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WHOLE SERIES.
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Poetry.

For the Christian Messenger.
The Singing Church.

"Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Zion."—Isa. li., 11.

The following lines were written after hearing a sermon in the Olivet Church, from the above text:

The Singing church! Through Time's long distant aisles
Reverberate her sweet and solemn strains;
The psalm of praise, the prophet's wondrous voice,
The angels' song by Bethlehem's hallowed plains.

With willing feet, she comes before the Lord
Entering His gates with thankfulness and prayer;
And through the ages, hallelujah rise!
From joyful souls who meet to worship there.

Is there a mourning one amid the throng,
Longing to flee away on dove-like wings?
A sacred song tells of His loving care,
Who wept on earth, and yet was King of kings.

The Captive Church, with bowed and drooping head,
Sang of her Zion in a stranger-land;
And mountain-caves have treasured in their depths
The trembling tones of many a martyr-band.

Still sings the Pilgrim Church, and journeys on,
Crossing the path by ransomed footsteps trod;
The forward host with victory's cheer advance,
Seeing afar the city of their God.

And as the notes of fatherland beguile,
The weary exile on his toilsome way,
So, wafted o'er the silent stream, is heard
Seraphic music from celestial day.

But listen! as the thrilling tones above
Responsive meet in one melodious strain,
A glorious choir resounds, "Worthy the Lamb!"
The Church below repeats the sweet refrain.

Ye silent voices, speak of Jesus' love;
He waits to save,—begin the glad new song,
Learn while on earth the harmonies of heaven;
The Singing Church completes the ransomed throng.
Montreal. F. MORN.

Religious.

The Relation of John's Baptism to Christian Baptism.

This question is frequently introduced in the controversy between us and other denominations; and we think, it is often used where its relevancy is quite questionable. Let us, therefore, first of all, try to understand its true position in the points of difference between us and others.

It has no bearing whatever on the baptismal controversy. We appeal with confidence to John's baptism in favor of immersion; but many a one seems to think, it is a sufficient objection to our whole argument to tell us, that even if John immersed, that would not prove anything in relation to our baptism, as John's baptism and christian baptism are two different things. Does the word "John's" affect what we are to understand by the literal act of baptism? Does the word "christian" change the literal act and make it something else? We can easily understand that these terms might affect the significance of the act; but we fail to see how they can affect the significance of the word and make it something entirely different in the one case, from what it is in the other. This kind of logic is especially peculiar when it comes from those who the next moment, will identify the *Mosaic sprinkling* and *christian baptism*.

This applies with equal force to another fallacy which is now being paraded as a wonderful discovery of advanced scholarship. We are told the *heathen* word baptism and the *New Testament* word mean entirely different acts—physical acts—the one meaning to dip, the latter meaning to purify or

to consecrate! If we read in a *heathen* book, written in the days of Christ, that a number the people were baptized in the Jordan, we are to believe they were dipped in the Jordan; but if we find the *same words* in the *New Testament*, then we are to read, that a number of people were consecrated by having water in some way come in contact with the persons, be the water more or less! If we read in a *heathen* book, that the number of men, engaged in the business of fishing, cast their nets into the sea of Galilee, we are to believe it means what it says; but if we find the *same words* in the *New Testament*, then we must wait for some advanced scholar to inform us, that he has discovered, that these words have all a new signification, and that they mean something quite remote from what they mean in the *heathen* book! This word *heathen* is a wonderful word! It conjures up all the superstition of the darkest ages, and gives the would-be priest the much-wished-for power of lording it over men's reason and souls; and we are compelled to believe, that the men who use this term in their connection know its power over the ignorant and superstitious, and on that account use it.

The question of the relation of John's baptism to christian touches only the question of communion. Note well, that even here it affects only the question of the baptism of the eleven who received the supper from the Master. The whole ado about John's baptism is reduced to this: The eleven partook of the supper. It baptized at all, they were baptized with John's baptism. John's baptism, however, is entirely different from christian. This being the case they partook of the supper without christian baptism. THEREFORE christian baptism is not a prerequisite to communion. There is an alternative not taken into this count. Suppose the eleven were baptized, for that is the supposition, must they have been baptized by John's baptism? In the third and fourth chapters of John's gospel, we are told that Jesus through his disciples made and baptized more disciples than John. Will some Daniel tell us what baptism this was? May not the disciples have been baptized by this baptism? Even if, then, John's baptism was not the right thing, was not this baptism the right thing which Jesus himself supervised? It is simply then a question of alternatives. The eleven may have been baptized by Christ's baptism, or by John's. In the case of its being supposed that it was John's, was it of no use or value in relation to the supper?

