

contributed to render available the value of the land, and who, in purchasing, assumed the risk of all error and miscalculation.

The Christian Messenger.

Halifax, N. S., Aug. 9th, 1871.

THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

In this age of the Church and of the world, Christians should have well-defined and settled views on what the Scriptures teach in reference to this subject. Under the several dispensations of past ages it was important that the people of God should know what were the duties enjoined upon them, and the privileges enjoyed by them; so as to perform the one and partake of the other themselves, and transmit them to their posterity and the world. Living now as we do under the dispensation of the Spirit, there should be a clearer apprehension of God's later manifestations to his people and to the Church. Before our Saviour ascended to heaven he told his disciples to stay in Jerusalem until they had received "the baptism of the Spirit." This divine manifestation was to be made whilst they were assembled together with one accord, and was to be a preparation for their going forth to bear witness for Christ. They were thus to "receive power" from on high. When the promise was fulfilled there was first a sound, then an appearance, and then "they were all filled with the Spirit."

Many difficult questions have arisen in reference to what constituted this baptism; whether the same blessing is continued in the church, or whether similar overwhelmings are still to be expected.

The prayer for a baptism of the Spirit is often heard with more or less of fervency in our public and social worship. Sometimes those prayers are used merely as forms of expression indicating a desire for spiritual blessings in general, and not from any proper appreciation of what the figure—baptism—implies, or what the facts show in the instance given in the Acts of the Apostles. The outpouring was then sufficiently copious to be an immersion. The Spirit was in and around them "filling all the house where they were sitting." An influence and an all-pervading power which impelled the disciples forth in the Lord's work so that their words became irresistible. An element in which they might abide and become the efficient instruments of the Divine operation in saving men's souls.

Some have supposed that the baptism of the Holy Ghost was but the first shedding forth of the Spirit after our Lord's ascension, and that it was not to be sought for, or expected afterwards.

An instructive article on this subject by Dr. D. C. Eddy appears in the last Baptist Quarterly. He regards all extraordinary times of revival in the church as the result of a baptism of the Holy Spirit, or when experienced by an individual, the possession of an unusual condition of spirituality of mind and devotion of spirit preparing him or her for the accomplishing of some great work.

After calling attention to a number of revivals of religion in different places and the experience of many persons in the Church's history, cases of entire consecration of men and women to the work of Christ, he says: These different forms of the baptism all have different manifestations. It comes in the first form, as it did on the day of Pentecost, as it did in the times of Edwards, as it did in the history of Whitfield, as it has in Ireland and Sweden, it will lead to extensive revivals of religion, which will sway whole communities and nations, as America at times has been swayed.

If it comes in the second form, it will lead to intense Bible study, to enlarged conceptions of the word of God. It will lead to the herculean labors of Calvin, to the rich contributions of Fuller, to the thoughtful, earnest, inspired expositions of the Scriptures that oppose scepticism, confound error, and honor God.

If it comes in the third form, it will lead to immense efforts for the evangelization of the world. It will originate vast plans for the conversion of men. It will produce Luthers, and Hebers, and Judsons, and Cereys, and will flood the darkest nations with the splendors of a new day.

If it come in the fourth form, it will lead believing souls to desire to depart and be with Christ, inspire those on whom it falls with a holy impatience to leave this world

of sin and dwell above in the pure regions of everlasting bliss.

Either of these forms of the baptism is an inestimable blessing, to be sought and longed for by all. The baptism of the Holy Ghost is an essential element in the progress of the church, and a remarkable feature in the experience of the individual believer. There may be grace, there may be holiness, there may be surety of heaven without it. It develops grace, it makes holiness more active, and embodies the hope of a future heaven in a present, living reality. Thus baptise a Christian, and he cannot rest. His soul will blaze out. All who come in contact with him will feel a living flame. All who associate with him will be benefited and blessed by his rich experience.

Thus baptise a church, and her power becomes irresistible. Her mighty march shakes the earth like the tramp of armies; and she conquers wherever she goes. She has no miraculous power. The forces of nature are not reversed at her bidding. She hears no mighty rushing wind; she sees no cloven tongues; but she has the might life, the omnipotent energy of the Holy Ghost. Three thousand men, in all the marshalled deparation of depravity, may stand before her weakest battalions, as did three thousand on the day of Pentecost; and she will subdue them by her irresistible power.

He further remarks in reply to the question, How is the baptism of the Holy Ghost to be secured?

