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Poetry.

After Communion.

A band of soldiers, weary and worn,
With banners drooping and bright plumes torn,
Gathered to-day at the high command,
Of their glorious Prince, the Lord of the land.
The festal table was richly spread,
With the living wine and living bread,
And they who were wounded in deadly strife,
Were healed with leaves from the Tree of Life.
They forgot while their task
Of weariness and woe,
And changed the sound of the trumpet call
For the flute-note, soft and low.
Their glorious Leader spoke
High words of holy cheer;
Bade them be strong in faith and hope,
And never yield to fear.
Love to their noble Prince
Beamed from each kindling eye,
And each soldier took anew to-day
The oath of loyalty.
So they girt their armor on,
And the bannered cross waved high,
And they marched again to the battle-field,
To conquer or to die.
—Am. Messenger.

Religious.

Songs by the Well.

By Rev. C. H. Spurgeon.

"They that are delivered from the noise of archers in the places of drawing water, there shall they rehearse the righteous acts of the Lord, even the righteous acts towards the inhabitants of his villages in Israel; then shall the people of the Lord go down to the gates."—Judges v. 11.

As when the people came to the wells of old, they were wont to talk with one another if all was peaceful, so when we come up to the ordinances of God's house, and enjoy fellowship with Jesus, we should rehearse the works of the Lord. In Deborah's day, when one friend came to the well and met another, and half-a-dozen gathered together, one would say, "Delightful change, this! We could not come to the well a month ago without being afraid that an arrow would pierce our hearts." "Ah!" said another, "our family went without water for a long time." We were all bitten with thirst because we dare not come to the well." Then another would say, "But have you heard how it is? It was that woman, the wife of Lapidoth, Deborah, who called out Barak, and went with him to the battle. Have you not heard of the glorious fight they had, and how the river Kishon swept Jabin away, and Jael smote Sisera through the temples?" "The Lord hath done it," said another. "It was the Lord's doing, and is it not marvellous in our eyes?" And so, around the well's brink, when they were delivered from the noise of archers, they rehearsed the works of God; and before they wended their way to their several homes, they said one to another, "Let us sing unto the praise of God who has set our country free," and so, catching the tune, each woman went back to her village home, bearing the pitcher for her household, and singing as she went. This is very much what we ought to do.

When we come together, we ought to rehearse the work that Jesus Christ has done for us, the great work which he did on Calvary; the great work which he is doing now, as he stands before the Father's throne. We should talk experimentally, and tell one another of what we have known; what Christ has done for us; through what troubles we have been sustained; in what perils we have been preserved; what blessings we have enjoyed; what ills, so well deserved, have been averted from us. We have not enough of this rehearsing the works of the Lord. "It was a sign of the saints in the olden times, that they that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened, and heard." O let us get back to that primitive simplicity of conversation, and let us rehearse, as the text says, the righteous acts of Jehovah; let us go through our rehearsal

for the grand orchestra of the skies. Let us begin to praise God and stir each other up to gratitude here, that we may be getting ready to join the overwhelming hallelujah with the ten thousand times ten thousand who for ever praise God and the Lamb. Around all the wells, whoever they may be, of which we drink, let our conversation be concerning Christ and his dying love; concerning the Holy Spirit and his conquering power; concerning the providence of God and its goodness and its faithfulness; and then, as we wend our way to our different homes, let us go with music in our hearts, and music on our lips, to take music to our households, each man and woman magnifying the name of the Lord.

Did you observe carefully what it was they sang of? "The acts of the Lord." But there is an adjective appended, "the righteous acts of the Lord." Righteousness is that attribute which the carnal man fears; but he who sees the righteousness of God satisfied by the atonement of Christ, is charmed even by the severe aspect of God dressed as a judge. The justified child of God is not afraid of the righteousness of God, for he can meet all its demands. He likens it to the golden lions which stood in pairs upon the steps of the throne of Solomon—not meant to drive away the petitioner, but to let him see how strong, how powerful, was that throne upon which Israel leaned. I see the righteousness and holiness of God like huge colossal lions, as I look at his throne, and I delight, as I ascend the steps to bow before the glorious Father's face, to know that his righteousness is engaged to save those for whom Jesus died. Let us recount the righteous vengeance of Calvary, the terrors that God cast forth upon his Son, when he cursed our sins by making Christ to be a curse for us, though he knew no sin. This is a subject upon which we should delight to dwell.

