

For the Biblical Recorder.

Regeneration. As conflicting views are taught on regeneration, I have thought it expedient to publish my opinion on the subject. Some imagine that joining the church, or taking up some new opinion, or advocating some strange doctrine, or falling in with some schismatical faction is regeneration—or that these things cause regeneration. And others believe that regeneration is effected by baptism, and that whosoever is baptized, must of necessity be regenerated; but the Scriptures, as well as facts of daily occurrence, prove the contrary. The evangelist John I: 13, informs us that pious ancestors will do us no good, though we could establish a direct line of holy ancestors from Abraham; "nor will of the flesh," that is, any thing that the human heart can determine in its own behalf, nor anything that others can devise, or do for us, will regenerate us—"but of God." Hence it is manifest from this text that it is not baptism, for it says expressly it is of God—born from above, born of the Spirit. This new birth is effected alone by the power of God. Baptism is so far from being regeneration that the reverse is true, as appears from the tenor of Scripture. I John v. 7, says, "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God;" and 4th verse says, "Whosoever is born of God overcometh the world," and faith is the victory which overcometh the world. Verse 5, "Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." Here, in these texts, we have plain positive proof that he that believeth that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and trusts alone in him for salvation, is born of God, regenerated. Nor do we have any proof in holy writ that this faith in Christ ever did exist in any case before baptism? Yes, we have solid proof in the Scriptures that persons actually possessed this faith prior to their baptism, and the apostles and inspired guides did require that the candidates for baptism should actually possess faith in Christ, as a necessary prerequisite to baptism. Therefore the candidates for baptism were regenerated, for they had that faith in Christ, which it is said if a man have he is of necessity regenerated.

Again, it is said by some professors of religion that regeneration is a gradual expansion of the mental faculties, occasioned by the accumulation of literary and biblical knowledge. And why is this done by professors of religion? Because they are the only persons who positively and unhesitatingly deny and despise the doctrine of the divine influence of the holy Spirit—because they are conscious that the influences of the Spirit have never operated on their hearts, hence they ridicule those who have experienced this mighty work of regeneration by the Spirit. For this reason, men ascribe regeneration to a gradual expansion. Hence mere formalists ascribe all notions of communion with God through the operations of his holy Spirit, to some strange ferment of the animal spirits. I here remark, that those who deny the conscious perceptible presence of the influence of the holy Spirit, in regeneration, declare plainly that they have no part in this work. This grand work of transformation is not ideal—it is no wild fancy of the brain, and it does not consist merely in enlightening the mind, or in a convincing of the understanding—nor does it consist in a mere change of sentiment—nor a change of outward conduct. All these may take place without any real change of heart. Although the internal work of grace is commonly evinced by an outward reformation. Yet a man may be converted and not change his sentiments much, and he may have been moral and strictly honest in all his dealings with his fellow men prior to his conversion, he may have been orthodox in his creed before his conversion. In such a case, the change outwardly would not be so easily perceived in an openly profane sinner. The doctrine of gradual expansion, is in plain contradiction to the doctrine of human depravity. For if a man's nature is dead,

