

him, the Christian wishes to wait a little longer, and a little longer still, and to hold heaven in delightful anticipation—a joy in reserve, certain, eternal.—*United Presbyterian*.

Original Contributions.

ANTI-BIBLE TALK.

BY M. R. LEMERT.

Is the Bible a sufficient rule for man in his earnest efforts to pass from sin and death, to purity and eternal life—from corruption to incorruption — from earth to heaven?

This ought not to be a question with us, of *The Current Reformation*, as its fathers sustained the affirmative against the combined forces of the religious world. But I see it is called in question, and a labored effort made to sustain the negative, in our beloved paper, the *C. HERALD*, No. 22, by *Christian Missionary*!! He has pious fears that we as a people have mistaken the peculiar spirit and genius of the religion of Christ—fears that we think Christianity is contained wholly in the code of laws, called the Bible, especially the New Testament. He would benevolently disabuse the minds of all who have accepted the teaching of the Campbells and coadjutors upon the importance and sufficiency of the written word of the Lord! He thinks it very defective as a rule of action. He cannot endorse Paul's assertion that the Scriptures furnish "instruction in righteousness that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works—completely fitted for every good work," (2 Tim. 3: 17). For "we wholly misinterpret Christianity (he thinks) when we require a precept, example or legitimate inference." We must have a broader gauge — something more than is commanded, (a precept means a command). How does this agree with the following? "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them he it is that loveth me;" also "Blessed are they that do his commandments that they may have a right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." Teaching that so flatly contradicts the Scriptures cannot with safety be accepted.

Christian (?) Missionary thinks we place quite too exalted an estimate upon the writings of the New Testament, and desires to aid us in

lowering this estimate! He tells us that it is possible these writings contain some things unauthorized; (Here he helps Col. Ingersoll; and permits suspicion to rest upon it all!) and that "it is certain that the apostles taught much that has never reached us." This would be hard to sustain; as the same things were taught in all the churches; so, much of apostolic teaching was repetition. The fault-finding is continued. These writings are deficient in details, so that we may do things not specified; and we need not do all that is therein recorded. Besides, another great defect is, they give no authority for doing things indispensable — the building of meeting houses—setting an hour for assembling—preparing a place for baptizing, and for Sunday-schools. This is strange talk for a Christian—nothing more and nothing less. Such are generally pleased and satisfied with the Bible. I can see no reason for such fault-finding with this blessed Book, only as it is in the way of the fault-finder. He must want to introduce something he is conscious the Bible does not favor; and he is doubtful about succeeding, unless he first weakens the backbone of those loyal to their King, by weakening their confidence in the holy Scriptures! (Acts 20: 28-32).

Let us see what truth there is in the charge that the Scriptures give no authority for building meeting-houses, etc. To illustrate, A farmer upon the eve of leaving home for a few days, says to his servant, plow a certain field of corn while I am gone. Returning, he finds the field not plowed, and inquires: did you not understand me to tell you to plow that field? The servant replies, I did, but you gave me no authority for using your horse, harness or plow, and I could not do the plowing without all of these. The farmer, quite displeased, replied, you ought to have known that when I bid you plow that field I authorized you to use all these—use just what was necessary to do the plowing. So when the Lord requires his people to meet he authorizes them to secure a house and fix the hour; and when he commands baptizing, he authorizes all necessary preparations. Also when he bade his followers teach all nations—let their light-shine—hold forth the word of life—and sound out the word of the Lord, he authorized preaching and teaching, public and private, at home and

abroad; authorized gatherings for reading or speaking the word of the Lord, any day or evening, to old or young, Sunday morning, when it is called a Sunday-school, or Wednesday night, or any convenient time. He also authorized the printing and

circulation of Bibles, books of sermons, religious papers, tracts, etc., to aid in teaching. And when he enjoined "teaching and admonishing in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in their hearts to the Lord," he authorized making and using hymn-books, containing such composition; and had he commanded making music, all musical instruments would have been thereby authorized; but as he gave no such command his people have no such authority. But our very benevolent C. Missionary would have us act without Scriptural authority—would have us accept his instead thereof! He tells us that some things would be right, if no reference was made by the Scriptures to them. Hear him, "You may take an instrument and use it to help revel or to aid you in praising God." He knows; he is authority; but the Scriptures are of doubtful authority! Is it not equally true, you may dance to help revel or to aid you in praising God? Then we would have the organ and the dance in church! The quotation is continued, "If a Christian can use an organ anywhere, he can use it in the assembly of the saints." Thus he states his favorite principle. It is certainly right for a Christian to whistle, following his plow; then it is right to whistle in church! Again, the farmer comes in at noon and his little ones clamor for him to blow the horn and make the dogs howl; he does so, and they have a lively time; even the tired wife joins in the laugh. This was right for a little amusement in the family; therefore it cannot be wrong in the assembly!! Thou great Shepherd of the sheep, shield thy people from such teaching. Again, it is right for a Christian family to prepare a bountiful meal, and for all to partake at home; therefore it cannot be wrong to take this meal to church and eat it there! The Corinthians acted upon this principle and were rebuked by Paul. "If any man hunger let him eat at home," was his decision. So Paul thought that it did make a difference while some things, right in themselves, were done. Our C. M.

tells us that "Paul shaved his head, made a vow, and circumcised Timothy;" but I venture he did not go into the assembly of the saints to do these things. The Jews, carrying out this favorite principle of C. M. took their oxen, sheep, doves, and money changing into the temple, type of the church; but the outraged Teacher, whip in hand, scattered them. Some such treatment is now called for in some of our churches. O give us back our Bible and encourage us in studying it, treasuring its holy precepts in our hearts, guiding our lives by them. If we do so we will be approved by Him who has given us these precepts.

Hebron, O., June 16, 1883.

WHAT IS DUTY?

Bro. Floyd:

Being desirous of a better understanding of Christian duties, both in regard to theory and practice, is the prompter in this attempt to solicit the true meaning of the spirit on such duties as I may herein state.

First I will mention is the observance of the Lord's day. It seems to me much of the practice of both elders and laity is in opposition to the teaching of the Bible. What secular matters are lawful on that day? I have known an elder to choose that day to move, some go a fishing, more common day to gather up stock, do business, trade and deal as on other days, some do their letter writing mostly on Sunday, as it were to save time. If these practices are right why not merchants post their books and settle up, or sell goods, when no distress call for such things; others break young horses to ride or work on Sunday.

2. Family worship is seldom attended to, then only at night, perhaps only Sunday night; often no chapter read on subject treated of.

3. Another sore evil is the slack reins of the tongue bridle. Some are supercilious and claim to have the right of knowing most of a brother's business. Their moods vary much, sometimes hurt feelings by harsh rebukes, at others by course flatteries, sometimes they exalt themselves, then abuse. They may say, "Pull out the beam out of thy own eye." "All men think all men mortal but themselves," &c. Were we to keep back admonition on this plea I fear most of our teachers would be silent lest they would