

THEOLOGICAL QUARTERLY.

VOL. XII.

APRIL, 1908.

No. 2.

THE ARMINIAN ARGUMENT IN ROM. 7, 14—25.

“Of whom speaketh the apostle this? of himself, or of some other man?” That is the question which has perplexed the teachers of the Church from the earliest times. The real question, however, is not whether we have in this passage a strictly personal reminiscence of the apostle, a biographical note relating exclusively to his own inner life, with no reference to the experience of others, but whether the spiritual phenomena which the apostle recounts apply to him as an unregenerate or a regenerate person, hence, whether these phenomena are significant manifestations by which any person may determine his own spiritual condition.

The Greek fathers understood the entire passage to apply to the unregenerate. So did Augustine in his early days; however, he changed his opinion in the course of the Pelagian controversy and ever since that time defended most strenuously the view that it is the ego of the regenerate that is speaking in this passage. The view of Augustine became current in the Church of the Reformation, while the majority of the papists, Socinians, and Arminians followed the view of the Greek fathers. Luther cites the seventh chapter of Romans [in the Augustinian sense] about one hundred and ten times. . . . The Lutheran Confessions, too, appeal frequently to Rom. 7, 14—25 for proof that the old Adam still clings to believers in this life, and that this passage is a description of the Christian's daily contrition and repentance which “continues until death.” (Book of Concord, Jacobs' Ed., p. 596, 7. 8; 329, 40.) With this view the unanimous opinion of all the later Lutheran theologians coincides. In the controversy with Latermann the Leipzig Faculty handed down

MISCELLANY.

Albert Barnes, the author of "Notes, Explanatory and Practical, on the New Testament," and on a few books of the Old Testament, was a very diligent and a very practical man, a theologian who knew well how to use time, his time, to great advantage. He was the pastor of a very large congregation in the city of Philadelphia. In his preface to "Notes on the Book of Revelation" he tells us how he managed to find the time for his literary work. When I read it, I thought it might be of some benefit to young pastors. Here are his own words:—

Having, at the time when these "Notes" were commenced, as I have ever had since, the charge of a large congregation, I had no leisure that I could properly devote to these studies, except the early hours of the morning, and I adopted the resolution—a resolution which has since been invariably adhered to—to cease writing precisely at nine o'clock in the morning. The habit of writing in this manner, once formed, was easily continued, and having been thus continued, I find myself at the end of the New Testament. Perhaps this personal allusion would not be proper, except to show that I have not intended, in these literary labors, to infringe on the proper duties of the pastoral office, or to take time for these pursuits on which there was a claim for other purposes. This allusion may perhaps also be of use to my younger brethren in the ministry, that much may be accomplished by the habit of early rising, and by a diligent use of the early morning hours. In my own case, these "Notes on the New Testament," and also the "Notes on the Books of Isaiah, Job, and Daniel," extending, in all, to sixteen volumes, have all been written before nine o'clock in the morning, and are the fruit of the habit of rising between four and five o'clock. I do not know that by this practice I have neglected any duty I should otherwise have performed, and on the score of health and, I may add, of profit in the contemplation of a portion of divine truth at the beginning of each day, the habit has been of inestimable advantage to me.

And again:—

Having written on all the other portions of the New Testament, there remained only this book to complete an entire commentary on this part of the Bible. That I have endeavored to explain the book at all is to be traced to the habit which I had formed of spending

the early hours of the day in the study of the Sacred Scriptures. That habit, continued, has carried me forward until I have reached the end of the New Testament.

AUG. SCH.

Religion in the Public School continues to be an agitated topic in the religious press of the country. How an intelligent editor, who has evidently pondered the situation, can come near saying that parish schools ought to be established by his denomination, and how strenuously he can avoid saying just this one only pertinent thing, can be seen from the following:—

WEEK-DAY RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION.

Our American fashion of dealing with important social and religious matters is to keep them in a sort of subdued state of ebullition, in thought, discussion, and practice, for a longer or shorter period, and then, when the boiling point is reached, to enact with emphasis such course of conduct as we think will best meet the existing conditions. The question of slavery was in disturbed discussion for a generation or more before the dreadfulness of the Civil War settled it forever. The matter of proper dealing with the liquor traffic was in question, in the South, for a long time before a sudden crystallization of opinion made half the South go "dry." Just now, it seems as if we might be coming at least to the boiling point, and perhaps speedily afterward to the point of enactment and practice, in the important concern of religious education. The National Religious Education Association, meeting this week in Washington, contributes no small amount of interest to the prevailing thought and discussion, whether we agree with its positions or not. Others are diligently, if not anxiously, studying the present conditions, and all agreeing that something more than we are now doing must be done at once for the future welfare of our religious, not to say national life. The Inter-Church Federation has commended to the people, for consideration, a proposal to spend Wednesday afternoon, out of the time usually spent in public schools, upon such religious instruction as may be provided by the several churches for the youth that in any way belong to them or are under their care. Educators in all parts of the country are acknowledging the pressing need for some immediately practical solution of the problem, though they may not themselves be able to suggest what that solution ought to be.

