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Poetry.

The Mountain Torrent.

FAIR streamlet, running
Where violets grow,
Under the elm trees
Murmuring low;
Rippling gently
Amid the grass:
I have a fancy,
As I pass:
I have a fancy as I see
The trailing willows kissing thee;
As I behold the daisies pied,
The harebells nodding at thy side;
The sheep that feed upon thy brink,
The birds that stoop to thy wave to drink;
The blooms that tempt the bees to stray;
And all the life that tracks thy way:

I deem thou flowest
Through grassy meads,
To show the beauty
Of gentle deeds;
To show how happy
The world might be,
If men, observant,
Copied thee;
To show how small a stream may pour
Verdure and beauty on either shore;
To teach what humble men might do,
If their lives were pure and their hearts were true,
And what wealth they might dispense
In modest, calm beneficence;
Marking their course, as thou dost thine,
By way-side flowers of love divine.

And streamlet rushing,
With foam and spray,
Over the boulders
In thy way;
Leaping and rolling
From rock to cave,
A vast, impetuous,
Onward wave:

I have a fancy as I mark
Thy fall o'er the precipices dark:
As I behold thy power reveal'd,
And hear thy voice like thunder peal'd;
I have a fancy as I sit
Under the rocks where thy rainbows sit,
And listen to thy roar and swell,
Sonorous, irresistible:

I deem thou leapest
Adown the rocks,
To show how little
Are Fortune's shocks,
To him reliant,
Who knows his strength,
And measures evil—
Breadth and length:

I deem thou flowest, to teach us still
That perseverance conquers ill;
That no obstruction, small or great,
Can daunt the soul that dares its fate;
That calm, true hearts in peril's hour
Confront it with superior power.
Here at thy side I sit and dream
These fancies twain, sweet mountain stream.

Religions.

Who should be Baptized?

BY THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON, MINISTER
OF NEW PARK STREET CHAPEL.

"If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest."—Acts viii. 37.

(Concluded.)

II. And now note next, "If thou BELIEVEST." Faith then—personal faith—is the great PREREQUISITE FOR BAPTISM. You have then to ask this question, do you believe? "Well," says one, "I try to serve the Master as best I can." I am glad to hear it, and if your obedience is the result of faith I bless God for it. But still, if your obedience be not based on faith—if it be not the fruit of faith, it is worthless. All the obedience of unbelieving men is but a splendid sin, a whitewashed vice, which looketh like the virtue of which it is a base counterfeit, and not the sterling coin. The question is, dost thou believe? Says one, "I receive all the articles of the faith, beginning at election and ending at final perseverance; I am as sound a Christian as ever lived." I know that, but that is not all I ask you. To believe is not to receive a dry dead orthodoxy; to believe is not to be a sixteen-ounces-to-the-pound Calvinist, and faith is not simply to receive a creed or a form. To believe is to trust, and no man ever believes until he is brought to trust in Christ alone, and take his whole religion upon trust, relying not on what he sees,

nor on what he feels, but on what is revealed—relying not on what he is, or can be, or shall be, or does, or can do, or feels, but relying on what Christ has done, is doing, and shall certainly do. Now do you believe in Jesus Christ with all your hearts? My dear brothers and sisters, although you have now upon you the attire of candidates for baptism, I entreat you to retire from this pool if you do not believe in Christ. I think I see you with a tear in your eye, and I hear you say, "Blessed be God that with many imperfections I can say—

"Nothing in my hands I bring,
Simply to the cross I cling;
Naked, look to thee for dress;
Helpless, look to thee for grace;
Black, I to the fountain fly,
Wash me, Saviour, or I die."

Well then, however feeble your faith, this ordinance is yours, the table of Christ is yours, the promises of Christ are yours, the doctrines are yours, Christ is yours and Christ is all, and therefore all Christ's things are yours, most freely and richly to enjoy. "But without faith it is impossible to please God."

