

Predestination and Foreknowledge.

Since writing my article on Rom. viii. 28, I have thought it may be of interest to your readers to say a few things under the above heading.

Twenty years ago in some, indeed in almost all communities, this was the all absorbing theme in religious circles. It was the central pillow of the popular creeds; the one upon which all the preachers were discoursing, and by which almost everybody's orthodoxy was decided, whether the judges understood the question or not. The more people talked about it the less they knew of it, and the less they knew of it the more they seem to like it. It is almost impossible to conceive of the ideas entertained, upon this and kindred subjects, the purposes for which it was used, and the varied effects it produced upon the popular mind. It was the hot bed out of which grew Universalism, some phases of modern Spiritualism, and various other forms of modern skepticism and infidelity. While many of the good people, who long since renounced it as set forth in the sermons of by gone days, and as still found in the creeds at this time, yet they are not wholly free from its paralyzing effects on their perception of divine truth.

Our early pioneer preachers had to fight the popular dogmas upon this question, when it was in its fullest vigor and strength, therefore it was the subject of many debates. Perhaps no man was more dreaded by the popular theologians upon this question than the late Benjamin Franklin, as we glean from "The Life and Times of Benjamin Franklin," written by his son Joseph Franklin, and J. A. Headington, published by John Burns, St. Louis, Mo. On page 201 the author says, "As early as 1846 Mr. Franklin published the opinion that the 'Foreknowledge of God,' referred to in the Scriptures, was not what God simply knew before, but rather that which he made known before it came to pass. He held at the same time, that 'eternal purpose of God' was, 'He would justify the heathen through faith,' and not that he had 'from all eternity' determined to save some persons and permit others to perish without the opportunity of salvation; it was a purpose in regard to a plan or scheme, rather than a purpose to us individual human beings. At the request of four resident ministers of Cincinnati, Ohio, he wrote a sermon of the title of the heading of this article, which was stereotyped in 1851, and circulated wherever there were Disciples."

We are informed by the author that James Mathews, of the Presbyterian church, was the first to attack the discourse, and after several months correspondence between the parties, a protracted discussion followed. The first proposition being simply a synopsis of the sermon as follows. First sundry points of doctrine, viz.:

1. When God speaks of knowing certain things, it is in contradiction from things which he does not approve or make known as his.

2. The foreknowledge of God is the knowledge which God has before given by the prophets respecting Christ and his sufferings.

3. God's elect are the apostles and prophets.

4. The object for which God's elect were chosen was to make known the Gospel.

Second.—Sundry interpretations of Scripture, and

Third.—A declaration that the predestination of the confession of faith, as given in the extract on page 4, is not of the Bible or any thing like it. The four points of doctrine are in opposition to sound philology, correct philosophy and the Scripture truth; the interpretation of Scripture do not convey the true meaning of the spirit, and the declaration respecting the

doctrine of the extract is not true in fact."

Mr. Mathews affirmed.

The synopsis of the sermon and negation of Mr. Mathews is almost a debate of itself, how well he succeeded with such a burden with the wit and genius of Bro. Franklin falling after can be faintly imagined by the reader. No doubt the length and form of this proposition was of Mr. Mathews choosing, and it is said that the preliminary correspondence was quite spirited and lengthy; but the final debate held in Carlisle was pleasant. Ex-Governor Metcalf, Dr. McMillen and Esquire Sharpe, were the moderators.

The second proposition was affirmed by Mr. Franklin, and is more specific in substance—"That predestination, as taught in the Presbyterian Confession of Faith, ch. 3, sect. 3, 4 and 5, is unreasonable, unscriptural, and in opposition to the spread of the Gospel," which he, no doubt, sustained to the satisfaction of many of his audience, and to the dismay and discomfiture of his opponents, and many who had not before heard such things in Israel.

The author further says of Mr. Franklin's sermon, that it was predicated of Eph. i. 46, and the elect spoken of was the character referred to in the text—this was the apostles and prophets; he did not deny but what Christians are sometimes in other Scriptures called the elect.

If the reader feels interested to know more of the subject, let him keep this paper, and at some future time we will send the extract given by the author of Bro. Franklin's manner of treating this subject. In mean time you can buy the book of the publisher for \$2.00 per volume, and it will in very many ways be instructive and entertaining reading on many things of the past and present, while it exhibits much Gospel truths which never grows old.

Fraternally yours,

S. H. HEDRICK.

Fairfield, Iowa, Sept. 1, 1879.

A Humming-Bird's Nest.

