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"Not slothful in business: fervent in spirit."

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## Poetry.

### BESIDE THE RAILWAY TRACK.

On its straight iron pathway the long train was  
pushing,  
With its noise, and its smoke, and its great human  
load;  
And I saw where a wild rose in beauty was blushing,  
Fresh and sweet, by the side of the hot, dusty  
road.

Untrained were its branches, untended it flourished,  
No eye watched its opening or mourned its decay,  
But its leaves by the soft dews of heaven were  
nourished,  
And it opened its buds in the warm light of day.

I asked why it grew there, where none prized its  
beauty,  
For of thousands who passed none had leisure to  
stay;  
And the answer came, sweetly "I do but my duty,  
I was told to grow here by the side of the way."

There are those on life's pathway whose spirit are  
willing  
To dwell where the busy crowd passes them by;  
But the dew from above on their leaves is distilling,  
And they bloom beneath the smile of the All-seeing  
Eye.

They are loved by the few—like the rose, they re-  
mind us  
When tempted from duty's safe pathway to stray,  
We too have a place and a mission assigned us,  
Though it be but to grow by the side of the way.

## Religious.

### BAPTISMAL REGENERATION.

BY REV. C. H. SPURGEON.

(Concluded.)

"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world,  
and preach the gospel to every creature. He that  
believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he  
that believeth not shall be damned."—MARK 16:  
15, 16.

Here let me bring in another point. It is  
a most fearful fact, that in no age since the  
Reformation has Popery made such fearful  
strides in England as during the last few  
years. I had comfortably believed that Po-  
pery was only feeding itself upon foreign sub-  
scriptions, upon a few titled perverts, and im-  
ported monks and nuns. I dreamed that its  
progress was not real. In fact, I have often  
smiled at the alarm of many of my brethren  
at the progress of Popery. But my dear  
friends, we have been mistaken, grievously  
mistaken. If you will read a valuable paper  
in the magazine called "Christian Work,"  
those of you who are not acquainted with it  
will be perfectly startled at its revelations.  
This great city is now covered with a net-  
work of monks and priests, and sisters of  
mercy, and the conversions made are not by  
ones or twos, but by scores, till England is be-  
ing regarded as the most hopeful spot for  
Roman missionary enterprise in the whole  
world; and at the present moment there is  
not a mission which is succeeding to anything  
like the extent which the English mission is.  
I covet not their money, I despise their so-  
phistries, but I marvel at the way in which  
they gain their funds for the erection of their  
ecclesiastical buildings. It really is an alarm-  
ing matter to see so many of our countrymen  
going off to that superstition which as a na-  
tion we once rejected, and which it was sup-  
posed we should never again receive. Popery  
is making advances such as you would never  
believe, though a spectator should tell it to  
you. Close to your very doors, perhaps even  
in your own houses, you may have evidence  
ere long of what a march Romanism is mak-  
ing. And to what is it to be ascribed? I  
say, with every ground of probability that  
there is no marvel that Popery should in-  
crease when you have two things to make it  
grow; first of all, the falsehood of those who  
profess a faith which they do not believe,  
which is quite contrary to the honesty of the  
Romanist, who does through evil report and  
good report hold its faith; and then you have,  
secondly, this form of error known as bap-  
tismal regeneration, and commonly called Pu-  
neyism, which is not only Puseyism, but  
Church-of-Englandism, because it is in the  
Prayer Book, as plainly as words can express  
it—you have this baptismal regeneration pre-  
paring stepping-stones to make it easy for  
men to go to Rome. I have but to open my  
eyes a little to foresee Romanism rampant  
everywhere in the future, since its germs are  
spreading everywhere in the present. In one

