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LET BROTHERLY LOVE CONTINUE.

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POETRY.

For the FREE-WILL BAPTIST.

"BLESS'D ARE THEY WHO LONG FOR HOME, FOR THEY SHALL BE HOME."

BY REV. A. R. BRADHURST A. M.

Bless'd are they, who long for home
Whom heaven has call'd to see
Christ has prepar'd a heavenly rest,
No one of them shall be unblest.

Ere long each one shall reach his home,
Hearing his Saviour's call to come,
He'll enter into heaven above,
Where all within is peace and love.

Distressing cares they've laid aside,
With all their worldly toils beside,
This fleeting earth they bid adieu,
When glorious mansions rise in view.

They've left a world of sinful woes,
Escaped a host of hostile foes,
Have triumph'd in redeeming grace,
When they beheld their Saviour's face.

Now they are with the sons of light,
Forever in Jehovah's sight,
Forever done with every task,
Forever in God's presence bask.

Then let them rest in Jesus' arms,
They need not fear the least alarms,
Death has no power to display,
Death is the gate to endless day.

PROBATION AFTER DEATH.

BY REV. O. E. BAKER.

Few subjects are more prolific of questions than that of probable probation after death. Its advocates claim that all those who have died, or are yet to die, without having had a sufficient probation in the present life. Let lecturers, professors, commentators teach, but may not pupils ask questions? We would ask—

1. What is the necessity of a future probation for infants or any others, dying before becoming accountable?

Dr. Dorrer says: "Moreover those dying in childhood have not been able to decide personally for Christianity. Jesus seeks the lost. The lost are to be sought also in the kingdom of the dead." Prof. Smyth says: "I can trust God to provide for such (infants, antediluvians, some heathen, and children born apparently to no moral chance) some special opportunity for repentance, in Hades, before the final judgment." It looks very much as though the old theory of infant complicity in the sin and guilt of the federal head had prompted to this hypothetical probation, perhaps as a compromise between such old theory and that now more currently held, that moral character and conditions depend upon antecedent moral volition. The feeling now is very prevalent and strong that it would be unjust for God to cast off the undeserving personally responsible. If, therefore, in any degree involved in the sin and guilt of progenitors, they should have a probation and chance for reformation. So it is claimed. But, if it would be unjust for such to be cast away without a probation,—without their own action, how is it just that now, already without having had probation, they are held in a condition needing regeneration in order to be saved,—needing opportunity for repentance? These old and new theories lack harmony and are very like pieces of old and new cloth put together in a good way to hide an ugly rent. Condemnation being cast away, comes of sin, and of moral action by a moral responsible being, none of which can be predicted of infants, idiots, and others of like character. The legitimate conclusion is, that deceased infants, idiots, &c., will need no probation as a condition to well-being.

If any would assign these classes such future probation on the ground that they should not be denied in the advantages of probation, whatever they may be, for no fault of their own, it

would seem a sufficient answer that sin has inflicted many evils, not alone upon such infants, idiots, &c., but, no less, upon those who live to age and have a probation the longest and best possible, evils which probation anywhere cannot compensate, evils, suffer largely for no fault of those who suffered them. Whatever considerations will harmonize the existence of either of the latter class with our moral theory, will harmonize with the former also.

2. But what is a probation? Prof. Smyth after attributing to Mr. Cook the belief that at death, infants pass from indecision to decision, says: "There is a first moral choice—a probation—the other side of death. But there is mere decision, or the liberty of decision, a probation proper? Do not saints and angels exercise moral decision in every act of obedience? Is not their obedience, free, willing, happy? Are they therefore in a state of probation? Whatever less or other than such freedom of saints and angels probation may be, manifestly, persons may, as the angels and saint,—put forth acts of moral decision, and may be morally good and happy under other than conditions of probation. Why may not infants, therefore dying without the guilt of sin, enter at once upon the freedom and blessedness, in a degree of the angels and saints without previous probation.

May not probation consist of a condition, of free, willing happy obedience under trial, test, for purposes of discipline and its advantages? Not simply a condition to moral action and its results, but a special condition looking to special added advantages to the subject of probation, and to the government over moral beings. It would follow of course, that infants, and others, going out of this life without a probation, are losers, more or less, of such special, added advantages,—but this involves no injustice in God's treatment of them, more than his suffering other evils which follow in the wake of sin, and it involves no hazard to the ultimate well-being of such subjects.

