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## Poetry.

### SONG OF THE CHRISTMAS BELLS.

BY MRS. A. CAMPBELL.

Hark! those merry Christmas bells,  
How they ring!  
Peace on earth, good-will to men!—  
Thus they sing.

Singing of a Christmas morn,  
And a manger so forlorn,  
Where the Son of God was born,—  
Thus they sing.

Singing messages of love,  
From the Father high above,  
And the Spirit Heavenly Dove,—  
Thus they sing.

Singing charity and grace,  
Pardon for a sinful race,  
And a reconciled face,—  
Thus they sing!

Singing to the rich and poor,  
Chanting gladness evermore,  
Christ is now the open Door,—  
Thus they sing.

Singing to the rich to be  
Generous, for Thou dost see,  
And the poor belong to Thee,—  
Thus they sing.

Singing enmity should cease,  
Love and kindness to increase,  
Christmas is a time of peace,—  
Thus they sing.

Singing out a Christmas lay,  
Happiness to all! we say,  
Wishing you a merry day,—  
Thus they sing.

Hark! those merry Christmas bells,  
How they ring!  
Peace on earth, good-will to men,—  
Thus they sing.

## Religious.

### THE FIRST NEW-ENGLAND BAPTISTS.

CENTENNIAL NOTES.

By Prof. Heman Lincoln, D. D., of  
Newton, Mass.

#### OPPRESSION AND DELIVERANCE.

In this Centennial year it is wise for American Baptists to review their early history, and recall the struggles by which their fathers won religious freedom. We are free-born, but they purchased liberty at the cost of odium and imprisonment and blood. They had profound convictions, which shaped their lives. They were loyal to Christ and to gospel order, and their martyr spirit was born of loyalty. This loyalty made them swift to speak and strong to suffer. It created enthusiasm in assailing error, and heroism in bearing persecution. If the denomination is to retain its unity and aggressive power in the next century, it must preserve this unswerving loyalty to Christ and truth. Without it the denomination would have been unborn, without it death is inevitable. It is our only apology for a distinct name in Christendom. The liberalism which surrenders it is a precursor of dissolution.

Massachusetts was settled by two classes of colonists, with divergent aims. The Pilgrims at Plymouth sought to found a Christian Church, composed only of converted members. This was the inspiring motive of John Robinson, their noble leader. For this he separated from the English Church, where natural birth entitled to membership. For this he removed to Leyden, that the experiment of a spiritual church might be tried under favoring influences. For this he counselled emigration to America, because the social influences in Holland were gradually enticing the young members into the National Church. The Pilgrims struggled hard to maintain the principle, and to guard freedom of conscience as well, but they were overborne by their powerful neighbors.

The Puritans of Massachusetts Bay wished to found a Christian State.

They aimed to shape all civil forms and social institutions by New Testament law. The limits of Church and State were identical with them; and in 1631, they passed a law that "No one shall be admitted to the freedom of this body politic, unless he be a member of some church within the limits of the same." This law, intended to ensure a well ordered and Christian common-wealth was the source of endless trouble. It subverted freedom of conscience, by making it the duty of the State to punish Baptists and Quakers, as enemies of social order and disturbers of the public peace. It corrupted the spirituality of the church, by opening the door for the admission of all men of disreputable lives, even if unacquainted with divine grace. The law implied that Christians alone can be good citizens; its later interpretation was that all good citizens must, in the judgment of charity, be accounted good Christians. The law aimed to honour the Church and strengthen it, by exalting it above the State; it really undermined it, by making the State a supreme ruler over the Church. The same law which deprived non-members of the right of voting, finally deprived members of the right of ownership in Puritan houses of worship and parsonages, and in Harvard College.

This law was the parent of persecution. To it were due all the sufferings of our Baptist fathers. It clothed civil magistrates with power to enforce duties to God, as duties essential to good citizenship. It required "every inhabitant who should not voluntarily contribute to all charges, both in Church and Commonwealth, proportionably, according to his ability, to be compelled thereto by assessment;" and "if any man withheld the payment, the civil power must be exercised as in other just debts." The General Court held it to be "their great duty to provide that all places and people within their gates should be supplied with an able and faithful minister of God's holy word;" and that all inhabitants must "attend the preaching provided for them under a penalty of five shillings for absence on Lord's-Day, or Fast, or Thanksgiving."

By such statutes Baptists were required to attend worship in parish churches, and to pay their full proportion for building meeting-houses, and supporting pastors. If they refused to pay church taxes, their property was seized and sold at public auction. If they met in private houses to worship according to their own consciences, they were imprisoned and fined. If they erected chapels for public service the chapels might be barred by authority of law, and they had no court of appeal. For more than a century they endured intolerable wrongs, inflicted in the name of law, and under a charter assuring freedom of conscience to every citizen. A sketch will be given, in future papers, of some of these wanton outrages; of the heroism with which they were borne, and the boldness with which they were denounced. Some of the sufferers had fiery tongues and eloquent pens, and unjust magistrates cowered under their burning words of indignation and scorn.

