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WHOLE SERIES.
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Poetry.

Trust.

I cannot see, with my small human sight,
Why God should lead this way or that
for me;

I only know he saith, "Child, follow me."
But I can trust.

I know not why my path should be at
times

So straitly hedged, so strangely barred
before;

I only know God could keep wide the
door,

But I can trust.

I find no answer, often, when beset
With questions fierce and subtle on my
way.

And often have 'but strength to faintly
pray,

But I can trust.

I often wonder, as with trembling hand
I cast the seed along the furrowed
ground,

If ripened fruit for God will there be
found.

But I can trust.

I cannot know why suddenly the storm
Should rage so fiercely round me in its
wrath;

But this I know, God watches all my path,
And I can trust.

I may not draw aside the mystic veil
That hides the unknown future from my
sight;

Nor know if for me waits the dark or
light;

But I can trust.

I have no power to look across the tide,
To see while here, the land beyond the
river;

But this I know, I shall be God's forever;
So I can trust.

—Christian Weekly.

Religious.

Progress in a Hundred Years.

A SERMON PREACHED BEFORE THE
PASTORAL CONFERENCE OF THE
SALEM ASSOCIATION, OCT. 12TH,
1880, BY REV. L. DRURY, OF DAN-
VERSPOUR, MASS.

"And they continued steadfastly in
the apostles' doctrine."

"And the Lord added to the church,
daily, such as should be saved."—Acts
ii. 42, 47.

(Published by request.)

The persons here spoken of were
the first converts under the preaching
of the apostles. In the story of
their conversion we have an epitome
of the Christian faith. Convicted
of their sins by the preaching of
Peter, they cried out, "Men and
brethren, What shall we do?" And
Peter answered, "Repent and be
baptized every one of you in the name
of Jesus Christ for the remission of
sins." "Then they that gladly received
his word were baptized, and the same
day there were added unto them about
three thousand souls." Here we have
repentance, faith in Christ, baptism;
then a steadfast continuance in the
apostles' doctrine, a steadfast applica-
tion to their teaching, with a sincere
desire to learn and obey the truth.

This was constituted the first Christian
church, and thus was it placed on
record as a pattern for later times.
Continuing steadfastly in the apostles'
doctrine, conforming in life and practice
to their teaching, the Lord blessed them
greatly, and added to them, daily, such
as should be saved.

The pattern here given was every-
where observed, and the same blessing
followed. The apostles in their preach-
ing emphasized the necessity of
repentance and faith. Those who
repented and believed were baptized.
The churches thus constituted of baptized
believers continued steadfastly in the
apostles' doctrine. Tracing their pro-
gress to the close of the inspired record,
we find the same fidelity to the apostles'
teaching, and that the Lord continued
to add to their number until churches
modelled after this primitive pattern,
were found scattered throughout West-

ern Asia, and along the whole northern
coast of the Mediterranean, and perhaps
even upon the shores of Britain.

Deprived, at length, of the presence
and counsel of the apostles, they still
for more than a century, maintained
their faith in its purity and simplicity.
Then innovations commenced. Baptism
instead of being the profession of a new
life, came to be regarded as imparting
a new life itself, and as being necessary
to salvation. Hence a modified form
of the rite was advised for the sick
lest they might die without baptism.
The doctrine of original sin came to be
so held as to consign dying infants to
eternal death, and hence the saving
efficacy of baptism, as it was considered,
was demanded for them. Thus gradu-
ally, at first, the churches fell from
their steadfastness to the apostles' doc-
trine, and these first departures pre-
pared the way for others, until the
church of the apostles was lost in the
corruption of the Middle Ages. For
centuries we look almost in vain for
the pattern given on the day of Pentecost.
Still, through the darkness, there came
occasional gleams of light. Here and
there, in the north of Africa, among
the Alps and Pyrenees, in the vales of
Bohemia, in the lowlands of Holland,
and in the mountains of Wales, are
found companies of Christians who pro-
test against the worldliness and un-
scriptural teachings of the dominant
churches. At the dawn of the Reform-
ation, in the sixteenth century, when
the fetters were falling from men's
minds, they came forth from their
seclusion, and were everywhere quite
numerous. Wafted by favoring breezes
they came to these Western shores,
and in 1639 organized a church of
twelve members at Providence, under
the leadership of Roger Williams. In
the principles they professed, they seem
to have been in accord with the primi-
tive church at Jerusalem, and from
that day to the present, it may be said
of them, that they continued steadfastly
in the apostles' doctrine; and that the
Lord added unto them daily, until now
they constitute the largest religious
body, with one exception, in the United
States. From what has been said
already, it will be seen that the rise
and rapid progress of the Baptists in
America is not simply an episode of
modern times, but is part of a history
reaching back in an almost, if not quite,
unbroken line to the time of the apos-
tles.