Note with care that the works which are to be rehearsed are done towards the inhabitants of the villages of Israel. Does not this suggest that we ought frequently to magnify the Lord's choice favour and tender indulgence towards the least and feeblest of his family? Those villagers, those who know so little, those who possessed so little, those who could do so little, those who were so weak, so un-defended, these were rescued by the divine hand. Speak, then, of the mercy of God towards the little ones of Israel, and you will have no narrow field of speech. Why, if there be a choice word in the Bible, it is surely for the weak ones; if there be a peculiarly precious promise, it is generally for the feeble-minded. The best carriage in all the world that I ever heard of is Jesus' bosom, but then that is for the lamb, not for those who are strong, but for the tender and frail. Those most compassionate of sentences, in which Jesus seems to have most fully expressed his gentleness, and to have employed the tenderest similes, are evidently spoken with an eye to the trembling and timid. Take, for instance, that one, "The bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench." "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Such words as these we may well talk of together when we meet at the wells of ordinances, and so rehearse the praise of God and his righteous acts, even his righteous acts towards the villagers of Israel.—*Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit.*

The Seven Pillars of the Baptist.

This is the theme of a terse and forcible sermon recently preached by Rev. F. Denison, pastor of the Baptist church in West-terly, B. I., the text being in Prov. 9: 1, "Wisdom hath builded her house; she hath hewn out her seven pillars." From these words as a motto, the discourse proceeds to set forth seven of the more prominent principles of the Baptists, viz: 1. Soul Liberty; no compulsion in religious things; freedom of conscience in all matters of worship. 2. Separation of Churches and States; no marriage of civil and ecclesiastical powers; no welding the sword to the Gospel. 3. The Organic Completeness of every individual Church; each church a separate and complete candlestick, not a taper or branch

in a hierarchy or monopolising chandelier. 4. The Spiritual and Voluntary Constitution of every Church; a church made up only of regenerate persons, setting freely for themselves. 5. One law of Baptism; and baptism the ostensible door of a church. 6. No Law in a Church that is not plainly deducible from the New Testament. 7. The Parity of Rights in the members of a church, and every member a responsible one. No lords nor wards; no popes, priests, cardinals, bishops, but all on a footing of Christian equality, choosing their own officers, and alike responsible to Christ as his Head. These principles are briefly but well elucidated in the sermon before us. As the preacher observes, the Baptists contend for New Testament statutes and New Testament liberties. Wherein we are free, we gladly grant to all; perfect liberty. We are free in forms of worship, in dress, in style, in language, in places of worship. If any wish to write and read their prayers, to bow or stand, to dress in a Roman shirt, to worship in a cruciform meeting-house, let them have their liberty; but when they say we must do as they do, or as their church does, when they lay down a dictum or edict from prelacy, episcopacy or papacy, then we object and protest. If a man wants a liturgy or ritual, let him compose it and use it himself, for then it will be the utterance of his own soul, and not the echo of another man's mind; let him never impose his ritual upon others. It is not manly to wear other people's clothes, and follow like a slave in other people's tracks. So, for our own sake, for the sake of churches, for the sake of the world, for the liberties of all men, we stand by Christian liberty, a liberty suited to all peoples, and all countries, in all ages. Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage—the yoke of priestly associations, of hierarchical churches, of prelatical councils, ritualistic services, and patented ceremonies."

A Revision of Buddhist Sacred Books.

The *Colonist Observer* describes an unwonted sight—a Buddhist procession, consisting of six elephants, a hundred priests, and flags innumerable. First came a priest on foot, behind him two elephants with bells slung from their shoulders, then a double file of banner-bearers flanking a number of grotesque masks and musicians. After these, were three elephants abreast, the central one, a magnificent white-frosted tusker, with gorgeous housings, bearing a shrine covering a large silver dagoba, enclosing some Buddhist relic; behind him another similarly sized elephant, with crimson trappings, and shrines covering the sacred books. Following these came a long train of musicians and flags, the rear being brought up by a string of carriages and palanquins containing priests. The cortege had come from Galle, and was on its way to a temple at Palamadulla, where a convention is to be held, to collate and revise the sacred books.

Two ways of Counting Money.