Now in baptism it should be your business to please God, but without faith you would be performing an act displeasing to God. And how will that be an ordinance of God that is displeasing to him? "If thou believest thou mayest." If he be the unbuttressed pillar of thy hope, the solitary prop of thy trust, faith must really and truly say, "Nothings save Jesus do I know." Come ye hither, come and welcome; come in, thou blessed of the Lord, wherefore standest thou without? I remember some four years ago a person came to me—he may be here to-night, that does not signify, it will be all the more personal to him. He came to me wishing to be baptized. I saw him. "Friend," said I, "why are you wishing to be baptized?" "Well," said he, "I want to be a Christian." "But do you think that baptism will make you a Christian?" "Yes," said he. "Then," said I, "you are grossly mistaken—grossly mistaken; we baptize none but those who believe themselves to be Christians. Baptism can have no effect in helping you to heaven; you must be saved first before you can come to baptism." He seemed to be utterly struck at that idea. He had got into his head the notion that there was something efficacious in the matter—that it would do him good, and when I tried to explain to him that we were far from such a thought as that, and that, in fact, unless a man believed he was saved beforehand, we would not baptize him, he went away staggered, but I hope that he also went away to ask himself this solemn question. "How is it that I am not a Christian? How is it that I am not a follower of Christ, and that the minister therefore dismisses me, urging me to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and after that to attend to baptism, but not before?" God forbid that any of you should think for a moment that there is any saving virtue in that water. If you were baptized in the Jordan itself, what were that? Though the water flowed from the river of life itself, from the very garden of Eden, yet it would fail you. Nothing but the blood, the blood, the blood of Jesus. This is the washing of the saints. He that believeth let him be baptized. But if thou believest not, stand back; this is a sacred circle into which no intruder can be permitted to enter. If thou believest, come hither; if thou believest not, take heed lest thou destroy thine own soul in meddling with that which is not thine.

III. But now, mark again, the kind of faith that is here mentioned, "If thou believest with ALL thine heart." There is a great difference between *faith* and *faith*. One faith is the faith of the head, and another faith is the faith of the heart. Some men have all their religion in their head; like poor, miserable, poverty-stricken students, they shut their religion up in the head, and there they let it feed upon some dry thought or empty speculation; but the faith of the Christian has the best parlour of the heart, there it sits; in the inner man it has its citadel; in the inmost soul it dwells. The faith of the head the devil himself has. The devil is a very sound di-

vine; he believes and trembles. As far as the mere statement of theology is concerned, I would trust the devil to draw up a creed. I do believe he is thoroughly sound; I think he knows more about God's Word than most of us. He can quote it very admirably, although he also understands how to misquote it. I do not think the devil ever was an Arminian, or ever will be. I think he is a very sound theologian, and understands the doctrines of grace in his head. I believe he is a little better than some Antinomians, however; for they believe and presume, but the devil believes and trembles. Still the devil and Antinomians never would be such very great enemies. I wonder, indeed, why they talk about the devil tempting them. I believe it is not the devil at all, it is themselves; they tempt themselves, and tempt the devil to tempt them, if the devil does tempt them at all. The devil, I think, believes soundly, but he trembles as he believes. There is the doctrine of election. "Ah," says the devil, "I am not going to deny it, but I hate that doctrine of election." "Christ," he says, "redeems his people, but I am not one—I hate that doctrine of redemption; the cross is glorious, and I am obliged to confess it, for I have felt its power, and am to feel it more and more. But I hate the cross, I abhor it, because it crushes me and does not exalt me." "Ah," says he, "I know Jesus is the Son of God, but I wish he were not; I wish I could turn him out of his throne, and cast him out of his dominions." The devil believes, but he hates what he believes. Now, faith in Christ is never true, unless it is the faith of the heart; unless the heart loves and gives its assent to it; unless I can not only believe the thing is true, but love it to be true—not only because I am convinced of it, but because it is my joy that it is so. Now, do you know that this is true in your heart? If you are a sinner, do you believe it? Do you mourn it? Do you know this fact experimentally? Do you know also that Christ is your Saviour? Do you feel it? Do you receive it into your inward heart as a thing of vital importance to you, and a thing which you appreciate, and in which you rejoice? Do you know that Christ blots out sin, and have you received that, not as a doctrine, but as a matter of heartfelt truth, inasmuch as your sins have been blotted out? Do you believe that the Spirit is the sanctifier? Do you heartily believe that? Do you believe it in your heart, and therefore pray, "Lord, sanctify and renew me by thy Spirit in the inner man?" If not, all the faith that you have does not incline you to baptism, much less to heaven—stand back. But "if thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest." But if thy head be full of things sound, right, and true; if thine heart be empty of love to God, of love to Christ, and love to his truth, stand back, thou wouldst be an intruder into these sacred things.

