

ask a preacher, not in the Kingdom of Heaven, to officiate, in whole or in part, in this institution; it *may* be that we place ourselves in his position; and renounce, thus, all claim to a separate one for ourselves. If we do "hold the mystery of the faith," it should be "in a pure conscience;" and no consideration should avail to induce us to ignore it, or to condemn ourselves in what we allow. Those whom we gratify are allowed a triumph when we thus recognize their ministerial character and the scripturalness of the body that ordains them; and they ask, logically, how we can condemn them, and justify ourselves. If, when we preach the gospel, we know no man after the flesh—or after "a church," but call upon all men everywhere, simply as sinners, to repent and to obey the truth—just as the apostles—who knew no man as a Pharisee, a Sadducee, an Essene or Herodian—we should be consistent also, in all that is given us in charge "as stewards of the manifold grace of God;" and treat a sectarian—how pious soever—as needing to be openly reconciled to God. To countenance error will not correct it.

It will, in this latitudinarian age, be regarded as illiberal, narrow-minded, uncharitable, and far out of the spirit of the age, to "hold fast the form of sound words;" but, whether we, as a people, have attained to a knowledge of that form or not, the principles above asserted are unassailable; and no one who understands and openly avows them, can contravene them without betraying the cause in which they inhere. He who does not understand the identity of the Christ with his disciples; or, that he has no liberty to do what Christ would not do, or to say what he would not say, should not undertake to be a leader or a guide, in the Kingdom of Heaven. The guests at the Lord's Table are furnished by the host with the wedding garment: They have "put on Christ." He is in them; and they in him.—*Old Path Guide.*

"Tunnels in our Lives."

I have recently been reading the letters and diary of a pious-gifted young Scotch lady, who was an invalid and traveled abroad for her health. After having described, in one of her letters, her passage through the Mont Cenis tunnel, she thus moralized: "We have tunnels

sometimes in our lives, long, dark places filled with sadness and gloom, and God does not tell us what they mean—we could not understand; but we wait, and in good time come the sunshine and the flowers."

How well does this accord with the experience of the people of God generally. Rarely will you find one who has not met with such passage-tunnels of greater or less length, and of more or less darkness and gloominess, in the pilgrimage of life. So was it with the saints of ancient times. So was it with Abraham in his journey of three days with his beloved Isaac to Mount Moriah. A dark tunnel all the way. So was it with Job during that sad period of his history, of which we read in the book that bears his name. A long, dark, unalleviated night was that. And so was it oftentimes with David. How many were the dark passages in his troubled life?

Not greatly unlike theirs has been the experience of modern saints. Not unlike was that of the young lady, from whom we have quoted. Her illness was to her a long night of affliction. And for one cause and another, such nights have been common with the people of God of all times and of all countries. With some it has come from sore bereavements; with some from frustrated plans and for "purposes broken off," and with others from the hidings of their Father's face. They have walked in darkness, seeing no light.

But, take courage, all ye benighted and troubled souls; the dark tunnel will ere long be passed through, and you will emerge from it amidst bright and joyous scenes. To quote again from the diary already mentioned: "Most beautiful day. However dark the days may be for a time, sunshine always comes again." Fairer far than sunny Italy is that heavenly land towards which you are journeying. Your days of gloom and sadness will all soon be past and gone forever. Soon will "come the sunshine and the flowers," the "never withering flowers." Soon will you have become an inhabitant of "the city that hath no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it; for the glory of God doth lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof." All tears forever wiped away, you shall dwell amidst the splendors of a cloudless, eternal day.—H. S., in *Observer.*

The New Theology Again.

WHAT IS THE NEW THEOLOGY?

Not a few ministers, and laymen as well, are in the position which Dr. Meredith championed at the recent debate on "The New Theology" in the Boston Congregational Club. Some might announce themselves for the new theology and others for the old theology, but he refused to be classified with either side. This is a question with more than two sides. Many of us do not indorse either Augustine or Newman Smyth. We go back of the new theology to the New Testament, and back of the church Fathers to the grandfathers; the Apostles and the Evangelists. There is an oldest theology and an old, a new and a newest. We do not accept the old theology of Calvin, but the oldest—that of the whole Bible. We accept the new theology of the New Testament, but not the newest theories about the mistakes of the Bible, the after-death probation, and the one-sidedness of the atonement as related to love only, not at all to law. If, as the people generally understand, the three points of the new theology are: first, that the Bible contains the word of God, adulterated with myths and mistakes; second, that the atonement of Christ was nothing more than moral suasion to win man's heart to God; third, that we are to talk and write about an after death probation, instead of leaving that secret thing which belongs unto God where he leaves it—under the self-answering question, "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"—if these theories on inspiration and atonement and probation are the new theology, very many of us see no reason to accept it, while at the same time refusing to be considered unprogressive or Augustinian.

If The Christian Union's broader classification is to be accepted, and Phillips Brooks and Dr. Gordon are to be considered representatives of the new theology, then a majority of the evangelical preachers of today probably belong under the same banner of "progress in theology." Jesus said, "I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now." That was a promise of the Newest Testament of modern history and experience, in which the modern missionary movement is one gospel, and the Sunday-school movement another, and the temperance movement another.

That promise of Christ was Robinson's warrant for saying that more light would yet break forth from God's Word. As the New Testament grew up from the Old, so the Newest grows out of the New as men become able to bear it. Christ's words warranted Webster in saying, "There is more of valuable truth yet to be gleaned from the Sacred Writings that has thus far escaped the attention of commentators than from all other sources of human knowledge combined." If it is belief in progress of theological knowledge, rather than talking of after-death probation, that is to be the badge of the new theology, then it has a large following. But that is not at present the understood meaning of the term. The majority of ministers, if I mistake not, think that the mediæval creeds need revising, not in light of the new theology but of the New Testament. For instance, on the doctrine of inspiration few ministers believe that the Bible claims *verbal* inspiration, but fewer still find any established facts of Biblical criticism to lead them to believe that Ezra deceived Christ in regard to the authorship of the "Pentateuch," as Robertson Smith claimed at his trial. Could a good man deceive the God-man?

It seems to me, then, Mr. Editor, that we need a better definition of the new theology and a *more uniform use of the term*, to avoid misleading statements as to men's theological positions.—WILBUR F. CRAFTS, in *Christian Union.*

Prompt Obedience.

A prompt and unquestioning obedience should be rendered to all God's commands. No objections or excuses should be made. When God commands obedience it is to be rendered because he commands, not because it will be wise and profitable to obey. No time should be spent in considering the reasonableness of the command, or the rewards of obedience. The time should be spent in obeying.

It sometimes happens that a duty is set before the Christian. He hesitates to enter upon its performance, on account of the difficulties which he foresees he may meet with. The obligation is clear. The way is open, but he is not sure that he will succeed.

When Christ ordered the disciples to feed five thousand men with five loaves, they proceeded at once to obey the command. They did