An interesting contribution to the discussion of the subject is made by Dr. Rufus W. Miller, in the current number of the *Re-*

formed Church Review. Dr. Miller briefly reviews the methods employed in Europe, mentions the plans proposed in this country, and argues the part to be played by the minister and the Sabbath-school in the religious instruction of youth. He shows that the Sabbath-school itself filled an important function in securing the public-school system, but that at present the instruction of the public schools in ethics or morality is too limited. He shows that the present arrangement of Sabbath-school work is not the best for conservative religious instruction. He concludes that there is imperative need of magnifying the teaching function of the ministry. "The minister is the key to the situation, and the Sabbath-school is the open door."

The plans proposed for the use of the public school, as it is, for varied religious instruction have seemed to us impracticable, by reason of the variety of religious belief among the people. The attempt to adopt a system of religious instruction directly within the public school would inevitably lead to the successful demand of our Roman Catholic citizens for such a division of the public school funds as they have long advocated. We do not see how such a demand, not only from Catholics, but from other religious bodies, could be consistently denied. If the teaching were to be done by denominational teachers, paid from the public school funds, the logical consequence would be the division of the fund for the sustaining of denominational schools. It has seemed to us, therefore, that Dr. Miller is right when he argues that the whole matter must be met by the churches, in some way, rather than by the public-school system. It might be possible to secure an agreement on some strictly limited system of morals to be taught in the schools, as a part of the regular curriculum. But that would not meet the necessities of the case. Morals must be taught on the religious basis.

It would seem that whatever action may be taken must come through the churches. Upon them rests the responsibility for the proper religious education of their youth. Even if it were practicable, they would not be warranted in delegating their duty to the public school. To the securing of this end, then, their most serious counsels should be addressed. A correspondent of this paper replied, some time ago, to our suggestion that the Presbyterian Church has a splendid opportunity to establish its superiority in this regard, that the Church is already in advance in educational matters. But it will be difficult to show how far we have advanced in this particular and most important department of education. How much direct and practical religious instruction do our Presbyterian youth receive, apart from the home training that many of them do get and all of them ought to have? And is it not possible for us to establish some

method of religious instruction that will supply the lack that the public-school system must ever imply?

The Presbyterian, February 12, 1908.

A week later the same journal contained the following editorial remarks:—

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN THE SCHOOLS.

It is possible that out of the present difficulties in Great Britain with regard to religious instruction in public schools there may come some light upon our own questions. At least, we may be able to learn negatively, if not directly. One fact which appears prominently in the British labors with the problem is that in many of the schools supposed to be receiving religious education there is very little given. The *Christian World*, of London, reports the investigations of a correspondent in a considerable number of schools in Wales, in the diocese of Bangor, where it might be supposed the supervision of the Church would be most careful and accurate. The findings of the investigator were interesting and suggestive. There were two Roman Catholic schools in the district, in one of which one hour each day is spent in instruction "in the principles of the Roman Catholic faith," and in the other forty-five minutes per day. In the English Church schools, however, much less attention is given to religious instruction. Sixty-seven schools were examined. In only two of them do the clergy take direct part in the religious instruction. In one other a lay reader conducts part of the course. In the rest the instruction is given entirely by the school staff. The time given to such instruction on the average is less than five minutes per day. The instruction is somewhat varied. In one school the Catechism and the seasons of the Christian year are taught from the Prayer-Book. In two others only the Apostles' Creed is taught. In another "The instruction given is so broad as to suit every denomination in the place." Twenty-five minutes per week are spent upon the teaching in this school. And one reports that "No denominational teaching of any kind is given here."

It appears, then, that even where religious instruction may be supposed to be most carefully maintained, it is by no means certain that the work is thoroughly done. In some of these Welsh parishes the Nonconformists are exactly in the same situation as the citizens of one of our own towns where there is no religious exercise whatever in the school, or perhaps only the Lord's Prayer at the opening. On the other hand, where there is any such instruction it must still be given by those who represent the Church of England and teach by its authority.