can he act—will a dead man expand? No, a dead thing can not grow into life; it takes an Almighty arm to give life. To say that a dead soul can expand into life; is ascribing an infinite power to man who is said to be without strength. It is regeneration which quickens us—it imparts life and vigor to the dead faculties of the soul, and then it begins to expand and grow, and not until then. Regeneration is a passing from death unto life, and then the new-born spirit grows. In the first place it is my opinion that conviction must, and invariably does, precede regeneration. We must not only know that we are sinners, but we must feel ourselves to be such, that our iniquities are like a heavy burden over our heads. In the second place repentance must also of necessity go before regeneration. Evangelical repentance is sorrow, or in other words, godly sorrow worketh repentance. The true penitent is sorry because he has sinned against such a kind and merciful God, and such a loving benefactor, he is grieved by his actual sins; but more especially does he deplore the corruption of his heart, and the deep depravity of his nature. He hates sin because of its detestable nature, because it is opposed to God and holiness. He hates sin not simply because it ruins the soul, but because it is offensive to God, and attempts the subversion of the divine government. Repentance is not only hating sin, but it also implies a turning away from sin with the whole heart, and turning the heart to God—turning the heart from the ways of sin and death to the way of life. But evangelical repentance does not always follow conviction. Many quench the Spirit and finally die in impenitence. And as before stated, faith must always accompany regeneration, that is saving faith, and what I mean by saving is, that faith which saves the soul, it works by love, &c. Saving faith is not the act of a mind powerfully wrought upon by the spirit of God, and has sought in vain for peace in everything else, and has been driven to the threshold of despair, and has given up every hope of salvation by anything within itself, or anything which man can do for it. (I do not mean that there must be great animal excitement, but there must be deep anxiety and great mental agony.) This state of mind prepares the sinner to appreciate salvation by grace through faith in Christ Jesus. When every false hope has thus been torn away from the sinner, he is enabled to lay hold of Christ—a sure hope set before us in the gospel. And it will be remembered that evangelical faith is something very different from believing that the Scriptures are the word of God, and that all things therein contained are true. It is something more than simple belief or assent of the understanding. Assent, is faith, to be sure, in one sense of the word. And it is a part of saving faith, I say part, because a belief in the existence of a merciful God is only a part of evangelical faith. Yet it is an essential part, so much so, that credence must always precede gospel faith. Assent, or consent is only natural or historical faith. Wicked men and devils have this faith—they believe and tremble. Gospel faith is not merely casting up the evidences for and against the truth of religion, and accepting that which preponderates. Saving faith presupposes a conviction of sin, and a lively painful sense of guilt, and conviction itself is a sequence of assent to God's word, made effectual by the Holy Spirit, and with this conviction is implied a persuasion, that through the mediation and intercession of Christ Jesus our Lord, there is forgiveness with God. By this it is understood that the sinner is not only convinced of actual transgressions, but also of unbelief. He is made sensible that he is an unbeliever, and realizes the fact that he is without God, and without hope, and all who have not experienced this may know that they are unconverted; but many have a false hope. The Devil and some false teachers say men

can be saved without conversion. And you believe the Devil and presumptuously call it believing in God—you are trusting in a falsehood and call it trusting in God. True faith is trusting in God according to the divine statements and promise; but presumption trusts without a promise, saving faith is the gift of God. Saving faith is the gift of God as well as an act of the creature. True faith consists in believing the gospel and all it says about the lost, ruined, helpless state which we are in by nature, and the necessity of an atonement being made by Christ for us. Having stated that which must accompany and precede regeneration, I will endeavor to define it. In regeneration so much of the light of heaven is let into the soul as enables us to see ourselves aright, or discovers unto us our impotency, to recover ourselves from this state of sin and condemnation by our own power, and to vie God in most awful manifestations of power and holiness, and the extreme excellency of his character; it enables us to know the worth of the gospel and its adaptedness to our wants and the riches of divine grace, and it enables us to see the enormity of sin. This light is accompanied with warmth of vigor that produces an internal permanent change, a change which reaches to the heart and is evinced in the life. It renovates the powers of the mind, dispels folly, guilt, fear and despair, and introduces holiness, joy, happiness and peace. This is properly called regeneration, because it brings the sinner into a new state—he sustains a different relation to God. The powers of his spirit having been changed through energy imparted by God himself. The regenerated sinner's apprehensions of spiritual things are enlarged, his affections are set on heavenly things, his purposes are fully formed to serve God, depending alone on the riches of divine grace to help him. He now serves God from a principle of love and gratitude. A. B. ERWIN. Catawba Station.

DEAR RECORDER:—Through your columns of the 6th inst., there were reported an unusual large number of conversions and baptisms, in the aggregate about five hundred. It is truly cheering to receive such accounts of the work of the Spirit in the churches in our State, and to learn also, that the work is still going on, and that in many cases there have been no reports published of the numbers converted. Should we not heartily give thanks to the God of all grace and salvation, that he is once more visiting his Zion and building up her waste places. Let the prayers of his people go continually for a more abundant outpouring of the Spirit. No greater blessing could be sent upon the people of the State than a general and wide-spread religious awakening. By its influence we have reason to believe that hundreds of our youths would be saved from the moral ruin, which now so evidently threatens them. The hope of the church and of the State centres in them; and while the gospel is adapted to all, and intended for all, and should be faithfully preached to all, peculiar and special interest should be manifested to gather the young into the fold of Christ. Ministers, as well as others, are sometimes afraid to admit boys and girls to membership in the churches, under the impression that they cannot sufficiently understand the gospel. That great care and circumspection should be exercised in the reception of all is a truth which cannot be too deeply impressed upon the pastors, and members. That there are numbers in the churches, who were admitted without sufficient evidence of their being in a regenerate state, is too obvious to need remarks. But where the young have been received upon satisfactory evidence, that they understand, though in a simple manner, the plan of salvation and have given their hearts to the Savior, with proper instruction and training, there is quite as much reason to hope that they will grow in divine knowledge and grace as others of maturer age. Paul says to Timothy, "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." When these words were ad-