Does it come unsought, rocking the world like a tempest that bursts from a cloudless sky? Or is it to be secured by the use of the means of Grace, as the ordinary manifestations of the Spirit are secured? The former answer seems to be given by the Scripture accounts, and by the developments of grace. The general impression is that the baptism of the Holy Ghost is the answer to importunate prayer; but the facts would teach us another lesson. The gift seems to be beyond prayer, above the exercise of human faith. The disciples were directed to tarry in Jerusalem until the baptism of the Holy Ghost should come upon them. That time of waiting was to prepare them for a gift of which they had no proper conception. They did not pray for the baptism of the Spirit. Their prayerfulness, their urgency at the throne of grace was but the preparation to receive it; and when it came they were as strangely wrought upon as we should be at the present time, if it should fall on us. Christ knew what was to come; and his directions were calculated rather to put them into a proper position to receive the blessing than to induce them actively to seek the gift. They were to tarry, to wait, to be passive until the gift purchased by Christ should be bestowed. It was a blessing mightier, graver than their prayers, sublimer than their faith.

The baptism of the Holy Ghost in the Reformation was not the result of any anxious seeking, nor of any special prayer. It was the gift of God, above prayer, and superior to faith. It was the gracious movement of the infinite mind towards the darkened nations of the earth. No man sought it; no man prayed for it; no man believed it would come. It rolled grandly from the throne of Omnipotence; it came up from the sea of his exhaustless grace; and Luther and his fellow laborers passed through the cloud and through the sea.

The baptism in the time of Edwards was not the result of prayer. It came before the strong cries went up to God. It was an unsought, unlooked for, and to some extent unwelcome gift. Edwards himself knew not the hour nor the visitation. His grasp at mind stood still and saw the salvation of God. Had the events of that season, the wonders of that work been predicted, none would have been more sceptical than he, whom the Spirit used as an instrument in stirring the hearts of men.

The revivals in our land in 1858 were not so much the result as the cause of prayer. The baptism came first, and pushed us up to prayer. The country was submerged in business and the cares of this world. The church was cold and faithless; and while in this state the rushing wind was heard, and men returned to duty, and gave themselves to fasting and prayer.

In Ireland the gracious baptism was the cause rather than the result of prayer.—God saw that green isle in want and woe; and grace performed the great work which gladdened the hearts of all Christians. True, there had been a preparation, as on the day of Pentecost. "There had been a gradual and perceptible improvement in the state of religious thought in this district for years," says Mr. Dill, of Ballymore.

"By the good hand of God a generation of energetic and devoted ministers was raised up, with many of whom the burden of their prayers has ever been, 'O Lord, revive thy work,'" says Professor Gibson, the historian of the revival. But that it was God sent, no one who has marked that revival can doubt.

And so, we think, it has ever been in all cases which we may denote as baptisms of the Holy Ghost. They are of grace. They originate in the sovereign purpose of God. They are above prayer and beyond faith.

But is it not proper to pray for the baptism of the Holy Ghost? Yes; for the spirit that leads us to pray for such a blessing is the preparation needful for its reception: while we much doubt whether he who prays for the baptism of the Spirit is much wiser in his prayers or has any more comprehension of what he seeks, than did Peter, when on the Mount of Transfiguration he said, "Lord, it is good for us to be here, and let us make three tabernacles, one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias."

That the church is always blessed to the extent of her faith and prayer there can be no doubt. The ordinary means of grace will always be productive of certain results. Souls will be converted, believers will be sanctified, and God will be glorified without the baptism of the Holy Ghost. That is more than a conversion, more than a revival, more than a growth in grace. Many mistake the ordinary operations of the Spirit for the extraordinary manifestations of the baptism. They suppose they have the latter when they are only enjoying the former. The ordinary works of the Spirit can always be obtained in answer to prayer; but the baptism of the Holy Ghost cometh when God listeth, generally when men do not expect it, frequently when they do not want it. It is an act of divine sovereignty, a development of the holy purpose hidden from ages and generations, but in due time revealed unto the saints. It is the process by which God works unforced changes in the spiritual world, and is as different from the ordinary workings of the Spirit in the conversion of men and in the sanctification of believers, as the particular providence that sets up or casts down an empire is different from the great law of cause and effect that runs through the universe of God.

