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THE WORSHIP OF THE CHURCH.

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The first article "The Worship of the Church" by A. J. Rowland, D.D. is an examination of the principles and practice of worship as found in its various modes, in different ages and countries—from that of the quiet reverence of the Quaker to that of high ritualism as found in the Anglican and Roman Catholic Churches. The writer defines his subject by saying: "Worship, as the word etymologically signifies, is the expression of man's sense of worship or worthiness—as worthiness nobler and better than any thing of which he is conscious in himself."

Worship expresses itself in two ways, by prayer and by praise. In prayer we acknowledge our dependence and needs; in praise we adore the divine perfections, and express both our inferiority and gratitude.

But how shall worship be rendered? What are the methods through which the heart shall express itself, the surroundings in which worship shall clothe itself, the body by which the inner spirit shall make itself manifest to God and man? Shall an established liturgy be used, in which prescribed prayers and praises are rendered to the exclusion of the voluntary and spontaneous outbursts of the heart? Shall worship call to its aid the appliances of art and architecture? Are objects and influences adapted to move the senses to be employed or discarded? Is worship in any respect to be delegated by the congregation to persons who are supposed to have a natural or acquired aptness to render this in a superior manner? May the forms of worship be modified to suit the tastes and culture of different congregations? These and a number of other questions arise and thrust themselves on our attention. How shall we answer them? One criterion should guide us, I think, in our attempt to secure a proper reply to these inquiries. Worship, to be worship at all, must be spiritual. This is the distinct teaching of the Savior.

Controverting some of the existing forms of public worship the writer affirms that "the argument which proposes to show that a fixed service like that used in Roman Catholic or Episcopalian Churches is to be found even in germ in the New Testament is manifestly baseless. The New Testament gives no instruction whatever as to forms of worship. This is in itself an argument against a cumbersome and stereotyped liturgy. To get a liturgy out of the New Testament requires a wonderful power of exegetical insight. The man who finds it there has very likely put it there—a trick of spiritual jugglery, by the way, which is oftentimes resorted to in New Testament exegesis, and by which the performer and the audience seem alike deceived.

This whole question of the adoption of a form or forms of public worship seems to me to belong to the realm of Christian freedom. Men are themselves to determine largely the modes by which they may best express the prayers and praises of hearts to God. What is best for one age and one grade of culture might not be so for another. The silence of the Scriptures on this subject is indicative of the fact that our Lord meant that his people should use their own sanctified common sense. Certain it is that it is foolish to go to extremes. The iconoclasts of the seventeenth century not only smashed church windows, disfigured ecclesiastical works of art, discarded the prayer-book, and condemned vestments, but refused to use at all the service of praise. Music was put under an absolute ban, and worship was vocal only in much-divided sermons and long-drawn extemporaneous prayers. But such a state of things could not last. Men soon found that they were doing violence to their religious natures by crucifying the imagination and taste, and reaction came, as it always will. While, therefore, spirituality is ever to be sought for, and every thing avoided which would interfere with that, the methods of worship must be determined in the absence of any Scripture prescription, by circumstances and taste. The senses may be appealed to just so far as may be

necessary to promote a worshipful feeling. All there is in art or architecture which may excite thoughts of higher things, satisfy a proper taste, and provide surroundings that will insure comfort to the body, assist the aesthetic nature to free itself from annoyance, and help the heart the better to express its feeling, can safely be employed. It is true that it makes no difference to God whether worship, if it be real worship, is offered him from barn or cathedral; whether men "shout discordant hallelujahs" or set their praises to modulated song. But it does make a difference to us. The Scriptures give us no invariable form, and certainly we should not give a denominational handbook or time-honored custom a power to run the worship of the Church into fixed molds beyond that of the Word of God.

What is called simplicity in worship is oftentimes only another name for the grossest irreverence and slovenliness. Time-honored customs and prejudices are frequently covers for ignorance or rudeness or parsimony. The plea of a severe spirituality enables men oftentimes to treat God with a discourtesy that would not be allowed in human society.