The Sabbath service was over, Mr. Willis had preached his annual foreign missionary sermon, over which he had worked so hard for a month. The collection had been taken up and brought home in a clean handkerchief, and now they were to count the money. It was a pleasant day, and most of the rich men were there; and, in how the pastor hoped that the collection would prove larger than last year! So Mrs. Willis came to help him to count the money, as intended, as if it was all for herself instead of her Master. The currency was committed to her, while Mr. Willis looked over the bills. "Ah yes," Mr. McPride has done very well. Five bright, snappy twenty-dollar greenbacks, folded together. "One hundred dollars she never gave me more than thirty before." "Oh, how pleasant it must be to be rich!" thought poor Mrs. Willis, "especially to be able to give so liberally." And then her eye fell on her own contribution, a five-dollar bill, which she had saved so long that even the creases in it seemed familiar to her.

It had been kept toward the purchase of a water-proof cloak; but when the year came round, and the collection was to be taken up, she could spare nothing else. This was her own, and all she had; and now she felt a little discouraged to think that of all the collection, three hundred and eighty-nine dollars hers seemed so small a part. Suppose she had kept it there would be then three hundred and eighty-four dollars, and that seemed almost as much. Hers was but the seventy-eighth part; and she did need the water-proof. She laid it down by the new greenbacks, but without a murmur, for thought the resolute little woman, "How miserable I should be to have a collection go off without any of my money! Better wear my old blanket shawl the rest of my days."

Then they re-counted the currency and pennies, to make sure that they had reckoned right. There were some bright fifty cents in currency, one or two of doubtful value, and the usual proportion of dingy ten and stinky three. Among the coppers they found one English shilling; rather pewtery-looking, as it is called, the friction of daily use, but with the genuine ring. Mrs. Willis took it into her hands, for real silver was a rare sight to her, and she said she supposed it would be worth more than thirty cents, and yet it seemed more valuable than paper currency of any value. Then she wondered if ever again silver would pass from hand to hand in daily use; and if those days should ever come; whether it would be a more golden age for ministers' families. "Mother, tea is ready; and I made the toast and turned only one pigeon, and that I am going to eat myself. May we have molasses this evening, because it is Sabbath day? And yet another little voice said, 'I can't learn my hymn; the words are so hard; and what does *metaphorical* and *desist* mean? Oelia says she knows, but she can't tell.' " "And, mother, Georgie went but into the snow-drift, and his feet are so wet that I am afraid that he will have croup again."

And the mother took up the burden of her hourly cares, varying but never ended, and patiently decided every perplexity, and lessened, if she did not remove, every little sorrow. Mr. Willis followed his wife, looking as he went his study door, not to keep out robbers, but lest the little ones might disturb the money consecrated to the Lord of all. The door was locked, they had both gone, and yet the room was not empty. In the quiet study, growing a little dusky in the gloaming, a presence might be felt and gradually from the shadows appeared—I cannot say came, but as it already there, it had hitherto been unseen—a bright form. Little by little it grew distinct, and yet the room seemed darker; one could hardly say whether the visitant absorbed the light of the room, or whether the study only seemed dark in the presence of such brightness. The form grew clearer and clearer till it was as distinct as a statue. But so illuminated, so translucent, was its whiteness, that the clearest transparency seemed in comparison dim and muddy. Even the snowy garments were bright with an unearthly lustre, as if light were woven into the very substance of the fabric. There was nothing of the solemn repose, the death-like stillness of the sculptured marble; the form was instinct with life, even with radiant busyness. There was nothing of the fearful mystery, hanging around an imaginary ghost, but the brightness of embodied light. Oh, why should we fear to see angels? Mrs. Willis had had a busyness. The bright messenger had come on an errand, for scales were in his hand, unlike any of earthly workmanship; and yet I think he called them the balances of the sanctuary. Every contribution, even to the pennies, was tried in the balances, and as he weighed, the scales did not drop or tremble; they remained in true equilibrium; but the money changed. Fifty-cent pieces were thrown in, and one grew so dull and dingy that it seemed of little value, and the other grew bright with a ray of the angel's brightness. Alas, that some money, bills, currency and copper seemed of so little worth! "Grudged money" was the angel's only comment. So on the bright twenty-dollar green-backs were cast in. One hundred dollars given to the Lord! Oh, why did they shrivel and wither till they seemed like sore leaves of