

SABBATH MORNING.

BY MRS. EMILY HUNTINGTON MILLER.

O'er eastern hills the dusky night Steals out and leaves the rosy light; Pure as a soul unstained by sin The Sabbath morn comes softly in.

O, day of blessings, calm and sweet, We hail with joy thy coming feet. Six days the paths of toil we tread, To-day we share the rest of God.

Amid the battle's heat and din A space for free'r breath we win, And grateful for the sweet release, Our souls put on their robes of peace.

From suppliant hearts the voice of prayer Steals upward through the balmy air, Still as the light, O, grace divine! O'er all our darkened spirits shine.

Visitor Pulpit.

THE DUTY OF BAPTISTS TO TEACH THEIR DISTINCTIVE VIEWS.

SERMON BY DR. BROADUS BEFORE THE AMERICAN BAPTIST PUBLICATION SOCIETY.

CONTINUED.

1. MEANS AND METHODS OF PERFORMING THIS DUTY.

1. One of the best means of teaching our distinctive views to others, is the thorough instruction of our own people. Brethren of other persuasions need not be repelled or offended if they find us taking suitable occasion in pulpit discourses to teach our young members what Baptists believe, and why. If they perceive that we are not striking at them through our members, but in simplicity and sincerity are feeding our flock, they even may listen with interest. And then, if they choose to take these things to themselves, of their own accord and on their own responsibility, why, all the better, of course. But our young members greatly need such instruction, for their own sakes, and it is often grievously neglected. On a recent occasion a cultivated young lady stated that she had never in her life heard a word from the pulpit as to the relation between baptism and the Lord's Supper. And yet, she was the daughter of a well-known Baptist minister, and her pastors had been men of marked ability and earnest Baptists. Do you think it a rare case? You can find them by thousands. And we ought to teach these things in their measure, not only to our young members, but at home to the youth of our families. Suffer another fact for illustration: Years ago I knew a lad of sixteen, well educated for his years, whose father was a zealous and quiet influential Baptist layman, and his pastor an able and eloquent minister. The boy had been baptized, and with great joy and trembling had sat by his father's side and taken bread and wine in remembrance of Jesus. Some weeks later a Methodist preacher came through the country—a rare thing in that neighborhood—and after preaching he very tenderly invited all Christians to come to the Table of the Lord. The boy wanted to go, and knew of no reason why he should not, but thought he would wait till his older brother and sisters went forward, and as they did not he inquired on the way home, why it was, and, on reaching home, asked his father about it. The argument was made plain enough; but it was all new to him. Pastors, parents, and all had never thought it necessary to explain that matter to anybody. I mention these homely incidents with the hope of arousing such Baptists as my voice can reach to consider how it may be in their homes and churches. Nor shall this instruction be neglected in our Sunday-schools. The current Lesson system can of course make no immediate provision for such instruction, but it leaves ample room for it by giving lessons that embrace controverted matters, and it calculates that every denomination in its Lesson Helps will explain these matters according to its own views. It is clear then that Sunday-schools, connected with Baptist churches, ought to use Baptist helps for the study of the lesson. If some undenominational publications are so valuable for teachers as to be desired also, they ought to be used only in addition to those which explain according to Baptist beliefs. We do not withhold instruction in our Lord's other teachings, till his pupil has become a believer, and why should we withhold it as to his commands regarding church-membership and ordinances.

These benefits ought to follow from thus teaching our youth. First, it will restrain them from hereafter going to other denominations through ignorance. Some reasons for such change cannot be touched by instruction. But not a few take such a step because they were never taught the Scriptural grounds for Baptist usage, and so they readily fall in with the plausible idea that "one church is as good as another if the heart be right." There can be no doubt that well-meaning persons have

in this way been lost to us whom early instruction might have retained. Secondly, we may thus render them better Christians. I fully agree with an eminent Presbyterian minister who recently said, "We make people better Christians by making them better Presbyterians, better Methodists, Baptists, Episcopalians." There are some very excellent people in our time who think it a merit to be entirely undenominational, and who proclaim that they "love one church as well as another." But where not deluded such persons are few and exceptional; in general, the truest, most devoted and most useful Christians are strong in their denominational convictions and attachments. I repeat, then, that by proper instruction in our distinctive views we shall really make our young people better Christians. And thirdly we thus prepare them to explain and advocate these views in conversation, which is often called for, and when properly managed may be very useful.

