

Communications.

Interdenominational.

We mean something which is a sort of "union common ground" arrangement, by the mutual consent of the denomination, a joining together by combination, to a certain extent, of many religious sects. And by "common" we mean something belonging equally to many indefinitely. By "ground" we mean the basis upon which the whole thing rests. Hence the "common" rests upon the ground, and the "ground" rests upon the "common."

Here, it will be observed, is mutual reciprocity, mutual action and reaction, reciprocation interchange, exchange, and mutuality. It may be that the flexibility, and the sublimated letting down of sectarian orthodox rigidity, as is manifest, in such a tentative arrangement, ought to entitle it to a much bigger name than the one which we have suggested.

The determinate identity of the various religious sects of the age is mostly dependent upon their written creeds, which are their authorized standards of faith and practice, each of which generally contain positive statements of the sectarian dogmas which they represent, definitely laid down, explicitly stated, and clearly expressed.

But the grand interdenominational combination, to which we refer, has a sort of negative, veto, creed. A creed that possesses the charm of unwritten intangibility, one which contains no positive statements of "doctrines" in any regular creed form. This renders it more invulnerable to attack, and gives it the advantage of potency and effectiveness. Sometimes this great ecclesiastical nondescript crops out in what is called the "union movement," and there again its scintillations are seen in the "Moody Sankey" delusion, and sometimes in popular Bible lessons for Sunday schools. It always teaches some positive doctrinal ideas such as are commonly received by the various religious sects.

And while it is silent in relation to the doctrinal differences of the various sectarian elements that compose it. It also silently and negatively ignores by exclusion New Testament doctrine and practice, and in doing so it ignores God's plea, and of course, it ignores our distinctive plea as a religious people, for "our plea" is in contradistinction from sectarian teaching, because it is God's plea.

We are told sometimes that the various departments of this interdenominational movement proceed at the expense of church covenants, creeds and disciplines, and that its various systems of instructions are at the expense of Calvinism, Armenianism, Secinianism, Pelagianism, and every other creed-ism and confession of faith. And we suggest that it proceeds at the expense of the truth itself. And hence, the same insuperable objections which lie against every other human creed lie with equal force against this one. It matters not to say that in its various systems of religious instructions it often gives a learned and correct exegesis of many different portions of Scripture, for if it ignores by exclusion any part of the plain and positive teaching of the New Testament, it is artful, subtle, and dangerous. And is as much of a human creed, as any other. We have heard it urged that this great comprehensive system presents nothing but "Bible," and say some of "our people" that you know, is "our plea" just so, "our plea" is God's plea, and comprehends the whole Bible, the Gospel plan of salvation included. And we here raise the suggestion and ask, If our Sunday schools were confined to a system of instruction which excluded the Gospel plan of salvation, for all of their religious instruction, for a period of ten years, and then were to hear some of our preachers proclaim the whole truth, would they not be

greatly amazed? and think that they were hearing some new doctrine not found in their Bible instruction, and would they not reject the new and living way, and adhere to those Scriptural abstractions which they had previously received. We have never seen anything in the teachings of the system above referred to, which is so arranged as to maintain and develop the logical dependence and connection of Gospel facts, truths, commands, and promised blessings, in such Scriptural order as to induce persons, by federative acts of obedience to enter into covenant relation with the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, if our views of such a system are correct, is it not radically and fundamentally defective. What is the object of Bible instruction anyhow? is it to teach every part except that which is of the most vital interest to us, and leave that portion out, and substitute in its stead mere human philosophy and tradition, negatively, and sometimes positively declaring that to be nonessential, which the Holy Spirit hath made essential.

Now, if we have made any overstrained inferences, let some of our more liberal brethren arise and explain them away.

Differentially,
S. B. DUNTON.

The Drama of Life.

Man is born into this world, of all creatures most helpless and dependent, and were it not for the care and protection of senior associations he would fade as the untimely rose before the cold wintry blast.

But most of all creatures man is cared for in his embryo state and nursed and nurtured until he begins to struggle for his own existence. He sees the workings of the busy world before him, and he steps upon the great stage and mingles in its multitudinous element. He accepts the world as he finds it, and begins a record for eternity, whether for weal or for woe.

