

# Christian Messenger.

A REPOSITORY OF RELIGIOUS, POLITICAL & GENERAL INTELLIGENCE.

"Not slothful in business: fervent in spirit."

NEW SERIES. }  
VOL. X. No. 23. }

HALIFAX, N. S., WEDNESDAY, JUNE 7, 1865.

WHOLE SERIES. }  
VOL. XXIX. No. 23. }

## Poetry.

For the Christian Messenger.

### Good Bye.

Farewell! farewell! is often heard  
From the lips of those who part;  
'Tis a whispered tone—'tis a gentle word,  
But it springs not from the heart.

It may serve for the lover's closing lay,  
To be sung 'neath a summer's sky;  
But give to me the lips that say  
The honest words "good bye."

Adieu, adieu may greet the ear  
In the guise of courtly speech,  
But when we leave the kind and dear,  
'Tis not what the soul would teach.

When'er we grasp the hands of those  
We would have forever nigh,  
The flame of friendship bursts and glows  
In the warm, frank "good bye."

The mother sending forth her child,  
To meet with cares and strife,  
Breathes through her tears, her doubts and fears,  
For the loved one's future life;

No cold "adieu" no "farewell" lives  
Within her choking sigh,  
But the deepest sob of anguish gives  
"God bless the boy, good bye."

Go watch the pale and dying one,  
When the glance has lost its beam,  
When the brow is cold as the marble stone,  
And the world a passing dream.

And the latest pressure of the hand,  
The look of the closing eye,  
Yield what the heart must understand  
A long, a last "good bye."  
May 23, 1865. MAUDE.

## Religious.

### Baptist Churches, a necessity.

ADDRESS OF REV. DR. ANGUS TO THE LONDON  
BAPTIST UNION.

(Continued.)

"iii. But even if we were not excluded from other churches by their adoption of creeds we cannot sign, and if we hold that baptism is not essential to church membership or to communion, provided always there is a reverential regard for Christ's authority, is it still important to have Scriptural views of this doctrine of baptism? Is our advocacy of it simply self-defensive? Remove it as a barrier of fellowship—does it still remain as a truth to be maintained and taught, in its proper place of course, but still maintained and taught as part of the Divine law?"

"Even if the formation of separate churches were not forced upon us by necessity, and were not in some cases the result of a conscientious conviction of the nature of the Christian Church, Scriptural views on this question are important. They seem to me part of our Protestantism: they are closely connected with just views of regeneration and forgiveness and adoption; and no less closely with the New Testament distinction of the world and the Church. Or to put it in another form, infant baptism betrays our Protestantism; risks the vital doctrine of spiritual renewal; and tends to confound the world and the Church. Baptism is not to me, with the teaching of the Bible before me, a mere ordinance, a positive institution without meaning or significance: it is the representative of great spiritual truths. Take it away, and I miss an instructive lesson: change it in its mode, in its subjects, and apply to it as thus changed the startling and impressive language of the Bible, and you may make it teach the most mischievous errors.

"1. Protestantism, as we now understand it, is an avowal of our acceptance of the Bible as the only rule of our religious faith. Such has ever been the principle of no inconsiderable portion of the Church of Christ. Ranke notes that long before Luther's day it was the principle recognized by some of the most enlightened and devout men of the Roman Catholic Church. William Jones amongst ourselves, Uhlman among the Germans, have traced this same faith among

various sects from the earliest times. Since the days of Luther it has been accepted as the principle of all Protestants. In his earlier labours he contented himself with affirming the doctrine of justification by faith, and protesting against monasticism and indulgence. In 1522 he completed his version of the New Testament. Thenceforth he himself retired from the front place, putting there God's Word: 'let this book,' said he, 'be on all tongues, in all hands, under all eyes, and in all hearts.' A century later, Chillingworth affirmed the same principle in a more logical form, 'the Bible and the Bible only the religion of Protestants.'

"It is part of this principle that we gather the meaning of the Bible from the Bible itself. As it is the only inspired Book, so itself is the only inspired interpreter of its message. It is self-interpretive; its own expositor, and the only authoritative expositor. We use lexicons, for it is written in what is largely a dead language. We admit evidence of its meaning—evidence, not authority—from all quarters, but when men say, 'Tradition received through the Church must be regarded with like reverence as Holy Writ,' we repudiate the dogma and call it Popery. Popery depends for truth and for the meaning of Scripture on tradition; and therein Protestantism condemns it.

