

bled they discoursed. In this instance the essential elements of a prayer-meeting are apparent. Several women met together at the same time and in the same place for prayer. Our term for such a transaction is a prayer-meeting. Let us translate accordingly, "where was wont to be a prayer-meeting." The article may be omitted, because it refers to a Jewish and not to the Christian institution. In Acts iii. 1 the common rendering ignores the article. It can be translated thus: "And Peter and John were going up together into the temple at the hour of the prayer-meeting, being the ninth hour." Acts i. 14 is susceptible of the rendering, "These all with one accord were regular attendants on the prayer-meeting." We may understand the same Greek word in Acts vi. 4, with the article, to denote the same idea as is developed above. In other words, the department of prayer is spoken of as coordinate with the didactic department indicated by the words "the ministry of the word." The passages which we have just noted include all the instances in the Acts where the word occurs, except two. In those two the possessive pronoun is added. They are therefore entirely dissimilar. If the interpretations above given are justifiable, the conclusion legitimately follows that a Christian prayer-meeting is an apostolic institution to which the pentecostal converts steadfastly devoted themselves. We do not say that our word prayer-meeting is always the equivalent to the Greek word with the article. It is not easy to find terms which are exactly commensurate; but the Greek word certainly often denotes prayer in concert; and the persistent use of the article with it in the above passage designates prayer as a definite and recognized Christian institution. If further argument were necessary to show that the prayer-meeting holds the rank of an abiding institution in the church, we might point to its authorization by Christ himself. We conclude therefore that the modern prayer-meeting is a genuine outcropping of the primeval apostolic institution.

We find then that three of the nouns in this series denote institutions whose essential features are recognizable in the face of modern Christianity. The presumption is strong that the remaining noun belongs to the same class as those with which it is grouped, and like them denotes not an isolated act, nor a state of mind, but an institution. Like the rest it has the article. Like them also it denotes an idea which is essential to social Christianity. What Aristotle says of his ideal commonwealth is true in its application to the Christian church: "The citizens of every state must of necessity have all things in common or nothing in common, or some thing in common and others not. To have nothing in common is evidently impossible, for the state itself is a kind of partnership." Since community of possession is essential to every social organization, it pertains necessarily to the church. Accordingly, we find the model church at Jerusalem endowed with a common property. The common property of a church may be scanty and precarious; but there must be at least a place of assembling held in common. That may be an upper room; it may be a cave or a cellar, or a spot of earth sheltered only by the canopy of heaven. Be it little or ample, whatever a church possesses and uses for the joint benefit of those who compose it constitutes its fellowship. The fellowship of the church at Jerusalem, for example, consisted chiefly of the gifts and offerings which were brought in for the common benefit. Besides this, for a time they continued to enjoy the privilege of the temple, which belonged to them as members of the Hebrew commonwealth. The Teaching, the Fellowship, the Supper, and the Prayer-meeting are the four pillars which form the edifice by which the mundane side of the church is supported and adorned. These are all alike essential and apostolic. With these the church is rendered complete. It lacks nothing which is necessary either for strength, symmetry, stability, effectiveness, or beauty. That they were all regarded by the sacred historian, not as acts but as institutions to be maintained, is evident from the periphrastic imperfect tense which he employs to describe what was customary, from the repetition of the article which denotes what is definite and well known, and from the completeness which his enumeration gives to the curriculum of church-order and department.

Some people are commended for a giddy kind of humor, which is as much a virtue as drunkenness.—Pope.

For the Christian Messenger.  
"MODERN" versus THE ANCIENT GREEKS.

Sir,—

Your correspondent "Modern" speaks our square. He is evidently not ashamed of his views, probably for the simple reason that he has not examined them with any care. If the arguments which have already appeared in your columns in connexion with the interesting subject of which he writes, have not shewn the insufficiency of "History, Modern Science, and Modern Languages" as the means of true culture, it would be idle for me to attempt the conversion of "Modern." But I may be allowed to say that while it is true that one generation is heir of another, the inheritance is of substance only. The form of what is inherited must ever depend upon the time and its attendant circumstances. With no nations in the world is the form of the inheritance they have left us so closely connected with the substance, as in the case of the Greeks and Romans, especially the Greeks. The idea, indeed, was with them only one portion of their culture. The other and one thought quite as important, was expression, and presentation to the senses in accordance with the laws of beauty. Therefore it is that the Greek taste has among all cultivated people been accepted as in more than one sense the standard of taste. And it is precisely this beauty of form, which renders indispensable to every one desirous of comprehending it, the knowledge of the classical languages.

