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Poetry.

NEAR THE CROSS.

Where can man, all vile within,
Far from God, undone by sin,
Life, and peace, and pardon win?
Near the Cross.

Prone to evil from a child,
Helpless, hopeless, lost, defiled,
Where can he be reconciled?
Near the Cross.

Where will God His mercy show?
Where will love to Jesus grow?
Where will faith and virtue grow?
Near the Cross.

Where do sweetest pleasures spring?
Where do Christians loudest sing,
And together closest cling?
Near the Cross.

Where do saints when racked with pain
All-sufficient grace obtain?
Where they every blessing gain—
Near the Cross.

Our imperfect prayers arise
With acceptance to the skies,
While in faith we lift our eyes.
Near the Cross.

Heavenly Father! hear our cry;
All our actions sanctify;
Let us live and let us die
Near the Cross.

Eye. J. C.

Religious.

THE BAPTISTERY IN TYRE.

BY REV. HENRY C. FISH, D. D.

I write this sitting on the ruins of ancient Tyre, on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea. As the subject of prophecy, especially by Ezekiel, and a city of vast influence in the days of its glory. Tyre possesses a thrilling interest to the thoughtful visitor. I have time to speak, however, of only one thing. We were fortunate enough to reach here when excavations are being made, under German patronage, by Prof. Sepp, on the site of the famous church edifice, built about the year 315 after Christ, by Paulinus, Bishop of Tyre. Eusebius preached at its dedication. The sermon is in his "Ecclesiastical History."

Prof. Sepp received us very cordially, and showed us some wonderful columns of red granite, and other remains, some of them, probably, of a heathen temple that once stood on the same site. Judge of our interest when he said, "Here is the old baptistery," as we stood beside a marble structure, close to the wall, evidently as old as the church, and an original part of it. I took my tape-measure and noted the dimensions. It is of white marble, in the shape of a cross. There are four steps at either end, leading down into it, and a hole is seen on the level of the floor for letting out the water. The extreme length, inside, is 5 feet and 6 inches. The depth is 3 feet. The width 3 feet and 7 inches. Prof. Sepp said, "They immersed people here."

After a little I said, "did they not also baptize the children?"

He replied, "Oh, no; they only baptized the grown people then."

"But," said I, "is it not rather small, taking out the space occupied by the steps?"

He at once went down into it, and lowered himself below the level of the top, saying, "This is the way they baptized themselves."

As we know, candidates often knelt in the water, and projected the head and shoulders forward, doing it, perhaps generally, three times. There is ample room for this, as one readily sees. The officiating minister stood beside the baptistery. It is cut from a solid block; and the floor was somehow cracked, so that a false bottom of marble and cement was put in. One side is now pretty much broken away; otherwise it is in a good state of preservation. It will likely be removed, with other antiquities, to Germany.

Here, then, is a new witness for the ancient practice of immersion, and I feel a pleasure in having seen it and called attention to it. It must be remembered that this reaches back very far; and even if the baptistery were found to be less ancient than the church (which I feel sure is not the case), it would only strengthen the force of this evidence—showing the prevalence of the practice still later.

The celebrated Origen was buried in this church; so was the great Emperor Frederick Barbarossa. This very day a tomb under the church floor was opened, and I saw the bones and parts of the shroud. Perhaps it was Origen's, or Barbarossa's.

Four renowned names are thus connected with this silent, but eloquent witness for scriptural baptism, entombed for centuries under some ten feet of rubbish. These names are Eusebius, Origen, Paulinus, and Barbarossa. Add to this the fact that no church in all Phœnicia, as Eusebius says, compared with this for size and splendour. It was 216 feet long, and 136 feet broad, and had a tower which he describes as "rising to the heavens," and "a quadrangular space (for the audience), with inclined porticoes, supported and adorned with pillars on every side." Specimens of these splendid rose granite columns remain.

Tyre early became a Christian city. Paul, on his visit to Jerusalem from Greece, found disciples here, with whom he spent a week, and on parting with them on this same sea shore, "they kneeled down and prayed." And there are no other foundations of an original church edifice, in any state of preservation like this, so ancient, in all the world. That founded by Helena at Jerusalem, by the Holy Sepulchre, is twenty-one years later, and almost no part of it remains.

All these facts give interest and importance to the discovery of this noble monolith. If an exquisite font or basin, holding a pint or two of water, had here been exhumed, evidently used for baptism, and no baptistery, it had been seized upon as strong proof of the antiquity of sprinkling. Let equal justice be done in this case. I have seen the baptisteries at Florence and Pisa. Both are antiquities of great interest; but they are modern as compared with this. It is stated that there is one of a very early period at Constantinople. I shall make inquiries as to it when we visit that city.

ROMAN CATHOLIC LOYALTY!