Let worship then, we say, be adapted to the worshiper, and let the worshiper use his best endeavors to bring God such an offering as will express his deepest devotion. Let him bring this in a way that will testify to God the feeling of reverence with which his heart is filled.

But whatever be the form of worship, one thing is very essential in the social services of the Church, and that is, that all the people should enter heartily into it. There is great need of emphasizing this point just now. It is greatly to be feared that, in our ordinary congregations, there is very little real worship. There are entirely too many audiences and too few worshipping assemblies. How now can we secure the hearty co-operation in worship of all the members of the Church?

1. First and foremost, I would say, the people should observe a devotional manner. Attitudes are, probably, of slight account in the sight of God. It matters little to him whether men sit or stand or kneel when they pray. But it is not so with us. Irreverence in manner is likely to beget irreverence in spirit. A devout attitude is likely to induce a devout heart. At any rate simple respect to God would demand respectful demeanor. They do well, therefore, who attend to the words of the Psalmist: "O come let us worship and bow down."

2. Again, I am persuaded that it is well in public worship to give the people something to do. In the early Church it seems to have been the custom for the people to engage responsively in the service. Paul urges the Ephesians to speak to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs—a form of expression which can best be explained, I think, on the theory that the early Church continued the use of the antiphonal Psalms, as had for centuries been the custom in the service of the temple and synagogue. Pliny, describing the services of Christians, says, among other things, that they were accustomed to utter responsively among themselves a song of praise to Christ. Tertullian tells us that pious husbands and wives repeated Psalms antiphonally—that is, by alternate responses. Augustine and Basil give the same testimony. We can very readily see how admirably the Psalms are adapted to such a form of service by taking the nineteenth or twentieth, and reciting this after the manner of the Hebrew antiphone, I certainly think that if we could break away from our foolish fear of every thing which seems to savor of Romish practices, and adopt some such form of service as this, we would find the spirit of worship growing mightily in our churches.

3. Again, as praise is one of the most important elements of worship, congregational singing of a high type is an absolute necessity. Psalms and hymns should be sung by the entire congregation. Any delegation of this part of the service to a choir is preposterous. The only office a choir can serve is to lead the congregation in the singing. Anthems and voluntaries, while pleasant and

entertaining enough on artistic grounds, are in no adequate sense a part of worship. God is not to be praised by proxy. The truth is, too, that singing is a good index of the spiritual life of a people. All great movements in the Church have been signals for outbursts of song, as will be seen in the Lutheran and Methodist reformations and in the revival periods of our time. What we need, therefore, in the improvement of worship, is an improvement in congregational singing. Not until we obey the injunction of the Psalmist, "Let all the people praise thee," will public worship be what it should be.

4. Once more, we may improve the worship of the Church by varying from time to time the order of its services. There is a natural craving for variety in all things. One of the disadvantages of a fixed liturgy is the monotony into which its use is so apt to degenerate, and which deadens men's hearts to its beauties. If services could be accommodated to the ever changing needs of the soul it is probable that there would be a more hearty and earnest entering into them. Nor is this impossible. While the more formal exercises of the Lord's day must, perhaps, of necessity be more or less fixed, the devotional meetings offer a scope for variety sufficient to include every spiritual exigency, and give facilities to make the hour of worship a perpetual help and joy.

For both individuals and churches there is but one valid law; namely, that, as far as practicable, each shall embody its worship in such modes and forms as are best adapted to its own life. Of worship itself there is but one great use and end, that it brings a brotherhood of men to the feet and heart of the great Father in heaven, there to speak to the eager sympathy of his love all their adoration and all their desire.

