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Religious Corner.

A. B. Replies to Reader's Letter of August 21st.

DEAR EDITOR.—In this letter Reader's ire has scarcely abated though the tone and temper have both improved. His assumed irony and cynical assurance only reveal the depth of his despair or may it rather be traced to the secret rancour of the baffled disputant, undesignedly betraying the sorrows of feeling that waits on the consciousness of defeat? It is just the schoolboy whistling to keep his courage up. It will hardly do. Sensible people nowadays are not befuddled by any such pantomimic display either in the physical or mental sphere of action. What Reader needs is not banter but reason and when he furnishes the latter article, which has been rather scarce in some of his previous letters, I shall at once give him credit for it, and acknowledge his arguments in the full light of day.

The letter opens with a childish boast of his having inflicted a castigation upon his critic which may entertain his admirers or amuse his grandmother but, trust me, is entirely thrown away upon A. B. His "severe handling"? neither disturbs my composure nor excites my resentment. One would think his own dignity would have forbidden him from glorying in a menial occupation which betrays a familiarity with the prize-ring that does him no credit. But let that pass. From the mild lessons I have given him he may collect a profitable instruction for his future life. They will, to adapt another's eloquent words, either teach him so to regulate his future conduct, as to be able to set the most malicious enquirers at defiance; or if that be a lost hope, they will teach him prudence enough not to attract the public attention to a character (or system) which will only pass without censure when it passes without observation. Motives very different from any apprehension of receiving a castigation, lingual or physical, or from any approbation for inflicting one, induced me to enter this controversy. The attainment of truth was my only object. If Reader had given the information asked for in my first letters, and explained away his animus against the Presbyterian body in a courteous manner I should have accepted it or registered my protest and there the matter would have ended. Instead, however, of doing this sensible thing, Reader, imagining I was attacking him and his church, buckled on his armor, furnished his literary sword and straightway fell to accusing me of cowardice, etc., for not attacking a Toronto Presbyterian Professor whom he alleged was guilty of the rankest heresy. This with the introduction of several other disputed points left me no other recourse but like Sir Richard Grenville of old, to "fight on" or ignominiously capitulate to the "degenerate Spaniard."

Over the portal of this letter of Reader's, as over the previous one, might very properly be inscribed in large characters the old Turner's sign, "All sorts of Turning and Twisting done here." The exposures of my last reply amply justify this application. Here again he courts exposure and I am badly mistaken if he be not satisfied before I am through with him.

The phrase "vulgar tongue" seems to sting him badly. I fear it will continue to sting him and interrupt his devotions when his eye accidentally falls upon it in his beloved prayer book. It would be better for him to use free prayer, as Presbyterians do, until he has forgotten the naughty A. B. and his "dip into the vulgar tongue." He translated it himself at first as "English tongue," now he seems to think it vulgar. I hope his change in this regard is not an indication of a lessened regard for the prayer book that uses it. That would be a great pity. It will not help him out of his great dilemma as I said I used the prayer book as a joke-book. I did not and he knows it. It is simply one of his little devices to divert attention from the weakness of his argument and as such it can be pardoned. Though I have a very high regard for the prayer book as the Coping Stone of that "Compromise" upon which the Reformed church of England is built yet I suppose I have not the same reverence for it that he has. I am however perfectly satisfied with it and do not desire any alterations therein. But since Reader has more than once referred to it as so perfect a thing I may be pardoned if I say that it by no means satisfies a large number of his own church people. This I now proceed to prove. My authorities are given hence every quotation may be verified—(1) Many living will remember the stir in England in 1873 by a petition presented to Convocation by 488 priests of the church of England asking among other things for changes in the prayer book. "The Book of Common Prayer," says this petition, "is manifestly incomplete, through the absence in many particulars of such services and rubrics as would give adequate expression to this claim of the church of England to be Catholic in her doctrines, usage and ceremonial." This "want of completeness" is considered by the petitioners as a "distinct grievance."—(The Church Times, Sept. 1898). (2) The Archbishop of York at a meeting of the Synod of Lichfield in 1884 used these words. "Is there not in the office of the Bishop an authority prior to all Acts of Parliament to frame and sanction for the use of the clergy services for

