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Communications.

For the Lutheran Visitor.
 Rev. J. B. Gross.
 NUMBER VIII.

The author now comes to discuss the "obscure" of Christ's Body, and to prove from this the "absurdity" of a real presence.

He contends that Christ's "terrestrial body" was never known to be in two places at one time, and therefore the doctrine of a real presence is absurd. Now, it is well known that no Lutheran ever contended for such a presence in the sacrament, and that Luther and the other Reformers, over and over again, declared that there was no such presence, nor any carnal, Capernaic, gross eating of the body of Christ, and it is unfair and uncharitable in Mr. Gross to try to make the impression that Lutherans do hold any such notion. I wish to refute his assertion by saying that Lutherans are an intelligent people, and that is refutation enough. Still he fails to prove his point; for the only semblance of proof adduced is, that he "traveled," "went," and that he was "made in the likeness of sinful men." But was he not God—the God-man? As Dr. Luther says, it is not at all necessary to a real presence to speak of his body previous to his resurrection; for this is not the condition in which he is present in the Supper; but yet, no man can prove that he was absolutely confined to one place even then.

But our author undertakes to prove that it can not be his resurrection or glorified body that is present in the Supper. I will give his arguments. He says, "I hold that the crucified body of Christ, LONG SINCE DECOMPOSED INTO ITS ELEMENTARY CONSTITUENTS, and supplanted by a body to the functions of which it was no longer competent, can have no existence in the Lord's Supper." Here is "biblical philology and exegesis" of which Luther was ignorant! I agree with our author, that the Reformers knew nothing of such rules. He says, "I hold this. Well, he may hold it and welcome to it; for I am sure no sensible man will ever want it—Christ's body decomposed." "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, nor suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." "But He whom God raised again saw no corruption." "Neither did His flesh see corruption." "And as concerning that he raised him from the dead, so more to see corruption."

I am not of those who hold a man's eyes to the creed by force, and do not cry heresy whenever a man disagrees with me; but I submit that no greater heresy has been taught in the church since Christ came than this. Well, he may hold it and welcome to it; for I am sure no sensible man will ever want it—Christ's body decomposed. "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, nor suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." "But He whom God raised again saw no corruption." "Neither did His flesh see corruption." "And as concerning that he raised him from the dead, so more to see corruption."

He then undertakes to prove that the glorified body of Christ is totally different from his crucified body. He states, correctly, that the Lutheran doctrine is, "that Jesus, though still God-man, possesses absolute Divinity, and thus continues to be omniscient, omnipresent and almighty, and that his glorified body is necessarily capable of the most facile and unbounded ubiquity." He says, "If this statement were true, it would be easy to account for the real presence, under the symbols of bread and wine in the sacrament."

But as it is taught that the glorified body of Christ has still flesh and blood... it follows that it is no more endowed with the attribute of ubiquity, than was his earthly body. It is true, and that is why we think it easy to believe in the Real Presence. If Christ's flesh "saw no corruption" and is "no more to see corruption," where is it?

The Bible clearly teaches that Christ, the God-man, is in heaven with his body and blood. The passage triumphantly quoted by our author, to prove the contrary, "Flesh and blood can not inherit the kingdom of God," as every intelligent person knows, refers to our natural, sinful, carnal bodies. Mr. Gross, in a long argument, tries to show that we are to be like Christ, or Christ like us, and that we will not have the same body of flesh and blood that we have here, and therefore Christ can not have his earthly body, or the body he had while on earth. On this subject, Dr. Knapp, in his The-

ology, says, "Our future bodies will be in substance the same with the present. Let not, therefore, the Christian doctrine be charged with all the absurdities and fancies which dreaming heads have suggested respecting the nature, form, size and uses of the spiritual body; nor with the fictions even of some theologians respecting *corpore pellucida penetrantia, illocali, invisibili*," &c. He says also, "The simple idea conveyed by this expression—'glorified'—is, glorious, excellent, perfected, enabled." St. Paul says, "There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body."