The heathen are named along with infants, idiots, and others as subjects of future probation. Well, we conclude, that all persons dying without intelligence sufficient for arriving at moral action and character, will class in the case of infants. It is not claimed that all heathen will be so classed. Many of them have light enough from intuition nature, nature, tradition, and the spirit of God to be accountable, to acquire moral character good or bad. It will hardly be denied that many among them are self-constituted, actual sinners. But what is a sinner? Manifestly, one who voluntarily does what he knows he ought not to do, or leaves undone what he knows ought to be done,—one or both. Sin is no mere propensity, no accident no mistake, but admit of right action instead of of reformation after the wrong has been done. But is not this a state of probation? Is not this a sufficient probation? It is so far sufficient as that such sinner is self-condemned condemnation of God's law, and of universal right judgment. So far sufficient as that were he to live on earth forever with such character, he would be forever condemned, without any injustice. How otherwise would it be, if removed to another place, in which character and its conditions would be very much as in the present life?

Here we are met by another significant feature of the future probation theory: that probation is not to be terminated by any arbitrary event—by death or any other intervention of God, by fixity of character, by becoming so positively good, or bad, as that no change of character will take place. All persons not arriving at this permanence before death, it is claimed, will continue in probation in the future state, until such a general consummation.

Here we grow inquisitive. Would not such a probation take in well nigh the whole human race—all dying in

infancy, constituting nearly half the race, and idiocy, together with lunatics the antediluvians, most of the heathen if not all, and, we conclude, a large majority of all in civilized and Christian lands? The number of the confirmed is comparatively small. Dr. Dorrer says, "Nay, even within the church there are periods and circles where the gospel (acceptance or rejection of which depends upon the individual) does not really appear to be as that which it really is. Prof. Smyth after accepting those only from a probation after death who shall have had a decisive probation here, was asked: "What you mean by decisive probation. The answer was," "One that ends in Augustine's sense of real freedom in a real determination beyond moral probability of recall. Such one end their probation at or before death, all others to have further chance. Again, when asked how he would estimate, as to further probation, a sinner who had lived a life of gross wickedness, cursing God, the professor replied I would not feel myself warranted to pronounce judgement on such a man!

Taking these utterances as indicating the scope of the future probation, it is clear it awaits most of our race, the present probation being well nigh a failure. Now what is the probability that such continued probation would result in any considerable gain to the number of the finally saved? (1) There as here, the motives to good must not be successive, but moderate leaving men to act chiefly for the reasons for which the good should be chosen. The conclusion is that the future would not afford advantages much above those of the present. Mr. Thayer says: "I have no doubt that the future probation will obliterate the soul with any more clearness in the future than now." (2) Add to the foregoing that the non-confirmed good, in the said future probation, may reverse their decisions and become bad. Men may fall, as well as rise, in such a probation. (3) Add to these what would seem probable, as matter of natural selection, and of good order, that those of the intermediate probationary state, the best of them even, will not be in the place of the fully saved, will not enjoy their associations, that they will, however retain infidelity their native and contract weakness and depravity and sin, possibly which as in the past, will continue to hazard the question of their well-being, and who would prophesy future gains on a very large scale? (4) Omit whatever gains, by such probation, with the fearful demoralization, the immense differences on the wrong side which would inevitably result from universal belief that, to all time, after death and before, men may reform a will. It is a case made out that, whenever, and wherever kindred theories have been taught and accepted, men have been smitten with moral blight. All things considered, it is by all means certain no probable that extension of probation beyond the present will wound on the whole, as well.

But it is certainly true that probation can terminate only by fixity of character, each man ending his own probation to his liking? (1) Supposing that all things considered, more of our race would be finally saved by limiting probation to the present life, thereby awakening men's fears, arresting their attention, energizing the church, and intensifying all the means of grace, would it in such case, be unlike God to do so?—to do what on the whole would be for the largest good? What might seem to be injustice to individuals might be the wisest possible justice, when the public weal is taken into account. (2) Has not God ended the lives, and probably the probation of wicked men again and again within the history of his church and providence? Or, are we to interpret his destruction of the Old World, of Sodom and Gomorrah, of Jerusalem, and of individuals, as the sons of Ed, Amnias and Sapphira not as judgments, but as merciful moral removals to better conditions, or

posed to probation where light will be shed into the soul with no more clearness than here.

HE ASKED FOR BREAD AND THEY GAVE HIM A STONE.