various purposes in addition to those contained in the Book of Common Prayer."—(Crisis in the Church, p. 11). He, evidently, is not satisfied with the prayer book as it is. (3) Again, the Archbishop of Canterbury has declared that he is prepared, contrary to the express words of the Act of 1872 (Mark that!) to sanction additional services which "do not form part of the Bible or Prayer Book," etc. ibid p. 8. The Archbishop is evidently not satisfied with the Bible or the Prayer Book. (4) In the Union Review, an Anglican church paper, for 1865, p. 621, is the following remarkable sentence:—"We venture to say, heresy has been practically triumphant for three hundred years together through the Prayer Book. It was designed to be so, and it has been so." (5) Again on p. 626, "We cannot and we will not tamely accept the illogical and incompetent system which the Reformers have left us in the Prayer Book as it is. It has been tried for three hundred years and found wanting." (6) Some years earlier than these, a petition was presented to the House of Lords signed by thirty clergymen and about as many lay members of the establishment in which among others the following clauses appear:—"That in various other parts of our prayer-book, especially in the services for baptism, for ordination, and for burial, some words and phrases are of doubtful signification and otherwise liable to misconstruction," etc. Again, "That Athanasius' Creed is not generally understood by the people, while each of the laetatory clauses in itself, is such as to require an explanation inconsistent with the words, when taken in their plain sense and common force." (Athenaeum, Aug. 1840 p. 681.) (7) King James speaking to the General Assembly held in Edinburgh in 1590 uses this language with respect to it: "As for our neighbor Kirk of England, their service is an ill-said Mass in English." (Calderwood's Ch. Hist. p. 256)

And so, I might continue to quote pages if space would allow. Enough has been said to show that some high in authority in Reader's own church are far from being so satisfied as he is with the Prayer Book as it is. But in this, I heartily commend him. Let him stand by the old book if he is to have one at all. As the final expression of the spirit of compromise I really think it can never be surpassed and those who demand radical changes in it are not the best friends of the establishment though they are members of her communion and enjoy her emoluments.

The following paragraph from Pastor W. T. Sabine of the First Reformed Episcopal Church, New York puts this aspect of the Prayer Book so neatly that I copy it entire:—"The English Prayer-Book, being thus the off-spring of compromise, contains within itself antagonistic elements; its ritual (which constitutes its educating power) looking towards Rome; its articles of faith, towards Geneva. As a consequence of this the Church of England has always contained within itself two manner of peoples, two schools or parties,—one asserting its Protestantism, the other claiming its affinity with Rome."

Reader's two-column dissertation on "change of heart" does not increase his reputation for clearness of illustration or lucidity of exposition. I established the position that the phrase "change of heart" was one of the ordinary English expressions—"Vulgar tongue" in its literal sense if you please—as distinguished from the theological, for the immediate and simultaneous result of Regeneration or the being born again of Scripture—God by the act of Regeneration produces instantaneously so to speak the change indicated. I have no quarrel with the Scripture language. There was no "confounding" about it and Reader's attempts to "destroy" my arguments remind one of a flight of fire-flies attempting to destroy the Chinese wall. If twisting the meanings of words, using irrelevant illustrations, and substituting words for others would destroy my argument, I admit he has made a fairly good attempt to accomplish his purpose. Since therefore my positions have not been successfully assailed I leave this long series of quibbles to the good sense of his readers. I am not disappointed, for his reply is about what his letters would lead me to expect. EX NIHILO NIHI FIT.

Two digressions however from the general subject of this dissertation deserve short notice. First is Reader's pathetic confidence in the staunchness of the "old Boat!" It is true the craft has come through some 300 years of troubled storms and "wintry seas" but it is also true that most of the troubles and storms have come from within, not from without, from the very defects of construction and constitution which Reader appears to think so beautiful and so permanent. They have come from the spirit of compromise already referred to, or perhaps, it is because the crew has been rebellious and will not be at peace. "Every kingdom divided against itself," etc. When however one thinks of the rigidity of the laws which govern the Established Church of England, one cannot wonder that liberty-loving souls within would like to break down the barricades that hem them in, or like Richard Baxter and many others, leap over them to get a full breath of real freedom. I shall advert to this later but here I desire to call in as witness to the present "rottenness" of the old Boat, a man who ought to know what he is speaking of. I trust I shall not thereby de-