of our courts of legislature but last Tuesday,  
the Lord Chief Justice showed his supersti-  
tion, by speaking of "the risk of the calami-  
ty of children dying unbaptized!" Among  
Dissenters you see a veneration for structures,  
a modified belief in the sacredness of places,  
which is all idolatry; for to believe in the  
sacredness of anything but of God and of his  
own Word, is to idolize, whether it is to be-  
lieve in the sacredness of the men, the priests,  
or in the sacredness of the bricks and mortar,  
or of the fine linen, or what not, which you  
may use in the worship of God. I see this  
coming up everywhere—a belief in ceremony,  
a veneration for altars, fountains, and churches—a  
veneration so profound that we must not ven-  
ture upon a remark, or straightway of sinners  
we are chief. Here is the essence and soul of  
Popery, peeping under the garb of a decent  
respect for sacred things. It is impossible  
but that the church of Rome must spread,  
when we who are the watch-dogs of the fold  
are silent, and others are gently and smoothly  
turning the road, and making it soft and  
smooth as possible, that converts may travel  
down to the nethermost hell of Popery. We  
want John Knox back again. Do not talk  
to me of mild and gentlemen, of soft man-  
ners and squeamish words, we want the fiery  
Knox, and even though his vehemence should  
"ding our pulpits into blades," it were well if  
he did but rouse our hearts to action. We  
want Luther to tell men the truth unmis-  
takeably, in homely phrase. The velvet has got  
into our ministers' mouths of late, but we  
must unrobe ourselves of soft raiment, and  
truth must be spoken, and nothing but truth;  
for of all lies which have dragged millions  
down to hell, I look upon this as being one of  
the most atrocious—that in a Protestant  
church there should be found those who swear  
that baptism saves the soul. Call a man a  
Baptist, or a Presbyterian, or a Dissenter, or  
a Churchman, that is nothing to me—if he  
says that baptism saves the soul, out upon  
him, out upon him, he states what God never  
taught, what the Bible never laid down and  
what ought never to be maintained by men  
who profess that the Bible, and the whole  
Bible, is the religion of Protestants.

I have spoken thus much, and there will be  
some who will say—spoken thus much bitter-  
ly. Very well, be it so. Physic is often  
bitter, but it shall work well, and the phy-  
sician is not bitter because his medicine is  
so; or if he be accounted so, it will not mat-  
ter, so long as the patient is cured—at all  
events, it is no business of the patient whether  
the physician is bitter or not, his business is  
with his own soul's health. There is the  
truth, and I have told it to you; and if  
there should be one among you, or if there  
should be one among the readers of this  
sermon when it is printed, who is resting on  
baptism, or resting upon ceremonies of  
any sort, I do beseech you, shake off this  
venomous faith into the fire as Paul did  
the viper which fastened on his hand. I pray  
you do not rest on baptism.

"No outward forms can make you clean,  
The leprosy lies deep within."

I do beseech you to remember that you  
must have a new heart and a right spirit, and  
baptism cannot give you these. You must  
turn from your sins and follow after Christ;  
you must have such a faith as shall make  
your life holy and your speech devout, or else  
you have not the faith of God's elect, and into  
God's kingdom you shall never come. I pray  
you never rest upon this wretched and rotten  
foundation, this deceitful invention of Anti-  
christ. O, may God save you from it, and  
bring you to seek the true rock of refuge for  
weary souls.

THE BAPTISM IN THE TEXT IS ONE EVIDENTLY  
CONNECTED WITH FAITH. "He that believeth  
and is baptized shall be saved." It strikes  
me, there is no supposition here, that anybody  
would be baptized who did not believe; or,  
if there be such a supposition, it is very  
clearly laid down that his baptism will be of  
no use to him, for he will be damned, baptized  
or not, unless he believes. The baptism of  
the text seems to me—my brethren, if you  
differ from me I am sorry for it, but I must  
hold my opinion and out with it—it seems to  
me that baptism is connected with, nay, di-  
rectly follows, belief. A man who knows that  
he is saved by believing in Christ does not,  
when he is baptized, lift his baptism into a  
saving ordinance. In fact, he is the best pro-