It would be a mistake to suppose that all Puritans in Massachusetts Bay favored the persecution of Baptists. A strong public sentiment opposed it, and sometimes found expression in the General Court, or in the journals of the day. Indignant remonstrances also came from the English Puritans, demanding an instant change in the public policy, and declaring that persecution in Massachusetts was far more odious than in the Established Church in England. But the clergy justified it, and their influence, almost omnipotent, enforced it against all opposition. They even denied that whipping or imprisonment or fines could be called persecution. John Cotton, good man as he was, was blind as any Jesuit, and defended the severest measures as in perfect harmony with religious freedom. The public conscience, however, was touched by the manly appeals

of Baptists. Odious laws were gradually modified, or their operation suspended, and a more liberal public sentiment found utterance; but it was not till 1834, less than a half century ago, that absolute freedom of conscience was established by law.

It is instructive to notice how Divine Providence avenges wrong by penalties wrapped up in the evil act or word. The Puritan legislation could not escape this ordained penalty. A bad law, though intended for good, corrupted the Church it was designed to strengthen, and alienated property it was expected to secure.

The large bodies of emigrants coming to Massachusetts Bay grew restive under the law limiting citizenship to church members, and church membership to converted men. They demanded a wider door for entering Church and State. The demand prevailed, and laxity began on the Church side. A Synod in Boston, in 1657, extended baptism to the children of those not church members, if the parents understood the grounds of religion, and were not scandalous in life. The Lord's Supper, however, was still limited to believers.

But the pressure towards greater laxity continued. As it was held that baptized infants were members of the church, the inference was natural that they were entitled to all the privileges of the church, and, therefore, to the Supper. The practice gradually obtained of admitting them to the Supper in adult years, if they maintained reputable lives, without requiring evidences of conversion. Thus the churches and the pulpits were filled with unconverted members, having no attachment, by personal experience, to the doctrines of grace; and the way was prepared for the great Unitarian apostasy. An unjust law enacted to strengthen the Church, by an inexorable Providence brought disaster to the Church, and led it into heresy.

Nor was this the only penalty of bad legislation returning to plague the inventors. The reaction of the law by which all were taxed to build houses of worship and support parish ministers alienated church property from Puritan ownership, and transferred it to Unitarian parishes. One might have almost expected the Cottons and Mathers, the old Puritan champions, to come from their graves to protest against the moral wrong of wresting property from its true owners. But the same Providence which "of our pleasant vices makes instruments to scourge us," used the vicious laws of the Puritans as a scourge to correct their errors of selfishness and oppression.

The method was simple and natural, but startling in its effects. Puritan law compelled the parish to build meeting-houses and support preachers. As a compensation for enforced taxes, the parish was finally allowed to have the sole voice in the election of pastor. In the early part of the nineteenth century many parishes became Unitarian, while the majority of church-members continued orthodox. When pastors were elected, the parish voted for a Unitarian pastor, whom the church refused to accept. Divisions followed, and appeals to courts of law. The decisions were uniformly against the orthodox party; the courts deciding that ownership of property and the choice of pastor vested in the parishes, and not in the churches. The descendants of the Puritans found, to their dismay, that the laws by which their fathers had buttressed the orthodox faith were now strengthening Unitarian heresy, and that the Puritan churches had not only lost houses and parsonages, but the right even to the old historic name, for the name went with the property.

The wrongs inflicted on Baptists and Quakers were terribly avenged; for the petty sums gained by unjust taxation were lost a thousand fold by the alienation of church and college edifices, and of large funds bequeathed for the support of orthodoxy. It must have occurred to many of the sufferers, that by a righteous retribution

they were receiving the same measure they had meted to others. By legal wrongs they had robbed Baptists, and by similar legal wrongs they were robbed in turn.

It required such personal suffering to open their eyes to their own injustice. It was only when smiting under their own losses, that they at length consented to the repeal of the old statutes, and in 1834 the last relics of oppression disappeared, and freedom of worship became the uniform law of the Commonwealth.—*N. Y. Ex. & Chron.*

From the London Baptist.