The novel discoveries of your correspondent in reference to the want of æsthetic culture among the Greeks, and its development under the hands of modern scientific men, are what I wish to pass under review. Not that I expect to change the opinion of one so contemptuous of the past as "Modern," but to do a little justice to the dead worthies, and to expose the reckless ignorance of a flippant "Modernism." This is my purpose in asking you to print something from an old mouser among the works of that people who "neither loved nor appreciated nature."

What do the Greeks themselves tell us? It would appear that they did study nature from some motive, if not from love. Human nature is not the question, for none will deny that they were sensible of nature's beauty in that department. Indeed, until their sculpture as well as their painting is destroyed, modern ingenuity can have no fair chance of disputing their claims herein. But it is in "savage nature," "the beautiful," "the sublime," "the picturesque," and "most of all in the domain of vegetation" that their disabilities lay! Examined here, they, truly, tell us very little about vegetable fibre and its applications to the useful arts; nothing at all about guano and scientific farming; wholly ignorant of that beautiful fact in the vegetable kingdom gutta serena, with its universal appliances to commerce, and shut off from sympathy with cotton, it is clear, so far at least, that they had not our reasons for loving nature.

But whence, I beg to ask, if not from a profound converse with vegetable nature, and a fruition of deep solace thence derived, grew up in the Greek that longing and at last fulfilled desire to find benign spirits in the herbage, in the trees, in the flowers, and the faint-voiced rushes? Or would these growths, if he heeded not, nor loved them, have been his chosen habitations for spirits his soul loved and worshipped? Through what degrees of pleasurable regard, of love sweet awe, and ecstasy transcending ours, must he have passed on to that rapturous vision and belief? We love flowers, so we say; but have any of us read the deep lines of their beauty, the sad or joyous signs of their faces, unto the sympathetic telling of the story of their births? Have we so patiently regarded these creatures, that presently their forms and complexions transmuted into human semblance revealing jealousy or love, or shame? What intense gaze of ours on a wind-scathed hyacinth has discovered Apollo's love and the jealousy of Zephyrus, or confirmed our faith to the tracing of the bereaved god's handwriting on its petals? Was this flower, or Smilax, or Daphne, or Narcissus, or any in that poetic flora, valued as a source of lucre, or graced each with its sweet fable for yielding the material for any Grecian textile fabric? Or were these dedicated by

name, as we dedicate them, to a prince, a general, a judge, or a millionaire, or dedicated solely and sacredly to gods? And which course of conduct, the modern or the ancient, argues the deeper sensibility and regard? Verily we are critics of a sort. Let us go with the Greek—the unappreciative Greek—into the woods, and see further what manner of man he was, though ignorant of the true God. In my next.

OUTIS.

The Christian Messenger.

Halifax, N. S., Nov. 1st, 1871.

THE WORD "REGENERATE."

It is curious to see what difficulties arise in the effort to make this word signify something different from its true and commonly accepted meaning. The Bishops of the Protestant Episcopal Church, recently assembled in Council in Baltimore, have given forth a solemn Declaration, and gravely entered it upon their Minutes on the 11th day of October 1871, as follows:—

"We, the subscribers, Bishops of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States, being asked, in order to the quieting of the conscience of sundry members of the same church, to declare our conviction as to the meaning of the word "regenerate" in the offices for the ministration of baptism of infants, do declare that, in our opinion, the word "regenerate" is not there so used as to determine that a moral change in the subject of baptism is wrought in the sacrament."

It is said that all the bishops signed their names to this "declaration." And after doing so what does it amount to? It is an effort to get rid of the charge of teaching the doctrine of baptismal regeneration, which has been a source of so much trouble to some of them. After making such a declaration the rest of the baptismal service in the Book of Common Prayer becomes meaningless and inconsistent. Subsequent to the act of baptism, so-called, the minister is required to say: "Seeing now dearly beloved brethren that this child is regenerate and grafted into the body of Christ's Church," &c., and again:—"We yield thee hearty thanks most merciful Father, that it hath pleased Thee to regenerate this infant with thy Holy Spirit, to receive him for thine own child by adoption, and to incorporate him into thy holy Church &c." How can this be said of one on whom no "moral change" has passed? Authorities almost without number might be brought forth expressing the opinion that a moral change has passed upon the child in Baptism.