tester against that mistake, because he holds  
that he has no right to be baptized until he  
is saved. He bears a testimony against bap-  
tismal regeneration in his being baptized as  
professedly an already regenerate person.  
Brethren, the baptism here meant is a bap-  
tism connected with faith, and to this baptism  
I will admit there is very much ascribed in  
Scripture. Into that question I am not go-  
ing; but I do find some very remarkable  
passages in which baptism is spoken of very  
strongly. I find this—"Arise, and be bap-  
tized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the  
name of the Lord." I find as much as this  
elsewhere; I know that believer's baptism it-  
self does not wash away sin, yet it is so, the  
outward sign and emblem of it to the believ-  
er, that the thing visible may be described as  
the thing signified. Just as our Saviour said  
—"This is my body," when it was not his  
body, but bread, yet, inasmuch as it repre-  
sented his body, it was fair and right accord-  
ing to the usage of language to say, "Take,  
eat, this is my body." And so, inasmuch as  
baptism to the believer representeth the wash-  
ing of sin—not that it is so, but that it is to  
saved souls the outward symbol and represen-  
tation of what is done by the power of the  
Holy Spirit, in the man who believes in  
Christ.

What connection has this baptism with  
faith? I think it has just this, baptism is  
the avowal of faith; the man was Christ's  
soldier, but now in baptism he puts on his  
regimentals. The man believed in Christ,  
but his faith remained between God and his  
own soul. In baptism he says to the baptiz-  
er, "I believe in Jesus Christ;" he says to  
the church, "I unite with you as a believer  
in the common truths of christianity;" he  
saith to the onlooker, "Whatever you may  
do, as for me, I will serve the Lord." It is  
the avowal of his faith.

Next, we think baptism is also to the be-  
liever a testimony of his faith; he does in  
baptism tell the world what he believes. "I  
am about," saith he, "to be buried in water.  
I believe that the Son of God was metaphori-  
cally baptized in suffering; I believe he was  
literally dead and buried." To rise again  
out of the water sets forth to all men that  
he believes in the resurrection of Christ.  
There is a showing forth in the Lord's Sup-  
per of Christ's death, and there is a showing  
forth in baptism of Christ's burial and resur-  
rection. It is a type, a sign, a symbol, a  
mirror to the world; a looking-glass in which  
religion is as it were reflected. We say to  
the onlooker, when he asks what is the mean-  
ing of this ordinance, "We mean to set forth  
our faith that Christ was buried, and that he  
rose again from the dead, and we avow this  
death and resurrection to be the ground of  
our trust."

Again, baptism is also Faith's taking her  
proper place. It is, or should be, one of her  
first acts of obedience. Reason looks at bap-  
tism, and says, "Perhaps there is nothing in  
it; it cannot do me any good." "True,"  
says Faith, "and therefore will I observe it.  
If it did me some good, my selfishness would  
make me do it but inasmuch as to my sense  
there is no good in it, since I am blinded by  
my Lord thus to fulfil all righteousness, it is  
my first public declaration that a thing which  
looks to be unreasonable and seems to be un-  
profitable, being commanded by God, is law,  
is law to me. If my Master had told me to  
pick up six stones and lay them in a row I  
would do it, without demanding of him,  
"What good will it do?" *Cui bono?* is no  
fit question for soldiers of Jesus. The very  
simplicity and apparent uselessness of the or-  
dinance should make the believer say, "There-  
fore I do it because it becomes the better test  
to me of my obedience to my Master." When  
you tell your servant to do something, and he  
cannot comprehend it, if he turns around and  
says, "Please, sir, what for?" you are quite  
clear that he hardly understands the relation  
between master and servant. So when God  
tells me to do a thing, if I say, "What for?"  
I cannot have taken the place which faith  
ought to occupy, which is that of simple obe-  
dience to whatever the Lord hath said.  
Baptism is commanded, and Faith obeys be-  
cause it is commanded, and thus takes her  
proper place.

