brought blessing to the home and to the State. She has been the disseminator of principles that have extended the area of human freedom. She has been the helper of man in all that relates to his civil as well as religious rights and privileges. Those identified with her have been the regenerators of the lapsed masses as far as was in their power, carrying light, joy and assistance to the suffering and helpless in city and country, at home and abroad. Through her the chains of slavery have been broken; the wanderer has been reclaimed; prison reforms have been effected; and the wants of the widow and the orphan, of the poor and the needy have been relieved. If she is to be left out of the count, the resultant of philanthropic and humanitarian enterprise will be reduced to comparatively small proportions.

It is to be further noted, when the Gospel takes hold of a man or of a community, it effects moral and social changes both radical and manifest. A transforming principle is introduced into the character and the life. This has been characteristic of its entire history. Wherever it goes, it produces transformations, whether in high or in low places, whether in the city, or in the country, whether in civilized or in uncivilized lands.

Its reformations extend to all the walks of life. Its records are conspicuous for noble, disinterested and diligent service for humanity. For illustration, reference need only be made to the ameliorating influences started, and the results accomplished; during the revival of evangelical religion following the Middle Ages; to Wesley's efforts in behalf of the French prisoners whom the authorities had left to suffer terrible hardships; to

WHAT FATALISM IS

BY PROF. BENJAMIN B. WARFIELD, D.D., LL.D.

That is a sad state of mind that people fall into sometimes, in which they do not know the difference between God and Fate. One of the most astonishing illustrations of it in all history is, no doubt, that afforded by our Cumberland Presbyterian brethren, who for a hundred years, now, have been vigorously declaring that the Westminster Confession teaches "fatalism." What they mean is that the Westminster Confession of Faith teaches that it is God who determines all that shall happen in his universe; that God has not—to use a fine phrase of Dr. Charles Hodge's—"given it either to necessity, or to chance, or to the caprice of man, or to the malice of Satan, to control the sequence of events and all their issues, but has kept the reins of government in his own hands." This, they say, is Fate: because (so they say) it involves "an inevitable necessity" in the falling out of events. And this doctrine of "fatality," they say—or at least, their historian, Dr. B. W. McDonold says for them—is "the one supreme difficulty which it has never been possible to reconcile," and which still "stands an insuperable obstacle to a reunion" between them and "the mother church." "Whether the hard places in the Westminster Confession be justly called fatality or not," he adds, "they are too hard for us."

Now, is it not remarkable that men with hearts on fire with love to God should not know him from Fate? Of course, the reason is not far to seek. Like other men, and like the singer in the sweet hymn that begins, "I was a wandering sheep," they have a natural objection to being "controlled." They wish to be the architects of their own fortunes, the determiners of their own destinies; though why they should fancy they could do that better for themselves than God can be trusted to do it for them, it puzzles one to understand. And their confusion is fostered further by a faulty way they have of conceiving how God works. They fancy he works only by "general law." "Divine influence," they call it (rather than "Him"): and they conceive this "divine influence" as a diffused force, present through the whole universe and playing on all alike. just like gravity, or light, or heat. What happens to the individual, therefore, is determined, not by the "divine influence" which plays alike on all, but by something in himself which makes him respond more or less to the "divine influence" common to all. If we conceive God's modes of operation, thus, under the analogy of a natural force, no wonder if we cannot tell Him from Fate. For Fate is just Natural Force; and if Natural Force should thus govern all things that would be Fatalism.

The conception is, we see, in essence the same as that of the old Greeks. "To the Stoic, in fact," says Dr. Bigg, "God was Natural Law. and his other name was Destiny. Thus we read in the famous hymn of Cleanthes: 'Lead us, O Zeus, and Thou too, O destiny, whithersoever ye have appointed for us to go. For I will follow without hesitation. And if I refuse I shall become evil, but I shall follow all the same.' Man is himself a part of the great world-force, carried along in its all-embracing sweep, like the water-beetle

in a torrent. He may struggle, or he may let himself go; but the result is the same, except that in the latter case, he embraces his doom, and so is at peace." When a man thus identifies God with mere natural law, he may obtain resignation, but he cannot attain religion. And the resignation attained may conceal beneath it the intensest bitterness of spirit. We all remember that terrible epigram of Palladas: "If caring avails anything, why, certainly, take good care; but if care is taken for you by a God, what's the use of your taking care? It's all the same whether you care or care not; the God takes care only for this—that you shall have cares enough." That is the outcome of fatalism—of confounding God with Natural Law.

What, now, is the real difference between this Fatalism and the Predestination taught, say, in our Confession? "Predestination and Fatalism," says Schopenhauer, "do not differ in the main. They differ only in this, that with predestination the external determination of human action proceeds from a rational Being, and with fatalism from an irrational one. But in either case the result is the same." That is to say, they differ precisely as a person differs from a machine. And yet Schopenhauer can represent this as not a radical difference! Professor William James knows better; and in his lectures on "The Varieties of Religious Experience" enlarges on the difference. It is illustrated, he says, by the difference between the chill remark of Marcus Aurelius: "If the gods care not for me or my children, there is a reason for it"; and the passionate cry of Job, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him"! Nor is the difference solely in emotional mood. It is precisely the difference that stretches between materialism and religion. There is, therefore, no heresy so great, no heresy that so utterly tears religion up by the roots, as the heresy that thinks of God under the analogy of natural force and forgets that he is a person.