It is a good omen for the human race as they stand at the threshold of the last quarter of the nineteenth century, that the Pope of Rome considers their condition hopeless. In his latest discourse, delivered in answer to the congratulations of the season offered to him by the College of Cardinals, he echoes, in doleful notes, their opinion of the miserable state to which the world has been brought. His only consolation, he tells them, is that the bad—that is, all who do not accept himself as the vicergerent of God—"shall go and burn eternally in the inextinguishable fires of hell." The spirit animating the wail is one of angry, we might say ferocious, irritation; and it is only too clear that, if the Pope's power coincided with his will the people whom he calls the "tares" would have a very bad time of it here as well as hereafter. But his power is now almost nil; so he enjoins his followers to accept the situation as best they can, and to reconcile themselves to the destiny which mixes them up with the enemies of the Church, whom they shall one day have the pleasure of trampling under foot. At the moment when Dr. Manning, with teeth set, and in words of studied quietness that breathe the intensest passion, is replying to a writer in *Macmillan* who has pierced the Archbishop's coat of mail and driven his sword home to the quick, it is instructive to mark what the Pope says. Dr. Manning repudiates the notion that

the Vatican decrees have the slightest influence on the allegiance of subjects to their rulers; but what are the words addressed by Pius IX. to the Italians? He tells them to abstain from recognizing the Italian State at all! Of course he has often said the same thing before; but it is instructive to note its repetition, and that in a more emphatic form than ever, at the very hour in which his English agent is denying that the Papal claims involve any interference whatever with the civil allegiance of the Roman Catholic. Dr. Manning really presumes too much on the good nature of this Protestant nation. Though he has himself ceased in spirit to be an Englishman, he ought not to forget that his fellow-countrymen have common sense and a regard for the truth. The Pope himself declares that a good Catholic cannot enter the Legislature of the Italian Kingdom; and that one fact scatters to winds all the allegations advanced by the frontless Archbishop at Westminster.—*London Freeman.*

A REVIVAL.

Probably the time never was when our churches so generally as now expected to enjoy a revival of religion in their midst. The severe business revulsions of the year past, the poverty and suffering so widely experienced, the appalling casualties and calamities which have swept away wealth and carried sorrow and mourning to so many firesides, have all been adapted to turn the thoughts of men from things transitory and fleeting, to things eternal. The public mind has been in a state of unrest. In consequence of this, the week of prayer was anticipated by many as the time when there would be witnessed the special manifestations of saving power. With this expectation the last week was observed by the churches more generally than ever before. Night after night, Christians met to pray, and they found it good to do so. In very many churches there were cheering indications of the Spirit's presence. Christians felt their spiritual graces quickened; and this is in the true sense a revival. It is a reviving of spiritual emotions and enjoyment, a renewed engagedness in the service of Christ. Ordinarily this precedes the ingathering of souls to the kingdom of Christ. The conversion of sinners is the legitimate result of a religious revival in the church. To use the figurative language of Scripture, when Zion (the church) travails she shall bring forth children. Souls shall be converted unto God. The church of Christ—the family of the redeemed—is to be the grand agency in bringing men to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

No more important subject can now engross the minds of Christians than that of saving sinners. Our churches have come very largely to feel that a work of grace is rarely to be expected except in the winter season. The great fields are white unto the harvest. Souls are perishing every day; and without a mighty work of grace by which they shall be rescued, what multitudes will go down to perdition.

The philosophy of such a work is divine, yet simple. There is not a Christian who may not understand it if he will take the plain teachings of Christ and follow them. There is not a child of God so poor or humble in life, that he cannot have power with God and with men. There is not a church of Christ so few in numbers and limited in pecuniary means that God will not come in mighty power and save sinners there, if that church will accept the conditions; for "it is not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith God." Hence it is that every church and every Christian must answer the question whether a work of grace shall be enjoyed in their midst this winter. There is no time to be lost. By humiliation and prayer the individual heart of Christians must be brought into closer sympathy with Jesus, and then, praying for the salvation of men they must labor for it.

Let the life exemplify Christ as the sinner's Savior, and men will be led to seek him.—*Era.*

SPURGEON'S LECTURE ON CANDLES.

At the annual meeting of the Pastors' College, held a week or two since the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon gave his lecture, "Sermons on Candles," with several new illustrations and emblems. He previously made some statements respecting the Pastor's College and those who had gone out from it:

In 1873—the statistics could not yet be obtained for 1874—197 pastors trained in the college had baptized 2,633 believers, and the total number of baptisms in the nine years from the commencement was, he believed, about 20,000.

A marble bust of Mr. Spurgeon was presented, preparatory to its removal to the large lecture-room of the new college. The bust is considered an excellent likeness.