Olausen's Commentary: "As without the body, no soul, so without corporeality, no eternal happiness; corporeality and the concomitant personality are the object of God's work."

Mr. Gross says, "Christ's glorified body has neither flesh nor blood," for "Flesh and blood can not inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." "For a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have."

This is his proof, and all of it. As to the first passage, we all know that Paul means gross, carnal, sinful nature, or our natural bodies in their natural state. The second is one of the strongest passages in the Bible to prove that "flesh and bones" can inherit the kingdom of God; for they were spoken by Christ of himself after his resurrection, and spoken in reference to the very identical body with which the disciples saw him ascend, and the infallible Record tells us that "He was parted from them and carried up into heaven." And now that same Record tells us that He is "sitting on the Right Hand of God," "standing in the midst of the Throne," speaks of Him as "ascending up where he was before," as "coming to the father," "being received up into heaven."

In regard to the objection raised about the "right hand of God" being a locality, if it is, it does not follow at all that Christ is confined there. But it is well known to biblical scholars that by this term is meant "to be in that condition of plenary, divine glory, majesty and dominion, which belongs to God alone." His "right hand" is everywhere, the universe is in "the hollow of his hand," Christ is everywhere present, and God to whom is "committed all power in heaven and on earth," is at his "right hand" everywhere. "All power" certainly includes the power to be omnipresent; for that is one of the powers of heaven.

The next point made by our author is, that Christ is our Passover, and that the Lord's Supper is a memorial. These facts no Lutheran denies; but all true Lutherans maintain that while it is indeed a memorial, it is at the same time more than a memorial. It is more, much more, than the Passover was. Our author himself becomes much more orthodox further on, and says he will show that the Lord's Supper is not "exclusively to be valued as a mere memorial institution." But his mistake lies in the fact that he teaches that because it is a memorial feast, it, therefore, excludes the real presence.

Next he shows that because the Lord's Supper is a memorial, therefore, it is a means of grace. He even quotes Mosheim and adopts his language, "These rites, baptism and the Lord's Supper, are not to be considered as mere ceremonies, nor yet as symbolical representations only, but also as ordinances accompanied with a sanctifying influence upon the heart and the affections of true Christians." Noble confession! but unfortunately flatly contradictory of what the author has previously said. It only shows that if an individual has any truth in him it "will out" in spite of all effort to conceal it. Least, however, he acknowledges too much, he qualifies his adoption of the language of Mosheim by saying that "every institution claiming a scriptural origin, and thus having the divine sanction, is suited to be promotive of the attainment of Christian graces, or heavenly gifts." Just so, and hence the Lord's Supper is. He even acknowledges that Christ is "present in the Lord's Supper, as he is present in all heaven-appointed means of grace." Very well, Mr. Gross. If he is "present," that presence is real; if real, it is substantial; if substantial, it is bodily.

Now apply your metaphysics, your laws, your rules. If you dodge to the "spiritual," still it is the same—spiritual presence is a real spiritual presence; if not, then there is no presence at all; but you say there is a presence; then it must be real, for it can not be unreal. So then all your troubles to write, and expense to publish your work, to disprove a real presence, are for naught.

J. HAWKINS.

Selections.

On Human Judgment of what God Says.

"But no two of you can agree as to what God says in the Bible on almost any point."

"I think you are mistaken, there is very little difference as to what God says; indeed, there can be little, for He speaks to us plainly and simply."

"Why, I might open the Bible almost at random, and there would be twenty differences of opinion as to the first passage my eye fell upon."

"Let us put it to the test, and you need not open the Bible at random, but select any passage that will best suit your purpose."

"Well, here is one, in Matthew, 'But I say unto you, Resist not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.' How many of you are agreed as to what that teaches?"

"My remark, as you will remember, was, that there could be very little difference as to what God says in the Bible. And you and I can not differ as to what the Lord says in this passage."