Having thus, as we think, reduced this whole subject to a very small matter; let us, before dealing with the main question, show what it would amount to, even if proven that the eleven were never baptized at all, notwithstanding God's commandment in relation both to John and Jesus. Would the circumstance of the supper's being partaken by the eleven apostles without baptism, affect the laws of church membership and order as uniformly carried out by them after the day of Pentecost? Is there not a great difference between the position of those who are sent to inaugurate a given system and the parties to whom they are sent? For example: There is no difficulty in believing that John the Baptist was himself never baptized. Would that justify the people in rejecting God's counsel? That is the logic of the day. The parties to whom Christ committed the organization of his churches, everywhere and at all times after the beginning of this special work, commanded repentance, faith, and baptism in order, to be reckoned among their number, and so to be partakers of church privileges among which came in the supper. If these eleven men were commissioned to organize churches after a certain plan involving baptism as a prerequisite to communion, would it vitiate this commission that they themselves had never been baptized? The organization of churches was a matter pertaining to the times after Pentecost, and if we

would show ourselves more willing to obey and less ready to quibble, we would find very little need of talking about John's baptism in connection with the order of a church organization. *Canadian Baptist.*

Missions in Europe.

ITALY.—*Good News from Genoa.*—The following deeply interesting letter from the Rev. W. K. Landels, of Naples, has recently been received by the *Missionary Herald*.

In a recent letter, Signor Jahier writes him:—

"The foundations of the Christian Apostolic Church of Genoa were laid last Sunday. I do not say by the baptism—because that does not constitute the church—but by the public testimony borne by our catechumens to their faith in the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. There were fifteen who bore witness by word of mouth, but I judged it prudent not to admit them all to communion, because some of them had not sufficient knowledge of the Scriptures, having frequented our meetings for only six or seven months. Those, however, whom I baptized had attended the services almost from the day that our hall was opened, and having been here nearly nine months, I have known them all that time, and have instructed them as catechumens. Early in the morning of Sunday last, they testified of their faith, and asked to be recognized as brethren in Christ. Feeling that I could no longer withhold from them the privileges of the Christian, I listened to the accounts of their conversion, which were very consoling, and then, acting according to the teaching of St. Peter, who says that the disciples should first repent and then be baptized (Acts ii, 38), we all went down to a bathing establishment on the sea-shore, called the 'Witch.' There each one had his own cabin for dressing. The men, seven in number, wore the dresses which had been purposely made for baptizing, and the three women wore the usual bathing costumes, which suit the purpose exceedingly well. At seven a. m. all were ready, and we walked down to the sea together. Nothing could be more beautiful than the ceremony. I went first into the sea, and as the others followed I felt that they were my crown and glory. The first to be baptized, or immersed, were the women, whom I took by the hand, and on my asking if they believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, they each answered, 'Yes, amen.' I then immersed them, and they returned together to their cabins, whilst I continued to baptize the men.

"After the service was over, I asked one of our catechumens who was looking on, and who had been told that baptism by immersion was a scandal, if, now that he had seen the ordinance, it seemed to him such a scandalous affair. His answer was 'That it had been most edifying and solemn!' He then told me that the assistant of the establishment, who had seen all that took place, asked who I was, and, on being told that I was an Evangelical minister, he said, 'And this is the way the Evangelicals baptize.' Now I ask how could he have known that we were observing a religious ordinance, if it had not been from the solemnity of the service? Our baptism, then, is both edifying and solemn when properly carried out, and when the dress and the place are well chosen.

"The services being concluded, we went to the hall, to thank God for what He had done, and to ask Him to do still more in the future, by bringing many souls to Himself. We then all went to our homes, to return again at eleven o'clock to the Communion service. After the sermon, the bread and wine were passed round to the new members, who, I am sure, were gathered together in the name of the Lord Jesus, and with a sincere desire to commemorate His precious death.

"During the last few days I have often seen the warm tears of joy flowing from the eyes of these dear brethren

and sisters, two of whom are sixty years old, and one of them seventy-five, while the youngest is about twenty. The three women have husbands, who come regularly to the meetings. These are the first fruits of my labours in Genoa, and I believe they were the first baptized here in the sea. They are very dear to me. Pray for me, dear Mr. Landels, and receive our salutations.

"You may well understand that I rejoiced greatly to receive this news of the work, which to me has such peculiar interest from its having been founded by my brother."

"In Catholic Italy there are to-day a hundred and thirty-eight Protestant churches and about a hundred and fifty pastors and evangelists. At Rome, Dr. Somerville, the Scotch evangelist, has held large public meetings in the theatres. Although these meetings were in general largely attended, and sometimes counted as many as three hundred persons, they were always very quiet.—*L'Echo de la Verite.*

"To counteract the influence of the Protestant and State Schools in Rome, the Pope has set up fifty-two schools in that city, which have complied with all the requirements of the Italian law. Normal schools, technical and professional schools, primary schools, and gymnasia are included in this number; and the Pope contributes sixty thousand dollars a year, to their maintenance. The bishops throughout the kingdom have been instructed to open schools of a similar character in their dioceses, and to use their influence for the election, in the various cities, of municipal counsellors pledged to substitute clerical for lay teachers.—*United Presbyterian.*

