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"Not slothful in business : fervent in spirit."

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Poetry.

For the Christian Messenger.

The Mayflower.

Can there be aught on earth more fair
Than thou? Sweet emblem of our land!
Thy beautiful tints, thy fragrance rare;
Surpass the power of fairy's wand.

Thou art the first sweet gift of Spring,
Acadia's darling cherished flower!
To thee our hearts will ever cling,
And woo thee in thy native bower.

Let England boast the queenly rose,
And Erin love her shamrock fair;
No bud that blooms, nor plant that grows,
Can in their charms with thee compare.

What though the poets may not deign,
To sing thy praise in words that thrill,
We joy to know that thou dost reign,
Peerless among thy sisters still.

Thou art the name-sake of the bright
And balmy month of gentle May!
Thy memory thrills with magic might,
Our hearts, when we are far away.

Our land has scenes as fair as those
That charm beneath a sunnier sky;
And flowers more sweet than radiant glow,
In tropic climes of gorgeous dye.

Long may the Mayflower be our pride,
Long may Acadia flourish fair!
And may her sons, for ever abide,
Beneath her emblem—free from care.
Tremont, 20th April, 1866.

Religious.

Who are the Baptists?

[The following is an extract from a sermon preached by Rev. Dr. Cheney of San Francisco, at the request of the Association of that city. Being expected to use perfect freedom in presenting the history, faith, and polity of his own denomination, he prepared a discourse at once courteous in its tone, and trustworthy and frank in its expression.]

There are multitudes of people, and among them men of large intelligence in other respects, who think and speak of the Baptists, as if they were a people almost without a history. As examples of this style of thinking, note the following. A few years ago, Albert Barnes, in an elaborate article which he published in more than one of our speaking of the Baptists, said: "As a denomination they are but of yesterday; * * * for there were times, and those not remote in the history of the world, when the Baptist denomination was not." And he adds: "For more than three-fourths of the history of the church on earth, Christianity has made its way somehow among the nations, * * * without the Baptist idea that men must be immersed." In 1852, Dr. Nevins published an article in the *Mercersburg Review* in which, after speaking of the faith of the Baptists as "a new faith," and of their system as "a new system," a "thing comparatively of yesterday," he proceeds to apostrophize the new scheme as follows: "Who art thou, upstart system! that thou shouldst set thyself in such proud style above the universal church of antiquity?"

There are others, who suppose that the Baptists trace their origin to Roger Williams, the founder of Rhode Island; that he sustains a relation to the great Baptist family similar to that of Luther and Calvin, Robinson and Wesley, to the denominations with which their names are respectively associated. Roger Williams was an able expounder of some of the principles ever dear to the Baptists; as "soul liberty," the entire severance of church and state, and the immersion of believers as the only valid baptism. And he was the first man in this country who expounded these principles; but beyond this, Roger Williams was not the father even of the American Baptists. He baptized a little company at "Providence Plantations," the name he gave his new settlement, after he was banished from Massachusetts for his religious belief; but it is by no means certain that those persons perpetuated a ministry, through whom a single person was ever introduced into a Baptist church. The late Dr. Duncan, in his history of the Baptists, has shown quite conclusively that they did not.

The early Baptists of the United States came hither from the old world—for the most part from Wales. The first Baptist churches in New England, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania—the first in the order of time in the country—were largely of Cambrian or Welch extraction, embracing alike their ministers and private members.

The Welch Baptists claim their origin direct from the Apostles, and their claim has never been successfully controverted. They maintain that the light of a pure Christianity has been preserved among their people during all "the dark ages." True, there is no written history covering all this period, and probably there never will be. The circumstances under which they lived were altogether unfavorable to the gathering of materials for such a history. They were a pastoral people dwelling in their mountain homes. They were subjected to almost constant persecution, and therefore sought to conceal themselves in their mountain recesses, that have been so appropriately styled the "Piedmont of Britain." And yet the fact of their early existence is placed beyond peradventure or doubt. They attracted the attention of the Romish church, and as early as the year 597, a monk visited them, by the name of Austin, who sought to win them to his views. They met him in a great Convocation of twelve hundred pastors and delegates, when he laid before them three distinct propositions, all of which they rejected. The first related to the observance of Easter; the second required their submission to Austin as a prelate of the church which he represented; and the third demanded that they should give "Christendom," that is, infant baptism to their children. These conditions very clearly define the position of those to whom they were addressed and by whom they were rejected. They would not administer infant baptism; they would not yield to the demands of the English or Romish church; they would not observe a festival appointed by that church. And you observe the date of this occurrence. It was in the year 597, or nearly twelve hundred and seventy years ago.