The rapid increase of the disciples
at Jerusalem seems to have followed
as a natural result of their fidelity to
the teaching of the apostles, and may
we not believe there is a similar con-
nection between the progress of the
Baptists in these later times, and their
sincere endeavor to know and obey
the truth as the apostles taught it? It
is not my present purpose to discuss
our fidelity to apostolic teaching; but
assuming the fact, to show how the
blessing of God has seemed to follow
our obedience. I shall show more
particularly the progress of Baptist
sentiments during the last hundred
years. For, great as the advances
have been within the denomination itself,
it is not more wonderful or encouraging
than the progress of our principles out-
side it.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

If an accurate portrayal could be
given of the condition of American
Baptists a century ago, and compared
with their present situation, the con-
trast would be striking indeed. Then in
all New England, there were about 150
churches, while in our whole country
there were about 550 churches, with
about 55,000 members, to represent the
growth of the denomination for the
period of one hundred and forty years.

Tracing now the growth of the
denomination by periods, if you will
indulge me in a paragraph of
statistics, we find that in the first ten
years of the century under review, the
number of churches increased from
550 to 872, and the number of mem-
bers to 65,000, or at the rate of 1,000
for each year. Passing over forty
years, we find in 1830 about 8,000

churches, with over 300,000 members.
After an interval of twenty years more,
in 1850, there are about 12,000
churches and 800,000 members, and
in 1870, after another twenty years, we
find 17,445 churches and 1,410,493
members. In the last decade, from
1870 to 1880, the churches have
increased to 24,794, and the members
to 2,133,044, or at the rate of over
72,000 per year for the last ten years.
Adding the probable increase for the
year that has passed since these figures
were compiled, would give us nearly,
if not quite two and a quarter millions
for our present number. In the twenty
years preceding 1870, we added over
five new churches per week, — nearly
one for each day. In the last ten
years the churches have increased at
the rate of fourteen per week, or two
each day, in the whole ten years.

But it may be said that the
whole country has witnessed a marvel-
ous growth of population. Have we
kept pace with that rapid increase?
Let us see. From 1790 to 1830 the
increase in population was 227 per
cent; the Baptist increase for the
same period was 361 per cent. From
1830 to 1850 the increase of population
was 80 per cent; that of the Baptists,
166 per cent. From 1850 to 1870
the population increased 66 per cent.,
the Baptists, 76 per cent. In the last ten
years the increase of population was
24 per cent., while that of the Baptists
was 51 per cent.; or, to put the state-
ment in another form, in 1790 one
person in every sixty was a member of
a Baptist church. In 1830, one in
forty-three was a Baptist; in 1850,
one in twenty-nine; in 1870, one in
twenty-seven; and now in 1880, one
person in every twenty-two is a
Baptist. The population is now six-
teen times greater than at the begin-
ning of the century, while the number
of the Baptists is thirty-four times
greater. Thus it will be seen that
our increase has been relatively vastly
beyond the increase of the population,
and this notwithstanding the enormous
influx of foreigners, a large majority
of whom it is very difficult for us to
reach. If our estimates had been con-
fined to our native American people
the relative increase would have been
very much greater.