ressed to him, Timothy was an eminent minister of the gospel, but he had been long before, even when he was a child, duly instructed in the knowledge of God by his mother, Eunice, and perhaps also, by his grandmother Lois. It is much to be regretted that more pains are not taken to instruct young converts, whether they be children or grown up persons, in the plain rudiments of christian knowledge and especially of christian obligation. Many enter the church and remain in it for years with but little benefit to themselves or to others, under the false idea that joining and being baptized is about the sum of what they are required to do. Their efforts cease just where they ought to begin, if indeed they would deserve to be called the followers of Christ. And such dereliction is usually the result of improper or imperfect teaching. It is all important when converts offer themselves for membership in the church, that they should be deeply impressed with the obligation they then assume, to live for the good of the cause and for the glory of God. Such instructions should be repeated time and again until they clearly and thoroughly understand the entire sum of their christian duties. Were this done in all cases where it ought to be and might be, great indeed would be the change in the intelligence, efficiency and zeal of the church here. The apostle James says, "faith without works is dead being alone." So a church without works is also dead—as to all the purposes for which it was organized and have an unsightly dead branch of the living and true vine which is Christ. Yet there is reason to fear that some, if not many, of the churches of our land, if tested by the rule given by our Lord in his address to the seven churches of Asia, would be found wanting and deficient; so that his rebukes to them would be equally applicable to those. Remember from whence thou art fallen and repent and do the first works. . . . "Because thou art lukewarm and neither cold, nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth." Great importance is rightfully attached to preaching the gospel with a special view to the conversion of the impenitent. But may not and do not pastors and evangelists some times pursue this view of the subject, with an interest that leads to the neglect of the careful instruction and training of those who are brought into the churches. The one may be regarded as the counterpart of the other, but both are vital and essentially important. Each branch of the subject has its proper place, and one should not be overlooked or forgotten in the urgent pressing of the other. When converts come into the church they should be plainly taught that they enter it as laborers. They are "God's husbandry," and co-workers with God." That there are no sinecures or easy places in the church, that every one is required by the Master to employ his talents and improve them according to his ability; and that the church can never be what it should be till this is practically realized. Two causes may be mentioned why church members in their early history are not properly instructed. First. At the close of a revival meeting, the church and its pastor are so worn out with continuous labor, or so elated with their success that they stop their efforts too soon. The idea that the Lord has graciously blessed them and added to their number so many souls, seems to satisfy them that they have done well, and are entitled at least to a temporary furlough, forgetting that there is time to make lasting impressions for good on the minds of the converts. Secondly. Another cause is an absolute want of appreciation of the value of instruction. Some ministers are not sufficiently instructed themselves, to be able rightly to teach others; while others do not seem to see its importance till it is too late, as the religious habits and general course of action of most persons become settled and fixed in a short period after their connection with the church; after which it becomes more difficult to reform them. With these suggestions to all concerned, your correspondent closes with the hope and earnest prayer that the numbers who have, or may be, gathered in from the religious awakenings in different parts of the State may prove a valuable accession to the cause of the Redeemer. PAUL.

DEAR RECORDER:—I have just returned from a six weeks trip among the mountains of N. C. Spent most of the time in Alexander, Wilkes and Ashe. Perhaps the finest portion of the State is the Yadkin Valley, lying between the Brushy mountain range and the Blue Ridge. The county line between Alexander and Wilkes runs along the top of the Brushy mountain range. That between Wilkes and Ashe runs along the top of the Blue Ridge. Ashe county is a good deal like the valley of Va. It is as fine a grazing region as any part of Western Va. The climate is as healthful as any part of the United States. The nights are cool enough for large fires the whole summer through. They generally have some frosts every year. Persons from down the country would perhaps realize as much improvement in their health by spending a summer there as they would in spending their time at most of the springs in North Carolina and Virginia. Nearly all the churches in these mountain counties are enjoying a revival of religion. Nearly all the associations that have met, have made an advance movement in their benevolent operations. A spirit of work seems to be finding its way into these mountain churches. Alexander is now bidding fair to turn out more preachers than any other county in the State. There are about a half dozen young men there now preparing for the ministry. The United Baptist Institute at Taylorsville is beginning to look up. Bro. Deane has been laboring there at a great sacrifice, for more than two years to revive and build up the institution which had been dead ever since the war. He is now beginning to see the fruits of his labors—his clouds are breaking away. He can now thank God and take courage. The State affords no finer location for a school than Taylorsville, Alexander county. The mountain scenery is grand. The Brushy mountains, Barretts mountains and Blue Ridge are all in view. The location is not only beautiful, but decidedly healthful. The writer was a student there before the war when there were a hundred students in attendance, representing various portions of this, and other States and has seen young men there from unhealthy parts, bodily shaken with chills, and remaining there one or two seasons, found themselves free from chills, strong and healthy. But I am making this little too long. W. A. GAULTNEY.