The Work in Florence.—The following deeply interesting letter is from the pen of the Rev. James Wall, of Rome, to the *Missionary Herald*, and is dated from Florence:—

"Dear Mr. Baynes,—I came here last Monday night, where the evangelist supported by our friends in Cambridge has been breaking up new ground for the last few weeks. He had succeeded in finding a room in one of the lowest quarters of the city—San Frediano—and, after purchasing a few chairs and a couple of lamps, had resolved to commence preaching and Sunday-school work immediately. I was glad to find that Signor Borgi was full of hope, and surrounded by some who showed him much sympathy. Signor Baratti came up from Leghorn on the same night with about seven hundred weight of copies of the New Testament and detached gospels. The people in the street in which the room is, wondered at the great boxes which they saw deposited at the door, and when they knew their contents, several strong men offered their help to get them upstairs. After prayer for a blessing, we opened the boxes, and went out to sell the New Testaments, give the gospels, and invite the people to a meeting in the evening. I have for several years past visited this part of Florence occasionally, and was not surprised at the reception we met with. We sold a hundred New Testaments, distributed four thousand copies of the Gospel of John, and invited the people to a meeting. Last night the room was crammed with persons who listened to the Gospel.

"A lady, who, having heard of our medical mission in Rome, and had come to see its working, has commenced in Florence, and Signor Borgi is preaching there twice a week.

Dr. Carey's Gardener.—Dr. Carey was very fond of flowers, and as well known to many as an accomplished botanist. So tender was his sympathy with, and fondness for plants, that he would never pluck a flower. His private devotions were always performed in his garden, which, at a time, was noted as the best in India. Haldar, Dr. C.'s gardener, is now very old. He entered Dr. Carey's service when quite a boy, and learnt much from him, also from Dr. Voigt, Dr. Marsh's son-in-law. His

memory continues wonderfully good, so that he can give the botanical name of almost every plant or flower shown him. I have before me a list of over two hundred and fifty plants in the College garden, the names of which have been taken down by an English master from his dictation.

In 1821 Dr. Carey's botanical proclivities led him to found the "Agricultural Society of India," which holds its meetings in the Metcalf Hall. In the hall there is a bust, in marble, with the inscription, "W. Carey, D.D., Founder of the Agricultural and Horticultural Society, 1820."

This is now one of the most useful and influential corporations in the country.

ALBERT WILLIAMS,
Serampore College,
Serampore, Bengal.

Old methods quite sufficient.

We see very clearly that old means and methods are quite sufficient to save souls. Our Lord did not say, "Paul be not afraid, but deliver a Sunday afternoon lecture with a nonsensical title and little or no gospel in it." No, no; but "Speak, and hold not thy peace, for I have much people in this city." God's way of saving souls is the best way, after all. You and I may get up all sorts of inventions, and he may wink at our follies, and let us go on with them; but his way of saving souls is speaking the gospel, and nothing other than the gospel. I should like to see in the world again a revival like that under Jonathan Edwards, in which there were no extravagances, no utterance of false doctrine, no making a noise and a riot, but just the preaching of the old-fashioned doctrines of grace. These truths brought on a revival of a deep and enduring kind. Men were filled with an awful fear of God, and they repented bitterly, and mended their ways, and sought for Jesus in dreadful earnest, and rested not till they found him. They did not sing jigs but they went as one that is in bitterness for her firstborn. They haunted no banners, but they laid hold on Jesus in the secret of their souls. They did not often shout, but they went home and talked one to another of what God had been doing in their souls, and they lived near to him. I would like to see that old kind of work and life among us again. The Holy Ghost may work as he pleases, but still that order of revival seemed to be deep and permanent, and the results were found after many days; whereas, nowadays, where are the converts of your revivals? Where are the converts after a little time has passed? All Paul did when he knew there was much people in that city was just to go and speak the gospel and not be afraid. I, for one, mean to keep to the old-fashioned way. —*Spurgeon.*

Sabbath-breaking.

This is the great sin, because it embraces so many sins. It is complex in character. Like a rope, it is twisted from many threads, and is very strong; but one grows out of another, and yet all adhere closely to each other, and seem to constitute but one line of sin. Suggestion, desire, and purpose, are the threads in their order, and execution twists them, and they become a strong cord, which, with perseverance in it, completes the object of ruin. It involves the violation of another law of the Decalogue, besides the fourth Commandment. It even assumes the character of a personality, and displays superior wisdom and capacity for evil. It is a usurper—it minds other men's business, in that it compels them to work on Sunday, or lose their positions. It is a thief—it steals the Lord's sacred hours, which are consecrated to holy use. It is a rioter—it disturbs the peace, order, and quietude of the community. It is a defiler—it destroys the sacredness and solemnity of God's holy day. It is an