But let us leave mere numbers, and
consider the life of our churches.
What advancement have we made in
material resources, and in our means
and methods of vigorous and aggres-
sive work? A century ago there was
but little wealth among our few and
scattered churches; and with the
means at their disposal they found it
often a hard struggle to maintain
even their own existence. But in the
growing prosperity of the country,
our people have shared in common
with others, and many have amassed
fortunes. The mere acquisition of
wealth is no element of real progress;
but with it has come a heart to devise
liberal things for the church of Christ.
It has given us comfortable and at-
tractive houses of worship, and furnished
a more adequate support for the
ministry, thus adding immensely to their
power and efficiency. It has multiplied
institutions of learning, and set in
motion the machinery of vast and be-
nevolent Christian enterprises. All
these multiplied agencies, which
depend for their support upon the
material resources of our people, are
the creation of the present century.
Of all our denominational schools,
only the college in Rhode Island was
in existence a hundred years ago.
Then we had no educated ministry.
Hardly one in twenty of our pastors,
even here in New England, had re-
ceived a liberal education. Churches
were multiplying rapidly, and men
were called from the field and the
workshop to enter the pastoral office.
Rhode Island College, then just estab-
lished, was wholly inadequate to supply
the growing demand for pastors, even
if candidates for the ministry had
means to avail themselves of the
privileges it afforded. Now the num-
ber of our colleges has increased to
thirty-one; eight theological sem-

inaries have been established; and
besides these, we have fifty schools of
the grade of academies. All of them,
together, are giving instruction to
10,000 students, 1,500 of whom are
preparing for the ministry. With
these multiplied facilities for education,
in place of the illiteracy of a century
ago, our ministers now can come
"thoroughly furnished" to their work,
and instead of looking to other denomi-
nations for it, our churches are now
favored with the fruits of ripest schol-
arship from among their own number.

These resources of wealth and talent
are finding employment not only with
our churches at home, but also in our
great benevolent societies, which in
their operation are sending the life-
blood coursing through all the arteries
of our denominational body, stimulat-
ing us to vigorous and healthful activi-
ty, and sending the life-giving Word to
the millions of the destitute and benighted.
Our Publication Society is sending out
annually, in Bibles and religious publi-
cations, the amount of more than 320,
000,000 of printed pages, at a cost of
over \$300,000. The Home Mission
Society is expending over \$200,000 a
year in carrying the gospel to the des-
titute portions of our own land, sup-
porting schools and missionaries among
the freedmen of the South, and estab-
lishing churches in the new settlements
in the West. The Missionary Union
disburses over \$250,000 a year in the
maintenance of a pure gospel in the
midst of the rationalism and Catholicism
of Europe, and the heathenism of Asia.
In the work of these three societies
alone, our churches are annually em-
ploying over \$800,000 of their re-
sources for objects which a century ago
had hardly begun to appeal to their
liberality or had even been suggested to
them.

In nothing, perhaps, is our progress
more marked, than in the modern devel-
opment of the missionary enterprise.
And it is with some pardonable com-
placency that we remember how the
honor of originating this great move-
ment has been accorded to our own
denomination. To William Carey, an
humble English shoemaker, afterwards
a Baptist minister and missionary,
belongs the honor of awakening the
British and American churches to the
grand enterprise of sending the gospel
to heathen lands. To the men of his
time, his suggestions at first seemed
visionary and impracticable, but being
invited to put his thoughts in writing,
in 1792, he preached before a meeting
of his Association his memorable sermon
setting forth these two grand proposi-
tions, "Expect great things from
God; and attempt great things for God."
It proved to be a spark from heaven's
own altars, and kindled a flame of
missionary zeal which resulted in the
formation in October, 1792, of the first
Foreign Missionary Society of modern
times. With the least possible delay
he himself embarked on the venture to
carry the gospel light into the darkness
of India. There in the midst of
obstacles and discouragements which
might have appalled the stoutest hearts,
he toiled on perseveringly for seven
years, and then led down his first con-
vert into the waters of Christian bap-
tism.

