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THEORIES OF INSPIRATION.

This subject, of special importance at this crisis in the religious world, is very fully discussed in the late number of the *American Presbyterian and Theological Review*. No new light is professed to be offered, but careful and analytic statements of various prevalent views on the subject are presented, and particularly the views of Bleazar Lord are presented, and his works on Inspiration are discussed at length.

The only important theories of inspiration may be stated as three in number. First, the theory which allows inspiration to belong only to those who have been recipients of revelation. Inspiration, in the view of such, is only the subjective effect of revelation. There is no distinguishable inspiration of the Scriptures as Scriptures. This is the view of Schleiermacher, DeWette and Bunsen. Second, the theory which regards the Scriptures as containing the word of God, not as being the word of God. The writers are inspired, divinely guided, yet not in such a way that all the Bible is free from error. This is the view which the returning rationalism of Germany had reached long ago, and which it was expected ere long to pass, as it pressed forward to the true evangelical faith. Hence, we waited patiently when such men as the eminently good Tholuck said that "the Bible as we have it cannot in any case be held to be verbally inspired, and hence the contents of Scripture cannot be regarded as verbally guaranteed;" we waited, expecting such good men to take still clearer positions, and hoping that evangelical Christians in Germany would quite shake off these old relics of rationalism. Many have done so; Rothe, Schenkel, Meyer and others retain them. Olshausen, in his splendid commentaries, inclines to the admission of such discrepancies in the Gospels as this theory of defective inspiration would allow. And it is now the very nucleus of the difficulties raised by the essayists and by Colenso in the Church of England. Coleridge, Arnold, Alford, Stanley and Jowett hold or held to this theory. The great contest into which we have plunged, is between this theory of half-abandoned German rationalism, and the third or Orthodox view; which regards the Bible, in the form in which God gave it, as so inspired as to be an infallible authority, free from error. In a certain sense all evangelical Christians hold to the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures—a guarding influence extending even to the words. But not all believe in what has been called the "mechanical theory," according to which the very words were dictated and the writers were nothing but amanuenses. Most take the position that, besides receiving revelations, such an influence was exerted upon the minds of the writers, as to guide them, in the free exercise of their faculties, to the true fact, thought, or conception, and to the use of such language as would correctly express it. Little is now heard of the once famous theory of degrees of inspiration, as suggestion, direction, superintendence, &c. One kind of guiding influence is now generally recognized among the orthodox as sufficient.

Mr. Bleazar Lord, however, adopts the theory which has generally been denominated mechanical. He says: "It follows that he conveyed to the sacred writers by Inspiration what they wrote—the thoughts in the words by which they are expressed." The nature of inspiration, then, according to Mr. Lord, is simply this, that it imparts thoughts and words to the minds of the recipients. "In the divine act of Inspiration, consequently, the agency of the recipient can in no wise have any participation whatever, any more than in a divine act of creation, or in the act of one person in speaking to another." We do not care to follow in the line of argument by which, from Scripture and the nature of language, this extreme theory is defended. It is like everything Mr. Lord has ever done in theological discussion; very thorough, earnest and analytical; very logical in statement; proving hard study; but extreme in its conclusions. "The whole," says the reviewer, "turns upon the question whether Inspiration is to be defined in relation to the writers or to what they wrote. Were the men inspired to write the word, or was the word they wrote inspired? Alford says:

"The men were inspired, the books were the result of that inspiration." Mr. Lord says: "The primary error which pervades the treatises of those who believe in any divine Inspiration, is that of regarding the Inspiration as an influence on the mental faculties of the sacred writers." We apprehend that most evangelical Christians are in error according to the views of Mr. Lord, which would not be remarkable, judging from the attitude of Mr. L. on other mooted questions.