### MR. STANLEY'S APPEAL FOR MISSIONARIES.

We are disposed to think that Mr. Henry Stanley, the "Own Correspondent," in Central Africa, of the *Daily Telegraph* and the *New York Herald*, is exhibiting himself in a character in which not many amongst us were prepared to recognise him. We suspect that in the mind of many there was a vague feeling, so vague that they themselves were hardly conscious of it, that he was little more than an adventurer after all, and that, in finding Livingstone, he made only a "lucky hit." How contrary to the truth such a suspicion was, those of us who have had the privilege of personal intercourse with him very well know; and even those who have read his book with any degree of candour must have seen that beneath the rollickingness, and what we may almost call the "bumptiousness," that lay upon the surface, there was a dash and determination which, if guided by discretion, could not fail of achieving great results. Still, nobody thought of him exactly as a hero, though it is clear that he is as much entitled to that designation as many a petted son of fortune. In the course of a comparatively few months, and amidst difficulties and dangers, in the presence of which many another brave man would have been dismayed, he has made discoveries after which Livingstone and our other great African travellers have been toiling for years. If he has not actually discovered the sources of the Nile, as the *Telegraph* not unnaturally boasts that he has, he has certainly got far nearer to them than any explorer has done before; and it seems likely that his next communications, if he is spared to make other communications, will furnish additions to our geographical knowledge as surprising as they will be valuable. What pleases us, however, most in Mr. Stanley is the spirit of seriousness, as well as earnestness, in which he is prosecuting his work. As we read his letters last week, we felt almost as if the mantle of the departed Livingstone had fallen upon his shoulders. Writing in April from Uganda, the capital of King Mtesa, whose kingdom Mr. Stanley estimates as being, at least, half as big as Great Britain, and as including not fewer than two million people, he says:—"Now, until I arrived at Mtesa's Court, the king delighted in the idea that he was a follower of Islam; but by one conversation I flattered myself that I have tumbled the newly raised religious fabric to the ground, and, if it were only followed by the arrival of a Christian mission here, the conversion of Mtesa and his court to Christianity would, I think, be complete. I have, indeed, undermined Islamism so much here that Mtesa has determined henceforth, until he is better informed, to observe the Christian Sabbath as well as the Moslem Sabbath, and the great captains have unanimously consented to this. He has further caused the ten commandments of Moses to be written on a board for his daily perusal—for Mtesa can read Arabic—as well as the Lord's Prayer and the golden commandment of our Saviour, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself!' This is great progress for the few days that I have remained with him, and though I am no missionary, I shall begin to think that I might become one if such success is feasible. But, oh that some

pious, practical missionary would come here! What a field and a harvest ripe for the sickle of civilisation! Mtesa would give him anything he desired—houses, lands, cattle, ivory, etc., he might call a province his own in one day. It is not the mere preacher, however, that is wanted here. The bishops of Great Britain collected, with all the classic youth of Oxford and Cambridge, would effect nothing by mere talk with the intelligent people of Uganda. It is the practical Christian tutor, who can teach people how to become Christians, cure their diseases, construct dwellings, understand and exemplify agriculture, and turn his hand to anything, like a sailor—this is the man who is wanted. Such a one, if he can be found, would become the saviour of Africa." We have no space for further quotation, but our readers will see, from the words already cited, something of the spirit of the man at whom it was so fashionable at one time to sneer. We earnestly hope that Mr. Stanley's life will be preserved, and that he will come back to us to be received with all the honours which, if he prosecute his work in the same spirit to the end, he will undoubtedly deserve. But what a chance for the Baptist Missionary Society! Mr. Saker and his brethren have done good work in the West of Africa; can we not send somebody equally faithful, to labour in the East?—*The Baptist.*

THE PRINCE'S RECEPTION AT BARODA was "cordial and respectful." Accompanied by the boy Guikwar and Sir Madhavo Rao, he was carried from the railway station to the Residency on a gorgeously-caparioned elephant; and subsequently he witnessed exciting scenes in the arena, these including elephant, rhinoceros, buffalo, and ram fights, exceedingly dubious forms of amusement. For these exhibitions the Court of Baroda has always, we are told, been "famous." Native Indian princes have a remarkable passion for such displays, but Kunderao and his successor, the late Guikwar, were particularly devoted to the amusement of watching the contests of animals, so that at Baroda there has always been kept up a large supply of elephants, rhinoceroses, buffaloes, tigers, rams, and camels, trained to fight for the pleasure of the Courts. Combats still more cruel, such as the snocking *nukhi* matches—wherein naked athletes tore each other to pieces with iron claws fitted upon the palm—used to disgrace the leisure of the Guikwars; but we may trust that such sights are now abolished there. The savage struggles of beasts, starved or excited into ferocity, are bad enough, in all conscience, to witness; and it is deplorable that the Heir-Apparent should have consented to countenance sports so brutal and degrading. What will those bishops say to this who have been assuring the country that the main purpose of the Prince's visit to India was to further the cause of Christianity?—*Freeman.*

The Marquis of Lorne has addressed to the officiating clergymen of the various parishes a letter asking for their support and sympathy in the work of the Church of England Incumbents' Sustentation Fund, which aims at raising the incomes of all existing benefices to £200 a year. There are nearly 4,000 benefices below that amount in annual value.

A recent revival in Moonte in Australia has resulted in the conversion of 2,200 people. The different churches in Adelaide have been holding special services in that city and its suburbs with great success. A revival is reported to have occurred in San Francisco, by which the membership of several churches has been largely increased.

There is something very sublime, though very fanciful, in Plato's description of the Supreme being, that "truth is His body, and light His shadow."