And now note one more thing. It says, "If thou believest with all thine heart." Now, candidates for baptism, can you say from your heart that you give up all to Christ—all?

"The dearest idol I have known,
Whate'er that idol be,
Help me to rend it from thy throne,
And worship only thee."

Can you give it all up—life, body, soul, health, wealth, or talent—can you give all up to him? If you cannot, you have not believed with all your heart; there is a part of your heart kept back. If you believe with all your heart, the surrender will be of all the heart. "Oh," says one, "but I desire to give all to him. Then, my brother, thou hast given all to him, thou hast done so really, and it will be thine to carry it out in daily practice, by making a full surrender of thyself to him."

I would very affectionately in closing put this question to my hearers; but I will leave it with the Lord to do as he pleases to teach it to you—Does it not seem from this passage that faith is necessary to baptism, and that if this man had not believed Philip could not have baptized him? "I speak as unto wise men, judge ye what I say." If any of you are unbelievers, venture not to think that, in your present state,

you can be baptized; but if you be believers and be not baptized let me put it to your consciences, do you think you are right in neglecting this ordinance of God? It has nothing to do with me, remember; if I have just awakened your conscience I have done enough. It is for you to think of, and I leave it with God and your own soul. I pray the Lord to guide us in this matter. If we are wrong may he set us right. If you be wrong, may he set you right. The prayer of the old curate was a fine one. He was once in a great dispute and was observed to be writing; some one said, "Allow me to look at your notes." "Certainly," he said. The notes were read, and they consisted of these words, "More light, Lord, more light." I think that is the prayer we may pray for many of our brethren, and certainly for ourselves—"More light, Lord, more light."

For the Christian Messenger.

Ministerial Support.

During the past year, after several years absence from my native land it has been my pleasure to make it two visits, at which times I have been deeply impressed with the unscriptural views held by many in regard to the support of the Christian ministry. Therefore I now write for the latitude and longitude of Nova Scotia, where Christians are in the full and free enjoyment of Heaven's blessings. Many of them almost reveling in wealth and pleasure, take it for granted that Baptist Ministers should study, travel, preach day and night, be the first to contribute to every charitable object, visit from house to house, pray with the sick, bury the dead, exercise a general supervision over all the social, educational and religious interests of community, be denied their inalienable rights and liberty in the exercise of civil suffrage, because they conscientiously differ from a few political enthusiasts, and in many cases receive in return but little more than cold hearted ingratitude. This peculiar doctrine is not found in the Bible, nor in our Articles of Faith, but it is, nevertheless, in our practices. The principles of justice, humanity, the bible, a lost world, all the sacred interests of the Saviour's kingdom, call for its everlasting obliteration from our name and nature? But who are to be the meek, Christlike, yet earnest, persevering pioneers of reform? Who shall have sufficient grace to write upon these texts of the great Apostle to the Gentiles, and scatter the elements of reform broadcast to the people?—"If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we should reap your carnal things?"—"If we have labored for the good of your souls is it unreasonable to receive in return what is needful for our support?" "Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel." "Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth, in all good things."—You who hear the gospel give to him who preaches it all things needful for his support. Is it those who are the most destitute who are to arise and vindicate their rights to live of the gospel? We can hardly expect it, they are kept back by the fear that unsanctified personal and selfish motives would be ascribed to them. They choose rather to be wronged, to suffer wrong, then to wound the tender feelings of their beloved and sympathizing brethren.

At present there is a serious deficiency in the number of ministers in the Province, the field is large, the laborers few and moral corruption rolls like an ocean over it, and yet one after another is emigrating, compelled to go—not to heathen lands, but to the United States. Why is this? Because they are starved in a land of plenty, in one of the loveliest lands on which the light of Calvary ever beamed. Is it right that a Christian minister while exhausting himself in the service of his people, should be left to a scanty living, or as in some cases be forced to "leave the word of God and serve tables." In a land of poverty, as a Christian minister preaching the gospel to the poor, I could conscientiously wear myself out prematurely in destitution but not in