The English Baptists are able to trace their principles and practices with great distinctness through a period of more than five hundred years. They are now, and have long been, a power in that land. The late Dr. Chalmers pronounced them, "for their number, the most intellectual body in England." Their annals are not only adorned by such names as Hall, Ryland, and Fuller, Carey, Marshman, and Ward; but in earlier times, by the names of Wickliffe, Bunyan, and Milton.

But, leaving the Baptists of England, we pass over to Continental Europe. And here we first meet the Dutch Baptists in Holland. That they are a very ancient people, we have the highest proof of history. Mosheim says: "The true origin of that sect, which acquired the name of Anabaptists, is hid in the remote depths of antiquity, and is consequently extremely difficult to be ascertained." Zwingle, the Swiss reformer, who was no lover of the Baptists, says: "The institution of Anabaptism is no novelty, but for thirteen hundred years has caused great disturbance in the church." As Zwingle died in 1531, his accusation would show that the Baptists date as far back, at least, as two hundred years after the death of Christ. But we have a better testimony than this. A few years ago, the king of Holland directed Dr. Dermont, his chaplain, and Dr. Ypeij, a theological professor, to prepare a history of the Reformed Dutch Church. In that history, they bear the following manly and generous testimony concerning the Dutch Baptists. They say: "We have now seen, that the Baptists, who were formerly called Anabaptists, and in later times, Miconites, were the original Waldenses, and have long in the history of the church received the honor of that origin. On this account the Baptists may be considered," they add, "the only Christian community which has stood since the apostles and as a Christian society, which has preserved pure the doctrines of the gospel through all ages." This, you will observe, is not Baptist testimony, but Reformed Dutch.

It is as true as it is manly and generous. Put this testimony with the accusation of Zwingle, that the Baptists had been disturbers of the church for thirteen hundred years be-

fore his day, and add to the two the record of Mosheim, that their origin "is hid in the remote depths of antiquity," and you have established as thoroughly as any fact of history can be established from this style of testimony, that the Baptists can successfully trace their genealogy far back towards the apostolic age.

Of the German Baptists we have little need to speak. Every reader of history knows that they were numerous not only in the times of Luther, but long before him. Of the part they bore in the reformation, Bancroft, the great American historian, himself not a Baptist, has made a noble record. He says: "With a greater consistency than Luther, they applied the doctrines of the reformation to the social positions of life, and threatened an end to priest-craft and king-craft, spiritual domination, titles, and vassalage. They were trodden under foot with foul reproaches and most arrogant scorn, and their history is written in the blood of thousands of the German peasantry; but their principles, secure in their immortality, escaped with Roger Williams to Providence, and his colony is witness that naturally the paths of the Baptists are paths of freedom, pleasantness, and peace."

Following the line of Baptist history, we must pass over the Alps into the vales and among the rocky fastnesses of Piedmont; for, as already shown from the testimony of Drs. Dermont and Ypeij, the Baptists were "the original Waldenses, and have long, in the history of the church, received the honor of that origin." That people have been known under different names, Waldenses, Albigenses, Cathari, Poor Men of Lyons and Vaudois; but, during the long dark ages of the church, they held fast the faith, and preserved the ordinances as they were delivered to the saints. They have been appropriately styled "the burning bush" of the Christian dispensation. The fires of persecution have raged around them, heated to the intensity of Nebuchadnezzar's furnace; but they have not been consumed.

Beyond this people we find the Paulicians, of whom the Empress Theodora caused no less than one hundred thousand to be put to death, and whom Robinson, the historian calls "Trinitarian Baptists." They first began to attract attention in the seventh century. In the fourth century the Donatists arose, holding the same general views; and in the third the Novatians.

But I need proceed no farther in this direction. These statements sufficiently indicate the line of inquiry by which we undertake to show that gospel churches such as were planted by the Saviour and his apostles, have been preserved through all the succeeding ages.

