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SALT LAKE CITY, MAY 22, 1900.

WHAT WILL THEY DO WITH IT?

As an indication of the trend of religious thought at the present time, we present the overture offered by the Branson, Texas, Presbytery to the Southern General Assembly at Atlanta, Georgia, on Monday. It is that the assembly be permitted to vote on the following amendment to the Confession of Faith:

"All dying in infancy are elect infants and are regenerated."

It will be remembered by our readers that this subject was vigorously treated by several noted New York Presbyterian preachers, in recent Sunday sermons. They denounced as "a libel on the infinite grace of God," that part of the creed of their church which intimates that "babes may be destined to hell." Dr. Parkhurst stated that it was in the third chapter of the Presbyterian Confession of Faith that, "perhaps the babeat your bosom is damned, already damned before it was born, damned from everlasting to everlasting."

The introduction of this subject will no doubt be the cause of much discussion. Presbyterian ministers are widely divided in their views concerning it. While many of them repudiate the horrible doctrine that the infinitely just and merciful God would create infants and doom them to eternal damnation in endless torment, and others doubt its truth, there are quite a number who object to any meddling with the Confession of Faith, which has for so long a time been received as the standard of Presbyterianism. And the most thoughtful among them perceive the discredit that must come on the entire document, by admitting that part of it is not only false but absolutely diabolical.

The wording of the proposed amendment, too, is faulty and implies an absurdity. If infants who die are "regenerated," what about those who live? What is the age at which a babe becomes unregenerate? Does death itself regenerate an infant? If not, by what process is it regenerated? The doctrine held by that church is, that all children are born in sin and inherit the depravity that comes of "the fall." If that is true, in what way are they delivered from that taint, and should a living infant be regarded as "worthy of God's wrath and damnation," and a dead infant as "elect and regenerated?"

It is gratifying, however, to see the disposition increasing among the sects, to cast aside some of the vagaries that men have introduced for Christian doctrine. The influence of the Gospel, restored to earth through the Prophet Joseph Smith, is having its designed effect on the religious thought of the age. It is seen in many ways and is working like the leaven in the meal. Nearly seventy years ago the Lord revealed through that Prophet:

"But behold I say unto you, that little children are redeemed from the foundation of the world through mine Only Begotten."

"Wherefore they cannot sin, for power is not given unto Satan to tempt little children until they begin to become accountable before me." Doc. and Cov., p. 147.

How much more Christ-like, and consistent with the recognized attributes of Deity, is that doctrine than the doubtful theories of infant "regeneration," involved in baby baptism and other human theological inventions, to say nothing of the blasphemous and revolting idea of "elect infants" and "infant damnation."

We are anxious to see what the Presbyterian assembly will do with the proposition to reform its creed. If the overture is refused, it will surely create a schism of menacing proportions, and if a radical change is effected, it will be a tacit admission that it is tainted with error, and if wrong in one thing may be wrong in many others, and is, anyhow, a man-made form and not of God nor to be regarded as anything but a blind guide.

Since the foregoing was put in type a dispatch from St. Louis has brought information that the question of change in the creed has been submitted to a committee who will report probably next year. Meanwhile the subject will be agitated among the Presbyterian clergy. Let us hope it will cause light to illuminate their darkness.

MUST REMAIN NEUTRAL.

One of the envoys of President Kruger, Mr. Wessels, the other day said that they had not come to this country to ask the United States to take up arms for the republics, but to ask this mighty republic to bid England cease her warfare at this time.

It is to be hoped that the interview had with the secretary of state has served to make it clear to Wessels, not only that this country cannot interfere, in behalf of the people of South Africa, but also the reasons why the country must remain neutral in a struggle of this kind.

If Mr. Wessels is correctly reported, he said at a public meeting: "We do not ask you to fight for us, but we do ask you to say to England, 'Stop! And

we think that if America said the word, the war would be stopped." If he repeated this to the secretary of state, that official would have an opportunity of explaining to him and his colleagues, that while there is much sympathy in this country for the two republics, our government is not in the habit of dictating the policy of other countries. The Boer envoys must have confused ideas of international proprieties, and if their ignorance on such matters is general in the countries they represent, it is no great wonder a war was precipitated, which in all human probability must end by the annihilation of the independence of two republics.