The field of nature in all its heavenborn beauty is before him as his soul may each day be enraptured as he views the green valleys and mountains and brooks and rills, or stroll among the green forests cheered by sweet notes of melody from singing birds. Or see the snowy clouds floating in the ethereal heavens on the wings of the wind 'neath the azure sky, or on the return of aurora view the rising sun as he lifts his radiant beams from beneath the horizon of the East, giving heat, light, and life to all living. The book of nature is ever portraying to his intelligence instructive lessons. The glittering stars shining from heaven speak volumes to him. The golden beams of the rising and setting sun point heavenward. The growing vegetation, the towering forests and mountains and hills all point upward. His ears and understanding oftentimes are attracted by the glad sound of the Gospel pointing him to heaven. The best people on earth speak to him of heaven. The longings of his soul yearn for heaven. Belonging to an ephemeral race he knows his time will end, his race will soon be run, and his days will soon be numbered. Two roads are before him, one or the other he must pursue; the one leading to happiness, the other to misery; the one to life, the other to death; the one to heaven, the other to hell. He has the freedom of choice. His better judgment admonishes him to "follow peace with all men and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord." The Savior tells him to "enter in at the straight gate," and follow the "narrow way that leads to life," and warns him of the "broad way that leads to death."

But pride intrudes upon him, and tells him of a long life of enjoyment, of many fruits and flowers to be gathered upon the world's highway. That Christianity is unpopular, too

sanctimonious and humiliating, the road is too narrow, the cross too heavy, the responsibilities too great for his young life. He can bask in the pleasures of life for a season, enjoy its enjoyable season for a time, until the mind becomes more established; and become settled in habits will make a decided stand and a permanent movement. But alas! the young mind has become established in sin, the soul is poisoned by the baleful effects of vice, so much so, that the redeeming qualities are nearly all paralyzed. Early impressions are lasting, and as a general rule form the man whether good or bad. Feasting the soul upon sin during youth and manhood will never better qualify one for the solemn duties of life. One should set their mark high in early life, should form resolutions to make life a blessing, to unyieldingly brandish the Word against earth's temptations, and to regard confidential friends as inveterate enemies unless they recognize the "blood stained banner of King Immanuel."

Never be decoyed by their vain allurements and subtleties to overthrow you and thwart you in your efforts to manfully breast the torrents and brave the storms and floods from the persecuting world.

Young soldiers, enlist in the army of the faithful. Wade into the battlefield panoplied with the heavenly armour, and the battle will soon be over.

T. M. MORGAN.

Looking Glass, Or., Aug. 20, 1879.

On Immortality.

It must be allowed, that through all the parts of nature there appears a most benevolent intention in the providence of God for man's preservation and comfort. The earth and waters administering to his food and raiment, animals of various kinds are preserved for him in due season, as we every day experience. But these pleasures are but of a subordinate degree; he enjoys something of a far more sublime nature, his power of contemplating on the goodness of his Maker in the creation of all these things, which renders him desirous of something above and beyond them all.

Can it therefore be suggested that beings capable of the most refined tastes, capable of being moved and affected even to an inexpressible degree of pleasure by the combined harmonies of sounds; beings capable of increasing and advancing their knowledge in all things, even to their latest moments capable of conceiving notions which no part of their mortal frame can possibly convey to their understanding, and in which no instrumental influence can have any share; beings that are never satisfied in searching after truth through all the winding labyrinths and hidden recesses of nature, we must say that their origin is truly divine, its fullness must be in a hereafter. "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in this body according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." 2 Cor. v. 10.

Our very imaginations reach to eternity in spite of all that can be said by the most obstinate Atheist or that our own doubts can devise. Hope is a constant instinct which inspires me with a desire of finding some better state. "To the general assembly and church of the firstborn which are written in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect." Heb. xiii. 23.

That shows that there is a future state. Were we not certain of an other state of existence hereafter we would not shrink at committing wicked acts if there were no power within ourselves that we shall live hereafter.

"Giving thanks unto the Father which hath made us meet to be par-

takers of the inheritance of the saints in light." Col. i. 12.

Another strong proof of the immortality of the spirit flows from the infallibility of goodness and justice of the divine being, for if it were not immortal and ever conscious of good and evil done in this life, that goodness and justice would be liable to be called in question. This notion has often confounded some of the greatest philosophers, and at the same time one of the greatest considerations to prove the future state when entered upon with deliberation.

Can we hesitate to believe immortality of the spirit. The word of God tells us plainly in St. Luke the sixteenth chapter and 22d verse: "And it came to pass that the beggar died and was carried by angels into Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried; and in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off and Lazarus in his bosom."

These considerations have induced me to believe in a future existence, which I most firmly do; will therefore put my trust in an allmerciful God who is able to conduct me through the thorny path of life to another and better world. "For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened; not for that we be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life." 2 Cor. v. 4. "For to me to live is Christ; and to die is gain." Phil. i. 21. "I press toward the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory." Col. iii. 4.

I see the sun of life is setting,
My earthly toils will soon be o'er;
I have labored through the heat of summer,
And now view the heavenly shore.

M. E. WORK.

Spread of the English Language.