One error leads to others. It is plain that these difficulties and inconsistencies are the results of the error lying at the root—Infant Baptism. It is difficult to leave from Pædo-baptist writers what different position the child occupies after baptism from what it did previously. The difficulty will be rather increased than removed by the above "declaration." If no "moral change" is wrought, what benefit is conferred by the "sacrament," and what does it mean? If the bishops had given a positive declaration instead of a negative one, their work might have been of some service to the unlearned.

We cannot be too thankful for being free from the necessity for such doubtful interpretation. Baptists hold that the New Testament teaches that the moral change—regeneration—should be experienced previous to a reception of baptism, and therefore no moral change is needed to be wrought in the sacrament: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." The act thus becomes one of submission and obedience, and illustrative of the work of Christ for man's redemption and salvation.

WEEK OF PRAYER, 1872.

The Evangelical Alliance have again invited all Christian Churches to observe the first week of the New Year as a Week of Prayer and Exhortation, and have provided a series of subjects for the successive days. It is suggested that the week commence on Sunday January 7th. The following is the list of topics:—

Sunday Jan 7.—SERMONS: Subject: The faith once delivered to the saints, a universal and everlasting bond of union in the Christian Church. The duty of its defence and extension binding on all believers.

Monday, Jan 8.—THANKSGIVING: God's "unspeakable gift"; for mercies, personal and relative; for national mercies; for the maintenance and restoration of peace,

and for preservation from famine and other national calamities; for mercies to the Christian Church; for the progress of Christ's Kingdom and the usefulness of the Christian ministry.

Tuesday, Jan 9.—HUMILIATION: For personal and national sins, weakness of faith, disobedience and worldliness in the Church. Acknowledgements of Divine judgments, confession of unfaithfulness, and prayer for the revival of religion as in past times.

Wednesday Jan. 10.—PRAYER (intercessory): For families; for the sons and daughters of Christian parents at home and in other lands; also those at school, at colleges and universities; and for all entering upon commercial or professional duties; for the increase of spiritual life in those who confess Christ; for the conversion of the unconverted; and for the sanctifying of affliction both to parents and children.

Thursday, Jan. 11.—PRAYER (intercessory): For kings and all in authority; for nations, especially those recently visited with the calamities of war; for the prevalence of peace in the counsels of statesmen; for righteousness, harmony, and goodwill among all classes; for the spread of sound knowledge, and for God's blessing upon special efforts to resist the progress of infidelity, superstition, intemperance, and other kinds of immorality.

Friday, Jan. 12.—PRAYER (intercessory): For the Christian Church; for bishops, presbyters, pastors, and missionaries; for translators of the Holy Scriptures into various tongues; for office bearers, and for committees, societies, and authors engaged in Christian work.

Saturday, Jan. 13.—PRAYER: For a larger outpouring of the Holy Spirit; for the increase of Christian love and holy zeal, and the union of believers in prayer and effort for God's glory.

Sunday, Jan. 14.—SERMONS: "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven." (Mat. vi. 10.)

HALIFAX, Oct. 27th, 1871.

To the Editor of the Christian Messenger:

Sir,—Within the last fortnight the Roman Catholic community of Halifax have been favored with the spiritual labours of a Missionary Clergyman of that Church, named Langeake; and for ten days, early and late, from five in the morning, till ten or eleven at night, the large Cathedral of St. Mary's has been crowded with thousands of devout worshippers.

The secular newspapers, Protestant and Catholic, have been alike generous in their acknowledgement of the zeal and ability of this talented missionary.

For several years past my business has led me frequently to meet and converse with respectable persons, members of the Roman Catholic communion. From conversations with some of them on the subject, I have been led to believe, and by others have been positively assured, that no enlightened Catholic of these days would pretend to believe that the Catholic Church was the only one in which salvation could be found.

Believing those statements, and with the most favorable impressions, I went to hear the Rev. gentleman lecture on Tuesday evening last. His subject was "The Christian Church." The texts principally commented upon were Matt. xvi. 18, "Thou art Peter, &c.," and xviii. 18, "But if he neglect to hear the Church," &c., and I assure you, Sir, that I very soon found all my beautiful ideas of the liberality of the modern Catholic Church were at once cut up, root and branch.

We were told by this high authority, that Protestantism was the child of adultery, inasmuch as Luther became an adulterer by marrying a Nun; that all Protestant Churches are illegitimate and bastards, and every member of the various communions were, by the words of the everlasting gospel, doomed to everlasting perdition; that Heaven was the place for all Catholics who lived up to their duty, and Hell the place for all the world besides—Christian and Pagan.

Now Sir, against such preachings, and teachings I do protest, and I ask, should such bold, daring assumptions go unrebuked in this community?