"But each of you have a different way of getting round it."

"There you express exactly what our differences are. They are not differences as to what God says, but as to what men think He ought to have said; and most of our difficulties in Scripture are difficulties in getting round it."

"But do you mean that if I smite you on the right cheek you will turn to me the other also?"

"The question, you know, was not as to what I will do, but as to what God says. Your question shows that there can be no doubt as to what the Lord tells me to do."

"But if that were carried out, it would put an end to war and litigation."

"Precisely so; and therefore Christians who have made up their minds to go to war or to lay, must try to get round it. But none of them have any doubt as to what the Lord said, though they may think that He ought to have said something different."

"Well, all I can say is, that if you are going to take the Bible in that way, and do what it says, you will make a strange figure among other Christians."

This fragment of a conversation, which grew out of an appeal to the scriptural account of creation, is reported here because it suggests some important considerations which are easily and often overlooked.

In our use of the Scriptures, the question of inspiration should first of all be definitely settled. In discussions of the kinds and degrees of inspiration, men have lost sight of the true question, which is not, whether holy men of old were inspired in various ways and measures when they wrote these books, but whether the Scriptures themselves are inspired. This is what they claim: "All Scripture is God-inspired." If so, then every word and particle is sacred and significant. Divine wisdom placed it there, and it can not be overlooked or misplaced without injury. This becomes very impressive to those who are led to a minute study of the words of inspiration; just as the microscope reveals the most wonderful provisions of divine wisdom in the natural world. What beauty, what force, what depth of meaning, what nice harmonies, may often be found in the use of one preposition rather than another, in the use of one omission of an article, in the use of one noun or one tense rather than another!

The true question to be decided is, whether the Scriptures themselves are inspired, and whether we have, not only divine doctrine, but that doctrine in the very words which the Holy Ghost taught. If you introduce a human element at all, you place me in altogether a different attitude before the Scriptures. I then exercise my reason and judgment about what I read, instead of yielding unquestioning submission to a "thus saith the Lord." Let Paul be taught or guided as he may by the Spirit, it is a very different thing to hear Paul speak, and to know of what he wrote or spoke, that it is not Paul that speaks, but the Holy Ghost that speaks by him.

Surely it would lay a solemn restraint upon the effort to get around a passage of Scripture if we were thoroughly convinced that it is what God says. And it is worthy of solemn inquiry as to how far our differ-

ences are, as is suggested in the above conversation, differences of opinion as to what certain passages of Scripture ought to teach. If we regarded any passage as being indeed what God says, there could be little debate as to whether God means what he says, however it may run counter to our preconceptions, or the doctrine of our favorite teachers. It is necessary also clearly to distinguish between what the Scriptures actually say, and our inferences from what they say. Some of us have been alike surprised and humbled to discover that things which we supposed to be taught in Scripture, had no support but our inferences from portions of Scripture, while they are contradicted by express declarations of the word, which we had endeavored to "get around" and explain away.

Any man has reason to suspect and examine himself who finds a disposition to appeal to any class of human teachers as decisive authority, and to judge every thing by its harmony or disagreement with their views. Even when it is truth which is thus held, it is shorn of its divine power. But, moreover, it is certain that all human teaching is imperfect, and when it is received implicitly, and is held in the spirit of a partisan, the imperfection, whatever it may be, is that which will come into increasing prominence. So that the original defect, which in the leader was scarcely perceptible, matures among his followers into a system of errors. "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump."—The Witness.

An Ancient Farmer.

"The Lord be with you"—his address to the reapers of entering the harvest field—has the ring of sterling metal. What a contrast Boaz offers to farmers we have known, by whose lips God's name was frequently profaned, but never honored—their servants, like their dogs and horses, being cursed, and never once blessed. And in accordance with the apothegm, "Like master like man," what shocking oaths have we heard, volleying, as it were out of hell, from the lips of coarse animal, sensual farm servants!