The ordinary manifestations of the Spirit, quickening the church, convicting sinners, and producing ordinary revivals, are always to be obtained in answer to prayer. They are the results of faith, prayer, and labor, the threefold agent. But the baptism, though always to be prayed for and sought, is not always to be secured. This explains what often discourages the Christian believer. He finds certain blessings promised in answer to prayer, certain effects foretold as the result of exertion, and he goes and prays for the baptism of the Spirit, for what is not promised; and it does not come. Not content to gather the constant fruits of the Spirit, he wants the cloven tongues, the rushing wind, and the burning fire, and retires disheartened from the mercy seat because they are not granted. God has never promised the baptism of the Spirit in answer to prayer, any more than he has promised miraculous powers in answer to prayer. And though a disposition to have the gift, a yearning to receive it, and a humble entreating for it are doubtless pleasing to God, yet he does not always choose to send it; and when he does send it, it is often in a way different from that in which his people expect it. We may want it as it has been enjoyed in Ireland, as it was communicated on the day of Pentecost; but God may choose to give it us as he did to Bunyan, to Judson, and to Payson.

This view of the promise contained in Acts i. 5 is believed to be reasonable, philosophical, and scriptural, comforting to the believer, and honorable to God. It distinguishes between the ordinary and the extraordinary operations of the Third Person of the Trinity, between that which may be secured by the usual means of grace and that which God gives at his own election. It shows that while the miraculous exhibitions which attended the early bestowment of the blessing have been withdrawn, the gift itself remains to man, and in various forms comes to work out his salvation and do the will of God. It illustrates certain great principles familiar to all who are accustomed to watch the ways of God with us, and puts at rest the fears that often come when blessings long prayed for are delayed. It carries us back to the feet of God, lays us down there to learn and wait in patience for the greatest of all our blessings, the most desirable of all gifts, the richest of all treasures, THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY GHOST.

CONVENTION AT ST. JOHN, N. B.

The St. John, N. B. Sunday School Union intend holding a Grand Convention in that city on the 7th Sept. next. Every Sunday School in New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and P. E. Island is requested to send a Representative. Delegates are also expected from Ontario, Quebec, and the United States. The object of the Convention is to promote a greater interest in Sunday School labor, and to stimulate those already engaged in the work to more strenuous efforts and increased efficiency in seeking the spiritual welfare of the youth of our land.

Lt. Gov. Wilmot has consented to preside over the Convention.

Circulars, with Certificates, for delegates enclosed, have been sent to the ministers of the several denominations for the superintendents of Sunday Schools. Any superintendent that may have been overlooked will please apply to the Corresponding Secretary, Mr. H. R. Smith, St. John, N. B. who will supply them with all information on the subject.

Delegates will be provided with accommodation in the city during the sitting of the Convention, and arrangements will be made to pass them over the different routes of travel at half-price.

We have received a Circular of the Colver Institute at Richmond, Virginia, under the principalship of Rev. C. H. Corey, well known to many of our brethren in these provinces. A few brief sentences from this Circular will show the character and objects of the Institution:

THE COLVER INSTITUTE is one of the Schools of the American Baptist Home Mission Society, for FREEDMEN, PREACHERS AND OTHER PROMISING COLORED PUPILS.

White and colored churches, or individuals, in Virginia, by sending fifty dollars to Bro. COREY, the Principal, will be entitled to send a student of their own choosing. A colored man who earns and brings fifty dollars, will be admitted. The fifty dollars largely pays for board and meat. Tuition is free to students for the ministry.

More than seventy men have been in attendance during the last school year, among whom are several of the Richmond pastors and other ordained ministers. Besides this, an afternoon class of 83 colored women has been maintained.

There are young men in this school who are preparing for Missionary work in Africa; and different Missionary Societies, both South and North, have already applied for their services. One of our students took a prize of \$25 on entering the Freshman class of a Northern University. During the summer and winter vacations, nearly one thousand were gathered into churches or converted through the labors of the students.

The students have collected in Richmond over \$1000 for the repairing of the building. They have also contributed about \$500 worth of voluntary labor after school hours.

The school building was for many years the fashionable Hotel of the city, and is said to have cost originally one hundred and ten thousand dollars. It was obtained by us in 1870, and is owned free of debt. Its present value is variously estimated at from thirty to fifty thousand dollars. But it is badly out of repair. We sorely need help to make it comfortable and attractive.