For the Biblical Recorder. Pictures of Memory. ALICE CARRY. Among the beautiful pictures That hang on memory's wall, Is one of a dim old forest, That seems best of all: Not for its maple or birch, Dark with the mistletoe, Not for the violets golden, That sprinkle the vale below; Not for the milk-white lilies, That lean from the fragrant hedge; Quelling all day with the sunbeams, And stealing their golden edge; Not for the vines on the siphant, Where the bright red berries rest, Nor the pinks, nor the pale cowslip, It seemeth to me the best. I once had a little brother, With eyes that were dark and deep— In the lap of that old dim forest He lie in peace asleep; Light as the dove of the thistle, Free as the winds that blow, We roved there the beautiful summers, The summers of long ago; But his feet on the hills grew weary, And, one of the autumn eves, I made for my little brother, A bed of the yellow leaves, Sweetly his pale arms folded My neck in a sweet embrace, As the light of immortal beauty Shon brightly on his face; And when the arrows of sunset Lodged in the tree-tops bright, He fell in his slaty beauty, Asleep by the power of light. Therefore of all the pictures That hang on memory's wall, That one of the dim old forest, It seemeth to me the best. Some may know the story of the first weeping willow, introduced into England by the poet Pope, who found one twig in a basket of figs that had been given him, putting out a bud; and having planted it in his garden, reared it to a tree, whence all those beautiful trees in this country have been propagated. The weeping willow of Twickenham is no more; but its graceful offspring, leading over many a stream, lives far and wide. So many a thought, slight in the outset, conveyed or sprung up by seeming chance, has led to inventions. It is said that during his ministry of 50 years, Dr. Turg's congregation have contributed over \$5,000,000 for benevolent objects, besides raising \$300,000 for the building of four chapels, and six churches. Whenever you hear a man dissuading you from attempting to do well on the ground that perfection is "Utopian," beware of that man. The Utopianism is not our business, but the work is.—Ruskin. A holy life is made up of a number of small things. Little words, not eloquent speeches or sermons; little deeds, not miracles nor battles, nor one great heroic or mighty martyrdom, make up the true christian life. FOR FARMERS. THE USE OF CONCENTRATED FERTILIZERS.—The cause of failure in the use of this concentrated fertilizers is often due to the manner in which applied. It is difficult for those who have been accustomed to use bulky manures to realize that the full fertilizing potency of a bushel of animal excrement may be held in a large sized table spoon, and that a handful of one adds to plant structures as decidedly a several shovels full of the other. A fall dose of opium is as given to patients furnishes quite a dark bulky powder, or pill; if we separate the alkaloidal principal upon which its hypnotic power depends, we have only a little delicate white powder which a breath of wind will blow away. The grain powder will allow a human organ to be as powerful as ten times the weight of the opium. As we were so forgetful of "potencies" as to administer as much, or even one quarter as much of the white concentrated powder as of the bulky dark one, we should destroy our patient's life, or at least do great injury to his health. So, if in the use of the genuine superphosphate, or guano, or ground bones, and ashes, we forget their power and apply too much, or apply them too directly, endanger the lives of our plants. An experiment made upon corn can afford an illustrated case in point. At the time of planting, upon a field divided by a narrow strip of sward land, we laid the mixed weight of a bushel of the mixed bones and ashes should be placed in each hill and well covered with soil; upon the other four rows were to be treated similarly, and the remainder of the hills should receive a double quantity. It is curious to observe the effect. The first field and the four rows are remarkably thrifty. The corn stands up well, and has manifested remarkable vigor from the start. On the other hand the over-dosed corn appeared for a long while as if it had been paralyzed by some wasting disease. It could not bear up under so much of a good thing. More free ammonia was furnished at the start than could be appropriated by the tender plants, and many of them perished from over-stimulation and heat produced by the fermentative changes of the active bodies in contact. The corn that survived is at present growing finely and will no doubt afford a large yield. Now if this had happened in the course of our agricultural labors, and without any understanding of the nature of the fertilizing substances used, it is probable that it would have been condemned as a worthless or dangerous article. This has been the case with hundreds of experiments, and is indeed a perfectly natural conclusion to reach. But we must learn to reason, learn to have patience, learn the character of the substance we can employ upon our land. We must be careful now we reach conclusions; we must examine closely to see if they are based upon correct grounds. There are well established principles in agriculture; let us cling to these, and when we get results