"Declining to add traditional teaching to Scripture, we decline no less the teaching of reason or of taste or of convenience. When, therefore, a high authority tells us that baptism, i. e., immersion, was undoubtedly the precept of the New Testament and the practice of the first churches, but that the Church of Christ may exercise a 'wise liberty' and substitute a more convenient mode, we demur to this announcement. 'A liberty' we admit it to be; a wise liberty' we question. Positive institutions, if binding at all, are binding as the Master ordained them. The Bible, not tradition; the Bible, not convenience, not even a wise liberty in things commanded, the religion of Protestants.

"Now, in fact, it is to this liberty and to tradition that most advocates of infant baptism appeal. On the mode tradition is against them; immersion was nearly everywhere regarded for centuries as the primitive practice. In defence of sprinkling, therefore, they appeal to this wise liberty. On the subjects there is nothing for two hundred and fifty years to help them. Kurtz, the German ecclesiastical historian, says indeed that the baptism of children was never condemned till the days of Tertullian, in the early part of the third century. And this is perfectly true, only it is but half the truth. It is as true that the baptism of children is never once mentioned till Tertullian's days; he is the first that clearly alludes to it; and the first writer that alludes to it condemns it. Still there is evidence that the practice was spreading, and to this evidence nearly all the defenders of infant baptism appeal. Concessions of Pædobaptist writers have been quoted by scores. They seem to admit without scruple that baptism means immersion, and that there is no trace of infant baptism in the New Testament. They even hold, the most eminent of them, that it is unwise to maintain the contrary; but then they think that they neutralise all these concessions by the 'wise liberty' and the primitive tradition which we venture to condemn.

"I cannot now dwell upon these appeals to tradition, or upon the reasons for which we decline to give it a place by the side of Scripture; but I may affirm, with men who have examined the whole question, and who are not Baptists, that the appeal to tradition, if we are to be bound by it, will land us in infidelity or in Popery. Chillingworth tried tradition. Seeking for certainty of religious faith, he left the Bible and went, as he tells us, to the Fathers, but only with the result of multiplying all his doubts; nor did he find any resting-place till he returned to the Bible again. Jeremy Taylor tried it, and alleges that the authority of councils is in the highest degree precarious, and the judgments of the Fathers often mutually contradictory. In our own time Isaac Taylor tried it with exhaustive fulness, and has shown in detail that if men will go to the Fathers even those of the first three centuries, for their religious faith, they will have to admit most of the errors of the Romish Church.

Nay, any man who uses tradition for the defence of infant baptism may try it for himself; and he will find in the very Fathers he quotes, statements about the saving efficacy of baptism, and the right of infants to communion, which, if he be an Evangelical Christian man, he will be compelled to disown! Appeal to tradition, and you must in consistency hold infant baptismal regeneration, and infant church-membership.

"These remarks are true of most Pædobaptists: not of all. Our Congregational brethren agree with us in repudiating tradition, and in rejecting the 'wise liberty' for which some plead. They appeal to the Bible alone. In consequence they are driven to methods of interpretation which Churchmen as strongly question as ourselves. They hold that to baptize does not mean to dip, or that it means quite as much to apply water in any way; that 'in the Jordan' means 'with the Jordan,' that 'into' and 'up out of' mean respectively 'to' and 'away from'; while they destroy the very reason for either by affirming that baptism is not the application of the person to the water, but of the water to the person. They appeal to circumcision as the type, but overlook the fact that circumcision introduced to all the rights of the Jewish covenant, while the baptism of infants—the antitype—is on their system only dedication, entitling of itself to nothing. They appeal to the piety of the wife as sanctifying the child, and therefore as a pretext for baptizing it, overlooking the fact that the husband is also thereby sanctified,—whatever that may mean—and that on the same ground they ought to baptize the unbelieving husband. They appeal to the baptism of families, overlooking the fact that in every case the baptized family is spoken of as believing, or as rejoicing, or as addicting themselves to the ministry of the saints, or as brethren, and as comforted, while every passage that speaks of baptism in its spiritual significance as the 'washing away of sin,' as 'burial with Christ,' as 'saving,' they reject, deeming each and all inapplicable to the baptism they administer. These methods of interpretation are as mischievous, it seems to me, to our reverence for Scripture, as they are unworthy of our scholarship. The Romanist taunts the Churchman with taking his baptism from tradition, and asks why he takes one doctrine from that source and refuses to take more; and he taunts Dissenting Pædobaptists with non-natural interpretations, suggesting that if we may interpret the Bible in this fashion, we may make anything of its teaching. Let any man take his religion from the Bible only, let him interpret it as a plain man would any other document; and I believe he will hold one baptism as certainly—to say the least—as he holds one Lord and one faith.

