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Poetry.

FRUIT-BEARING.

BY MISS L. L. PHELPS.

"I shiver through my show of leaves, when'er
The year comes round;
Why cumbereth it, I ever fear to hear,
'The groaning ground?'"

"The lingering husbandman too oft hath
passed;
He seeks my fruit
And tills my clod in vain. The axe at last
Lies at my root."

Not yet, despairing one, not yet the axe
Lies at thy root;
I do but lop thy branches off that thou
May'st bear more fruit.

O not in vain I till thy barren clay
With patient care,
For well I know that in no other way
Comes fruitage rare.

Thy goodly show of fresh, green leaves doth
prove
That life is there,
And not till I shall bid that life remove
Need'st thou despair

I am the Vine—the branch art thou—therefore
Abide in me;
So shall the dresser of the vineyard find
Much fruit in thee.

Thou askest work to do. Who asks, receives,
Be not afraid,
Thy prayer is heard. Use now thy show of
leaves
For grateful shade.

It is a lowly work I ask of thee,
O, to give
Cool shadows unto them that faint for me,
That they may live.

Only to echo in thy leaf-clad top
My promise true;
And let its strength upon my people drop
In healing dew.

Some trees I have, loaded with fruit most rare,
Goodly to see;
But is it less a service true to bear
Just leaves for me?

Know'st not whos' leaf is green and withers
not
Shall surely bear
Fruit in his season? The shadiest spot
Yields to my care.

A single handful only may be left
Thy tongs upon;
At harvest time the fruit thereof shall shake
Like Lebanon.

Religious.

SPANISH CATHOLIC WRITERS ON BAPTISM.

The following extracts from Spanish writers were obtained by Dr. Lorimer in a recent visit to Madrid, and published in an article furnished for the *Watchman and Reflector*:

"Padre Scio, the translator of the Roman Catholic Bible into Spanish, and annotator of the same, writes on Acts 8, (Philip and the Eunuch), 'Baptism was administered then, and for a long time continued to be administered, by immersion.' Under Col. ii. 12 he says, 'the immersion of the body in the water of baptism, as it was accustomed to be administered anciently, is a sure and efficacious sign of the death, of the spiritual death of the old man,' etc., etc."

"Francisco Ximenez, in his 'Paraphrase of the Epistle of Paul the Apostle,' published in Madrid, 1789, says, under Rom. vi. 4, 'Here Paul alludes to the ceremony employed in his day for the administration of baptism which was done by plunging in the water the whole body of him who was baptized.' And here follows a fact worthy of note. Throughout the epistles in the first edition, this author employs the word immersed wherever baptism occurs; but in the second edition issued after his death, this plan is reversed, by the Romish revisors. Were they afraid, as this work might be read by men of ordinary education, to leave so clear a condemnation of their system?"

"In the recent Spanish Etymological Dictionary of Felipe Monlau baptize is simply defined by the word immerse

without further explanation. And this is true of the Literary Encyclopaedias without exception. The Catholic Theological Dictionary (11 vols. Madrid, 1867), makes the following statement: 'With regard to the ablution, the practice of the Latin Church, differs entirely from the usage of the ancient church. We perform the ablution by sprinkling or pouring; the apostles did it by immersion; and this was the universal practice until after the Middle Ages; in the middle of the thirteenth century sprinkling or pouring was rarely practiced. In 1280 a Council of Cologne sought to maintain the ancient usages.'

TOO GOOD COMPANY FOR ME.

One evening last summer, a lady who belongs to the editorial staff of one of the leading dailies of New York, had been detained by office duties until a rather late hour. Living on the heights of Fulton Ferry, it was not much of a venture to go home without an escort, and so she started.

On the boat, standing outside enjoying the refreshing breeze after a day's toil she perceived a gentleman (?) leaning over the guard, but said nothing.

"Are you alone?" said he, as the boat neared the slip.

"No, sir," said she; and without further interruption when the boat touched she stepped off.

"I thought you were not alone," said the fellow, stepping to her side again.

"I am not," replied the lady.

"Why, I don't see any one; who is with you?"

"God, and the angels, sir. I am never alone."

"You keep too good company for me, madam; good night," and he shot for a Fulton avenue car, then nearly a block away.

SHORT SERMON TO PREACH-ERS.

All apologies are founded in self-deception or pride.

Move directly to your subject; the sooner you get at the main idea, the better.

One telling illustration is better than a dozen, even if each of the dozen are quite as strong.

Let the subject be of such importance as to invest you with an inspiration, until the closing sentence.

Encourage rather than scold. Do not make many points; two or three well insisted on will be longer remembered than half a dozen.

Never think of your-self, but of a soul saved or lost, and Calvary.

Have only two or three headings and one application—clear, short, and to the point, so that it may still be ringing in the ears of the people as they are dispersing.

If you cannot preach from a text without an intimation that a different translation would improve it, select some other passage, or a different subject.