Next to the blessing of God, an endowment is a necessary. With the approval of the Executive Board, and in pursuance of the vote of the Home Mission Society, in annual meeting assembled, we have undertaken to raise \$50,000 as a permanent Endowment for the Colver Institute. Moneyed offerings may be sent either to Rev. Charles H. Corey, Richmond, Va.; Rev. A. P. Mason, D. D., 59 Washington Street, Boston, Mass.; Or, to the Treasurer of the American Baptist Home Mission Society, No. 239 Broadway, New York.

We are glad to see by the list of names in our last issue, that the Principal is expected to be present at the Convention at Yarmouth.

Rev. Dr. Cramp has intimated his willingness to receive and forward any contributions to this excellent Institution.

The New York riot still forms a staple for newspaper discussion, both in the United States and in these eastern portions of the American continent. The principles which were brought out so prominently by that event, are of highest moment in every community in Christendom. Whether a party of one communion shall be allowed to dictate to the authorities, and prevent the assembling of peaceable citizens of another faith, is a question that strikes at the very heart of civil and religious liberty. There may be some doubt as to the propriety of large bodies of people who stand in a state of antagonism to other bodies appearing in very large processions and exhibiting themselves and their insignia of hostility. Protection, however, must

be given to all peaceful citizens, or government fails to exercise its proper functions. So soon as the authorities take upon themselves to decide what societies shall be permitted to walk in processions and who shall be denied that liberty, then farewell to free institutions. The ballot-box becomes a mockery, and the people will be ripening for an open war of races and of creeds. Orangemen may to-day be the objects of hate, but to-morrow some other party might be placed under the ban of the rulers, and would have to feel their iron heel of oppression.

In the discussion of this question those who advise that restrictions be placed on the permission to walk in processions will find it a pretty difficult task to distinguish between political, benevolent and religious societies. In some countries it is Orangemen that stir the hate of their rivals, but in others it may be a funeral procession or a religious assembly. We regard all attempts to restrict the people's liberties as insulting to the parties supposed to be making a request for such restrictions, leading to the supposition that their turbulence cannot be restrained when they see men united together in opposition to their faith. Just imagine for a moment the authorities in Halifax forbidding the Benevolent Irish Society from parading the streets lest they should incite the Protestant portion of the community to a breach of the peace! Would it not be a slur on the Protestant faith, and enough to make peaceable citizens blush for the governing bodies who would so regard the members of that faith? No, we would say let men of all countries or creeds enjoy the liberty to appear in any position they choose, provided they do not interfere with public order and the liberties of the people; and if Irishmen, Englishmen, or Scotchmen, Protestants or Catholics interfere with them, let them feel the strong arm of authority laid on them, and suffer the utmost rigors of the law, until they learn to be peaceable law-abiding subjects.

We hope that our contemporaries will be unwilling further to advocate the giving up a particle of the genuine British freedom we enjoy, and for which so much of treasure and blood has been expended.

In our notice of the Baronetcy conferred on Hugh Allan of Montreal we fell into the same error as the telegraphist who sent on the information and our contemporaries generally, and said "The title conferred is Baron Allan of Ravenscrag." An English gentleman of our acquaintance has called us to account for our inadvertence, and tells us "As an Englishman you ought to have understood it. His title is not Baron Allan, but Sir Hugh Allan, Baronet." We sit corrected. His title does not give him a place in the peerage.

If variety is the spice of life much more is it that of a newspaper. At the beginning of a week when seeing how many minds have been employed upon the contents of one issue we often wonder where the material for the next is to be found. We soon find that the sources are still open, and, like the streams in the natural world, the mental supply continues and increases rather than diminishes in its demand for space in which to flow. The Correspondence on our fifth page this week, is on a variety of subjects, and will doubtless call forth a variety of expressions of opinion. That on "The Number of the Beast," will doubtless obtain some attention. It is a subject on which a great diversity of opinion is held, and we shall not attempt to discuss it with the writer. The others are of a more practical character, and will be read with more or less interest as the parties are concerned in them. We trust our readers will enjoy the repast.

Our thanks are due to Rev. John Munro of Wallace, for a copy of his pamphlet on "the circulation of the Pure Word of God" advertised in another column, addressed to the President, and managers of the Nova Scotia Auxiliary Bible Society. This is the result of a discussion between Mr. Russell, the agent of the Society and Rev. Mr. Munro, respecting the circulation of Roman Catholic Versions of the Scriptures in France and other European countries. It would appear that in many cases greater effort has been made to put them into circulation than Protestant versions.

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