Mr. Spurgeon then proceeded to redeliver his lecture on Candles, briefly explaining the origin of the lecture. While he was urging on students in the college the necessity of using illustrations in preaching, one of them asked him where illustrations were to come from, whereupon he replied that he would not give two-pence for a man who could not preach six months from a tallow candle, the result being that he set to work to find out illustrations from that source, which grew by development into the lecture now to be repeated, he went on to say that although Holy Scripture contained many allusions to candles, yet no such things existed in ancient times; the word translated "candle" signified, in fact, a lamp. He then quoted several texts in which the word "candle" was used in translations in the Old Testament, of the words of Job, David, Solomon, and Zechariah. When David said, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my steps," he alluded to a lantern like that. Here a round lantern was exhibited, about a foot high and with coloured divisions; and the lecturer observed that similar lanterns to that were still used in the East. Seven candles having been placed on the table which ran down gradually from full length to almost nothing, the lecturer remarked that that was the emblem by which old Quarles illustrated the seven stages of life. He then held up before the audience a black japanned candle box, observing that, though it might contain excellent wax candles, there could be no light unless they were illuminated, and that it might represent the case of a very respectable congregation either of the Established Church or of some dissenting denomination—a very respectable Independent, or Baptist, or Wesleyan congregation. They had got a very respectable minister, but nobody could understand him. The deacons were very respectable, but nothing else. If asked whether they had a ragged school, such men would reply that it would shock their wives to think of such a thing. Many persons were prevented from being useful by the notion of dignity or respectability. People must be got at somehow; and if it could not be done in the gentlest manner it must be done in some other manner. What was wanted was light to lead the ignorant to Christ. Some persons were born on the wrong day or in the wrong age to be of any use. One gentleman fancied that he might have been an Oliver Cromwell, and as an Oliver Cromwell was not wanted in his time he became a loafer on his father and mother. If such a person were set up in business he soon came down again. He was like a candle which had too fine a candlestick, the truth being that it was not the candlestick but the candle that was wrong. A guttering candle was afterwards snuffed out, and the emblem used to illustrate the case of Christians being so severe in reproving fellow-Christians as to

destroy all hope and confidence. He was not, he said, a great admirer of Professor Tyndall, but there was one remark of his about sleep he must quote. The professor said that all animals breathed through the mouth in sleep except man, and that man was very foolish to do it, and the best advice he could give him was, "Shut your mouth." So he (Mr. Spurgeon) would say in reference to the habit of repeating anything that tended to hurt a good man's character. In concluding, the lecturer denounced shams and counterfeits who created a prejudice against religion by objecting to all laughter; and having placed about twenty lighted candles of different colours on the table, spoke of them as representing the different sections of the Christian Church, remarking that various denominations of Christians all gave the same testimony amid their apparent divisions, and adding, by way of illustration, that though he should himself have selected a "dip," if there had been one among the candles before them, the light that was shining was the same in all. The lecture occupied nearly two hours, and was listened to throughout with marked interest.

HOW TO GET HELPERS.

Another plan has just occurred to us. What a wonder that we were so slow in its discovery, when there it is—as plain as can be in the Bible—"Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest." This is a divine prescription. For ourselves and for our church we are resolved to try it. As we stand upon the threshold of another year, big with glorious possibilities, let us resolve to try it all along the line. Let this be the burden of our private and our public prayers. Let special meetings be appointed for the purpose. Get all the good people in the church, so many of whom are outside the school, to join you in your supplications, and presently, if we are not mistaken, some of them, as they pray, will be moved to say, "Here am I, send me."—*Baptist Teacher.*

A PERFECT HOME.

The most perfect home I ever saw was a little house into the sweet incense of whose fires went no costly things. A thousand dollars served as a year's living of father, mother and three children. But the mother was a creator of a home; her relations with her children were the most beautiful I have ever seen, even the dull, commonplace man was lifted up and enabled to do good work for souls by the atmosphere which this woman created; every inmate of her house involuntarily looked into her face for the keynote of the day, and it always rang clear. From the rosebud or clover leaf which, in spite of her hard housework, she always found to put by our plates at breakfast, down to the story she had on hand to read in the evening, there was no intermission of her influence. She has always been and always will be my ideal of a mother, wife, and a home-maker. If to her quick brain, loving heart and exquisite face had been added the appliance of wider culture, hers would have been absolutely the ideal home. As it was, it was the best I have ever seen.—*Helen Hunt.*

ABANDONING CELIBACY.—An old Catholic priest in Switzerland is about to follow Father Hyacinthe's example, abandoning celibacy. St. Ange Lievre, of Biel, in announcing his betrothal to a Protestant lady, says: "I marry because I wish to remain an honourable man. In the sixteenth century it was a proverbial expression to say 'as corrupt as a priest,' and this might be said to-day. I marry, therefore, because I wish to get out of the Ultramontane slough." During the last two years sixty-seven Roman Catholic priests have been convicted of