stroy Reader's peace of mind or conscience. Archbishop Thompson, in York Minister, replying to a deputation presenting a memorial signed by 106 peers, 73 members of the House of Commons, and a host of dignitaries of the "Church," protesting against the ritualistic practices said:—"Never before in history was our church in such a condition." * * * It was in a state of rottenness which might last a week, a month, a year, or a few years according to the course of public events, but he did not hesitate to say it must end in destruction."—(Crisis in the Church p. 18.) This looks as if some of the timbers of the craft were unsound or the crew mutinous. Which is it? The following weighty words from Sir William V. Harcourt, himself an Anglican and one that desires the well-being of his Church, do not promise the same assurance of permanency as Reader's prophetic utterance:—"It is truly said that the National Church of England in its foundation was a compromise between conflicting opinions. But in order that this compromise should be established on a firm and lasting basis it was necessary that it should rest on some national sanction. It is of course a question whether there should be a National Church at all; but if there is to be such a Church, it must be based on a National authority, and the only National authority we recognize is that of the Crown and of Parliament." * * * "The strict adherence to established formularies and rites is the only protection against ecclesiastical strife and popular discontent." (The Times, Sept. 22, 1898.) It is said that compromises are rarely successful, that they lack the elements necessary to permanency and that therefore, sooner or later, they must be reconstructed or the natural resultant is disintegration or dissolution.

The second digression is Reader's reference to the salvation of infants. He says that in one of my former letters, I held, "that the children of believing parents are born within the church," etc. If Reader wished to be fair, he would have said that I gave Dr. Williamson's interpretation of our Standards, not my own views. I might disagree with the Doctor's interpretation as much as I do with his views on Episcopacy. But I did not there express an opinion on the question, nor did I give the teaching of the Presbyterian church upon the point. I need not do so now. That is not under discussion. I merely point out that from Reader's own words, it is evident he "confounds two things which are essentially different," viz., Conversion and Regeneration. "Regeneration is an act of God, originating by a new creation, a new spiritual life in the heart of the subject." The Holy Spirit, in the act of effectual calling (Rom. 8:30) causes the souls to become regenerate by implanting a new governing principle or habit of spiritual affection and action. The soul itself, in Conversion, immediately acts under the guidance of this new principle in turning from sin unto God through Christ. It is evident that the implantation of the gracious principle is different from the exercise of that principle, and that the making a man willing is different from his acting willingly. This first is the act of God solely; the second is the consequent act of man dependent upon the continued assistance of the Holy Ghost. From this it follows that the Conversion (the turning from sin or the world) of Dr. Williamson may not be necessary for the infant but Regeneration which simultaneously and instantly accomplishes a change of the inward spiritual nature (a change of heart) is necessary to salvation for infant and adult alike. Reader appears to have entirely missed the point. But I could expect nothing better from one who accepts the superficial teaching of the Anglican Church upon the question of baptismal regeneration. The habit of accepting as authoritative any doctrine propounded or promulgated by a church, as such, leads to superficial reasoning and mental slavery. It may be well to examine briefly what that teaching is in order to arrive at a proper understanding of Reader's point of view. Desiring to be entirely fair, I shall quote from Anglicans only, to arrive at the teaching of the church upon the subject: I find in Tract No. 76 of "Tracts for the Times, a source of information, which Reader will I am sure admit to be above all suspicion, a list given of no fewer than forty-one of the most eminent divines of the English church who all maintain the following position:—"That infants are by and at baptism unconditionally translated from a state of wrath to a state of Grace and acceptance for Christ's sake." In an Episcopal publication, "Essays on the Church," issued a few years after said Tract, the author says:—"We have seen a large section of the clergy, under the guidance of one of her ablest prelates insisting that the church teaches that in all cases, even when the officiating minister is an ungodly man, and the parents and sponsors notorious profligates, the infant over whom the service was read is still then and thereby actually regenerated (103). Does not the church herself through her liturgy teach gross heresy in the prayers which she puts up before and after every baptism. Before baptism she entreats that the "infant may receive remission of his sins by spiritual regeneration;" thus presenting an erroneous view of the cause of pardon, which all sound theology has ever ascribed, not to the sanctifying work of the spirit, but to the atoning blood of the Saviour. And after baptism she teaches the priest to say

"We give Thee hearty thanks, most merciful Father that it hath pleased Thee to regenerate this infant by Thy Holy Spirit;" assuming in this as infallibly true, what Scripture and fact alike concur in contradicting, that regenerating grace is the inseparable concomitant of baptism. The following questions and answers from Bishop Mant's Catechism are still more astounding: "Persons are said to be regenerated or born again only once." Q. "And when do you say that is?" A. "When they are made Christians at their baptism." Q. "Does the church teach her members to pray for the Grace of regeneration at any other time?" A. "By no means." On this language comment is needless. As expounded by this learned prelate, the doctrine of the church is "that infants are made Christians at their baptism," and that on no account should her members pray to be regenerated at any other time. No matter what doubts they may entertain in after life, no matter what convictions of sin they may feel, or what fears of their spiritual safety may arise within them, let them by no means ask of God to regenerate their souls. This were a fatal error on their part, a practical denial of the efficacy of baptism, a shameful undervaluing of the benefit they enjoyed in being allowed to partake of that sacrament.