"2. Scriptural views of baptism are essential or are largely conducive to Scriptural views of forgiveness and regeneration, of adoption and holiness. Regeneration and adoption—sonship—are correlative terms, they describe the two sides of the same great work. By regeneration we have the character of children, by adoption the privileges; while both are contemporaneous with forgiveness and the beginning of holiness. According to the teaching of Scripture, men are regenerated, begotten again, through the truth and by the Spirit; they become partakers of a Divine nature, and are forthwith, in the highest spiritual sense, 'sons and daughters of the Lord God Almighty': Contemporaneously, they believe and are forgiven. Baptism is the outward and visible sign of the threefold change—regeneration, adoption, forgiveness—not itself the means of the change either of character or of state; nor the preparation for the change, but the outward sign of the change."

"Apply baptism to infants who have not believed, and then describe them in the language which Scripture uses of those who have been baptized into Christ, and you neutralize the Gospel. Apply baptism to infants, and speak of them simply as dedicated to God, and the ordinance loses all its Scriptural meaning; while men are thereby taught to suspect that evangelical system which is afraid of Scripture phraseology, and which cannot subsist, as they have reason to think, without denying the obvious interpretation of many passages of revealed truth. So long as infant baptism is practised by evangelical

Christians, men will continue to oscillate between the unscriptural faith that makes nothing of the ordinance, and the unscriptural faith that makes it everything: the one dishonours baptism, the other dishonours the Gospel. Give baptism its Scriptural mode, and especially its Scriptural subjects, and we honour the ordinance and honour no less the spiritual truths it is intended to represent.

"Personally, I believe firmly in Christ's purposes of mercy to all children that die in infancy. I have only to suppose that the spirit of those words, 'Suffer the little children to come unto me,' abides still with Christ, and I conclude that all who die before actual sin are at once safe with God, the love and the work of Christ supplying all they need, whatever that may be, to entitle them to a blessed home and to fit them for it."

"3. Scriptural views of this ordinance are largely conducive to just conceptions of Christian discipleship and to the preservation of the distinction between the church and the world.

"A disciple is one who takes another as his teacher. The disciple of Christ is one who takes Christ as his teacher, recognising in Him at the very outset his Saviour and King. The Christian church is an association of such disciples, avowedly believing men, women and children, banded together under such laws as Christ has laid down; and it is the great aim of the Gospel to multiply such disciples and to extend such churches throughout the world.

"Now the ordinance that avows discipleship and that practically separates the believing and the unbelieving, the world and the church, is baptism. It is not necessarily in every case an initiatory ordinance, as it has been called, nor is it necessarily a church ordinance. Not necessarily an initiatory ordinance; for while it is most appropriate at the beginning of a Christian life, it is binding even upon those who have been believing Christian men for years, but who have never yet observed it. So our Lord regarded the kindred ordinance of John's baptism, though in Him it was no baptism of repentance with a view to the remission of sins: 'thus,' says He, 'it becomes us to fulfil all righteousness,'—every righteous requirement. So the disciples who had believed but had not yet heard whether the dispensation of the Messiah had begun, and whether the Holy Ghost were yet given; after they heard of it they were baptized in the name of Lord. It is not necessarily a church ordinance: it is rather an individual duty, just as faith is; it is indeed to the world what faith is to God, the outward sign of the inward grace. Believing men are bound to be baptized, even though there be no church they can join; as missionaries and others may be free to baptize believers into Christ prior to the formation of churches or independently of them. It was thus Jesus baptized more disciples than John; though as yet no churches were formed. It was thus Saul was baptized by Ananias, and the Eunuch by Philip. Not necessarily a church ordinance, not necessarily an initiatory rite; but in all cases the appointed mode of avowed discipleship, deeply significant, gloriously distinctive. 'Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Christ were baptized into His death. . . . that we also should walk in newness of life' (Rom. vi. 4). 'As many of us as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ, and being Christ's we are heirs according to the promise,' (Gal. iii. 27, 29). 'By one Spirit we are all baptized into one body,' (1 Cor. xii. 13).

(Conclusion next week.)

"This do in remembrance of me."

### THE GARMENT.

"Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder: yes, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisted the proud, and giveth grace to the humble."—1 Peter 5: 5.

We are required to be humble, and to appear humble. For as the garment is first seen, so should our humility appear. How much we have to humble us, and keep us low before the Lord. If we look to the rock whence we were hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence we were digged. If we look back on the days of our unregeneracy, spent in sin.