

Lutheran Observer.

with proofs of Holy Writ, or with manifest, clear and distinct principles and arguments, I am refuted and convinced, I can and will recant nothing.—Luther.

In Essentials, Unity; in Non-Essentials, Liberty; in all Things, Charity.

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LANCASTER AND PHILADELPHIA, FRIDAY, MARCH 15, 1901.

WHOLE NO. 3623.

Poetry.

THE ETERNAL GOODNESS.

BY J. G. WHITTIER.

I long for household voices gone,
For vanished smiles I long,
But God has led my dear ones on,
And He can do no wrong.

I know not what the future hath
Of marvel or surprise,
Assured alone that life and death
His mercy underlies.

And if my heart and flesh are weak
To bear an untried pain,
The bruised reed He will not break,
But strengthen and sustain.

No offering of my own I have,
No works my faith to prove;
I can but give the gift He gave,
And plead His love for love.

And so beside the Silent Sea
I wait the muffled oar;
No harm from Him can come to me
On ocean or on shore.

I know not where His islands lift
Their fronded palms in air;
I only know I cannot drift
Beyond His love and care.

DAYBREAK.

BY H. W. LONGFELLOW.

A wind came up out of the sea.
And said, "O mists, make room for me!"

It hailed the ships, and cried, "Sail on,
Ye mariners, the night is gone!"

And hurried landward far away,
Crying, "Awake! it is the day!"

It said unto the forest, "Shout!
Hang all your leafy banners out!"

I touched the wood-bird's folded wing,
And said, "O bird, awake and sing!"

And o'er the farms, "O chanticleer,
Your clarion blow; the day is near!"

It whispered to the fields of corn,
"Bow down, and hail the coming morn!"

It shouted through the belfry-tower,
"Awake, O bell! proclaim the hour."

It crossed the churchyard with a sigh,
And said, "Not yet! in quiet lie."

FAITH AND LOVE.

The darkened chamber held the maiden dead.
Her name was Faith. Of long neglect she died.
And now men rose and shook themselves and cried:
"O Faith, come back—come back ere hope be fled!"
But she lay silent on her solemn bed.
And men grew piteous at their prayer denied;
They said: "No more is man to man allied;
We fall asunder—and the world," they said,
And while they talked, behold a gracious form,
"We live and die together, she and I."
So then he kissed her, and her flesh grew warm;
She woke and faced them with a ruddy glow,
If Love be living, Faith can never die.

—Edward Cracoft Lefroy.

Contributions.

IS IT LUTHERAN IN PRINCIPLE?

BY M. VALENTINE, D. D., LL. D.

It is to be regretted that another movement alien to the history and spirit of the General Synod is upon us, in the effort now put under way to establish an official church paper. As it has been urged by several synods, and the committee having the movement in charge has taken steps to recommend it to the General Synod, preparing the way by seeking the consent of the Board of Publication to issue it from its house, discussion of the question is forced upon the Church, unless it is ready to surrender blindly to the strange innovation.

Denominational papers, in sufficient number to represent and reach the Church's territory, form an important and vital part of right equipment for its spiritual and religious work, developing an intelligent and interested membership, and furnishing a medium for securing efficient coöperation in its general enterprises of missions, church-extension, education, and benevolent service. The absence or extinction of them would isolate the congregations and stop the wheels of progress. Through them the best wisdom and faith and energy may speak, encouraging and guiding the Church's activities to otherwise impossible efficiency and prosperity. But in proportion to the grand power for good in the church paper is the possibility of damage that may be wrought through it, if held in relations inconsistent with fundamental principles of the Church's true life. The possible injury in such case can hardly be estimated.

It is in this connection that this question of an official church paper among us ought to be first considered. Altogether apart from the financial problem and other serious features, is the question whether this movement accords with the fundamental principles of our Lutheran organization and true church-life.

There are some denominations with whose ecclesiastical principles such a church organ would well agree. The Roman Catholic Church is such a one. That church consists of its officials, its hierarchy of rulership. The people are not its components. They do not constitute the Church, but are only *subjects* of it. They have no authority—are the source of no power or direction. The official priestly organization is everything. There is a governing class. Everything is decided by these ruling officials; and the place and business of the people and congregations of believers are simply to hear, obey, give, and work as directed. A church organ for a country or district under such a system would fit well as a means of ecclesiastical control and its dictated concert of work.

The Anglican or Episcopal Church is another, in which the official church organ might fit. This, too, grounds its church conception in a class ordained to rule and guide everything, with congregations and

YOUNG PEOPLE'S PRAYER-MEETING.

Topic for March 24, 1901—What I Owe to Christ. 2 Cor. viii. 9; 1 Pet. ii. 21-23.

Bible Study.

BY REV. J. B. GUINEY.

I. Why am I in debt to Christ?

1. Because he redeemed me. Rom. v. 15-17; Gal. i. 4; Gal. iii. 13; Titus ii. 14; Luke i. 68, 69.

2. With what am I redeemed? His blood. Eph. i. 7; Col. i. 14; Heb. ix. 14; 1 Pet. i. 18, 19; Rev. v. 9.

II. What Christ especially bought—the soul. Ps. xlix. 8; Matt. x. 28; Luke ix. 25; 2 Tim. i. 10.

III. The debt is so wonderfully great that we can never purchase it. John iii. 16; Isa. ix. 6; Eph. i. 22; Rom. vi. 23; 1 John v. 11.