These are only samples of quotations that might be continued manifold. Is not this "monstrous heresy?" If it is true that in whom God begins a good work he will perform it to the end (Phil. 1, 3) must it not then follow that all who have been baptized shall infallibly be saved? This is the legitimate and unavoidable consequence of the doctrine. The explanation of some Episcopalians to escape these consequences are always superficial and often ludicrous. Were it not for a length I should like to quote one from "A Farewell Sermon," by an Episcopal Clergyman published in 1839 as a fair sample of the kind. It reads strangely like some of Reader's explanations that do not explain. On this question like many others do we not again see the inevitable effects of the fatal "Compromise" which is the foundation plank of the whole Anglican fabric?

It is but fair to remark that light is beginning to dawn even within the church on this question. The Reformed Episcopal Church of the United States, "condemns and rejects the erroneous and strange doctrine," that Regeneration is inseparably connected with Baptism, "as contrary to God's Word."

There is but one other question in this letter namely, the use of a Liturgy, which requires further comment but as it will take a letter by itself to discuss that question I shall leave it for a future issue. I may however say here that the "proof" which Reader gives to show that a liturgical service would be a benefit to the Presbyterian Church, viz., the opinion of Sir Sanford Fleming and a Presbyterian divine "on the eve of his entrance into the English Church" is enough to make Diogenes himself laugh outright. The personal opinions of two men (and one of them a perversity) to prove such a question!!! Dows! Shades of Aristotle, and Plato, and Whately and Edwards, why hover ye so near? Is it to call to mind the words of Father Lambert:—"A schoolboy that could not reason better than this ought to have his ears boxed, provided," etc.

Yours truly,
A. B.

CHURCH NOTES.
METHODIST.

The Monkman Bros., Song Evangelists, will begin a series of special services in the Methodist church on Sunday, continuing during the week. The Hymn Book "Songs of the Living Way" will be used. Strangers especially invited. Everybody welcome.

The Social Night with the members of the Epworth League of Christian Endeavor and their friends on Monday evening was very largely attended and a great amount of interest was aroused in the debate championed on the one side by Wm. Glass and E. Watson with A. A. Catton and Wm. Irwin on the opposition. Resolved that wedded happiness is better than single blessedness. The debate was well sustained by the able advocates on both sides, but the faces were against Messrs. Catton and Irwin from the start. They did well in leading a forlorn hope. The judges finally decided that it is better by three points to get married than to live single. We expect the Ministers of this town will reap a rich harvest after this and that our editors will be crowded for space in which to announce the wedding festivities of the Red Ribbons when they resolve to practice what they preach. All enjoyed the evening. The solos and choruses were pleasing, the fruit refreshing and the social good cheer was charming.

The Rev. Wray R. Smith was the speaker in Arthur on Tuesday evening at a social gathering of the young people of the Methodist church.

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W. CALDER,
Durham.

MARKET REPORT.
DURHAM, Oct. 2, 1902.

Fall Wheat.....	70	72
Spring Wheat.....	40	42
Oats.....	70	73
Peas.....	50	55
Barley.....	50	55
Hay.....	5 00	6 00
Butter.....	14	15
Eggs per dozen.....	12 1/2	13
Apples per bag.....	75	1 00
Dried Apples.....	4 1/2	5
Potatoes per bag.....	75	1 00
Flour per cwt.....	1 85	2 20
Oatmeal per sack.....	2 75	2 75
Chop per cwt.....	1 30	1 40
Dressed Hogs per cwt.....	8 00	8 00
Hides per lb.....	5	5
Sheepskins.....	25	40
Turkeys per lb.....	8	9
Beef.....	6	7
Lamb.....	8	10
Tallow.....	5	5
Lard.....	10	12
Ducks per pair.....	30	50
Geese per lb.....	5	5
Live Hogs per cwt.....	6 75	7 00

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In Forks, Straw Forks, Manure Forks and Ensilage Forks, we lead the market.

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Just taken in stock a great variety of Clothes Racks, Pastery Boards, Knife Boards, Bread Boards, Spring Clothes Pins, Wash Boards, Tubs, Churns and Wheelbarrows.

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