2. If actions speak louder than words, we may practically teach our distinctive views by everything that builds up our churches in Christian character, and promotes their legitimate influence. Baptists are in some respects placed at serious disadvantage in consequence of trying to do their duty. They have not restricted their ministry to men who had a certain fixed grade of education, but have encouraged all to preach who felt moved to do so, and whom the churches were willing to hear. In this way they have greatly helped to meet the vast demand in our country, and have gained a powerful hold upon the masses. What would have become of the scattered millions in this new country, had it not been for the Methodists, the Baptists, and some others who have pursued a like course? But the result is, that we have a great mass of comparatively uneducated ministers and members. Moreover, our Episcopal and Presbyterian brethren brought over the sea the social influence derived from an Established Church; and this social superiority they have easily maintained in many of our cities, particularly as their ministry was at the same time restricted to men having considerable education. The result is, that while Baptists have many families of excellent social position and influence, and many ministers of high cultivation, yet in virtue of having a great number who are in these respects comparatively wanting, they have to bear, as a denomination, the odium of educational inferiority. I do not regret this as regards our past. I think our principle as to the ministry is right, and I rejoice that we have been able to take hold of the multitude. But we must strive earnestly to better this situation in the future, by steadily lifting up this great body of people as fast as we can. Whatever elevates the educational condition of our denomination, or gives more of social influence, provided this be not gained by worldly conformity, will help in securing respect and attention for our distinctive tenets. And a like effect will be produced by the increasing development of benevolence among our churches, and by a completer report of what is actually done.

3. If we wish to teach our distinctive views to others, it is necessary to understand those whom we propose to reach. I remember a teacher of Modern Languages, who would often elaborately explain some French or German or other idiom with which we had no difficulty at all, and then pass over as not needing any explanation many a phrase we could not understand. He knew the language he was teaching, but was not well acquainted with the language of his pupils. If we would in any way teach effectively, we must know how things look to the persons addressed, we must get their point of view. Now Baptists are not on the whole so ignorant of the denominational opinions of other Christians as they are of ours, because our circumstances have compelled us to give some attention to that matter. Yet we need a much better acquaintance with them if we would speak to any purpose, in public or in private. I respectfully urge upon all ministers, and upon intelligent private members of both sexes, that they shall study, by reading and by personal inquiry, each of the leading religious bodies with which they have to do, shall study them in three respects. (a) Inquire what are the characteristic peculiarities of this body of Christians, differentiating them from others. And if possible get at the fundamental opinions which account for these peculiarities. (b) Consider in what respects they particularly deserve our admiration, and, with the necessary changes, our imitation. Each denomination emphasizes certain aspects of truth or departments of duty, and will in regard to these present us a very instructive and inspiring model. (c) Strive to ascertain how they regard our tenets, practices, and spirit—what things in us they especially dislike, and with what they might easily feel sympathy. Such inquiries will help us in sev-

eral ways. They may restrain the tendency to react from what we regard as the errors of others into an opposite extreme, as Protestants have done with reference to some errors of Popery, and many Baptists with reference to prelatical or pastoral domination, to clerical support, etc. They may check the unconscious adoption or imitation of opinions, sentiments, or phrases which are inconsistent or at least incongruous in us, but which are not seldom to be observed among our people. We rejoice in that "Progress of Baptist Principles" among Pedobaptists which Curtis's book so well describes, and perhaps fail to inquire whether there be not a counter influence which may not be wholly beneficial. And then, this study of other denominations will enable us to adapt ourselves to those whom we would influence. When you address to Methodists an argument suited to High Churchmen, or vice versa, what in the world are you thinking about?