Recently a humming-bird's nest was found by some persons who had sufficient natural curiosity to overcome their compassion, and who captured the nest, two young hummers and the old one, took them home, and had them stuffed. They are to be sent to a museum of natural curiosities in London. The nest is built on a little twig, and scarcely the size of half an English walnut. Both nest and twig are covered with patches of lichen until it is almost impossible to tell one from the other, and the nest looks like a kind of natural excrescence on the twig. It is pliable, like a tiny cup of velvet, and the inside is lined with a white substance, as rich and soft as white silk. The little birds are about the size of bumblebees, very pretty, and they sit on a little perch just outside the nest, with open bills, while the old bird hovers over them to feed them.—*New Jersey paper.*

UNDER THE SEA.—A professional diver said he had in his house—what would probably strike a visitor as a very strange chimney ornament—the shells of an oyster holding fast a piece of printed paper. The possessor of this ornament was diving on coast, when he observed at the bottom of the sea this oyster on a rock, with a piece of paper in its mouth, which he detached, and commenced to read through the goggles of his head-dress. It was a gospel tract, and, coming to him thus strangely, so impressed his unconverted heart that he said: "I can hold out against God's mercy in Christ no longer, since it pursues me thus." He became while at the ocean's depth, a repentant, converted and (as he was assured) sin-forgiven man—saved at the bottom of the sea.

We never did like the unbecoming habit of grabbing hats and leaving the house just as soon as services are over. People should take time to stop and shake hands and impart and receive friendly greetings. Regard each other as belonging to the same family, and part as though you had some respect for each other and the church of God.

Poverty.

"Poverty is the nurse of manly energy and heaven-climbing thoughts, attended by love, and faith, and hope, around whose steps the mountain breezes blow, and from whose countenance all the virtues gather strength."

It is not so much the hardships of labor that poverty brings, which makes the poor unhappy as the fretting, because of missing luxuries. Labor is healthful and honorable, and is really a source of happiness. Necessary labor sharpens the faculties and privation and sacrifice brace the moral nature. A lack of a superabundance of this world's goods does not always constitute poverty, nor does the possession of them always constitute riches. Poverty or riches lie much in the mind. One man with five hundred a year is rich, while another with three times five thousand is poor. The one with five hundred is rich because he does not live beyond his means, and has few wants; the other is poor because his desires are extravagant and he indulges them beyond his income.

The unhappy poor man, is he who is dissatisfied with his lot and spends his strength fretting because he is not rich. He fancies that he is looked down upon because he is poor, when at the same time he is the one that hates poverty. He is constantly looking for slights. If he meets an acquaintance, who happens to be in a pre-occupied state of mind and perchance does not see him, he cries, "Ah, he ignores me because I'm poor." Or if a man of "wealth and position" shows him considerable attention he is being "patronized." He is so much afraid of being slighted or patronized that he wraps himself in such a thick mantle of loftiness, indifference and far-awayness that those who would be to him, what he desires, warm and generous friends, are turned away indeed. Many a rich man is hated—called proud and cold, whose bosom is full of warm and tender sympathies for those who endure privations but dares not offer them lest he be thought officious. We hear daily of the duties of the rich to the poor, but not often of the duties of the poor to the rich. I think often of this, not that I would shield one or condemn the other. But, who makes the disparity between the two classes? Does one do it all? Why should not the poor man be as frank and open-hearted with the man of much means as with one who is destitute? Does money make the man? Because you have none, need you be less worthy? Because he has it does he not need love and sympathy—not for his money but for himself? Need your mind and heart be less bright and warm because you have not lain in the lilies nor fed on the roses of life? Ah.

"If every one's internal care
Were written on his brow
How many would our pity share
Who bear our envy now."

Just here comes to mind an incident related to me by a friend long ago. It is very simple—simple as the tiny golden star of the wild broom that nods in the breeze here at my door. From this tiny star will fall a seed from whose germ will rise untold numbers in time to come. Yes, it is simple but precious to me as long remembered words of a dear and distant friend: She was out walking enjoying the prosperous condition of her broad acres, when she was led outside the borders of her domain by curiosity to a rude hut on a hillside. It was picturesque in its rudeness so she resolved to peep in. She had never met poverty face to face before. One room with dirt floor; the only furniture a bed, a table and a few chairs. The occupant was an old white-haired woman, with scant and worn garments. At a glance she took it all in—a life of pain, toil, misery. She sat down on one of the rude chairs

and burst into tears. The old woman seemed much surprised, enquired if she could do anything for her and seemed anxious to soothe her pain, but when she told her that she had never till then comprehended what poverty was and that in a moment the terrible thought, that her daughter who lived "as the lilies of the field," might by some unexpected turn of fortune's wheel, be reduced to a life like this and ended with, "Oh impossible, I could not live and bear it." The white-haired woman smiled gently and said, "is that all my dear lady? You call me poor? I am rich, I have all I want. I have shelter, food, raiment and this," laying her toil-worn hand upon a much used Bible. "What more do I want? He has promised me a glorious crown up there. I know it will be mine, for I have kept the faith. Ah, yes, it won't be long dear lady, you see my hair is blossomed for the grave. I am content; yea, more, I am happy. Can I do anything that can make you happier? Oh learn that Jesus is indeed your elder brother, then you will not fear poverty nor worship at the shrine of your ancestral wealth." Ah, that is the poverty that the richest parvenue in the land will not dare to patronize—the poverty before whom the mightiest ruler in christendom will bow. And this proud woman went away humbled. She who had every advantage of long amassed wealth, old and honored name, education and refinement—she who was wont to be acknowledged and to feel herself a queen in the polished circles of society in which she moved, had won not homage from this lowly cottager but proffered aid! So gentle, too, it was, so holy, so like a mother pitying the sorrows of a child that many, many a bitter day this motherless woman's heart yearned for the holy influence of that happy lowly woman.