There is much of the fighting spirit in this country at present, and there is some talk of the possible necessity of preparing for an armed struggle in support of the Monroe doctrine. But while this is being talked about, there is no disposition on the part of anybody, to throw the country into an Quixotic adventure in regions where we have no interests. The United States have kept out of entangling alliances, and cannot enter into a compact that would bring nothing but the most terrific war of modern times. For that is what a conflict between this country and Great Britain would mean. If the Boer delegates think they can attempt this country, until public opinion is turned insane on that question, they are mistaken. The United States cannot interfere in any way at this time. What a good word, spoken at the proper time, later, may accomplish, is a different question.

A CASE IN CHICAGO.

This city is not the only one where the police at times take up upon themselves to make laws and to execute them at the same time.

The story is told about a young Chicago woman who was arrested in that city and detained at the station for six days. There was no charge against her. Her family were in ignorance of her whereabouts, and supposed she had been murdered. For a whole week she was thus kept a prisoner without the slightest justification in either law or common sense.

The supposition was that the girl knew something about a diamond robbery, but there was no reasonable ground for the suspicion, nor was any information extorted from the girl during her incarceration. It is said the father of the young lady proposes to make it interesting for the police. And he will have the public with him in his legal fight, for the people understand that the first duty of a servant of the law is to keep that law inviolate.

American travelers abroad may have noticed the arbitrary power exercised by the police officers of semi-barbarous countries. But the tyranny exercised by a Turkish officer is not any more intolerable than that of an American policeman, if the latter exceeds his powers, delegated to him by the people. There are rights in this country that are sacred because surrounded by the glory of the law of liberty. A policeman has no more right to profane that sanctity than has the evil-doer, against whom society needs protection.

MISSIONARY METHODS.

A contributor to the May Chautauquan, Mr. Hugh Cork, tells about an effort that has been made in some of the larger cities to reach the population that does not attend churches, by means of house-to-house visits.

In Philadelphia, for instance, this work was carried on by the Sunday School association. The city was divided into eighteen districts, subdivided into one hundred and thirty-seven sub-districts, none of which were larger than from four to six blocks square, except on the outskirts of the city where the territory was practically country. For each of these one hundred and thirty-seven subdistricts a person was very carefully chosen to prepare the work for the visitation day and to direct the visitors. The churches were aroused to furnish visitors by weekly letters to pastors, Sunday school superintendents, and the presidents of the young people's societies, and the general public was prepared for the work by items published in the daily papers.

When their work was ended, it was found that 233,169 visits had been made by 4,509 workers. The report shows that of the families visited, 75,499 were to Catholics, 38,894 to Methodists, 21,075 to Presbyterians, 20,134 to Episcopalians, 27,292 to Baptists, 5,238 to Jews, 6,223 to Reformers, and so on down until we find thirty-one Atheists, ten "Mormons," and one Mohammedan, while 17,388 had "no preference," and 5,180 "refused information."

The idea seems to have been, by this means, to reach some of the millions in this country who refuse to identify themselves with the Sunday schools and the churches, and it is believed the result was to arouse an interest in the work of the churches.

Great anxiety has been felt lately in clerical circles about the stagnation evident in some of the churches. The missionary work of the "Mormon" Elders has often been pointed to as a pattern worthy of imitation, and it may be presumed that this house-to-house visit is an experiment to ascertain what other churches can do by such systematic work. But our Protestant friends should not be too sanguine of success attending that work. Correct methods are, no doubt, of great importance, but it is still more important to have a genuine message to deliver to the world. Without that, what does a house-to-house canvass amount to? And it is in this respect that Protestantism is weak. The canvassers have no other message than have the occupants of the pulpits. Why should the effect of a private visit be different from that of a public discourse, when the novelty is worn off?

In a New York dispatch it is stated that the Christian Citizenship League recently sent to a number of representative men the question whether the church is "Christian?" Among the replies received was one from Dr. Heber Newton, of All Souls' church. He replied an emphatic "no." He explained his belief that the teachings of the churches are, for the most part, far from following those of the Nazarene, and the ecclesiastical organizations

generally are planned upon a policy which is the very antithesis of a true Church. In his own words:

"Commercialism dominates the organization and conventionalism tyrannizes the pulpit. The law of the market, rather than the law of the Mount, is accepted by the church at large. Our Protestant churches are composed, for the most part, of a constituency drawn from the well-to-do classes, and they see nothing essentially unsound or unethical in the economic system of the day. The pulpit, therefore, is rarely free to deliver its soul. If it has one, upon the burning questions of our generation. Blind leaders of the blind, both seem hastening to fall into the ditch which lies before our civilization."

