

Christian Messenger.

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"Not slothful in business : fervent in spirit."

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Poetry.

SONG OF THE OLD DECANter.

There was an old decanter,
and its mouth
gaping wide; the
rosy wine had
ebbed away
and left
its crystal
side :
and the wind
went humming,
humming—
up and
down the
sides it flow,
and through the
reed-like,
hollow neck
the wildest notes it
blew. I placed it in the
window, where the blast was
blowing free, and fancied that its
pale mouth sang the queerest strains
to me. "They tell me—puny con-
querors!—the Plague has slain his ten,
and War his hundred thousands of the
very best of men; but I"—'twas thus
the bottle spoke—"but I have con-
quered more, than all your famous con-
querors, so feared and famed of yore.
Then come ye youth and maidens,
come drink, from out my cup, the
beverage that dulls the brain and
burns the spirit up; that puts to
shame the conquerors that slay their
scores below; for this has deluged
millions with the lava-tide of
woe. Though in the path of
battle darkest waves of blood
may roll; yet while I kill-
ed the body, I have
cured the very soul.
The cholera, the
sword such ruin
never wrought, as I, in mirth or
malice, on the innocent have brought.
And still I breathe upon them, and they
shrink before my breath; and year by year my
thousands tread the dismal road to death."

Religious.

For the Christian Messenger.

THOUGHTS ON ROMANS 6 : 3, 4.

"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death; therefore we are buried with him by baptism unto death," &c.

Mr. Editor,—

Conceiving that the following observations, copied from the Spiritual Magazine, are calculated to impress on the minds of believers, a sense of their privileges and obligations as represented in the significant ordinance of baptism, I request their insertion, if approved, in your valuable periodical.

Yours truly,
J. T. G.

Mr. Rutherford, in his Thoughts on Baptism, page 62, says, "In short, the observation of baptism, is an open declaration of a fixed faith in Christ Jesus, and an entire devotion of the subject to the service of the Triune God. In this solemn ordinance, we assert Christ to be our Prophet, that hath taught us the things concerning the Kingdom of God; Our Priest, who hath made an atonement for us; and our King who is to rule, govern and defend us; otherwise our submission is only a blind obedience; for the Father and his ways are only known to such as have a revelation of both from the Son. In this holy institution we profess to claim God for our father, husband and friend. Our father who hath made ample provision, and now prepared us for and granted free admittance to the children's bread. Our husband, in whom we possess all things, and are now brought home to enter upon the enjoyment. Our friend, with whom we take sweet counsel, and in fellowship with whom we have great delight. In baptism we declare that we are washed with the washing of regeneration and enlivened by the renewing of the Holy Ghost; for they must be clean, who come into the sanctuary of God, and alive, before they can walk in his commandments blameless. Moreover, in this ordinance we

profess to believe with all our hearts, that the Lord is our portion, his people our people, and his ways our ways; therefore, with all our souls, we devote ourselves wholly to God, for this weighty reason, we are not our own, but bought with a price; also with a firm resolution—to observe whatever he hath commanded, and with this important prayer that he would enable us to spend the residue of our days to his honor and glory.

For if our minds be exercised, and faith employed during the administration of this significant solemnity, we cannot but be impressed with the bitter baptism of our Saviour's salutary sufferings, when he was immersed in sin, overwhelmed in wrath, and plunged in the depth of agonies for us. Thus while we are indulged with soul-reviving views of our Father's love, and heart affecting prospects of our Saviour's sufferings, we cannot but long and pray, for the Holy Ghost to lead us into green pastures, and beside the still waters: so that we may drink deeper into the love of Jesus, and behold his beauty through the windows, while he shows his glory through the lattice. This being granted, in baptism we view the death of our surety, making atonement for our sins—his grave in which our guilt is buried, and his resurrection, whereby we enjoy the justification of life. In this figurative fountain, we behold the stream of grace, proceeding out of the throne of God, and the Lamb, and flowing into our souls, in virtue of the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus; and are led by faith to see a death to sin in our intellectual powers; the old man buried, and the new man in Christ rising to holiness of life. We have a prospect of the baptism of sufferings, to which we are called as pilgrims of Jesus. Nor does this grieve or disturb our spirits, while we behold the eternal God our refuge, and his everlasting arm our support. The entire bathing of our bodies in water represents the bathing of our souls in the blood of the Lamb. In going down into the water we have a lively sense of our implantation into Christ, and of sinking deeper into the love of God, which flows from the fulness of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. In passing through the element, we have a sweet symbol of our translation out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son. In coming up out of the water, we have the joyful prospect of a complete deliverance from all sin and sorrow; together with a triumphant resurrection from the grave of corruption, and an abundant entrance into the kingdom of bliss and glory. Finally, whatever is necessary to qualify a sinner for communion with God in his house below, is represented in baptism: as whatever is necessary to qualify a saint for communion with God in his house above, is represented in the Lord's Supper. They are outward and visible signs of the real substance, and cannot possibly be of the least advantage to the soul, further than faith is concerned and the understanding employed to behold the glory signified. Thus while we rejoice in the blessing, and feed thereon ourselves, we profess to others our confidence in, and devotedness to the great THREE-IN-ONE.

For the Christian Messenger.

PEN SKETCHES.—NO. 12.

LOAFERS.