Boaz never opens his mouth but pearls drop out. His speech breathes forth pious utterances. All his conversation is seasoned with grace; and though the result of a divine change of heart, how natural his religion seems! not like a gala-dress assumed for the occasion, not like gum-flowers worn for ornaments, but such as the spring living from the sward; not like an artificial perfume that imparts a passing odor to a thing that is dead, but the odors exhaled by roses or lilies bathed in the dew of heaven. One who could say, "I have set the Lord always before me." God is in all the good man's thoughts, and his holy name as often in his mouth, to be honored as it is in others to be profaned.

Though it may have been a common custom to bless the harvest and its reapers, he did it from his heart; nor were they words of course or custom he spoke when, bending on Ruth an eye of mingled pity and admiration, he said: "It hath been fully showed me all that thou hast done unto thy mother-in-law since the death of thy husband, and how thou hast left thy father, and thy mother, and the land of thy nativity, and art come unto a people which thou knewest not heretofore. The Lord remember thy work, and a full reward will be given thee of the Lord God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust."

Nor was it only in the language of pity that his piety expressed itself. It did not evaporate in words. We have heard him speak; see how he acts. One night, sleeping by a heap of corn, alone as he supposed, he wakes to find a woman lying at his feet. It is Ruth. Instructed by Naomi, she takes this strange Jewish fashion to seek her rights and commit her fortunes into his hands. There is not in all history a passage more honorable to true religion than the story of that midnight meeting. Silver seven times purified never shone brighter as it flowed from the glowing furnace than Boaz's high principles then and there—nor purer or brighter the stars that looked down on the scene of such a triumph. The house of God, the holy table where, by the symbols of Christ's bloody death, saints have held high intercourse with heaven, never begot purer thoughts than this thrashing-floor that night. A noble contrast to such as, disgracing

their professions, have received no men beneath their roof to undermine their virtue and work their ruin. Boaz, in his fear of God and sacred regard to a poor gleaner's good name, is a pattern to all men. Ruling his own spirit, he stands there "better than he that taketh a city." He is enrolled among the progenitors of the Messiah; nor, take him for all in all, was there one in the list of whom Christ had less cause to be ashamed, one more worthy to be the ancestor of an incarnate God—of him who was "holy, harmless, and undefiled, separate from sinners."—From Students of Character, by Dr. Guthrie.

Luther's Unselfishness.

Disinterestedness was a leading feature in the character of Luther; superior to all selfish considerations, he left the honors and emoluments of this world to those who delighted in them. The poverty of this great man did not arise from wanting the means of acquiring riches, for few men have had it in their power more easily to obtain them. The Elector of Saxony offered him the produce of a mine at Saeberg; but he nobly refused it, "lest," said he, "I should tempt the devil, who is lord of these subterranean treasures, to tempt me." The enemies of Luther were no strangers to his contempt for gold. When one of the Popes asked a certain Cardinal why he did not stop that man's mouth with silver and gold, his Eminence replied, "That German best regards not money?" It may easily be supposed that the liberality of such a man would often exceed his means. A poor student once telling him of his poverty, he desired his wife to give him a sum of money; and when she informed him they had none left, he immediately seized a cup of some value, which accidentally stood within his reach, and giving it to the poor man, bade him go and sell it, and keep the money to supply his wants. In one of his epistles, Luther says, "I have received one hundred guilders from Fauberein; and Schartz has given me fifty; so that I begin to fear lest God should reward me in this life. But I will not be satisfied with it. What have I to do with so much money? I gave half of it to P. Prior, and made the man glad."

Money for Christ.

There is an inseparable connection between spiritual prosperity and christian liberality. "He that watereth shall be watered also himself." Prov. xi: 24, 25; Luke vi: 38; Prov. iii: 9; Deut. xv: 7, 8, 10; Isaiah xxxii: 8; Matt. xxv: 40; 2 Cor. ix: 6, 7; Acts xx: 35. The reader will please refer to the above texts. Facts confirm their truth.

