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Poetry.

For the Christian Messenger.

SHADOWS AND SUNSHINE.

As breaks the wave upon the shore,
When caverns echo back the roar;
As breaks the forest trees the blast,
When the rough storm king hurries past,
So breaks earth's grief, corrodingly.

As breaks the morning on the hills,
And then with light the valleys fill;
As breaks the moon through clouds of night,
And bathes the world in softest light,
So breaks relief, so soothingly.

As fade the tints upon the flower,
When Autumn's chill invades the bower;
As fade the day-beams at its close,
When Nature nestles to repose,
So fade life's years, scarce seemingly.

As fade the stars when morning wakes,
To gild the tipples of the lakes;
As fades night's ebon into grey,
And then moon's gold to silvery day,
So fade death's fears, so easily.

As comes a dark and deep'ning cloud,
And folds the sun in drapery shroud;
Till pitying heavens bend and weep,
And mourning shadows o'er earth creep,
So comes death's gloom, so gloomily.

As comes the Sun from out that cloud,
And flings aside his crapen shroud;
Till all the smiling heavens display
The answering tints, that on earth play,
So comes LIFE'S bloom, so Edenly.

W. P.

Religious.

WHAT A BAPTIST MAY LEARN IN EUROPE.

BY GEORGE W. ANDERSON, D. D.

It is well known that the Gospel was introduced into Europe at a very early day. The Apostle Paul preached in Rome in the year 61, and gathered a goodly number of believers about him. During the first century, also, the truth had been borne to Gaul. According to recent historical argument, Patricius labored among the people of Ireland in the last of the third century, before the Papal system had developed itself in Italy. The labors of Irish missionaries introduced the Gospel into Southern Germany and Switzerland in the sixth and seventh centuries. Anskar, the apostle of the North, undertook his mission to Denmark in 826, and to Sweden in 831. Norway was visited by missionaries in the following century. Thus, for periods varying from 900 to 1800 years, Christianity has been known in the different countries of Europe. Of course, it had left traces everywhere, showing something of the opinions and practices of the early times. What can a Baptist learn in Europe that may be useful to him in his defence of the Lord's ordinance against later innovations?

This was the question that came in my mind when contemplating a lengthened visit to most of the countries of the old world. I resolved to notice whatever of interest came in my way, and sometimes to go, if necessary, out of my way in search of means for answering the question. Some of the results I propose to notice.

BAPTISTERY AT BERNE, SWITZERLAND.

In the Cathedral at Berne is a very massy stone baptistery. It is somewhat like an hour glass. It is about three feet in diameter, and probably four feet from base to brim. Its depth is about twenty inches. I inquired of the guide, who was pointing out the objects of special note, how they baptized in this font, whether by immersion or by pouring or sprinkling.

"Oh, by dipping them in," was the reply.

"But how do they baptize here now?"
"They pour the water on them."
"What is the reason that they do not dip them now?"

"Oh they were Catholics that dipped. And this is a Protestant church now."

"Then dipping was a Roman Catholic custom, and pouring is the true Protestant mode here?"

"Yes, yes," was the prompt reply.

"But I read in the New Testament, that when Philip was about to baptize the eunuch, they went both down into the water, and then he baptized him. I came from America, where there are nearly two millions of Christians that have been immersed, because they do not think anything else is baptism and they are not Roman Catholics either; very far from it!"

"Nearly two millions! Wonderful! Wonderful!"

This may serve to show how necessary it is that the truth in regard to the Lord's ordinance should be scattered broad-cast over Europe. The press and the colporteur have a wide field with the prospect of a large harvest.

THE BAPTISTERIES OF ITALY.

Italy is dotted over with large buildings expressly designed as places for administering baptism. That at Florence, standing directly in front of the Duomo, is a handsome octagonal building. The famous bronze doors by Ghiberti are among the richest ornaments of the city. The baptistery itself was destroyed by one of the Medici, in the sixteenth century. It was twelve feet in diameter. This was, of course, large enough for the immersion of any person. So, also, are those at Verona, at Pisa, and that of St. Giovanni in Fonte, in Rome. The latter is circular, more than twenty feet in diameter and fully three feet deep. At present a baptistery stands in its centre. It is probably seven feet long, and two and a half feet wide, and about the same depth. Its dimensions are nearly the same as those of the handsome porphyry baptistery in the Bibliotheque Nationale in Paris, in which, it is said, that Clovis was baptized, in the fifth century. The baptistery in Rome is said to be the one in which Constantine was baptized. Of course this is a mistake, but its history goes back to a very early date, to the third or fourth century.