Another clergyman, Rev. W. D. Ellis, of Brooklyn, is quoted as having said in a public lecture that the modern churches are not "Christian," and that the working people are leaving them, because they are religious.

If there is any truth in these views of the modern churches—and who with his eyes open to facts can deny it?—those interested in home missions cannot expect too much from a change of methods. The fault is in the substance. The "Mormon" Elders have a message to deliver from God to man. That fact—not their mode of presenting it—is the real secret of the success, which is a mystery to some of the clergymen.

THE INDIAN FAMINE.

The situation in India is in some places beyond description, cholera having added new horrors to those of famine and the plague. A correspondent of the London Standard gives the following graphic account of what he saw at Ahmedabad, in British territory:

"In an open space in this bungalow were seated upwards of 500 beings, old and young, famine personified. The smell that arose from their filthy rags was sickening, and had attracted myriads of flies that settled on some of them. Some of the men, especially the old ones, were mere bony frames, with ghastly to look at. The little ones, with hollow temples, sunken eyes and cheeks, the napes of their necks falling in under skulls which seemed to overbalance their emaciated bodies and wisp-like arms and legs, were more dreadful still. A man farther along the quivering row, with a body that once must have been stalwart, was left with only skin-covered bones to show the breadth of his shoulders and the strength he had known. His eyes were shut, and he sat silently rocking himself. Many of the people were suffering from disease. Numbers had fever heavy upon them, the grim contagion due to famine. Those who could work, and they were few, were sent on to where the tanks were being dug. The others were also given a meal, and passed on to the poorhouse."

The correspondent adds that it is certain that in some of the remotest districts things are far worse than at the place mentioned. In some of the scattered villages on the borders of Sind and Rajputana, numerous deaths have occurred. The cattle are dead in those parts, there being neither fodder nor water for them. When the sufferings in the populous and much frequented districts are as reported above, it is easy to imagine what they must be in out-of-the-way places.

It is reported that the amount of relief now allowed suffering individuals is about three cents a day for men, and less proportionately for women and children. This probably is enough to postpone the final separation of soul and body for weeks, though it cannot be enough to actually live on, even in India, where living is cheap. Possibly it will keep the flame of life flickering until the harvest. If three cents a day can do that much for a human being, a dollar given to the Indian relief fund is well spent. The extreme distress of the country should not be permitted to last long, with the entire "Christian" world enjoying unprecedented prosperity and having millions to spend on contrivances for the destruction of life.

WHY ENGLAND REJOICES.

As the details of the British victory at Mafeking become known, it appears that the reverses of the Boers at that place are equal to, if not worse than, any of the previous disasters met with. A great number of Boers were captured, and among others, Eloff, the grandson of President Kruger. The moral impression upon the burghers by this severe defeat seems to be very demoralizing. They are fleeing, panic-stricken, from Pretoria, and it is a question whether they are willing to rally for another stand.

Mafeking is not a place of much strategic importance. It was the first to be included by the invading Boers. When the latter had to withdraw from Ladysmith and Kimberley, the contest for Mafeking became one of honor, rather than of material advantage. The besieging army made many assaults, some of them well planned and very violent. But the British resisted.

There was more joy in England over the victory at Mafeking than over any of the other triumphs recorded. Probably one little circumstance may account for this. The town was relieved almost on the exact date set for that event by Lord Roberts. That serves to inspire perfect confidence in him. It indicates that he knows exactly what he is doing, and that he is calculating every detail of the campaign with mathematical precision. This gives ground for the expectation that the final outcome of the war will be the complete triumph of the British arms in South Africa.

One of the late reports from the beleaguered place gave a total of 349 killed, wounded, died of sickness, and missing, counting from the 12th of October, the beginning of the siege, until the end of February. Of these 265 belonged to the fighting force, and 144 were non-combatants. Of the latter 129 were natives. Seven of the white non-combatants killed and wounded were women and children. This tells fairly well the story of the siege that lasted over seven months. How insignificant are these figures to statistics from some other investments of cities famous in ancient history! And yet, the interest of the world has lately been centered in that little village containing about 3,000 inhabitants, a mighty empire is shouting for joy, because a handful of its sons and daughters are no longer threatened by enemies. Surely, the world is growing tender and gentle. It is actuated by a spirit different from that which pre-

valled at a time when a siege often meant untold suffering, cannibalism and wholesale massacres.