Twenty-six years ago an American or Englishman, in Paris, could scarcely find a Frenchman who could talk any language but his own; and travelers were equally restricted to one dialect. The Paris shops were sealed books in 1851-2 to English and Americans, and a valet de place, or "guide," that could talk English, was as rare as a silent monkey or a yellow crow. Now all is changed. A trip to Europe is cheaper than a journey to California. You can go to Rome and back to America for less than it will cost you to live at an American watering-place the same length of time. The Frenchman acquires English, not nearly so generally as the American does French, but the two get on together very well; and every day practice is making both more perfect. Every French shop, almost, and all the best hotels, have English attendants, and, at the Exposition you are helped through by a number of good people who talk to you and for you. English is the quicksilver that simplifies the polyglot mixture, for while the man who knows English tries to master German and French, the two latter grapple English at the same time. English is a part of polite education in the best French and German schools. How will it be in twenty-two years, between now and the opening of the twentieth century? The spread of the English language is among the marvels of the present; other tongues stay in schools and sections, or grow in the soil where they took root, dying out, as in America, where they were transplanted more than a hundred years ago. But the English is the tongue that travels, and discovers, rights, controverts and converts.—*Ec.*

The expert before a combination banklock when the combination is unknown to him, is in a position similar to that in which are placed even the most skillful teachers by their endeavor to reach certain minds.

Prices of Magazine Work.

A writer in a New York magazine thirty-five years ago says: "The history of the monthlies for the past few years forms a chapter by itself of American progress. It is but a very short time since the dollar a page of the *North American Review* was considered sufficient pay for articles by Edward Everett. The old New York *Mirror* paid \$500 a year for 'Pencilings by the Way' (N. P. Willis), the republication of which has paid the author \$7,000. I think the burst on authorland of Graham's and Godey's liberal prices were like sunrise without a dawn. They began at once by paying their principal contributors at the rate of \$12 a page—nearly thrice the amount paid by English magazines to the best writers, and paying it, too, on the receipt of the MSS., and not, as in London, on the publication of the article." These prices have not been maintained. Six dollars a page would now be an unusual high price. The leading magazines, however, with the exception of the *Atlantic Monthly*, pay on the acceptance of the MSS., but in some cases it is scarcely safe for a contributor to accept these terms, as the amount of print it will make may be underestimated. The leading English magazines pay from \$4 to \$7 50 a page. *Blackwood* and *London Society* are exceedingly good pay. The *Quarterly* and *Edinburgh* pay ordinary contributors a guinea a page but some times raise these rates fifty per cent.—*New York Sun*.

To Much for the Attorney.

The following dialogue, which occurred years ago between a lawyer and a witness in a justice's court, is worth relating:

It seems that Mr. Jones loaned Mr. Smith a horse, which died in his (Smith's) possession. Mr. Jones brought suit to recover the value of the horse, attributing his death to bad treatment. During the trial a witness, (Brown), was called to the stand to testify as to how Mr. Smith treated horses.

Lawyer, with a bland and confidence invoking smile, "Well, sir, how does Mr. Smith generally ride a horse?"

Witness, with a merry twinkle in his eye, otherwise imperturbable, "Astraddle, I believe sir."

Lawyer, with scarcely a perceptible flush of vexation on his cheek, but still speaking in his blandest tones, "But, sir, what gait does he ride?"

Witness, "He never rides any gait, sir. His boys ride all the gates."

Lawyer, his bland smile all gone and his voice slightly husky, "But how does he ride when in company, with others?"

Witness, "Keeps up, if his horse is able, if not, he goes behind."

Lawyer, triumphantly and in perfect fury, "How does he ride when alone?"

Witness, "Don't know, never was with him when he was alone."

Lawyer, "I have done with you, sir."

A Wonderful Work.

An American engineer, who, being engaged in the construction of a railway in China, has had unusually favorable opportunities of examining the famous "Great Wall" built to obstruct the incursions of the Tartars, gives the following account of this wonderful work: The wall is 1728 miles long, 18 feet wide and 15 feet thick at the top. The foundation throughout is of solid granite, the remainder is of compact masonry. At intervals of between two and three hundred yards towers rise up 25 to 30 feet high, and 24 feet in diameter. On the top of the wall and on both sides of it are masonry parapets to enable the defenders to pass unseen from one tower to another. The wall itself is carried from point to point in a perfectly straight line, across valleys and plains and hills, without the slightest regard to the configuration of the ground, sometimes plunging into abysses a thousand feet deep. Brooks and small rivers are bridged over by the wall, while on both banks of the larger streams, strong flanking towers are placed.

ARTISTS' Materials, Wax Goods, Shades, &c., A. H. ABBOTT & CO., Chicago.