The chief lesson for ourselves from this somewhat limited examination of British conditions is that any proper scheme of religious education in our own schools, or in connection with them, must be carefully and accurately superintended by the churches, through such agency as may be most practical in specific cases. It is not probable that we can ever secure such a modification of our public-school system as would permit teachers of different denominations to come to the schools at stated times for the religious instruction of the scholars. The practical difficulties are too many. But it is possible that Dr. Wenner's plan of Wednesday afternoon instruction in different churches might work well in some places, and instruction by church teachers at other times in other communities. It will be even more difficult to obtain a uniform system in this country than in England. But the conditions here as well as there make it increasingly evident that more definite and practical religious teaching must be afforded our youth. The churches will have to do it, in some way. We may well give immediate and sedulous attention to so important a concern of our national life.

Expressions like these indicate increasing clearness of mind as regards the duty to be performed — this is a hopeful sign! — and increasing weakness of will to enter upon the performance of the duty — this is a depressing sign! From the evils of the present situation there are only two ways of escape: either by establishing congregational day-schools, commonly called parochial schools, or by adopting a state-religion and establishing a state-church. Most Americans dread the one course nearly as much as the other, and hence continue to shift uneasily between the two, with a tendency toward the adoption of the latter course, if that can be carried into effect. The “un-American,” “foreign” parochial school continues to be a truly Christian solution of the “educational problem” and, incidentally, a truly patriotic effort of Christian parents to live up to the very letter of the Constitution of our country.

Sensible Remarks on Another Timely Topic, viz., pastor's salaries, have been transferred from the pages of *The Interior*, of Chicago, to *The Christian Intelligencer* (organ of the Reformed church in America), of March 11:—

With the increase of the cost of living the question of responsibility for ministers' salaries becomes an urgent one. It is not fair that the sacrifice should rest alone on the pastor, nor that ministers who seek, by a change of pastorates, a betterment of their finances should be cited as a vindication of the time-worn slander that "the Lord's call is always where the biggest salary is."

The Interior, of Chicago, has recently spoken truly and suggestively on this subject. It said: "There is real virtue in preaching for small salary to people who have little money to pay, but no virtue (?) at all in preaching cheap for a church that could pay a worthy recompense. The beauties of sacrifice appear to best advantage when properly distributed—to the clergy and laity share and share alike. No honest minister wants to live better than his people. The true servant-spirited man will be very ready to live in a shack—in the midst of a settlement of shacks. But living in a shack and preaching for a people who live in mansions is a different proposition, and it is no wonder that ministers revolt at it."

One difficulty leading to unrest among pastors is that, once settled in a church, the promised salary has a tendency to stay "fixed." The above writer says on this point:

"The congregation may multiply in numbers; its members may increase in wealth; a new social tone may impose upon the pastor's family much costlier obligations; the market prices of necessities may all advance; in the happy course of nature the pastor's children become, as growing children must, decidedly more expensive, and illness or misfortune may invade the manse—yet that salary never comes unfixed. Elders and trustees need more curiosity as to 'how the parson gets along.' It isn't safe to assume that if everything wasn't going well at the manse, you'd have heard of it. If your preacher is the right kind, you won't hear of it. If his wife is the right kind also, there's double chance against your hearing of it. They're not going to whine. The only way you'll find out is to go down to the manse with your very best fact worn next your heart, and insist on knowing.

"And you ought to go. If the salary isn't sufficient to make the minister and his family as comfortable as the average comfort of your community, then there's clearly something to be done about it. Not one-tenth of one per cent. of the Protestant congregations of the United States are actually paying their pastors all that they could pay; this is a guess, but it's a safe one. Your congregation can raise the salary, and it will, rather than let the pastor's family feel privation. Only you, as the 'leading elder' or the 'principal

trustee' or the 'best-known deacon,' will have to find out the facts and let the congregation know—and put down the first increase."

He further tells how to find out what salary the minister ought to receive:

"Set down what it costs you to keep your family a year—if you are a farmer, be sure you add the grocery price of what you eat of your own raising. Count in what you give away—and double it, for the preacher has more requests and it's likely he's more generous than you. Put down a little extra for clothing, because you know you couldn't bear to see him wear in the pulpit a coat as scuffed as serves for you in a pinch. Allow him \$50.00 for new books; the reason he was so dull last Sunday was probably because he hasn't been able to afford a fresh book to read for six months. Add as much more for expenses to a convention or two; you wonder why he doesn't keep up with the times, but he hardly ever gets away anywhere where he can catch step with the times. Finally, grant an allowance for the rainy day."

These are timely suggestions for a majority of the churches of our country.