IV. Now, as Christ has given us so much, what do we owe him?

1. Love. Mark xii. 31, 33; Luke vi. 31-35; Rom. xii. 9, 10; Rom. xiii. 8-10.

2. We owe him all our life. Gal. ii. 20; 2 Cor. v. 14, 15; 1 Thess. v. 10; Col. iii. 3, 4.
Floyd, Va.

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR TOPICS.

Seed Thoughts.

Sunday, March 24th. Topic—What I Owe to Christ. 2 Cor. viii. 9; 1 Pet. ii. 21-25.

BY REV. P. A. HEILMAN.

Many people think they do not owe him anything. Do they not work and sacrifice for what they have, and have they not paid a good price for it, and is it not all their own? Yes, for they can do what they will with it, which proves their dower right.

But before, and above all, there is a prior right. The Lord says, "Ye are not your own; ye are bought with a price." If we do not belong to ourselves, then surely all that we may have of gold or silver or lands are not ours absolutely. God has a prior claim on everything. We belong to him because he created us. He has continued our lives. He has provided for all our wants. We live on his sunshine and rain, and breathe the air he made, and enjoy the beautiful things, the creation of his hand, and of which no man may deprive us. Even the cattle on a thousand hills, and the beasts of the forest, and the treasures of the mountains.

All these things belong to him, and if we are entrusted with them it is only as his stewards. Our homes ought to be godly homes because they belong primarily to him. Our bodies should be consecrated to him because he made them, and more particularly because they are the temple of the Holy Ghost.

But we belong to Christ by right of purchase. He bought us with a price. All that he had he gave for us. He became poor that we might be made rich. Think about how rich he was, then how poor he became—all for us. And then recall his own words, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength," and you will never have any trouble about the tenth that belongs to the Lord.

Baltimore, Md.

Bible Readings—In Debt to Jesus.

- March 18. The cost of redemption. Matt. xxvii. 29-35; Tit. ii. 13, 14.
- March 19. For what was the price paid? John iii. 16; x. 10-18.
- March 20. With what are we redeemed? 1 Pet. i. 18-23.
- March 21. The obligations of love. John xiv. 15-24.
- March 12. Cancelling of the debt. Matt. xxv. 31-40.
- March 23. Offering our all. 2 Cor. viii. 1-5.
- March 24. Topic—What I Owe to Christ. 2 Cor. viii. 9; 1 Pet. ii. 21-25.

LUTHER LEAGUE TOPICS.

March 24, 1901. Christ Our Intercessor. Heb. vii. 23-27.

BY REV. LUTHER M. KUHN.

Christ's unchangeable priesthood makes him an infinite Mediator. The superiority of Christ's priesthood is beyond question. It appears from what we here read. This man continueth ever. There were many Levitical priests; and they both served in course and had successors. Christ, however, dies not; and his priesthood is intransmissible. "No so-called Apostolic succession of priests are his vicegerents." Because he never dies nor alters, the natural consequences are that nothing whatever is at all wanting to make him the perfect intercessor. "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." So Christ as our perpetual priest is able to deliver us from condemnation and punishment—"able to do this in the heavenly world so long as there are any who need pardon, and who can obtain it." His life in heaven, admitting no interruption enables him to do this unceasingly. To support this he has a marvelous character.

There is the moral purity of his nature, and a conduct whose external performance corresponds with his internal holiness. Morally as well as ceremonially he is pure and without taint, far removed from men and things that contaminate and render impure. Like Melchizedec he is exalted above earth's stains.

Another consideration is the completeness of his sacrifice for sin. Stuart says: "He offered sacrifice for the sins of the people, once for all, but not for himself as a sinner." There was no infirmity in Christ's moral nature. Instead of the weakness of earthly priesthood Christ gives us an idea of a state of highest perfection.

Christ is our Mediator. Eph. ii. 13; 1 Tim. ii. 5; Heb. viii. 6; ix. 15; xii. 24.

Christ's intercession. Isa. liiii. 12; Rom. viii. 34; 1 John ii. 1.

Typified: Moses. Deut. v. 5; Gal. iii. 19. Aaron. Num. xvi. 48.

Omaha, Neb.

Luther League Daily Bible Readings.

- March 17. Fourth Sunday in Lent—Heb. x. 1-14.
- Monday—John xvii. 1-26.
- Tuesday—Romans viii. 31-39.
- Wednesday—Ephesians i. 15-23.
- Thursday—Exodus xxxiii. 1-23.
- Friday—Jeremiah xxxvii. 16-21.
- Saturday—Habakkuk iii. 1-19.

CRADLED ON THE ROCKS.

My observation is that most of the men who have pushed their way to the front in commerce, art, science, letters, statesmanship, yes, and in spiritual power also, have been cradled on the rocks. Many of them were nursed on the breast of poverty. Young Benny Franklin munching his roll of bread through the streets of Philadelphia, with a few coins in his pocket, stands to this day as about the best representative of the start which America's foremost men have been compelled to make. A judge in one of New York's courts told me that on his first day in this city he hammered down paving-stones in the streets to earn money enough to pay the captain of the sloop who brought him hither from Rhode Island; and Sir Thomas Lipton is rather proud of the recollection that in his boyhood he was obliged to borrow the pennies to pay the postage on letter to his parents.—Rev. Theodore L. Cuyler, D. D.