BY REV. W. G. RAMSEY.

In the year 1542, the sixteenth century, the Portuguese established

coast, and from that point the Catholic religion spread so rapidly that it seemed for a while as if India was about to exchange Brahmanism for Romanism. The Emperor Akbar, "the greatest and the best of the great Moguls," became dissatisfied with Islamism, and hearing of the religion of the strangers, he sent messengers to Goa, asking that Christian teachers might be sent to Delhi, the royal city, and that they might bring with them complete copies of their holy books.

It is unusual for a Mohammedan to confess doubts of his faith that this record is received with some incredulity. It is said Akbar had amused himself. But why should we doubt that this great soul may have been dissatisfied with his cold and empty religion? He found in his creed the great central truth that there is only one God, to who all homage is due; but to this God in his greatness and glory, he was shown no medium of access. How could he be satisfied, lacking "the way" of approaching that Christ alone revealed? Islamism is a religion without mercy. It offers neither redemption nor sanctification, and this man may have felt the common need of every human soul for pardon and salvation. We have no reason to doubt that the managing station prince felt the pressing need of a faith that would not only satisfy his reason, but give rest to his soul; therefore he turned to the professed Christian teachers, and like the Roman centurion, he was ready to hear "all things that was commanded them of God."

In answer to his appeal, three Romanists were sent to him. They carried with them richly ornamented images of Mary, and of saints. They had vestments, and crosses, candles and incense, and with great ceremony and pomp they entered the presence of the emperor.

We are informed that Akbar received them with great courtesy, but we have no authentic record of their interview. Jesuit priests reported that he looked down to their images and kissed their holy books, but this it is impossible to believe. Idolatry is the sin of all sins, most odious in the sight of a Moslem, and the failure of their mission is circumstantial evidence that, from the first, he was repelled by these things. He had begged for the bread of life and the water of salvation, and they mocked him with a pompous idolatry, and unsatisfying and corrupt theology. He was disappointed, as well he might be, and determined that they should discuss their religious views with the Mohomedan teachers. In these discussions the Jesuits, with all their learning, their ability, and their sophistry, were defeated. The Mohomedans were their equals in logic, and they convicted them by their own Scriptures of idolatry. The Jesuits did not avail them. There were their own teachings, and their own idols. There were their invocations of spirits, their worship of Mary, their prostrations before pictures and images. The subterfuge that they did not worship the images was rejected. The noble force of the second commandment of the Decalogue, in which the semblance of idol worship is prohibited, was urged against them.—"Thou shalt not bow down to them nor worship them." They could not defend themselves, and the great Akbar, disappointed perhaps in the fondest hope of his life, turned sadly away from them. They were permitted to remain, and for twelve years they labored in vain. They could not convert a Moslem to idolatry. At the end of these years they returned to Goa,

and sought a more fruitful field among the idol-worshipping Hindoos.

Still it appears that the soul of Akbar was not at rest. Did he feel intuitively that in Christianity, if he could but find it, was the truth for which he longed? He sent again to Goa, earnestly asking for teachers, and that they should prepare for his use a true translation of the history of Christ. He desired to read for himself, and to be able to explain to his subjects, who claimed to be Divine, had taught. Never has the church had a grander opportunity, and if these professed teachers of Christianity had given to this man the Word of God, it does not appear improbable that the house of Tamerlane, the proudest dynasty that has ever reigned, might have been won to Christ, and the destiny of all India might have been changed.

The book that these Jesuits prepared and presented to this inquiring prince, declaring that it was compiled from the Prophets and the Holy Gospels, has been preserved, and we are not surprised at its effect. Instead of a true history of Christ, it abounds in fables of Mary and the apostles, and whatever of truth it contains is veiled and colored by Romanism. Akbar read, and knowing no other Gospel, no other Christianity than was there revealed, he turned from it in despair, believing that the religion of the Son of God, instead of being the light and salvation of the world, was only a veiled idolatry, offensive in the sight of the Eternal.