An English gentleman gave the first year eighty dollars to the Bible Society, and increased his contributions from year to year, until he finally gave over twenty thousand dollars annually. When asked how his charities increased so largely, he replied, "The more I give, the more I get."

The poor people of Glasgow, Scotland, use to say that "David Dale gave his money by shovelfuls, and God Almighty shovelled it back again."

Some years ago a christian worker, who has long devoted his life to voluntary religious labors in the West, stopped in a large town where he was a stranger to every one. Stepping into the store of a prominent merchant, who was noted for christian activity, he introduced himself to the proprietor, and remarked that he would remain for a few days, visit the families, gratuitously circulate religious publications, etc. "Well," replied the merchant, "I have heard of you before, and here are five dollars to help you along."

"GIVE! GIVE! be always giving. He who gives not is not living! Give strength, give thought, give deeds, give love, give tears, and give thyself."

—Christian of Work.

Beligion is adapted to all our faculties, and to the various phases of life. It will grace the counting house and the mart of trade as well as the sanctuary; it repudiates narrow bounds; its field is the world; where sin is found, there will it exert its counteracting influence. In its origin it is heavenly; in its nature, divine. It incarnates the grandest thoughts of God. Nature reveals much; it is eloquent for God, but it has no Christ; and no cross. The Bible contains the most wondrous

revelations which man has ever received. It alone satisfies the soul.

Not Paid in Gold and Silver.

When Calvin desired to publish his first work, the booksellers turned their backs upon him. After great discouragement, he resolved to publish at his own expense. When the printing was finished, he said: "Upon my word, it has cost more money than I had imagined." Then he became very anxious about the sale of it, and said: "I am drained dry, and I must tax my wits to get back from every quarter the money I have expended." He hastened to the professors at the capital, and begged them to use his book in their lectures, and lost no opportunity to bring it into notice. Calvin toiled hard as an author, and yet, "at the close of life, he had only three hundred crowns, his library included."

Martin Luther wrote much which the Church is not willing to lose; and yet, when he came to die, he said: "I have neither house, nor land, nor money to leave behind me."

The Secret of Christian Attainment.

What is the attitude of mind in which all christians should most desire to be? How should they regard past experiences and actual attainments, as compared with what is to be done, hoped for, and made ours in the future? Is the christian a racer? does he stretch forth his hand and strain the muscle as longing to reach what he can not yet touch?

Near by where the Apostle Paul wrote his Epistle to the Philippians, was a circus. From it resounded the cheers and bravos of thousands who leaned forward to watch the issue of the race or boxing-match, and possibly they fell upon the ears of the still and thoughtful apostle amid the entrees of the Pretorium.

One thing will not be questioned, Paul says, applying the race to himself, "I have not reached it, but I follow after. I am not perfect, but I am to be. What ground I have gone over, I cease to think of. What still remains, that I think of, and rush towards. I just do one thing. I am called of God by a high calling. I see the mark. I press toward it. Nothing will content me but the winning of the prize."

And not only is this Paul's state of mind, but he describes it as the normal experience of christians. He refers to some who think, or were in danger of thinking, that they had attained and were perfect. He would win them to humbler thoughts of themselves and higher thoughts of their high calling, by the portraiture of his own spiritual experience. "I press," he says, "toward the mark," not as having "attained," not as being "perfect," but as attaining, perfecting. And then he adds, "Let us be thus minded." "Brethren, be followers of me, and mark them which walk so as you have us for an example."

He adds, in his sympathy, and the delicate courtesy of his love, that if in anything they be otherwise minded, have different and erroneous thoughts in the matter, God shall reveal even this unto them. There is a condition, however, to this revelation of God's truth to and in them, and it is this: "Nevertheless, where to we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing." The thing is, the rule is, "to press toward the mark," to forget the past, and reach forth toward the future.