that are puzzling or paradoxical, we must study causes, and not judge hastily.—Boston Journal of Chemistry. VALUE OF FODDER CORN.—The Department of agriculture has just issued a statement, providing a long list of facts, which show that sources on the value of fodder corn as a supplementary feed or selling crop for milk cows in summer. We present below the conclusions deduced from the testimony given: 1. Green corn fodder is rather worthless for the purpose of all soiling material. 2. It is the best when planted in drills or hills, not so thickly as to prevent normal growth and development, cultivated to destroy weed and grasses, and cut between tasseling and earing, when the amount elaborated for production of the ears are stored in readiness for immediate use. 3. It is probable both from the rationale of the case and from facts presented above that in the more northern latitudes a mistake has often been made in sowing thickly Southern corn which cannot mature, the fodder from which led in August must be very nearly worthless. On the contrary, the fodder from Northern corn, especially sweet corn, drilled and cultivated as above, fed just before earing, is found to be very valuable. 4. Its value, compared with lucerne, millet, the best grasses, and other plants containing a large percentage of nutriment, taking into consideration the quantity produced and the cost of its production, has not been determined fully, and should be decided by a series of thorough and exhaustive experiments. It is evident from all that is confining in the opinion of different feeders, that the difference are mainly due to the degree of maturity or condition of the corn. That from thick sowing, immature, colorless and watery, is unfit to place before the cows of any well regulated dairy. It is probable that half that is fed is either improperly cultivated or in a stage of growth not productive of the highest results. If this should be the case, how stupid to condemn the maize for the ignorance of the cultivator. It is found to contain too little nutriment for its bulk, or too small amount of the feed-forming element, the suggestion found in the practice of some, of giving a small amount of more highly concentrated nutriment in connection with corn fodder, is eminently wise. This is a deficiency easily remedied. While corn is our national crop, less fastidious in the circumstances of its growth than almost any other, and capable of yielding so largely under the proverbial neglect which characterizes our culture, let not this fodder be discarded until something of greater practical value is found, the superiority of which has been actually demonstrated under local circumstances of soil, climate and cultivation. A SURED POLICY ON THE FARM.—The Day Book gives the following sensible advice.—The whole secret of the successful farmer often lies in his having fixed a plan of operations. Multitudes have no plan but to meet their immediate necessities and make money by the easiest and assembling shortest methods. If wool brings high prices, they will gradually give up dairying and work in sheep, with the expectation of making their fortunes. If wool does not pay, they sell their flock at great sacrifice. If hops are sixty cents a pound, they invest in hop poles and timber for drying and expect sudden wealth when the next year's crop is full bearing; the price fall of one half or more, they are disgusted, and ready to plow up their yards, concluding the business will not pay. There are men always taking up a good thing a little too late to make money. The farmer cannot afford this continual change. His business is less speculative than any other, and after providing for the wants of his family and a stock, he should give his attention to the production of a few animals, crops or other products, on which he can rely to raise money. Any branch of farm industry steadily followed, will be found profitable. Dairying in a year of short grass might not pay, but a large stock of butter and cheese will make them a reliable source of income. Where a specialty is made of some one crop, it is particularly important he should follow it steadily. The raising of hops or tobacco requires fixtures that are useless in any other branch of farming, and the change of crops involves a considerable loss of capital. Besides we are always learning a business to which we give habitual attention, and this knowledge is as much a part of our capital as the money interest. In tools and buildings, if a man should make potatoes, his machinery would stand by to lessen the cost of production and would not be of use in the preparation of the seed potato, in the use of manures and fertilizers, quite unknown to the farmer who pursues a careless style of husbandry. He should raise potatoes cheaper than his neighbor by reason of his improved methods, and if he sold at the same price, make money. Whatever branch of farming you follow stick to it, if moderately profitable. Lay your plans ahead and be prepared for exceptional years, when large profits come from high prices, or losses from unfavorable seasons. A mixed husbandry is always the safer, and is not inconsistent with the cultivation of commercial crops, as tobacco, hops, flax, onion seed, or vegetable seed of any kind, garden vegetables or market fruits, etc. The introduction of these requires close calculation, definite plans, and thorough business management. It is not