From this time a revulsion set in. Islamism is an iconoclastic faith. The descendants of Akbar ranked Christianity with paganism, both to be equally rooted out. The Shah Jehan, and his beautiful Empress, the celebrated Moomtaj-Mahal, adhered to the Christian name. The Portuguese had settled in large numbers at Hooghly, near where Calcutta now stands. The Governor of Bengal received from Shah Jehan the laconic command: "Expel those idolaters from my dominion." It was done. The Christian community was almost entirely annihilated. Two thousand men, women and children who had taken refuge in a ship were blown up, choosing to die rather than to surrender to the Moguls. Five hundred children were taken prisoners. The boys were circumcised and the girls were divided among the harems of the nobles. The pictures were all destroyed by the express command of the Empress. Rev. Dr. Butler says: "Such wrongs did Romanism do Christianity in India, and the name of our God and Saviour was blasphemed among the heathen through its idolatries. Empress Moomtaj would not forget, even in death, her enmity to Christianity, and secured that it should be expressed on her very tomb, where it remains to this day and will remain as long as the wonderful Taj Mahal exists." On the tomb, facing the entrance, where all may see it as they approach, are these words: "Defend us from the tribe of Kafirs"—the word Kafirs being a term of bitter contempt for the Christian idolaters.

The Empire of the Great Moguls, with all pride, its wealth and glory has disappeared from India. Tamerlane and Akbar are names that no longer move the world. All that remains of the great Shah Jehan, and the peerless Moomtaj-Mahal molders in silence in the magnificent mausoleum, the Taj Mahal, whose matchless beauty and fabulous cost commemorate their love and their ambition. But the Christ whom, in their mistaken bigotry, they hated is extending his dominion. Their tomb is now in the custody of the "tribe" whose coming they deprecated. He whose right it is shall possess that land, India, so long oppressed, shall find shelter under His throne and His truth shall make her free.

WORK OF THE SPIRIT.

The Scriptures never present the doctrine of the trinity as a theory, but always in connection with human redemption. The love of the Father in

devising the scheme, the atoning sacrifice of the Son, and the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit are prominent throughout the sacred word. We need not, therefore, be curious to penetrate the mystery of the divine existence. It is ours to avail ourselves of the provision made to save this dark, fallen world.

Especially should we commit ourselves to the teaching and guidance of the Holy Spirit, who is the Comforter and the Spirit of truth, who will abide with us, and who will guide us into all the truth. He it is who applies divine truth to the hearts of men, enlightens and reedifies the conscience, produces conviction in the minds of the impenitent, renews and sanctifies the yielding heart.

Under the Gospel the Holy Spirit is the grand agent in the work of redemption and salvation. He uses various instrumentalities—among those to whom Christ has not been preached, he uses the light of nature, the works of creation, reason and conscience, so that even the heathen who reject this light influence are without excuse. In Christian nations he employs the sacred word, the labors of missionaries and teachers of every class. Thus he convinces the world of sin, righteousness and judgment. Nor is he limited to means, for he has direct access to the mind and heart. The Holy Spirit qualifies those who dispense the truth, and renders their work effectual. Here his agency is indispensable. No natural gifts or attainments are sufficient. No eloquence of speech, no power of rhetoric or logic, no personal influence will suffice to win the stubborn heart of the heathen. The presence of the Holy Spirit is essential to all true spiritual growth, to intercede with us in our prayers, to strengthen our faith and sanctify all our energies to labor successfully for God. Without him we are nothing, and our labor fruitless; but with him we are mighty.

It is then of the highest importance that we know and feel our dependence on him. Mr. Spurgeon well says: "Souls are not saved by systems, but by the Spirit. Organizations without the holy Ghost are mills without wind, or water, or steam power. Methods and arrangements without grace are pipes from a dry conduit, lamps without oil, banks without capital. Even the most scriptural forms of church government and effort are clouds without rain till the power from on high be given."

Much revival effort is lost because it is not made in the Spirit. Sermons, exhortations, prayers, are ineffectual for the same reason. People wonder at these failures, but there is no mystery. Let the power of the divine Spirit descend, then every word, every prayer, every appeal will be impressive. Then sinners will feel that Christians and ministers are in earnest, believing and realizing the truth they utter. A single discourse, a fattoring prayer, a sentence or word will sometimes thrill an entire Mass and send convulsions through many hearts. And this high gift is not for a few only, it is for all. He is ready to imbue every heart, and furnish them for the great work.

DEAN STANLY ON BAPTISM.

The following summary is given by the Christian Commonwealth as the views of the late Dean Stanly on the subject of baptism:

- 1. Immersion was wisely selected not only because it was a most delightful, ordinary and salutary observance but because it was significantly expressive of the design of baptism.
- 2. The word which Christ used to express baptism is literally translated immersion.
- 3. Christ himself was immersed in Jordan.
- 4. The apostles uniformly practiced immersion.

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