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Poetry.

The Great Harvest Field.

Mat. 9: 37, 38.

Oh! what a harvest field,
Presents itself to view;
The work at home, the work abroad
And laborers are few.

So many millions now
Of every tongue and name,
That dwell upon this spacious earth
By nature are the same.

All going on in sin,
Led by the carnal mind;
The way of peace they have not known,
Alas! they all are blind.

Their souls beyond all price,
Their worth no tongue can tell;
And while eternity endures,
Must live in Heaven or Hell.

"Go out!" The master said—
"In the highways of sin;
And tell them of the Gospel Feast,
Compel them to come in."

Now Jesus calls to you,
Come to the feast to day
For Heaven is waiting for you now;
Oh! come without delay.

Dear Lord, make known thy power
To draw our heads to thee,
May we accept thine offered grace
And live eternally.

Upper Gagetown. G. W. Coy.

Who was the Founder of the Baptist Denomination in America?

It has occurred to me that inasmuch as many have not had the privilege of seeing historical statements, it might be desirable to show what historians have said concerning the establishment of the first American Baptist Church.

"Staples, in his annals of Providence, says: 'There were two Baptist Churches in Providence as early as 1656; one of the six principle, and the other of the five principle Baptist. This appears from a manuscript diary kept by John Comer, a Baptist preacher in Newport.'

"Comer, in his manuscript, spells Wickenden's name, as it was probably pronounced, *Wigginton*; and his exact words are: 'Mr. William Vaughan, finding a number of Baptists in the town of Providence, lately joined together in special Church covenant, in the faith and practice, and under the inspection of Mr. William Wigginton, being heretofore members of the Church under Mr. Thomas Olney, of that town, he—i. e., Mr. William Vaughan—went thither in the month of October, 1652, and submitted thereto (to the imposition of hands) upon which he returned to Newport, accompanied with Mr. William Wigginton and Mr. Gregory, Dexter, etc.'"

"Mr. Callender says: 'About the year 1653 or 1654, there was a division in the Baptist Church at Providence, about the rite of laying on of hands, which some pleaded for as essentially necessary to Church communion, and the others would leave indifferent. Thereupon they walked in two churches; one under C. Browne

Wickenden, etc.; the other under Thomas Olney.'

"Mr. Backus, the historian, as quoted by Mr. Adlam, says: 'Thomas Olney, Senior, also died this year, (1682). He was sent to Mr. Williams, in the pastoral office at Providence, and continued so to his death, over that part of the Church who are called five principle Baptists, in distinction from those who parted from their brethren about the year 1653, under the leading of Elder Wickenden, holding the laying on of hands upon every Church member.' "Two things"—says Mr. Adlam—"show that the existing is the seceding Church. 1st. Every writer, including the record, mentions Browne, Wickenden and Dexter, as former pastors of that Church. 2nd. The present Church, from 1652 until 1770, was known only as six-principle, while Olney's was the five-principle Church. From this follows that the existing Church in Providence was not founded in 1639, but in 1652, it was not the first Church in the State, for it came out from an older Church; it is not the oldest of the Baptists in America, for the Newport Church was founded unquestionably, eight years before; and so far from Roger Williams being its founder, and its first pastor, he was in England when it was founded; and thirteen years before he had ceased to be a Baptist. It also follows that the time when Roger Williams was baptized, has nothing to do in determining the age of the present Church."

Mr. Adlam speaks as follows, concerning the old Olney five-principle Church: "A melancholy interest invests the last notice we have of this ancient Church. It continued till early in the last century, when it became extinct, leaving no records, and but few events in its history behind. The fullest information of it I have found, is in a note by Callender, on the 115th page of his discourse. Speaking of this Church, he adds below: 'This last continued till about twenty years ago, when, becoming destitute of an elder, the members were united with other Churches; and further adds, 'At present there is some prospect of their re-establishment in Church order.' This was written 1738. The Church had then been extinct about twenty years; and that it lost its visibility about 1718. Morgan Edwards says, that the Church under Olney continued till 1715; so that it continued, after the division in 1682, for more than sixty years, when, discouraged, they scattered, never to be united again. And thus passed away the original Church, and the waves of time have almost obliterated its remembrance from the minds of men. Callender indeed thought, when he wrote, that it might be re-established, and in this he would have rejoiced, as it would have afforded him a Church that would hold communion with him and with the people under his care; but he was disappointed, and for more than one hundred and thirty years the old Church in Providence is among the things that were."

"Comer, the first, and for the early history of our denomination, the most reliable of writers, ascribes, distinctly and repeatedly, this priority to the Newport Church. He had formed the design, more than a hundred and twenty years ago, of writing the history of the American Baptists; and in that work, which he only lived to commence—but which embraces an account of this—he says in one place, 'that it is the first of the Baptist denomination.' And, closing his history of it, says, 'Thus I have briefly given some account of the settlement and progress of the first Baptist Church of Rhode Island, in New England, and the first in America.'"