Hoping some one better qualified for the task may further ventilate a subject which concerns us all.

I am, Sir,  
Yours truly,  
S.

It is not an uncommon thing to find Roman Catholic laymen, who associate freely with Protestants, expressing dissatisfaction with the denunciations pronounced by their church against persons who dissent from her teachings. They are probably sincere in their mistake, and the wish that it were otherwise becomes father to the thought. The utterances of the clergy are however the more reliable expositions of her doctrines. So long as the priests are forbidden to marry, and its women are encouraged to take upon themselves the vows of celibacy it must be expected that Luther and the Reformation will be subjected to such attacks as those noticed by our correspondent. Not only is the Roman Catholic church not really changed in its character, but it now affirms all its former dogmas, and adds to them another one—the infallibility of the Pope. We must therefore expect any modification of its claims to suit modern ideas.

This is a free country and we have no desire to abridge the liberties of Catholic or Protestant. We do not think such teachings will ultimately injure the cause of Protestantism.

Revivals in the Roman Catholic Church must be expected of course to awaken fresh interest in the propagation of its peculiar doctrines. As they make its people more intense in their devotion to the church, so will they demand more implicit submission from their people and Protestants will be undeceived in their estimate of Modern Romanism.

In the Baptist Quarterly for October, our readers will find two Exegetical studies of some interest. The first is on John iii. 5, (Born of water and the Spirit.) The writer holds that the words translated water and the Spirit, are both literal and mean water and the wind or air; and both symbolic, the first of spiritual cleansing, the other of spiritual life. The translation might be: Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and the air, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. The sense would be given that: Except a man be cleansed from guilt and made spiritually alive, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. We accept the doctrine thus stated, but submit to the reader whether he is not conscious of something like a violent jerk in being led from the supposed literal meaning to the spiritual lesson. We incline to think that the words, as here given, would not have made the matter any plainer to Nicodemus than the statement in the third verse did. Besides, are the cleansing of the soul, and the awakening spiritual life, so essentially distinct as to call for two separate symbols in the same connection?

The other passage is Acts ii. 38, (Baptized \* \* \* for the remission of sins.) The writer of this article wishes to save these words from appearing to teach that pardon depends on Baptism, and so make them clearly in harmony with the general testimony of the New Testament on this subject. He claims that the preposition, eis, when following the word signifying to baptize, should always be translated into, and, therefore, the passage should read: Be baptized into the remission of sins. We doubt if this suggestion gives any relief. If one is said to be "baptized into the pardon of sins," it is natural to infer that his relations to pardon have been changed by Baptism, and therefore the difficulty presented by the common translation remains in the proposed substitute. Both of the passages noticed will continue to furnish occasions for reading and thought.

This number of the Quarterly contains several interesting and useful articles. We would especially commend to the attention of ministers and intelligent laymen those on Pastoral Authority and the Antiquity of Man.

A. W. S.

REV. T. BURDITT OF PINE GROVE, WILMOT.—A friend informs us that in looking over the English Baptist Magazine of 1866, for another purpose, he found the following paragraph in the December number of that year.

Thinking that it may possess some interest for our numerous readers particularly in the Western part of the Province he requests its insertion in our columns:—

"TESTIMONIAL TO THE REV. T. BURDITT, M. A.—A testimonial was presented to the Rev. Thomas Burditt, M. A., late Classical and Mathematical tutor of the Haverford-west Baptist College, at the Queen's Hotel, Aberdare, on Tuesday the 11th of September. The Rev. T. L. Davies, of Maunode, being the senior of Mr. Burditt's late students, presented to him a purse of gold, and also read an address, which expressed the highest admiration of Mr. Burditt's learning, abilities, and character, and deep regret that he had resigned his office as tutor. Mr. Davies spoke feelingly of the long time he had known Mr. Burditt, and the high esteem in which he held him, not only as his old tutor, but also as a true and faithful friend at all times. Speeches, in a similar spirit, were also delivered by the Revs. T. John, Aberdare; B. D. Thomas, Neath; T. A. Rice, Aberdare; and C. White, Berthye. Mr. Burditt warmly, and with much feeling, thanked the old students for the expression of their kindly feelings towards him."

A late number of the Macedonian contained an article entitled, "How Pengilly became a Pædo-baptist." This has been copied into many Baptist and Pædo-baptist papers. Rev. Dr. Cramp wrote the Visitor a note for the purpose of correcting this misstatement. Although we did not happen to copy the article ourselves,