Professor Newman of the Baptist College, Toronto, is the author of the second article on "Some Aspects of Early Protestant Theology." In referring to the controversies in the time of Luther Professor Newman says:

"Most of the theological discussion of this period took the form of polemical tracts on particular doctrines. Printing was already common and cheap, and theological tracts were circulated to an extent not greatly surpassed since. Pamphleteering subserved, in part, the ends of the modern newspaper. During several years of his life Luther must have written, on an average, more than a pamphlet a week, and many other writers were scarcely less prolific. The mediæval system of discussion by theses was likewise still employed. Before the close of the sixteenth century the freshness and the elasticity of the new [theology] had disappeared, and in its place had come a scholasticism almost as formal and lifeless as that of the Middle Ages."

The Reformation so-called was a vast stride in the return to the truth, but it was still far short of what it should have been if the truth had been allowed free course. The antagonisms of the reformers themselves, perhaps more than any thing else, prevented the full measure of reform. Luther still held on to the doctrine of the real presence.

Dr. Newman promises other articles on kindred subjects. He says:

With the editor's permission and encouragement, other articles may be expected to follow on the "Arminian and Socinian Controversies," on the "Theological System of Servetus," on the "Political Element in the Reformation," on the "Reformation from a Baptist Point of View," on "Protestant Leaders in Controversy with the Anabaptists."

Article 3 is entitled "Probation after Death," or "the spirits in prison" an examination of 1 Peter iii. 18-20, by C. F. Mussey, D. D. He says:

"A fair interpretation of this passage in Peter can not, then, teach a probation for men after death. If Christ's preaching to the spirits in prison was between his crucifixion and resurrection, this fact stands out prominently in the passage under consideration, that the men and only those, of Noah's time, are spoken of as the objects of it. Not a word or a hint is given to show that those men represented all sinners before them or after them, and to declare

that they do thus represent all sinners, and that all men, unsaved at death will hear the Gospel after death and be saved; or be offered salvation by it, is either a gratuitous or a dogmatic assumption, and is not a legitimate explanation of, or inference from, the text. We humbly conceive that this passage was introduced by Peter, and the men of Noah's time were specified to show—though this is not sharply done—that men who suffer for righteousness' sake have the company and fellowship of the saints who have gone before them, and especially before the flood, when the sinners were many and the saints were few, and the Spirit of Christ in Noah warned the world to flee from the wrath to come."

Article 4 "The six principle Baptists," a historical sketch by Rev. J. T. Smith, D. D.

Article 5 "The True Light of Asia," by John T. Perry.

In addition to these are Book Reviews &c.

We referred, in our last, to the invitation to Special Prayer on behalf of Sunday Schools the beginning of the present week. In addition to the arrangements suggested by the London Sunday School Union, the S. S. Convention of the Maritime Provinces purpose holding a S. S. Convention for one day on the 1st of November in the Halifax Y. M. C. A. Hall. There will be three sittings commencing at 9.30 a. m. The evening session will probably be in one of the larger churches as the programme will be attractive, and the meeting will probably be quite a large one.

It is expected that there will be additional interest given to this Convention by the circumstance of the Y. M. C. A. having their Convention on the 31st inst. the day previous. Many of the persons from a distance attending the latter will probably remain and attend the Sabbath School gatherings.

DEATH OF Z. CHIPMAN, ESQ.—A

despatch on Tuesday morning announced the death at his residence, of Z. Chipman, Esq., in the sixty-ninth year of his age. The deceased leaves one son, John D. Chipman, Esq., and four daughters, Lady Tilley, Mrs. Toller, Mrs. W. H. Howland of Toronto, and Mrs. Jones of New Zealand. Mr. Chipman was one of the leading men of St. Stephen, having been intimately identified with all the chief enterprises of the town for many years, and was during his successful mercantile career the holder of many important positions of public trust.

We formed a pleasant acquaintance with Mr. C. some years since, having been invited to partake of his hospitality during the sitting of the Baptist Convention in that town.