There is a note in the Minutes of the Philadelphia Association that says: "When the first Church in Newport, Rhode Island, was one hundred years old, in 1738, Mr. John Callender, their minister, delivered and published a sermon on the occasion."

On the tomb stone of Dr. John Clark, it is emphatically stated, and graven in the rock, that Dr. John Clark, came to this Island in March, 1638, and that "he shortly after gathered the Church aforesaid, and became its pastor." Mr. Samuel Adlam—from whom I have already quoted several times—studied this matter for over

twenty-five years, and is said, by good authority, to be as familiar with it as any man living—said: "After all the investigations I have made, I have come to the conclusion that the true date of the Newport Church is 1638, and that any other is altogether arbitrary. My reasons for these views are the following: We know that in the year 1638, a Church was formed on the Island, and Dr. Clark became its pastor; and we have no information that that Church ever became extinct. On the Island, there is no allusion to such an extent in any record; nor does tradition even speak of our Church but as the original Church on the Island; other Churches came out from us—we form no other." There are several facts which I intended to call attention to as being established by these historical statements, but as my article is already longer than I intended, let the presenting of the points established by these documents suffice for the present.

1. The present Providence Baptist Church did not descend from the Roger Williams Society.

2. The present Providence Baptist Church is not the oldest Baptist Church in America.

3. The Newport Baptist Church is doubtless the oldest Baptist Church in America that we have any knowledge of, and that its having been organized in 1638, and the Roger Williams Church—so called—having been formed in 1639, it is then one year the senior.

Respectfully,

J. C. BLEAKNEY,

Lawrencetown, N. S., Sept. 30th, 1879.

P. S.—There are several typographical errors in my last. Statement 2 should read "perpetuity of the Church," and "Tri-Lemma."

J. C. B.

For the Visitor.

Successful Prayer.

BY REV. L. C. STEVENS.

All prayer is not successful, we may fear that very much of what we hear is called prayer, is, if not solemn mockery at least "a mere chattering noise." It is pertinent, then, to ask, what prayer will be successful? Certainly the things asked for of God, must be right in themselves, for things wrong in themselves, with whatever importunity they are sought of God, will not be granted. So that the first condition successful of prayer, is that it be for things right in themselves.

But all things right in themselves though asked, God is not pleased to grant. Hence the second condition of successful prayer is, that it be for right things, that God is pleased to grant, or, in other words, that it be for things that God had purposed in Himself to do, before they were asked.

But what can our prayers do in causing things to be done, which God had already purposed to do? Nothing essentially, but much instrumentally. That is, just as much instrumentally as in any thing we do instrumentally. For it is here as in other things we do. We toil for a harvest of souls; but not one will be saved without God's power. Yet we act instrumentally. So in prayer. While a prayer is for what God purposed before we ask it, our asking has as much to do in procuring it, as any of our labors have to do in bringing a soul to Christ. All this must be; otherwise our praying has the impossible effect of causing God to do things, which He had not before thought of doing.

Another thought: If God, in answer to prayer, gives only that which He had already purposed to give, and if the giving follows the asking, apparently as effect follow cause, then it is plain what the relation is, which faith and the Holy Spirit sustain to successful prayer. For no faith will bring the smallest blessing, unless it be that faith, which is produced by the Holy Spirit. So that, if we ask for souls to be saved, the first question is, have we faith that God has given us by the Holy Spirit, that souls will be saved? There is one prayer—as certain to be answered as that God lives.

How then is the inquiry to be met in respect to the overcoming of natural obstacles, or the violation of natural laws in answering prayer? Will God violate natural laws? Will He shut the mouths of lions, prevent fire from burning, open prison doors when bolted, cause that the heavens give no rain for three years and six months? Yes, these things and the like He will do in answer to prayer when He gives the faith that asks them; for such faith is equivalent to a promise, that He will do them. How much such faith He gives we cannot say, we only know, that He will never refuse to answer it. Hence, in prayer, if we are to have success, we must begin by asking for the faith which is the gift of God, or the friend of the Holy Spirit.

Learning in the Ministry.

No learning ever comes amiss to one who has to interpret, expound and illustrate the word of God. The preacher who would instruct and edify the flock, and win men to the knowledge of the truth, must be a well-read and intelligent, as well as a devout man. He must subsidize all literature and science and art, so far as possible, for the purpose of enriching his discourse and illustrating and simplifying the truth. True learning will make sermons more simple and plain and easy to be understood, and not less so. It is half educated preachers who involve their meaning in a cloud of crude phrases and ill-chosen words, and astonish their hearers by loud-sounding adjectives. "How much learning it needs," said Archbishop Usher "to make these things plain." Hence the necessity of wide reading and observation on the part of the preacher. McCheyne was noted as a minister of great devoutness and spirituality, and a great winner of souls. But he did not undervalue learning. His biographer tells us that "in his days of most successful preaching, when, next to his own soul, his parish and his flock were his only care, he has been known to express a regret that he had not laid up in former days more stores of all useful knowledge; for he found himself able to use the jewels of the Egyptians in the service of Christ. His previous studies would sometimes flash into his mind some happy illustration of divine truth at the very moment when he was most solemnly applying the glorious gospel to the most ignorant and vile."