Feel that this sermon may be your last.—*Hall's Journal of Health.*

DECLINE OF INFANT BAPTISM.—Infant "christening" must be falling into disuse among Episcopalians. Bishop Doane's recent annual communication to the Diocesan Convention at Albany, reports 1,003 persons confirmed, of whom but twenty-five were "baptized" during the year; and only twenty-two infants "baptized" during the same period in the entire diocese, which embraces about one hundred officiating clergymen. This gives less than one infant christening to every four ministers, as the average of this operation in the diocese for a whole year.

BIBLE REVISION.—During the last fortnight the rate of progress of the Old Testament Company of Revisers has averaged about a chapter and a half per diem.

CLOSE COMMUNION: WHAT IS IT?

Echo answers, What is it? The following facts may help the reader:

I. There are in this country over one million of baptized believers who do not sit down at the Lord's Table with other millions of unbaptized believers.

II. These baptized believers have their churches, their ministers, and their missions, and are known as Baptists.

III. The unbaptized have their churches and ministers and missions, but are never called Baptists because they do not baptize.

IV. The most of them were sprinkled in their infancy, and have been told that this was baptism, but many of them fear it was not and all know that on their part it was without faith or obedience. They are known as pedobaptists.

V. The ministers of pedobaptist churches often invite and sometimes urge the members of Baptist churches to receive from their hands and in their fellowship, the *Lord's Supper*.

VI. The ministers of Baptist churches as often and as earnestly invite and urge all believers in pedobaptist Churches, whether ministers or members, to receive from their hands, and in their fellowship, the *Lord's Baptism*.

VII. Pedobaptist ministers and churches when they invite Baptists to communion with them, never say, We will receive from your hands the baptism of Jesus or be baptized as he was and you have been, if you will then commune with us.

VIII. But Baptists, when they invite members of pedobaptist churches to receive from their hands and in their fellowship the baptism of Christ, say to them, If you will do this we will eat with you the *Lord's Supper*, and with you have "One Lord, one faith, and one baptism."

IX. Not either party will accept the invitation. If pedobaptists would accept the invitation of Baptists to their baptism, Baptists would reciprocate and accept their invitation to the communion, but pedobaptists will not do it, they persist in "rejecting the counsel of God against themselves in not being baptized" and insist that Baptists shall justify them in so doing, or be cried down as "uncharitable," "self-concoited," "narrow-minded," "bigoted," "close communion Baptists." But who are "keeping the ordinances as delivered," and as administered to Christ and by Christ, if Baptists are not? And are they sinners above all the rest because they keep faithfully an ordinance of the gospel that others reject? They may be so in the estimation of those who substitute for an ordinance of God that which is all and only of men, but such we trust is not the mind of Christ and "close communion Baptists," falsely so called, can well afford to wait until he who was baptized in Jordan, and by a minister who, as he said, was a Baptist, shall come as his defence and consolation.—*Macedonian.*

AN ARCHBISHOP'S VANITY.—A correspondent of a High Church contemporary writes as follows:—"Sir, I am credibly informed that the Archbishop of York when in Switzerland walked about the country in 'knickerbockers.' His Grace may be vain of his understandings, but he ought to have remembered the text on that point." This is a serious difficulty, which we trust may be settled without having recourse to Convocation.

TURK'S ISLANDS.—The condition of this colony continues most painfully depressed. Labourers can no longer be paid in coin, the stores only pay in provisions. By a recent census there are 4,800 persons in the colony, thus distributed:—Baptists 1,800, Wesleyans 1,400, Presbyterians 100 the remainder Episcopalians.

If a man gets up when the day breaks, can he be said to have the whole day before him?

For the Christian Messenger.
REVIEW.

The Ecclesiastical polity of the New Testament. A study for the present crisis in the Church of England. By the Rev. G. A. Jacob, D. D., late master of Christ's Hospital. pp. 421.

This is a remarkable and very excellent volume. Dr. Jacob is a clergyman of the Church of England. He has studied "Ecclesiastical polity," not as it is taught in articles, creeds, canons, and constitutions, but as it appears in the New Testament. He acknowledges no other authority than the divine book.

"I appeal from the Nicene Fathers to the Apostles of Christ; from patristic literature to the New Testament; from ecclesiastical authorities and practices of post-apostolic centuries to the primitive Church of the apostolic age. To go back to that time, and to endeavour, as far as possible, to reproduce the Church of the New Testament, is most needful for us now, if we would preserve a faithful and distinct acknowledgement of Christian truth amongst our people. By realizing as far as we may the ideal of that Church in our own community, we shall but maintain its liberty and purity—we shall but meet the peculiar dangers of the present time, and prepare for the future which is at hand."

It will be interesting to our readers to place before them the conclusions which such an inquirer has reached. He looks upon the Christian Church as a spiritual body.