"Poor and content is rich, and rich enough,"

—Ex.

Elegant Simplicity.

BY DR. DEEMS.

It is a dangerous thing for a party of the male sex to discourse on the subject of female attire.

Every man of even the least cultivation delights in seeing woman well dressed. The difficulty lies in settling the question of what it is to be "well dressed," and that difficulty arises from the masculine ignorance of the details. As women pass before a man's eyes he knows at once whether the impression made upon him is pleasing or otherwise. But we cannot tell why. He does not know how much of an artist that woman had to become in order to be able to array herself in different garments that should have perfect adjustment to her person and perfect harmony of coloring. She has had to study, first, other women; secondly, herself; thirdly, the masculine intelligence, in order to reach the consummation to which she has attained.

Sometimes it costs pecuniarily to make such an achievement. The cost will vary according to the artist's skill in using her materials. The men who have to pay the bills, the husbands and papas know something about this, and in the course of years secure a valuable education in this department of art and economy; and, ordinarily this class of gentlemen, if thoughtful, deliver tolerably rational criticisms on this subject. The men outside, the bachelors generally, are those who make mistakes in uttering their dicta on dress. As an example of this, a young man says to his sister:

"Why can't you imitate the economy and elegant simplicity of the Van Bocker girls? They don't dress in silks as you do? For curiosity I inquired of a lady what a certain morning dress which I saw on one of the

Van Bocker girls at Saratoga, ought to cost. I learned that it was thirty-five cents a yard, and they did look so sweet and fresh."

"Quite true," said his sister; "but you must recollect that few ladies indulge in that kind of toilet, they must have several changes and each dress must have a large quantity of furbelowing and fixing to make it logk well; and the laundrying of dresses of that kind costs more than the washing of pocket handkerchiefs. So that if economy is what you have in view, dear brother, a good dress that costs more at the beginning may last longer and in the end cost less."

The fact is, we may as well understand that elegant simplicity in dress as in manners requires an outlay which demands a good income. Showiness is cheap. Elegance must be paid for by both money and taste; but still more costly is elegant simplicity, which for its indulgence demands more money and more taste. To a looker-on nothing seems so easy as to make graceful motion, as he beholds a gymnast or danseuse it seems to him as though it only required him to will to do the same thing in order to have it accomplished. But let him step out into the middle of the floor and try it. A few movements of his limbs will convince him that it will require months of practice, under tuition, to move with the simple grace of the person whom he supposed it would be so easy to imitate.

In literature we take our models of simple elegance, the writings in which the paragraphs run after one another as the ripples of a brook. It seems as though we could certainly write in that way, if we could not employ a more ambitious style. And what a mistake we find this to be! Our attempts soon show us that it is much more easy to turn off our period's full of sesquipedalian words and inflated bombast, and that a little imagination Webster's Dictionary and Roget's Thesaurus will enable us to write in a style which seems absolutely sublime to the uneducated masses. But if we are to write like an Emerson we must write over and oft, and take pains to correct, expurgate and polish, so that each word shall seem to be the very best possible in its place.

Our readers can carry this thought into their meditations upon the formation of character. An elegant simple character is one of the most charming things in the world. But what thought, what care, what constant discipline, what incessant practice of every virtue, through what a number of years, are required to give a man the character of elegant simplicity! Let our young readers ask themselves whether it is not worth while to endeavor to attain such a character as will remain for the admiration of the ages, like the Apollo Belvidere in statuary, and the Great Pyramid, which shall be the admiration of mankind when ten thousand ephemeral prettinesses, produced by sculptors and architects, shall have passed away.—*Sunday Magazine.*

A Quaint Picture.

A fearless writer gives this picture of a school within his knowledge: "Teacher knew very little. Boys knew less, Teacher taught but little. Boys paid no attention to that little. Teacher languidly asking questions. Boys listlessly read the printed answers. Teacher got done. Boys glad. Hymn given out. Teacher did not sing. Boys did not care about it. Teacher said he guessed he would not be there next Sunday. Boys said they guessed they would not either. Teacher did not care much. Boys did not seem to care at all. School dismissed. Net result of Sunday school teaching, nothing, absolutely nothing.—*Exchanges.*

There's never a day so sunny
But a little cloud appears;
There's never a life so happy
But had its time of tears;
Yet the sun shines out the brighter
When the stormy tempest clears,
There's never a way so narrow
But the entrance is made straight;
There's always a guide to point us
To the "little wicket gate,"
And the angels will be nearer
To a soul that is desolate.