Critics of the situation continue to warn the public, that the retreat from the Orange Free State, does not necessarily mean that the Boers are about to give up the defense. They think that perhaps some of the heaviest fighting is still to be done. This may possibly be correct. If so, Lord Roberts will soon know. He is advancing rapidly, and if the Boers are to make a last stand somewhere, the fact should soon be apparent. In the meantime it appears that the Free Staters are leaving the Transvaal, and that the struggle now is carried on mainly by the latter.

At last China sees danger in the "Boxer" outrages. If the Chinese government cannot stop these other nations will try at it.

It is reported from Havana that chaos is in the postoffice there. That was to be expected after it had been in the possession of thieves.

The organization of the tin can trust at Pittsburgh has been deferred. Lack of gold on the part of the promoters seems to be the cause of delay.

The American bridge trust has elected its officers. The next span to complete the combine is about ready, in the way of turning over twenty-six bridge-building plants to the consolidation.

The Boers facing Gen. Buller may be too few to offer much resistance to his advance, but the practical annihilation of part of Col. Bethune's force, reported officially, show them to be still able to make traps, if they only had the men to work with.

Great Britain is satisfied with President McKinley's refusal to take any further action in the British-Boer war. Yet President Kruger said a little while ago that "Britain's greed is never satisfied." But he may say it was not the "greed" this time.

The Boer peace envoys saw the President today, and learned that he had done all he felt that he could do in the way of securing peace in South Africa. If the gentlemen wish to continue their labors with a prospect of success, they should now call on Lord Salisbury.

The Chicago city council wants street noises stopped in the town. The members of that municipal body need conversion to the benefits of advertising. How will business go on when the hucksters and peddlers have to use deaf and dumb language instead of their melodious shoutings?

The U. S. Supreme court has reversed the decision of the Utah Supreme court in the case of D. P. Tarpey vs. A. Madson. The suit involved title to a tract of land claimed by the Central Pacific Railroad under its land grant and by Mr. Madson by virtue of prior occupancy. In the present case the decision may work a hardship, but people will now know what the rule is to be.

Now the San Francisco board of health is "in for it." The State board says there is no bubonic plague in California. The municipal board has declared there is. Then follows the charge that the municipal board worked up the original bubonic plague scare for political reasons. There is no knowing to what extent some politicians would go, in carrying out schemes for their own supposed advantage, no matter what the effect on the public.

The Kansas City Star remarks that it seems impossible for Eastern newspapers to write about Kansas without some misrepresentation. Thus, the American Press association is selling a page plate with the story of convention hall and the Democratic national convention, which is a straight account except for such fakes as a yarn about hosts of prairie schooners coming to town and a picture of a tent, marked "hotel," where, for a rude cot and meals served on bare boards, the prices for first-class hotel accommodations will be charged. The Star is justly indignant at such misrepresentation. In Utah we are accustomed to it. In all the eastern literature about Utah, much of which owes its existence to very revered pens, the truth is the exception. Exaggeration, vilification and falsehood are the rule.

CLOSING IN ON THE BOERS.

If a frontal check is imposed on Lord Roberts, he has men enough to turn his army out of any position chosen by a flanking movement. The Boer force must be concentrated, even if only to delay his advance. To scatter the small force they have in raiding parties is to expose each of these to be cut off in detail. Nor can they affect the main issues of the campaign. The days of the remaining South African Republic appear to be numbered, though they may not be so few as some British optimists believe.

Springfield Republican.

Present signs are that the Boers propose to offer only a nominal resistance to the British advance until the invading army has reached a point much nearer Koonstad. The farther north Roberts goes the longer will be his communications, and the weaker will be his available force for actual fighting on the front line of the invasion. The proper strategy for the Boers seems to consist in slow retreat. The influence of President Steyn, however, will probably compel a determined stand in front of Koonstad, which Steyn holds as the Free State capital.

St. Paul Pioneer Press.

We should soon begin to hear from Buller, who if he is engaged, as he undoubtedly is, in developing any plan of co-operation with Roberts, may move from Ladysmith either into the Orange River or a road running east through Hennen's pass to Harrismith, or he may march northward by the railroad running by the way of Matsiela Hill to Pretoria. In all probability it is by the latter route he will endeavor to break through the perilous ring of mountain passes into the Transvaal. Buller's movements, whatever form they may take, are going to count for an important factor in the contest of the Transvaal.

New York Mail and Express.

Lord Roberts continues pushing the Boer lines farther and farther back without serious resistance. Indeed, it seems as though the Boers were so thoroughly demoralized as to be unable to offer a determined battle, for nowhere has the steady progress of the English army been delayed since the general movement was begun. With

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