From these opinions, which border very closely on bigotry, we gladly turn to the broader and more genial views of such a comprehensive Christian thinker as Dr. Candlish. In his preface to the new edition of his "Reason and Revelation," the Presbyterian divine addresses himself first to the Bishop of Natal, repelling his gross misrepresentations, and then to the Duke of Argyll, who had given a meaning to the doctor's words which they would hardly bear. Dr. Candlish teaches that God took an "oversight" of the very words in which the record is framed. Whatever may be said of the nature of the things constituting the record, the fact that any of them is there, results from inspiration. Parts of the Bible may be more or less essential; but there is neither more nor less inspiration implied in their appearance upon the sacred page. Says Dr. C.:

I maintain strongly that all that is in the Bible is, in the strict and proper sense, the Word of God. It is God's inspired and infallible record of His Revelation, and of the human affairs—the sayings and doings of men—with which it has pleased Him that His Revelation should be mixed up. I have argued that God, giving to us a revelation of His mind and will in the manner in which it has seemed good to Him to give it—that is, mixed up with mundane affairs and the sayings and doings of men—secures its full and accurate conveyance to us—and can secure that—only by himself taking the oversight throughout of the very words in which the whole complex record is framed.

Hence, there are purely mundane matters, and there are evidences of an imperfect order of things in the record; but as God's system of Revelation included these secularities and these imperfect dispensations, the writers were just as truly inspired to record them as they were to record purely spiritual and wholly true things. But were they inspired to record errors of fact as if correct, trivial though they might be? Were they inspired to assert false views of natural phenomena as true, according to the imperfect notions of their own age? Dr. Candlish may answer for us.

"I put it as a problem which only the Omnipotent can solve—how a revelation which is to range over centuries of comparative ignorance on matters of secular and mundane science—and is necessarily, according to its plan, to mix up these matters freely with its higher themes—is to be so constructed and so recorded that it shall not anticipate human discoveries, and yet shall be in entire harmony with them as in the course of time they emerge. I maintain that this precise problem is found actually solved, in point of fact, in the Bible. And I draw the inference that this implies its plenary, verbal inspiration. The reason is plain enough, according to my view. Only one seeing the end from the beginning could so adjust the language used as, on the one hand, to make it tell the men of the existing generation no more than they otherwise knew of astronomical, or geological, or other natural truth; and yet, on the other hand, to make it such that the men of all future generations should be able in the long run, and without violence, to explain it satisfactorily in the light of their clearer and fuller information, and their more advanced and accurate science."

Dr. C. rather imagines that "The Duke of Argyll is prepared to admit, not only apparent, but real discrepancies between the statements of the Bible and the facts of science. In my opinion, the admission is unnecessary. All past experience, I think, goes to prove it to be unnecessary. Always hitherto it has been found that, after a little time, and a little patience on both sides, apparent discrepancies have turned out not to be real. I am preparing to expect that the same final harmony will come out of passing discord, in the future progress of Biblical study and scientific research, independently conducted and with Baconian modesty on both sides, without rash or premature dogmatism or generalization on either. In that confident expectation I can calmly await the issue."

"I close with one remark. It is the policy of our opponents on this question to run us up to untenable positions. They insist on our maintaining certain extreme and absurd views, such as have

no doubt sometimes found supporters among theologians writing before the subject was much discussed. And they raise a shout of exultation when any rational explanation is given on our side, as if it implied an entire abandonment of the whole doctrine. We have to thank Coleridge and Arnold for having led the van in this unworthy mode of assault. They, however, I believe, did it ignorantly; not knowing, or not understanding, the real orthodox belief, as expounded by its intelligent advocates. I am not prepared to be quite so charitable in my judgment of some, at least, of the tribe who have so eagerly caught up the weapon wielded by these great men. For our part, we must beware of being too much moved by the taunts of such adversaries. And, in particular, we must beware of permitting them to drive us into asserting more than Scripture itself and sound reason fairly warrant and require. It is on this account that I am not myself very sensitive on the score of being charged by hostile critics with surrendering the high views of inspiration commonly held in the Evangelical Churches, because I endeavor to make some small contribution towards a fair and candid exposition of what these views, when candidly looked at, really are.

"And for myself, I claim the justice of being believed when I avow it as my sole aim to advocate, as best I may, the great truth on which the religion of Christ and the hopes of Christians depend—that, not only is the Word of God in the Bible, but that the Bible is itself, in the strictest and fullest sense, in every particular of its contents, and in every expression which it uses, the infallible Word of the one only living and true God."

DR KIRK AND MR E. S. TOBEY AT THE FRONT.