This then is the lesson. The christian attitude is one of progress, pressing toward the mark; his face toward heaven, the light of an ever-brightening future playing on his features, and all past attainments lying in the shadow cast by his rising form. So Paul rose, the shadow behind him, the light before! So the sunlight of inspiration has photographed him, and made him the model for imitation.

"I follow after," press toward the mark," was the motto of the great apostle, long before that old Roman word "Excelsior" had its christian meaning poured into it; before it grew bright on the escutcheon of the Empire State, and before Longfellow had imperialed it in immortal verse. And when the discovered head of Paul rolled in the dust, and his eager spirit at a bound leaped on high, over his prone and inanimate form.

"From the sky serene and far
A voice fell, like a falling star,
Excelsior!"

—American Messenger.

The Sabbath.

The day is not done when the church dissolves; and the whole of it is holy to the Lord. And, therefore, when you return every one to your families, there are private and family duties to be performed. Walks and visits are not to be the evening work of the Sabbath, but holy and spiritual conferences are then proper; either to bring to your remembrance the truths you before have heard, or to engage your own hearts, or the hearts of others, to admire and magnify God for all His great wonders of providence and redemption. Indeed, if a walk be thus improved, it may be a walk to heaven. So we find the two disciples, who on this day were walking to Emmaus, how they entertained themselves, and shortened their way with spiritual and holy discourses. Luke xxiv: 13, 15. But those who have families to look after will be best employed in seeing that those who are under their charge spend the vacant time of the Sabbath in holy exercises; either reading the Scripture, or giving an account of what truths they have been taught, or joining with them in praises and prayer unto God, or, indeed, in all of these, in their several courses and order, till night calls for repose, and delivers them over, with a sweet seasoning and blessing, to the employments of the ensuing day and week.

If there be any spare time from these public and private duties, then sanctify it by entering into thy closet, and there unbosom thy soul before God in secret prayer, spread thy requests before Him, lay open thy wants and desires. And though, perhaps, thou art not gifted to word a prayer, yet sing and groan out a prayer, for thy God hears thee; and He understands [the language of] sighs, and knows the meanings of His Spirit in the inarticulate groans of His children. Here, likewise, in secret meditate on what thou hast heard; admire the glory of God in His works, the goodness of God in His providences, the infinite mercy of God in His promises. Certainly, meditation is one great duty of a Sabbath, without which, to hear the word of God only is but to swallow our meat without chewing it. It is meditation that makes it fit for nourishment; this sucks the juice and sweetness out of it, incorporates it into us, and turns it into life and substance.—Leighton.

Four Impossible Things.

1. To escape troubles by running away from duty, Jonah once made the experiment, but it did not succeed. Therefore, manfully meet and overcome the difficulties and trials to which the post assigned you by God's providence exposes you.
2. To become a christian of strength and maturity without undergoing several trials. What fire is to gold, such affliction is to the believer. It burns up the dross, and makes the gold shine forth with unalloyed lustre.
3. To form an independent character except when thrown upon one's own resources. The oak in the middle of the forest, if surrounded on every side by trees that shelter and shade it, runs up tall and comparatively feeble; cut away its protectors, and the first blast will overturn it. But the same tree, growing in the open field, where it is continually beaten upon by the tempest, becomes its own protector. So the man who is compelled to rely on his own resources forms an independence of character to which he could not otherwise have attained.
4. To be a growing man by looking to your position in society for influence, instead of bringing influence to your position. Therefore, prefer rather to climb up the hill with difficulty than to be steamed up by a power outside yourself.—Church Gazette.

One evidence of christian progress is the abolition of pulpits and the introduction of platforms. It indicates that preacher and people are coming together. It does both parties good. It makes ministers more manly and laymen more devout. When choirs are superseded by congregational singing, or made leaders of the whole congregation, another important step will have been taken.

No man is humbled and sincere with God, until he is willing to know the worst of himself.