MILTON QUEEN'S CO. BAPTIST

CHURCH is happily settled with a pastor in the person of our Brother C. R. B. Dodge. A brief note just received although not intended for publication, yet, as it will afford pleasure to a number of our readers we venture to give in a few lines. He says:—

"I am now fairly settled with the people here and I cannot begin to tell you of their kindness. It was whispered to me before I came that they were 'a good people,' but the 'half was not told.' We have organized for Friday evenings a class for Bible study, which is to meet in the vestry. Last evening of meeting although it was but the second, and the night rainy, we had thirty in attendance. Yesterday the choir sang for the first time out of the 'Baptist Hymnal' which we are introducing. It seems to be giving general satisfaction. I hope to hear of its being introduced into many of our churches as it is beyond question 'the best out.'"

REV. W. S. WHITTIER of Chalmers

Church in this City preached his farewell sermon on Sunday morning from the words, "Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity." We are informed that Mr. Whittier will leave in a few days for California, where he will spend the winter. He intends spending next summer in Australia, and the following year or two in China, India and Palestine.

THANKSGIVING DAY is appointed by the Dominion Government to be on Thursday the 8th day of November.

"AN OLD SUBSCRIBER" wrote us some time since the following note. We omitted its publication and it got out of sight. It has just turned up, and we think it due to our friend that it should appear. This is we presume about the time for the preparation of this article of home consumption:

Mr. Editor,—Dear Sir,—In a February number of the MESSENGER, I saw a piece headed "Sour Crout." I should like to see the person who wrote that piece try to eat some crout made in that manner; and if he eats more than one mouthful, he is pretty good stuff. I do not think he knows much about such things or he would never have made such a mistake in the quantity of salt. It would be so tough and salt no one could eat it. I have had an experience of nearly forty years of making crout, and never put more than a pint of salt to a barrel of crout, and it would be good with even less.

REV. W. H. ROBINSON made a visit to the city on his way from Port Hawkesbury, where he has been successfully labouring for some time past. The high appreciation he expresses of the friends there, shews how much he regrets leaving although proper regard for his health necessitates a change. He is anxious to hear of a minister to fill the place he has left.

The church at Canning has given a warm invitation to Brother Robinson to the pastorate. He is proposing to make them a visit. Bro R. preached in Granville St. Church on Sunday evening to much acceptance. We shall be glad to hear of our brother's acceptance of the call he has received.

COLLECTIONS were taken up on Sunday

last in the churches of the several denominations in the city on behalf of the HALIFAX DISPENSARY. This is an excellent institution. Each year shews more and more the necessity for it, and its value. The day was comparatively fine and there were present we presume quite average congregations in the churches.

The amounts so far as we have heard were:

Table with 2 columns: Church Name and Amount. Includes Granville Street (\$30.00), St. Paul's (135.00), Bishop's Chapel (39.23), St. Mary's (320.00), St. Patrick's (101.00), St. Joseph's (26.00), St. George's (68.76), St. Mark's (56.13), St. Matthew's (75.00), Garrison Chapel (73.17).

THE BAPTIST HYMNAL, without

music, published by the American Baptist Publication Society is a handsome book, fit for use in the pulpit, the desk, or the pew, at 65 cents. If the Society would get out a cheap edition of this book at say about 25 cents, they might, we believe, obtain sale by thousands to the Baptist churches. The book has nearly all the best hymns of all its predecessors.

It is very unsafe to decide by a

guess the author of an anonymous letter, whether it be in manuscript or in print. Great injustice is often done by such means. A person's name thus becomes associated with the statements it contains and the minds of his friends become prejudiced in favor of or against him, when he perhaps, knows nothing at all about the matter. A life long injury is sometimes thus done. It is often the case that an anonymous writer strives to divert the attention of his readers from himself, and is indifferent about the injury done to others by what he writes, so long as he himself escapes. We have seen this illustrated in several cases in a late controversy.