These two distinguished Bostonians have been spending a few days at the front of the Army of the Potomac, inquiring for themselves into the religious condition of the soldiers. On their way home, they consented to remain in this city, while a number of the clergy and laity of the different denominations were called together at the rooms of the Christian Commission, to hear their report. Although the whole affair was almost impromptu, the brethren having made no preparation to address the meeting, it was one of the most deeply interesting occasions that we have ever enjoyed. The cautious Boston merchant had gone with considerable doubt on his mind, as to the actual basis of fact in the high-colored accounts of the religious condition of the army, which have been current of late, and was in no mood to be easily deceived. He was attended by a Unitarian friend, a man with at least as little religious tenderness, as is usually found in connection with that faith; but the effect of what they saw at the various chapel tents, stations of the Christian Commission and other gathering places for religious purposes, was overwhelming. They came back too full for utterance; declaring many wonderful things of the work of God in the army, but assuring us that the half has not been told. The universal readiness of the men to hear the word; the crowded congregations; the eager hearers; the great, rapid, and to human appearance, thorough transformations of character; the evident nearness and power of the Holy Spirit, in connection with the labors of the Christian Commission, are features everywhere joyfully witnessed and testified to by these brethren. They come away deeply stirred at the sight of a field so vast, so important, so ripe for the harvest. In the very spirit of our article of last week; "A Great Home Missionary Field," they declared their conviction that the churches were not half-awake to the amazing character of the work thus providentially brought before them in the army. They felt that instant measures of a greatly enlarged character were demanded of the church; and especially, that the Christian Commission should immediately take measures, by a more expanded organization to adapt itself to the demands of the field. The Commission is universally welcome among the officers and soldiers. Its agents are respected and the way is opened for them promptly everywhere. The only Sabbath service held at the Head Quarters of the army, and attended by Gen. Meade and staff, is under the direction of the Commission.

The one, great, paramount duty of Christian people in reference to our army at the present time, was, in the judgment of these speakers, to keep in view the condition of our soldiers' spir-

itual interests, and to sustain, in the most liberal and effective manner, the Christian Commission. The happy harmonious working of the Commission hitherto, though composed of, and employing men of every evangelical denomination, was adverted to; never did a home missionary effort so successfully combine the energies of the entire body of Christian people.

Prof. Burrows, of Andover, who had, on a separate occasion, visited and labored in, the Army of the Potomac, was also present and fully corroborated the statements of the two principal speakers.

The assembly, containing, with the clergy, some of the leading laymen of the city, was deeply moved by these statements. Most of them had heard fully of the good work going on in the army, before; some had taken part in it; but all were stirred with an unusual sense of the necessity for action on a much larger scale than heretofore. The meeting, which lasted three hours, did not break up until some practical measures were inaugurated, and some most encouraging announcements of liberality on the part of the friends of the Commission had been made. It is hoped and expected that Dr. Kirk and Mr. Tobey will avail themselves of an early opportunity to lay their interesting statements before a full meeting of the Christian people of this city, and without making further statements, which might be premature, we think we may announce to the numerous friends of the Christian Commission, and of the spiritual welfare of our soldiers, that the good work of evangelizing the army, will from this time be pushed forward, with greater vigor than at any time before.

Since writing the above, we have received from the office of the *S. S. Times* a slip containing a full report of Dr. Kirk's address, which we print in another part of the paper.

THE SEPOYS AT FORT PILLLOW.

There are some passages in the history of our war that should be written in scarlet. Common modes of expression cannot convey our judgment of the enormity of the conduct of the rebels in these instances. We have already been sickened with details of their savage maltreatment of the dead bodies of our soldiers at Bull Run and Chickamauga; we expect as a matter of course that they will starve and nearly kill with ill-treatment such of our men as they capture; their terrible treatment of such of their neighbors as were guilty only of a peaceable preference for the Union—rivalling the persecutions of the sixteenth century in vindictiveness and ferocious cruelty—has come to be an oft-told tale; and now, as we wait amazed, indignant, ashamed for our common humanity, wondering what new development of the frantic spirit of the South is to appear next, we are answered by the massacre of the garrison of Fort Pillow by Forrest and his men. This took place on Tuesday, the 12th of April, just three years from the bombardment of Fort Sumter, and was attended with circumstances unparalleled in our history, since the massacre of the garrison of New London by the British, who captured it in the Revolutionary war.