This glance at Baptist history is sufficient to establish several important propositions; as for example, that the Baptists did not come out of the church of Rome, either at the time of the Reformation, or at any other time; and for the best of all reasons; *they were never in that Church.* This view accords with the testimony of Sir Isaac Newton, who said: "The Baptists are the only body of Christians that has not symbolized with the church of Rome."

These statements also show that the Baptists have a history. In the light of such facts as have been given, it will hardly do to speak of them as "a people of yesterday," or of their system of faith and practice, as an "upstart system."

Again, this glance at the history of the Baptists shows, that they have always been the firm and consistent advocates of religious liberty. This has ever been a cardinal feature in their faith and polity, and by their maintenance of it they have made the Christian world greatly their debtors. Upon this point, were it needed, there could be given an array of testimony, of which the following is a sample. Said the late Judge Story, when speaking of the Baptists: "In the code of laws established by them in Rhode Island, we read for the first time since Christianity ascended the throne of the Cæsars, that declaration that conscience should be free, and men should not be punished for worshipping God in the way they were persuaded he required."

Nor is this all. The Baptists, in holding fast to this principle of religious liberty, have always yielded to others what they have

claimed for themselves. While they have suffered untold persecution for the truth's sake, they have never persecuted in return; while they have freely given their blood as martyrs for the truth, the blood of martyrs is not found upon their garments.

For the Christian Messenger.

Letters on Revision.

LETTER III.—THE WORDS IN ITALICS.

Let an observant reader take up an English Bible, and he will notice in it some words printed in *italic letters*. Being accustomed to find such words in other books *emphatic*, or of special importance, he attempts to give them their usual stress; but perceives he can not do it and make sense. He feels that he must now learn some new rule for the use of italics; and he can't help thinking, Why should there be an established rule for using italicized words in other books, and a different or contrary rule for their use in that one Book, which God gave for all to read and try to understand?

To this inquiry we would reply: In God's Book, as he gave it to men, are no such italicized words. But in translating that book into English, in order to give it full meaning it was thought necessary to use some words in the English where no corresponding words are found in the inspired Hebrew and Greek. Such words were printed with a different style of type, and are now found in italics. These italicized words in the Common Version, however, besides being unemphatic, often render a sentence less concise and forcible, and sometimes they manifestly encumber it. See Mat. 1: 6; 3: 15; 4: 25; 5: 20; 13: 17; 16: 2, 3.

If any word is necessary in English to give the full and exact meaning of the Hebrew or Greek original, that word is in reality a part of the translation, and should be printed with the same kind of letters as the rest of the translation. And if any word is not necessary to give the sense of the original, it should not have a place in the translation. These are now acknowledged principles; and their application to the New Testament by the learned revisers has swept entirely away the anomalous and cumbersome words in italics. See, in the Revised Testament, the passages last referred to.

Yet in a few instances, it may be desirable to indicate to the ordinary reader of the Scriptures, a meaning which the scholar clearly sees is *implied* in the original, although not fully expressed in the written words. In such a case, the reader might be embarrassed, or might overlook the implied meaning, and in consequence misapprehend the passage. In the Revised Testament, such a meaning, occurring in some twenty-six passages, is indicated by one or more words inclosed in brackets []. See *Jno. 7: 39. Rom. 9: 31, 32; 12: 6, 7, 8, 19. 1 Cor. 11: 20. 2 Cor. 12: 18. Gal. 2: 5.*

Brackets are also used to inclose passages that are wanting in most of the oldest and best manuscripts. See *Jno. 7: 53—8: 11. Rom. 11: 6. 1 Pet. 4: 14.*

AQUEDUS.

Sinking Peter.

"Beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me."—Mat. XIV. 30.

Sinking times are praying times with the Lord's servants. Peter neglected prayer at starting upon his venturesome journey, but when he began to sink, his danger made him suppliant, and his cry, though late, was not too late. In our hours of bodily pain and mental anguish, we find ourselves as naturally driven to prayer as the wreck is driven upon the shore by the waves. The fox lies to its hole for protection; the bird flies to the wood for shelter; and even so, the tried believer hastens to the mercy-seat for safety. Heaven's great harbor of refuge is All prayer; thousands of weather-beaten vessels have found a haven there, and the moment a storm comes on, it is wise for us to make for it with all sail.

Short prayers are long enough. There were but three words in the petition which Peter gasped out, but they were sufficient for his purpose, they reached the ear of Jesus.