"The Church was not begun until after the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles on the day of Pentecost; and it is never mentioned, except prospectively, before that time. Men could be admitted into the kingdom of Christ as soon as they were willing to submit to this authority, and to conform to the life which He lived and taught; but they could not be formed into a Church until they believed in Him as the Son of God,—the Saviour of those who received Him, by the justifying righteousness of His life and the atoning sacrifice of His death,—and the imparting of the Holy Spirit, and the future Judge of men; and this could not be, until after His work on earth was done, and He had risen again, and ascended into heaven." p. 13.

The Church, therefore, according to Dr. Jacob, must consist of believers, converted persons. The nineteenth article of the Church of England teaches that it is "a congregation of faithful men."

Of baptism he speaks thus:—"It was to be administered to those who believed in the One God, the Father of all; who acknowledged Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God, the long-promised and now manifested Saviour; who accepted the doctrine that the Divine Spirit is the author of holiness in man, and would lead them to the knowledge and practice of the Christian life; and who with this amount of understanding and conviction were desirous to renounce the dominion and deeds of sin, to become obedient subjects of Christ's spiritual kingdom, and to join themselves to Him and His Church." p. 246. And he observes that in the apostolic Church "the baptism of those who repented of sin and believed in Jesus as the divine Saviour, was regarded as being to them 'the washing of regeneration,' the beginning of a new spiritual life, and an imparting of all the privileges of Christ's disciples. While at the same time no virtue was believed to be inherent in the rite itself; no consecration of the water was made, as if to infuse into it some mystical power; no sacramental grace was supposed to pass forth through it from the minister who performed the service."—He adds, "Neither is any instance of infant baptism recorded in the New Testament, nor any directions given respecting it." p. 347. On the mode of administration he is equally clear:—"Baptism in the primitive Church was evidently administered by immersion of the body in the water,—a mode which added to the significance of the rite, and gave a peculiar force to some of the allusions to it." p. 258.

He is not a believer in apostolic succession.

"The Apostles had no successors in their office. They stand alone. They stand alone as the divinely inspired teachers, legislators, and rulers in Christ's Church and kingdom. They stand alone as men appointed and commissioned by Christ himself, and not by man; whereas all Christian ministers since their time, of whatsoever order or degree, have been fallible men, and have been appointed and commissioned by man,—by the authority of the particular Church in which they were to minister." p. 26. "Of an apostolic succession, which is not commanded by the Apostles, nor mentioned in the New Testament;—which professes to transmit powers, never, as far as we know, by the Apostles either received or given; which secures no soundness in the faith, but lends itself to error, as readily as to truth; which can exclude the best as well as include the worst of ministers;—and which would leave every Church in doubt about the validity of its ministrations and very existence:—it is surely not too much to say that it 'is a fond thing, vainly invented, and grounded upon no warranty of scripture, but rather repugnant to the word of God.'" p. 419.

Christian ministers, according to Dr. Jacob, are not priests. "In nothing is the speaking silence of the New Testament more complete and significant, than in the fact that never there are Christian ministers of any degree called priests. Neither the apostles themselves, nor any office-bearers whom they appointed, are ever spoken of as having sacerdotal powers, or sacerdotal duties, committed to them. In no single instance is any one of the words which describe the priesthood and its work, assigned to the office of the Christian ministry or to its ministrations. Familiar as the apostles were with the striking ceremonial of the Temple worship, and sometimes deriving from it a figurative language of the greatest force, they never employed terms of priestly import in any manner which countenances the supposition that they, or the presbyters of their churches, were acting as priests in the congregations of Christian people." p. 106.

Referring to the state of the Church in the third and fourth centuries, and to the changes which had been then introduced in Christian worship and church government, he says

"We may admire whatever is admirable in the character of the good men of those days. We may acknowledge their piety, their zeal, their self-denial, their martyr-courage;—but to approve of the system which they uphold in the Church would be to prefer the delusions of men to the truth of God. And to attempt to revive that system now,—and to resuscitate, in an age so different from theirs, their dead and buried symbols and mysteries,—above all, to do this with the warnings of Church history sounding in our ears, and with the New Testament opened wide before our eyes,—would be a fatal anachronism indeed! It would seem to betoken a blindness which nothing could enlighten, an infatuation hopeless of a cure!" p. 281.

Episcopacy, it is clearly shown, was not of divine appointment.

"The want of united action among the different presbyters of the same Church, when they were all of equal authority, and there was no official superior to control or direct them; the disputes and divisions which consequently rose similar to those which disturbed the Corinthian Church in the life-time of St. Paul, and which, checked for a while by him, broke out again after his removal; the need which must have been felt more and more of a centre of union and of religious teaching and action, to bind together in one harmonious body the different members of each Christian community, and to facilitate their communication with other Churches,—led naturally, after the departure of the Apostles, to the wise and wholesome practice of appointing one presbyter to have the superiority over the rest in every Church;