The account received from Cairo, after describing the rebel attack, in which they twice gained advantages in position by an unfair use of a flag of truce goes on to say:

Immediately upon the surrender, there ensued a scene which utterly baffles description. Up to that comparatively few of our men were killed, but, insatiate as fiends and bloodthirsty as devils incarnate, the Confederates commenced an indiscriminate butchery of the whites and blacks including those of both colors who had been previously wounded.

The dead and wounded negroes were piled on heaps and burned, and several citizens who joined our forces for protection, were killed or wounded. The black soldiers becoming demoralized, rushed to the rear, their white officers having thrown down their arms. Both white and black were bayoneted, shot or sabred, and even dead bodies were horribly mutilated. Children of seven or eight years of age, and several negro women were killed in cold blood. Soldiers unable to speak, from their wounds, were shot dead, and their bodies rolled down the banks into the river. Out of a garrison of 600 men only 200 remained alive.

Every honest and Christian fibre of our hearts must tingle with indignation

at such a deed. Every true man and woman will be stirred up to labor and to pray, that, for humanity's sake, no peace shall be made with such civilized savages; such specimens of modern chivalry; until they are utterly discomfited and humbled by the power of the Nation. Every right-feeling man must crave at the hands of the Government, some surely for the condign and exemplary punishment of those who connived at, commanded, or perpetrated such atrocious murders, as soon as it is in our power to do it.

The contrast between an enslaved race and its former masters, in regard to humanity and general Christian principle, is turning out more and more to the advantage of the former every day. Bad as slavery is for the slave, the oppressor is, as is just, the greatest sufferer of the two. The reaction of a wrong so great is more terrible than the suffering of the wrong itself. It was long ago expected that the slaves would rise against a wrong so foul; but it was the masters that rose, without cause, in the mere excess of their pampered lust of power, against the most beneficent Government in the world. It was expected that when the liberated slaves were armed and commissioned to fight their former masters, their long cherished sense of wrong would lead them to the wildest excesses of revenge; on the contrary, it is the masters of the South, and their friends, in the rabble of our Northern cities, that have given loose to bloody rage against unarmed Africans, and have murdered defenceless women and children, and savagely butchered surrendered prisoners, and actually burned wounded and living men!

These are the contrasts. The colored race in America is undergoing a terrible ordeal; but every fresh development of rage on the part of their enemies becomes a fresh vindication of their humanity and a new plea for their rights.

News of the Churches.

WESTERN CHURCHES.—A debt of \$500 has recently been paid by the church of Winslow, Ills. This church, long feeble, is now enjoying a good measure of prosperity. Every collection taken for Home Missions among the Western churches this year, exceeds that of last year.—On the 17th of March, the 8th Anniversary of the Ladies Mite Society, of Dunton, was held. When this Society was organized, the church building was unfinished, unpainted and several hundred dollars in debt. At this Anniversary the report showed that they had raised, during those eight years, over fourteen hundred and fifty dollars, in the expenditure of which the church had been neatly finished and its entire debt paid off. As a thank offering, the ladies immediately started a subscription, which they raised at once to \$180, and probably before this have completed, for the purchase of a bell.—*Presbytery Reporter.*

THE WORK OF RECONSTRUCTION.—The Reporter for April contains a letter from Rolla Mo. It is an important military post, destitute of any Protestant church. The population is estimated at 1500 to 3000. A Sabbath School has been organized with 135 members. 12 persons are prepared to unite in organizing a Presbyterian church and quite a number will aid in supporting a Minister. Rev. T. S. Reeve is on the ground.

DONATIONS.—Rev. G. D. A. Hebard, of Iowa City, received a friendly call from his people in March. Acknowledging the call in the *Iowa City Republican*, he says: "Should any one have any curiosity to know how much was received they can be informed by calling at the Parsonage."