There is a story of a little Dutch boy, which embodies very fairly the difference between God and Fate. This little boy's home was on a dyke in Holland, near a great wind-mill, whose long arms swept so close to the ground as to endanger those who carelessly strayed under them. But he was very fond of playing precisely under this mill. His anxious parents had forbidden him to go near it; and, when his stubborn will did not give way, had sought to frighten him away from it by arousing his imagination to the terror of being struck by the arms and carried up into the air to have life beaten out of him by their ceaseless strokes. One day, heedless of their warning, he strayed again under the dangerous arms, and was soon absorbed in his play there—forgetful of everything but his present pleasures. Perhaps, he was half conscious of a breeze springing up; and somewhere in the depth of his soul, he may have been obscurely aware of the danger with which he had been threatened. At any rate, suddenly, as he played, he was violently smitten from behind, and found himself swung all at once, with his head downward, up into the air; and then the blows came, swift and hard! O what a sinking of the heart! O what a horror of great darkness! It had come then! And he was gone! In his terrified writhing, he twisted himself

about, and looking up, saw not the immeasurable expanse of the brazen heavens above him, but his father's face. At once, he realized, with a great revulsion, that he was not caught in the mill, but was only receiving the threatened punishment of his disobedience. He melted into tears, not of pain, but of relief and joy. In that moment, he understood the difference between falling into the grinding power of a machine and into the loving hands of a father.

That is the difference between Fate and Predestination. And all the language of men cannot tell the immensity of the difference.

Are We Cumberland Presbyterians in Theology?

[FIRST PAPER.]

By Rev. John Fox, D.D.

The Committee on Union with the Cumberland Presbyterian Church have now very wisely opened the door of discussion by the publication of their proposed report. Thorough discussion is much needed. Such discussion does not mean any inconsideration for the tender attachments felt by the members of both of these branches of Christ's Church for their respective usages, laws and cherished traditions, nor can it sanction a railing accusation by any one, for any reason. But on the other hand, it does require careful inquiry in detail as to the exact doctrinal status of both Churches, and an unsparing candor in recognizing the precise points of difference between them now and in the past. The determination of these *differentia* requires a large and catholic judgment and the cordial recognition of the indefeasible spiritual unity underlying all such differences. Holding our Cumberland Presbyterian brethren in high esteem we should deal with them in entire frankness, and forego entirely that ignoble latitudinarian contempt for sound doctrine, which is alien to their history, as it is to ours. Our committee have employed one expression—we would like to think inadvertently—which smacks somewhat of the very spirit of indifference to doctrine which is now unhappily common. After warning us against “needless and offensive references to the causes which have divided us”—which is obviously a duty, they further bid us avoid the “revival of past issues.” This is the very reverse of what ought to be done. The committee itself was bound to “revive past issues” with the Cumberland committee sufficiently to inform us exactly what the present doctrinal attitude of the Cumberland brethren is on the points formerly in dispute. We are now face to face with the same issues, and are in need of explicit information to settle them justly—information which the committee might properly furnish us. To advise us now, “not to revive past issues,” is tantamount to asking us not to discuss the merits of their own report. It is not enough to say in answer to this, that the main point of their report is the information that the Cumberland committee is now willing to accept our Confession of Faith as a basis of union. This surprising fact is likely to lead good-natured brethren to ignore the proposal of the committee in “Concurrent Declaration” No. 1, which both Assemblies are recommended to adopt, as follows:

“In adopting the Confession of Faith of the Pres-

byterian Church in the United States of America as revised in 1903, as a basis of union, it is mutually recognized that such agreement now exists between the systems of doctrine, contained in the Confessions of Faith of the two Churches, as to warrant this union.”

We beg careful consideration of the significance of this declaration. It is nothing less than a definite theological judgment passed on the precise questions which have hitherto divided these Churches. It implies a knowledge of “past issues” and present attitudes as well. It affirms that the revision of our Confession of Faith has brought our “system of doctrine” into such agreement with the Cumberland Confession and its “system of doctrine,” that we may honorably unite. This, we repeat, is the official expression of a definite theological judgment, resting on a presumably competent knowledge of Cumberland theology, *ab initio*; and of course on our own doctrinal history, and especially it calls for a correct knowledge and accurate judgment as to the precise degree in which the late revision has changed our doctrinal *status*. If the committee are correct in their judgment, we are to-day Cumberland Presbyterians in theology, and stand formally committed to that peculiar type of doctrine which historical Calvinism has hitherto found no place for among her varieties. But before we rashly accept this official judgment of the committee, certain questions are pertinent. Did the committee shrink unduly from reviving “past issues”? How far and how sharply did they press for definite answer, categorical questions bringing out the points formerly at issue between the two Churches? What exactly did they represent to the Cumberland brethren to be the effect of the Declaratory Statement upon the “system of doctrine” contained in our Confession? It was much insisted upon when Revision was under discussion among us, that “the system” was not changed at all—only “the expression” of it. Now the committee tell us that our “system” is one—substantially—with the Cumberland system. So we may ask, Were our Cumberland brethren perhaps not led unintentionally to feel that we had modified our “system of doctrine” in points where we really have not; especially that we do not regard the doctrine of election as an essential element in the system? Such a claim is openly made by some of our ministers, and still more defiantly in some other Churches holding our Confession. Calvinism is in Scotland, for instance, flouted by those who nominally profess the “system of doctrine” of the Confession. Unless the committee were at pains to assure our Cumberland friends to the contrary, they might easily get the impression, especially in view of some unfortunate ambiguities in the revision changes, and in the Brief Statement notably, that our doctrinal attitude was radically altered. We trust that the committee will give us much more explicit information as to these points.

The need for this is accentuated by a recent utterance, unofficial but not less weighty, because it comes from the Moderator of our own General Assembly. Dr. Coyle, at the Presbyterian Union in New York (See New York Observer, January 28th), took singular advantage of his distinguished position to denounce as “wretched pettifogging” any demur on doctrinal grounds to union with the Cumberland Presbyterians. Even this opprobrious expression however may be