Once more, baptism is a refreshment to  
Faith. While we are made up of body and  
soul as we are, we shall need some means by

which the body shall sometimes be stirred up  
to co-work with the soul. In the Lord's  
Supper my faith is assisted by the outward  
and visible sign. In the bread and in the  
wine I see no superstitious mystery, I see  
nothing but bread and wine, but in that bread  
and wine I do see to my faith an assistant.  
Through the sign my faith sees the thing sig-  
nified. So in baptism there is no mysterious  
efficacy in the baptism or in the water. We  
attach no reverence to the one or to the other,  
but we do see in the water and in the baptism  
such an assistance as brings home to our faith  
most manifestly our being buried with Christ,  
and our rising again in newness of life with  
him. Explain baptism thus, dear friends,  
and there is no fear of Popery rising out of  
it. Explain it thus, and we cannot suppose  
any soul will be led to trust to it; but it takes  
its proper place among the ordinances of  
God's house. To lift it up in the other way,  
and say men are saved by it—ah! my friends,  
how much of mischief that one falsehood has  
done and may do, eternity alone will disclose.  
Would to God another George Fox would  
spring up in all his quaint simplicity and  
rude honesty to rebuke the idol worship of  
this age; to rail at their holy bricks and mor-  
tar, holy lecterns, holy altars, holy surplices,  
right reverend fathers, and I know not what.  
These things are not holy. God is holy; his  
truth is holy; holiness belongs not to the car-  
nal and the material, but to the spiritual. O  
that a trumpet tongue would cry out against  
the superstition of the age. I cannot, as  
George Fox did, give up baptism and the  
Lord's Supper, but I would infinitely sooner  
do it, counting it the smaller mistake of the  
two, than perpetrate and assist in perpetrat-  
ing the uplifting of baptism and the Lord's  
Supper out of their proper place. O my be-  
loved friends, the comrades of my struggles  
and witnessings, cling to the salvation of faith,  
and abhor the salvation of priests. If I am  
not mistaken, the day will come when we  
shall have to fight for a simple spiritual re-  
ligion far more than we do now. We have  
been cultivating friendship with those who  
are either unscriptural in creed or else dis-  
honest, who either believe baptismal regene-  
ration, or profess that they do, and swear be-  
fore God that they do when they do not. The  
time is come when there shall be no more  
truce or parley between God's servants and  
time-servers. The time is come when those  
who follow God must follow God, and those  
who try to trim and dress themselves and  
find out a way which is pleasing to the flesh  
and gentle to carnal desires, must go their  
way. A great winnowing time is coming  
to God's saints, and we shall be clearer one  
of these days than we now are from union  
with those who are upholding Popery, under  
the pretence of teaching Protestantism. We  
shall be clear, I say, of those who teach sal-  
vation by baptism instead of salvation by the  
blood of our blessed Master, Jesus Christ.  
O may the Lord gird up your loins. Believe  
me it is no trifle. It may be that on this  
ground Armageddon shall be fought. Here  
shall come the great battle between Christ  
and his saints on the one hand, and the world,  
and forms, and ceremonies, on the other. If  
we are overcome here, there may be years of  
blood and persecution, and tossing to and fro  
between darkness and light; but if we are  
brave and bold, and flinch not here but stand  
to God's truth, the future of England may  
be bright and glorious. O for a truly re-  
formed church in England, and a godly race  
to maintain it. The world's future depends  
on it under God, for in proportion as truth  
is marred at home, truth is maimed abroad.  
Out of any system which teaches salvation  
by baptism must spring infidelity, an infidelity  
which the false church already seems willing  
to nourish, and foster beneath her wing. God  
save this favored land from the brood of her  
own established religion. Brethren, stand fast  
in the liberty wherewith Christ has made you  
free, and be not afraid of any sudden fear  
nor calamity when it cometh, for he who trust-  
eth to the Lord, mercy shall compass him  
about, and he who is faithful to God and  
Christ shall hear it said at the last, "Well-  
done, good and faithful servant, enter thou  
into the joy of the Lord." May the Lord  
bless this word for Christ's sake!

To live and not to learn is to loiter, and  
not to live.