In this active world of ours one would naturally expect man (gifted with powers of mind) very active, in harmony with all around him. Stars and suns working—clouds and winds—storms and hurricanes busy in the great laboratory of nature, soil seeds, flowers, and trees working—principles of truth and error leavening minds and moulding characters, and yet we find such anomalies in this working world of ours who may be called *Loafers*. They do not seem to have any ennobling ambition, nor any stir in their sluggish life. They look out from their Castle of Indolence upon the busy world with sleepy eyes, a haze seems to be before them, an inertness the characteristic of their being. In the church of Christ we find them—though they have

a kind of indistinct sense of their relation to Christ, that they are bought with a price, yet they do not realize the force of the natural sequence of it, that they glorify God with their bodies. They are like logs floated on the stream of circumstances and sometimes they are left high and dry, while religious thought and feeling pours in the direction of action, in behalf of precious souls' deliverance. To draw the most charitable conclusion we can, they seem to consult their own ease. They don't like to be disturbed. They are content to enjoy all the privileges they have taken a ticket through to heaven. As to work, why, that is out of the question. They want to enjoy an Elysium in this world. Their residence is in the immediate vicinity of the Poet's "Sleepy Hollow." Would that we could see them with the stir of life in their soul, and it would be manifest in their actions:—

In the world's broad field of battle,
In the bivouac of life;
Be not like dumb, driven cattle;
Be a hero in the strife.

Trust no future, how'er pleasant,
Let the dead past bury its dead,
Act—act in the living present,
Heart within, and God o'erhead.

JOHN.

For the Christian Messenger.

REVISION OF THE ENGLISH SCRIPTURES.

No. 7.

The hopelessness of the project of uniting all denominations in the work of revising the English Scriptures, forces us to the inquiry, whether the work is really needed, and, if so, how can it be successfully accomplished.

The need of the work is too frequently taken for granted. It is assumed by many that it is a very easy undertaking for scholars to correct all the errors and supply the defects of the Common Version, and that it stands upon the same footing as other works which require only learning and skill to translate accurately. And the same arguments are sometimes used for a faithful English version of the Sacred Scriptures, as would be employed on behalf of a faithful publication of Homer's Iliad or Virgil's Aeneid. But the cases are widely different.

If the Bible were merely a text-book of religion or morality, reasons abound for preserving it as it is. Suppose that it does differ in numerous instances from the Hebrew and Greek originals, in the main it agrees with them. If a doctrine is in some places obscured by an imperfect translation, in other places it shines out clearly. If errors of facts exist, truths superabound. If faults are apparent, beauties are multiplied.

And the version is now established.—Millions read it. The churches of the saints are edified, and sinners are converted, by its teachings. To disturb it, excites prejudice and opposition, and may, in some instances, unsettle the faith of weak minds. Why not let well enough alone, and do all the good you can with the book as it is?

These and many other arguments could, with a strong show of reason, be urged in the case supposed. But the real case is of another character.

The Author of the Book, and four relations to Him, must be regarded.

The nature and character of the communications, and their value to men, must be taken into account.

The effects of the errors and imperfections existing can not be overlooked.

The influence of the principles involved in the work of revision, upon the minds of God's people and the world.

The results of revision already realized; and the prospective results, among all nations.

All these and many other subjects of investigation are naturally suggested. To pursue the examination of such matters at length would indefinitely extend these ar-

ticles. Let us glance over them cursorily.

The Author of the Book is the same Being who made all things and by whom all things subsist, through whom alone we know anything, and on whom we depend for all things. In it He reveals himself.—Suppose that there was only one mistake in the book, and that mistake concealed or obscured His Godhead. Take for instance 2 Peter i. 1, where occurs in the Common Version the phrase: "God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." If any friend of the Redeemer knows, as all scholars know, that the original Greek says: "OUR GOD AND SAVIOR, JESUS CHRIST;" would he be willing to conceal this fact from all who read the Bible by retaining the old erroneous translation? Would any arguments of expediency satisfy him thus to dishonor Him who had come from his throne of glory, assumed our nature, suffered and died for us?

Our relations to Him are of the most influential character. We are his creatures, his subjects, his redeemed. He has pardoned us as rebels, restored us to favor, called us his friends, adopted us into his family. We owe everything to Him. Shall we hide his greatness and his glory from the world? Shall we not rather make every sacrifice to reveal them more clearly?

What directions does He give in such cases? At the close of the Revelation He says: "I testify to every one that hears the words of the prophecy of this book, if any one shall add to them, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; and if any one shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his part from the tree of life, and out of the holy city, which are written of in this book."

The communications conveyed to our race in the Sacred Scriptures, are of infinite value. The wisdom of Jehovah could not add anything to render it more important, that men should study and believe the words of revelation. Their immortal interests depend upon them.

Mistakes in such matters are of the highest consequence. Error here may be eternal ruin. It is not a certain safeguard, that in some part of the book a doctrine important to man is clearly revealed in this translation, if, in another part, where the original is clear, error or obscurity perverts or conceals the truth to the ordinary reader. He may stumble and fall over the defective translation.

Nor is it sufficient that some commentary may explain the fault and furnish the proper rendering. He may never see a commentary on the passage.

Hundreds have lived in sorrow and died in despair on account of the word "damnation" in 1 Cor. xi. 29.

Thousands have become infidels in consequence of false translations of the Old Testament and in the New.

Before examining the influence of the principles involved in revision, we shall here introduce some of the comparisons between translations in the Common Version and in the Revised Testament and Genesis and Job, as published by the Bible Union.

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BEAUTIFUL INCIDENT.

A rare and beautiful incident occurred last week on Monday evening in Detroit, at the closing services of the ordination of Bro. Young as pastor of the German Baptist Church. The congregation were requested to sing the Doxology.

"Praise God from whom all blessings flow," to the tune of *Old Hundred*. There were present, Germans, French, and Americans, and they all united in singing it each in their own tongue. It was a beautiful and harmonious blending of different languages in one sentiment and voice, showing impressively how God is bringing the nations of the earth together, and what will be the harmonies of Heaven. Perhaps just such an incident never occurred before. It was truly affecting.