MINISTERIAL CHANGES.—Rev. C. B. Barton has resigned the charge of Woodburn church, Ill., and Rev. G. C. Clark, lately of Collinsville, Ill., has been called to succeed him.—Rev. John W. Bailey, late professor in Knox College, has been called to the church in Bloomington, Ill. The Reporter "understands that he will accept."—Rev. Wm. T. Dickson, late of Coulterville, has accepted a call to the church at Wolf Creek, Mercer county, Pa.—Rev. Wm. N. Bacon has received and accepted a call to become the Pastor of the Congregational church and Society of Shoreham, Vt.—Mr. Joel J. Hough, a licen-

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tiate of the Third Presbytery of New York, was ordained to the ministry on the evening of the 6th inst., in the First Presbyterian Church, Bergen, N. J. Rev. Mr. Hough is at present laboring as an Evangelist in Delaware county, N. Y., his address being Cannonsville, N. Y.

REV. L. W. DUNLAP writes to the Reporter from La Grange, Mo., March 17, ult.:

We are doing some good I trust, at La Grange; but it is hard work and plenty of it. *Rebels are totally depraved* if other people are not. I hope to preach the Gospel here with the *golden rule included*. I fancy it has been left out in former days. I have commenced preaching at Canton, six miles further up the river. That town contains some 1,500 inhabitants.

REVIVAL IN LIMA, O.—A correspondent of the Herald writing from the above place says: The church was small, poor and cold, before the work of grace began. The first two epiphetes apply, to it yet, but by the blessing of God the heart of the church has grown warmer, and more healthful and larger. Even as to weakness and poverty, we have made some advance. Our church building had for sometime been too small, and we have exchanged it for a capacious hall, which thus far has been comfortably well filled.

On the second Sabbath of March the Lord brought twenty-three new members, and added them to our number. Six of these come by letter, and seventeen on profession of faith. Ten of the seventeen were baptized. We have taken up two collections for benevolent objects, since the revival began, and they have each been more than double any former contributions for the same cause. There was nothing remarkable about the revival, save the largeness of the blessing compared with the meagerness of the means used. It was a steady, quiet work of grace, the result of which, though not numerically large, we trust will be manifest among us for a long time to come.

COMMISSIONERS TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.—Third Presbytery of New York: Ministers—Rev. Wm. W. Newell, D. D., Rev. T. Ralston Smith, and Rev. Robert R. Booth, principals; Charles Merrill, Charles A. Davison, and Horatio A. Nelson, principals. The Fourth Presbytery of New York:—Revs. Thomas S. Hastings, Howard Crosby, D. D., Henry B. Smith, D. D.; and Elders—Oliver E. Wood, Tobias D. Lander, and Marcus C. Riggs: Presbytery of St. Louis, Principals, Rev. Edmund Wright, Elder Edwin Barnard.—Presbytery of Monroe, Michigan, Rev. George Duffield Jr.

CHURCH OF PORT JERVIS, N. Y.—This church is under the pastoral care of Rev. Dr. Fairchild. A debt of \$20,000 has recently been paid off, and \$230 presented to pastor and wife. At the last communion season, thirteen persons were received into fellowship—nine by profession of their faith, and four by letters from other churches. Of these, eight were heads of families, the others young people, mature, and "zealous of good works."

THE CHURCH AT HILLSDALE, MICH., has cancelled an indebtedness of \$3500.

CALIFORNIA.—Rev. C. C. Wallace, commissioned by the Assembly's Committee of Home Missions to place a mill, arrived per steamer at San Francisco on the last day of February.—Rev. P. G. Buchanan has been commissioned to labor at Watsonville.

THE PRESBYTERY OF CINCINNATI, at its late meeting received three candidates for the ministry, now at Lane Seminary, under their care. \$865.85 were reported as contributed for Home Missions by the churches last year. Three licentiates having for more than two years failed to report themselves, their licenses were withdrawn. Five licentiates reported their labors since the last meeting and their report was approved.

A church recently organized at Pleasant View, West Va., consisting of 28 members applied to be received, whereupon the following minute was adopted: 1st. Resolved, That said application be granted.

2d. That D. H. Allen, D. D., be a committee to memorialize the General Assembly, asking them to authorize churches in the Border States, over which none of our synods extend, who desire connection with any of our Presbyteries, as may be most convenient to themselves.

The President of the Cincinnati Branch of the U. S. Christian Commission, A. E. Chamberlain, being present, on invitation made some statements respecting their work, especially at Chattanooga, Nashville, Bridgeport and other places, upon which, resolutions of commendation were unanimously adopted.