Another remarkable baptistery, also of a very early date, is that in the Catacomb of St. Pontiano on the Janiculum Hill. The hill seems to be honey-combed in every direction by these receptacles for the dead. In visiting the baptistery, we had to pass along a narrow avenue for probably a quarter of a mile. This avenue is not more than four or five feet wide, and but little higher than the head of a man. On each side are recesses dug out of the rock, on which the bodies of the dead were laid. Lateral passages branched off at various points to the right and left on our route. These we did not explore. At last we came to a descending flight of narrow steps which led to a platform not more than four or five feet square. Below the level of this was the baptistery, four and a half feet long, three and a half feet wide, and the same in depth. It was filled with bright, clear water, so clear that the lights from our little tapers enabled us easily to see the bottom. Directly in front, as we came down the steps, was an arched recess, into which the baptistery extended. On the wall above this arch is an ancient fresco representing the baptism of the Lord. He is standing in the water up to his loins. At his left is John the Baptist as though about to immerse him. On his right is an angel holding the Lord's garments. There is also, on the same side, a hart—a frequent emblem of the believer desiring baptism. It was suggested evidently by the words of the Psalmist: "As the hart panteth after the water brooks." The same symbol I found in the church of St. Ainay, of the ninth century, in Lyons, in such a connection as to show, beyond a doubt, what its import really is.

These baptisteries, and pictures, and sculptures representing baptism are scattered very widely over Europe. It would not be possible in any narrow limits to refer to them all. Only a few characteristic specimens need to be presented in order to show some

things which a Baptist may learn in regard to the history of the ordinance in Europe. To these let me now refer.

THINGS WE MAY LEARN.

1. Starting from the earlier centuries and advancing toward the present time we cannot help noticing that some remarkable changes have occurred. The baptisteries of the earlier centuries are larger, as that at St. Giovanni in Fonte, and that in the Catacomb of St. Pontiano at Rome. No Baptist church could desire one more ample for all the purposes of believers' baptism. As we come down the centuries, we meet with very numerous baptisteries like those at Berne, Nuremberg, Magdeburg, and Stockholm, all quite large enough for the immersion of the infant, but not fitted for the baptism of the believer. These extend down to the thirteenth or fourteenth century, coming yet further down, we find them still diminishing. One of the most beautiful as a specimen of art, is found in the Church of Our Lady, at Copenhagen. It is a Protestant church, beautifully adorned with marble statues of our Lord and his apostles, by Thorwaldsen. That of the Lord is at one end, those of the apostles are ranged on both sides of the body of the church. In front of the statue of the Lord is an angel, kneeling on one knee, while the hands support, on the other, a beautiful shell, which is the modern baptistery. No one would ever suppose that it was designed for the immersion of even the least of infants. It is too small. It belongs to an age when immersion has died out, and pouring or sprinkling alone are employed. In very many churches the baptistery is still more shrunken, being a mere goblet, which can contain at most not more than a quart of water.

2. One cannot readily resist the conviction, that in the earlier times it was common to baptize, immerse, the believer. But as infant baptism spread, and, with the lapse of centuries, national churches became established, the baptisteries diminished, though still large enough for immersion. But coming still further down, the mode as well as the subject is changed, the larger baptisteries are no longer needed and even those which were used for the careful dipping of the infant are finding their way into the museums of curiosities. We learn that the teaching of the monuments harmonizes with that which we are taught by history, namely: that the immersion of the believer was at first deemed essential to the complete ordinance; that the immersion was still regarded as necessary after infant baptism had well nigh superseded the baptism of the believer; that at length the spirit of innovation on the Lord's order, growing more bold, changed the mode itself, legalizing in the fourteenth century pouring and sprinkling; and that by degrees this radical change of both subject and mode became well nigh universal so that the small shell or the little bowl usurps the place of the early spacious baptistery.

As I stood beside the subterranean baptistery in the Catacomb of St. Pontiano, I thought: "This is the work of those who lived probably fourteen centuries ago; and the men who hewed out of the rock this deep hidden baptistery, were like the Baptists of the present day, at least in one respect—they thought it incumbent on them to do just what the Lord commanded and nothing else, and they regarded it as necessary to be buried with Christ in baptism," as Paul says in his letter to the Roman Christians, with which they were, no doubt, especially familiar. It is very difficult to imagine that the men who laborously hewed out the baptistery at the Catacombs; who reared the spacious and costly baptisteries of St. Giovanni in Fonte, of Florence, and of Pisa; or who fashioned the capacious fonts, scattered so widely through the different countries of Europe, had any sympathy with that large number in our own day, who think that immersion, pouring, and sprinkling are all admissible—all equally valid.

3. Finally, the Baptist who goes through Europe with his eyes open, will be likely to admire the wisdom of God, who has caused a corrupt church to raise and preserve memorials which are a continued protest against its own unwarranted innovations—memorials which, no doubt, are to be turned to very good account in a future and better day, and are to aid in bringing back the Lord's own precious and expressive ordinance, to which they are silent, but faithful and incorruptible witnesses.

For the Christian Messenger.

FROM VIRGINIA.