THE City School Board are advertising

for a Supervisor of Schools for Halifax City. Why should Halifax indulge in such an expensive luxury any more than St. John N. B. An efficient Secretary should be equal to all the duties of that officer. If it is possible to save the amount of the salary paid to such officer, it should be done. The principal of each school should have full charge. The cost of our school machinery is a heavy burden on the city and where it is possible it should be diminished.

Rev. Dr. Sawyer promises us a second article for our next. The College and Religion.

CONCERNING RELIGIOUS CONFEDERATION.

Union or centralization seems to be the order of the day. Some of the denominations appear to be vying with others as to how far this shall be carried. The Church of England or certain portions of it, have for a good while past been beckoning to their Methodist brethren to come back into the communion from which their devoted leaders long ago came out. The Methodists themselves have sought rather to gather up the off-shoots from their own connexion and make of them again one large co-operating communion. This has been happily effected in this young Dominion. How soon the same thing may be said of the brethren in the mother country is as yet quite problematical.

Our Presbyterian brethren have had their experience in this direction, and now rejoice in a General Assembly, embracing the great Confederation.

Having effected this much, there seems a disposition on the part of some of the parties concerned to proceed still further and break down some of the denominational boundaries. The Presbyterian Witness makes a move in advance as follows:—

"The policy of rest and be thankful will not do in either Church or State. There is no 'finality.' Methodist family feuds are healed, greatly to the advantage of religion as well, Presbyterian family feuds have been nearly healed, and the gain has undoubtedly been very great. And now in both these bodies the idea of a union between Methodists and Presbyterians is beginning to be thought over and quietly discussed. The Bishop of Fredericton in his address before the recent Episcopalian Synod at Montreal, spoke of the Methodists as having lapsed into Presbyterianism. The accusation is not altogether groundless, for the Methodist system of organization is essentially Presbyterian, not just like our system, not copied from any other Church, but evidently wrought out in accordance with Scriptural principles under the stress of circumstances. The parity of the clergy, and the unity of the whole body are principles recognized by the Methodists as thoroughly as by ourselves. The 'stewards' are but elders under another name. The 'District Meeting' is but the Presbytery. The Conference is but the Synod; and the General Conference is but the General Assembly. Thus, as far as polity is concerned there would be no unsurmountable obstacle to union. The 'itineracy' would be a difficulty, but not an insoluble one.—Now as regards doctrinal standards there is no doubt that there are very formidable difficulties. Could Calvinism and Arminianism shake hands and dwell in the same house, the love of God constraining them? This is a point on which we would not venture to go beyond Dr. Henry B. Smith, the eminently thoughtful, far seeing, and philosophic theologian of Union Theological Seminary. Writing in 1871. Dr. Smith said: 'What is to keep Methodists and Presbyterians apart? Is it anything essential to the Church or even to its well-being. For one I do not think that it is. Your so called Arminianism being of grace, and not of nature, is in harmony with our symbols. It is a wide outlook which looks to the ecclesiastical union of Methodists and Presbyterians; but I am convinced that it is vital for both, and for Protestantism and Christianity versus Romanism in this country; and that it is desirable per se—I am also persuaded that our difficulties are merely intellectual (metaphysical), and not moral or spiritual; in short, formal and not material. As to polity too, so far as the Scriptures go there is no essential difference between us.'

The editor of the Wesleyan is so well pleased with the proposal that he copies the article and adds:—

"These surely are words to think of, coming as they do from one of the keenest eyed theologians of the age—a man who has sounded the depths of prevailing heresies as few have done. We are well aware that immediate steps in the way of union need not be expected; but the prospect is such as at least to disarm unreasoning antagonism and to take the sting out of sectarian bitterness and aggressiveness.

As our brethren belonging to both of these bodies are so often rejoicing in open communion, we certainly see no reason for their standing aloof from each other. We do not see that the authorities of either body recommended inter-communion as preparatory to such change, as uniformity is not essential to unity, they might proceed without delay in preparing for the consummation of this grand combination.

Send to the Baptist Book & Tract Society for Lesson Helps—at Publishers Prices.