In 1812 the first American mission-
aries sailed in two separate compan-
ies for their life of toil on heathen
shores. They were all Congregational-
ists, sent out under the auspices of the
American Board. In one vessel was
Mr. Judson, in the other was Mr. Rice.
During his weary voyage over ocean
solitude, Mr. Judson applied himself to
a diligent and critical study of the
Scriptures, and came to the belief that
none but believers are the proper sub-
jects of baptism, and that immersion
alone was the primitive mode of its
administration. Mr. Rice, pursuing a
similar course of study while separated
from Mr. Judson, reached the same
conclusion, and soon after their arrival
at Serampore, they were baptized by
the Rev. Mr. Ward of the English
Baptist Mission. With this change of
belief they offered themselves to the
Baptist churches of America. Their

voice was as a bugle note, awakening
into new life the latent energies of our
people. The churches responded to
their call, and commissioned them as
ambassadors for Christ in heathen lands.
Like Mr. Carey, on the banks of the
Ganges, so at Rangoon, Mr. Judson
labored with patience for seven years,
and in the summer of 1819, the first
convert was baptized, and the great
work commenced, which after sixty
years, has resulted in the formation in
India, and Burmah, and China, and
Japan, of 475 Baptist churches, with a
present membership of over 40,000.
Of late, converts are coming to us by
thousands, churches in many places are
becoming self-sustaining, cared for by
native pastors, and contributing gener-
ously from their own limited resources
to send the gospel farther on, to their
heathen neighbors. With the present
rate of progress the time seems not far
distant, when whole countries will have
become Christianized, and the doctrines
of Buddha and Confucius supplanted
by the truth as it is Jesus. But the
missionary work, as an element of our
progress, grand as it is when we think
of heathen converted and countries
Christianized, is not wholly measured
by this. The blessing we have en-
deavored to impart to others has been
returned to us in ten-fold measure,
developing Christian character, and
making our own churches better,
stronger, more active and more efficient
in every department of Christian effort.

PROGRESS OF OUR PRINCIPLES.

Thus far in our review of the cen-
tury we have noted our progress in
numbers, in material and educational re-
sources, and in the development of be-
nevolent and Christian enterprise. Let
us now consider briefly the progress of
our principles beyond our own limits.
In regard to some of the fundamental
articles of our faith, there has been in-
other denominations a very decided ad-
vance towards the views held by us.
In endeavoring to show this, I shall
rely almost wholly upon the testimony
of their own writers.

Take first the subject of infant bap-
tism. A century ago the scripturalness
of baptism for infants was accepted as
a fact almost unquestioned by all ex-
cept Baptists. It had become so inter-
woven with the religious belief of the
age, that even the ablest biblical schol-
ars seemed to deem it almost sacrilege
to investigate the subject, or viewed it
with prejudiced eyes. But during the
century there has appeared a disposi-
tion, especially among German scholars
and historians, to discover the exact
meaning of the Scriptures, and to state
the truth with candor and fairness. Let
me quote the language of some of these
writers. Neander, the German church
historian, in his first edition says, "It
is certain that Christ did not ordain in-
fant baptism. We cannot prove that
the apostles ordained it." Again, in
his second edition, issued about forty
years ago, he says, "Baptism was ad-
ministered at first only to adults, as
men were accustomed to conceive bap-
tism and faith as strictly connected.
We have all reason for not deriving in-
fant baptism from apostolic institution."

Bunsen, another accepted German
authority, speaking of the Reformation,
says, "The Reformation accepted in-
fant baptism, although its leaders were
more or less aware that it was neither
scriptural nor apostolic." And in an-
other place he says, "The baptism of
new born infants with the vicarious
premises of parents or other sponsors,
was utterly unknown to the early
church, not only down to the end of
the second, but indeed to the middle of
the third century." The *North British
Review*, at that time the organ of the
Free Church of Scotland, in reviewing
the statements of Bunsen, admitted
that "the only baptism known to the
New Testament was that of adults,
and said further, that "the correctness
of the picture of ancient baptism given
by Dr. Bunsen, will not, we apprehend,
be disputed by any one who is content
to accept the mere facts of the case."
In another article, this same *Presby-
terian Review* said, "Scripture knows
nothing of the baptism of infants."