Dear Editor,—

What about the negro? This is a great question, and the reply is not easy to give. To the solution of the problem I have turned my thoughts; and so far as I am able, have kept my eyes open. What said the old man with matted hair and a dirty face? "In Surrey my county" said the filthy gentleman "since the war the negroes have made more advancement in learning, have accumulated more property and now pay more taxes than the same number of the lower class of whites." Not long since some hundreds of Italians came to Richmond, and hired themselves to work on the railroads for forty cents per day, with a view to drive the negro off, who commanded seventy-five cents per day. But the object was not secured. The employers concluded, after a little, that the Italians were profitless crew; and they were all turned adrift; and the negro threw up his hat and shouted. A fine christian gentleman, a citizen of Richmond, and formerly a slave owner, said "The blacks enslaved the whites, and now I think God will use them to carry the gospel to the savage tribes of their own country"—and further, this gentleman added "They work well and I have seen them do the finest work in masonry." "The city of Richmond is more quiet since the war" said the coloured pastor of a coloured flock of three thousand souls. In the Senate Chamber to this state, a senator said to me, "There are three black men in our branch of the Legislature. Only one of them is a pure African, but he is a smart fellow." Seventeen have seats in the Lower House. I shook the hand of the cashier of the Central Freedmen's Bank in Washington; where at any time there is not less than a half-million dollars on deposit. Said a member of the board of a branch bank in Richmond, and he is a white man, "That cashier is an efficient man, and has the confidence of the Government." But this man is as black as soot. These indications are at least hopeful. I attended worship in Richmond, where the four or five coloured faces in the pulpit, looked down upon a sea of two thousand faces of the same complexion. Both in the pulpit and in the pew, the shading ran from negro blackness to Saxon whiteness; the lips from ample jet rolls of the pure bloods to the thin lips that we sometimes see drawn across the teeth of the men who rule us. There were also noses flat and noses high and sharp. There was hair short and curly, and hair straight and long. Both ministers and people had been lifted together out of slavery; and a free system of schools, for both the cities and State of Virginia, is lifting them a little higher; and there is not half the noise and fury about it, that attends a similar effort to raise up the great mass of ignorance in Old England. Some private institutions of a religious type, are doing a great work in the same direction. The preacher of the evening was a pure black; and his educational advantages consisted in two years at the feet of the Rev. C. H. Covey—a graduate of Acadia College. It was an ordination occasion, and the sermon was founded on the text "Shew thyself a workman that needeth not to be ashamed" &c. It was a good sermon. The preachers plea was for an educated ministry. He turned a kind of wit, with good ef-

fect, upon those who oppose an educated ministry." Some of you will say, "Open thy mouth wide and I will fill it" but you do not tell us with what it will be filled, but I can tell you." Then raising his voice to an appropriate pitch he exclaimed "It will be filled with wind and noise." Dr. Corey as they call him, sat in a front pew, with his face snow white in the contrast, rejoicing to see his good work carried forward with so much efficiency and success. I remember the time when that sermon would not have been out of place in certain quarters in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. Query! Is there a spot at this day where it would not be suitable?

What of the Negro? Well to what do these things point? The greater part of the labour is done. Some of them have already become grocers and small traders; and some of them own their own houses. A deacon announced at this meeting of which I speak that from their collections, once in five weeks, for a short time, they had deposited in a bank about two thousand dollars for a fund to build a new church. Their collection at one time for Missions was sixty dollars. Well these facts are not discouraging about the negro.

Richmond has spread itself over the undulations of the left bank of the James River at the head of navigation; and at the foot of a series of rapids or falls which give the music of tumbling waters to the city. The business portion, burnt when the Union army entered, is rebuilt, with a finer class of structures; and the city has been greatly improved by that calamity. It has never been my fortune to walk the streets of a more quiet and cheerful city. The broad streets rising and falling over the natural undulations of the site, the brick side-walks and the variety in the forms and styles of the fine houses and public buildings, and the moderate motion of the people, superinduce a feeling of contentment, and go far to make a stranger feel free and happy. The State House stands on a commanding height, and in a park ornamented with walks, trees, and statues. Washington in colossal size is astride a colossal horse. The attitude of both horse and rider is animated and impressive. The pedestal of this work of art, is surrounded by the colossal statues of men distinguished in the revolution; and there are also some allegorical figures. The place is beautiful but it will be so in a higher degree, when, instead of the flowers, as is the case now, the trees will have on their summer foliage. The Mansion occupied by the late President Davis is in sight. Libby prison and Castle Thunder where Northern prisoners and Richmond Unionists suffered durance vile, are all in plain view.

Every fifth man, of the fifty-one thousand inhabitants, is a member of a Baptist church; and so is every eighth man in the State a member of the same denomination. Of the twenty-two thousand church members, of all the churches in the city, including Jews and Catholics, one half of that number are Baptists. Extensive revivals are prevailing in several of the city churches. About two hundred have been received by baptism into one church; and others have received large additions.

On Sabbath morning, the 23rd of March, I attended worship at the First Baptist church, where Dr. Burrows is the esteemed and successful pastor. I was cordially received at the Sabbath School. There were four hundred and eighty one in attendance. Many of them were young men and women. Dr. B. was present and in response to an invitation about twenty five young persons came forward, and received greetings from the Dr's right hand and overflowing heart. Others who professed to be seeking Christ did the same thing.

The school was dismissed and an audience of about twelve hundred gathered in the body of the house. After sermon the pulpit disappeared,