Learning in the ministry must never be preferred to piety; that was the grievous mistake in New England in the Standing Order, a century ago, a mistake which led to disastrous results. Better is piety without learning than learning without piety. But far better than either is piety conjoined with learning. The pulpit has suffered and may suffer from an excess of intellectualism, but it also may suffer from the lack of it. The religion that will meet the wants and do the work of the age must be an intelligent one. Especially must those who assume to be teachers of others have somewhat to teach. The care of the heart with students for the ministry, and with ministers themselves, must ever be the first thing; next to this, they should seek, as Lord Bacon did, to make all knowledge their portion. "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." D. F. L.

Scolding.

With some, scolding is chronic; says *Zion's Herald*. Life is one long fret. The flesh is feverish, the nerves unstrung, the spirit perturbed and in a state of unrest. The physical condition and the material surroundings may have a strong tendency to disturb our equanimity and to exasperate our feelings; but we are apt to bear in mind that the scolding never did any body any good, and withal grows to be very uncomfortable to the party who indulges in it. Inappropriate to anybody, scolding appears most hateful in parents and ministers. Set to be dispensers of kindness and love to those with whom they are more especially associated, it is horrible to see gall distilled instead of charity that blesses both parties. Scolding turns a household into a pandemonium, and a church into an inquisition. Bear in mind

that kindness and gentle speech are a great deal easier to practice than their opposites. Why practice the worst thing when harder? Arrest yourself in the indulgence of this bad habit right here. Begin now, and put yourself under bonds to be good-natured.

Items of Interest.

Dissenters from the Orthodox Church hitherto unrecognized by the State, are to have entire liberty of worship. This effects 12,000,000 Russian subjects.

The Rothchilds of Vienna have had a magnificent railway carriage built, which is to run between Paris and Vienna for the special convenience of members of the great banking firm in each city.

Matthew and John G. Vassar have given Vassar college \$10,000 for a new chemical and philosophical laboratory.

The British Museum has seven volumes of the catalogue relating to the collection of printed Sanscrit literature, and this is only one of the smallest departments of the great library.

A Chinese church, free of debt, was dedicated at Oakland, Cal., on August 3d, by Rev. Dr. Gibson, the head of Methodist missionary work on the Pacific Coast. Over one-half the cost of it was paid by the Chinese themselves. Several native preachers were present at the dedication. At Honolulu, in the Sandwich Islands, a Chinese church was also organized recently—of what denomination is not stated.

A Chinese boy belonging to one of the Mission schools at Peking, at a recent examination repeated the entire New Testament without missing a single word or making a single mistake. He is now committing to memory Dr. Martin's "Evidences of Christianity." He united with the Church last year, and he has dedicated his extraordinary talent to the service of God.

Mr. Spurgeon, says the *London News*, has been gifted by nature with a voice distinctly audible at the edge of a crowd of 10,000 persons in the open air, and his perfect mastery of his own language is never marred and spoiled, as the far inferior style of many highly educated people are apt nowadays to be, by the unseasonable intrusion of foreign idioms. But beyond and above these advantages he has the indefinable power of so saying what he wishes to say as to make it both immediately intelligible and permanently impressive to all who hear him.

Heaven is not a place fenced in to keep good people securely. Hell is not a place walled around to confine bad people. They are states of being. The golden gate of heaven is kind words. The pearly street, a sweet temper. The jasper walls, impulse. The mansions, a pure heart. The blessedness, congenial associations. And hell is the opposite of these in the soul. If we would be happier, nobler, and more blessed, we must live daily with that purpose in view, eschewing all evil, seeking that which is good. And if we would have heaven beyond, we must strive for heavenly-mindedness here. "Whoever a man soweth that shall he also reap."

Here is a fitting extract from Canon Farrar's new *Life of St. Paul*: "Paul, as he stands in the light of history; Paul, as he is preserved for us in the records of Christianity; Paul, as energetic as Peter, as contemplative as John; Paul, the hero of unselfishness, the mighty champion of spiritual freedom; Paul, a greater preacher than Chrysostom; a greater missionary than Xavier; a greater reformer than Luther; a greater theologian than Thomas Aquinas; Paul, the inspired Apostle of the Gentiles; the slave of the Lord Jesus Christ—this is the man whose career will best enable us to understand the dawn of Christianity upon the darkness alike of Jew and Gentile—the man who loosed Christianity from the ceremonies of Judaism and inspired the pagan world with joy and hope. The study of his life will leave upon our minds a fuller conception of the extreme nobleness of the man, and of the paths which he lived and died to teach."