4. We should study the wise treatment of controverted topics. Upon this point, I venture to offer several practical suggestions, for what they are worth. (a) Years ago, I asked the now lamented Dr. Jeter how he managed about matters in dispute between us and other denominations. His reply was in substance: "I never go out of my way to avoid such topics, and never go out of my way to find them. When naturally suggested by my subject or the circumstances, I speak of them. And I try to speak without timid fear of giving offence, and without fierce vehemence as if taking hostility for granted, but just treating these matters, so far as I can, in the same tone with which I speak of other things." This seemed to me then, and still seems, an admirable statement of the course it is generally best to pursue. Some are constantly going out of their way to find such topics, through a bred and born love of controversy, or a mistaken judgement as to its necessity and benefits. Others go out of their way to avoid all disputed questions, and want nothing to do with controversy of any kind. This latter class might be advised to study the history, and recorded writings of a man named Paul. He did not shrink from controversy. Yea, and his Master and ours is polemical on every page of his recorded discourses—always striking at some error of evil practice of the people around him.

(b) Dr Jeter's plan may further suggest, what I think is true, that it is commonly better to treat these topics as they occur in our ordinary discourses. Set sermons have certain advantages—even public debates may still be useful in some few quarters, though most of us think their day of usefulness is passed. But set sermons forewarn our hearers holding different opinions to come with armor buckled and visor closed, while some excellent people take them as an invitation to stay away. They are no doubt sometimes appropriate and helpful; but in general the other course can scarcely fail to prove best.

(c) I think it very undesirable to connect sharp polemics with the actual administration of ordinances. Do not go into a defence of restriction of the Lord's Supper when about to take the bread and wine. Whatever you can say will repel some hearers, and deeply pain some others, while such a discussion can scarcely prove the best preparation for partaking. Try to bring out the sweet and blessed meaning of the ordinance, and to observe it with unpretending reverence and solemnity; and it will itself teach all concerned. I think Baptists often mar the wholesome solemnity of this ordinance, through the persuasion that they ought then and there to defend their restricted invitations. And when about to baptize, it is usually best simply to read the New Testament passages which give the history and significance of the ordinance, and then with solemn prayer and a carefully prepared and reverent administration of the rite to leave it and the Scripture to make their own impression. If an address or sermon be given, to present the practical lessons of baptism, especially that we should walk in newness of life, will be more seemly and often more convincing than to argue the proper subjects and proper action of baptism. Of course any such suggestion as this must be subject to exception, but I am persuaded it will generally hold good.

(d) We should use mainly arguments drawn from the English Scriptures, and from common experience or reflection, only occasionally those which depend on learning. Scholarship is greatly to be desired in ministers, and may we have much more of it; but the highest function of scholarship in preaching is to take assured results and make them plain to the general understanding, and certain through evidence which the unlearned can appreciate. If you pour a flood of learning about your hearer, and he remembers that two Sundays ago there was a torrent of learning from Dr. Somebody on the other side, then as he does not understand

and cannot judge, he is apt to conclude that he will not believe either of you. And do let us beware of using doubtful arguments as if they were conclusive.

(e) We may treat these subjects by other means as well as by preaching. Many opportunities will occur in conversation, for one who has a cultivated social tact and conversational skill, to relieve some prejudice, parry some thrust, or suggest some point for research or reflection, far more effectively than it can be done in the pulpit—and this without unpleasantly obtruding such subjects, or in any wise violating the delicate proprieties of life. And carefully chosen tracts, books, or periodicals will often reinforce the sermon or conversation, or even reach some who would not listen to any public or private spoken words. We have already a great wealth of good literature of this kind, with which preachers and intelligent private members should make themselves as thoroughly acquainted as possible, so that they may know how to select precisely the most suitable for every case—a matter of the very highest importance.

(f) We must always speak of controverted subjects in a loving spirit. Baptists occupy of necessity a polemical position; let us earnestly strive to show that it is possible to maintain a polemical position in the spirit of true Christian love. This is really good policy; and what is ten thousand times more: it is right.

5. Let us gladly cooperate with our fellow-Christians of other persuasions in general Christian work, as far as we can without sacrificing our convictions. Men who think ill of us are sometimes sorely perplexed. They say, "Look at these narrow-minded, bigoted, 'close-communion' Baptists, how zealously they work in our Union enterprise, how loving they seem to be—I don't quite understand it." It is well to increase this perplexity. At the same time we must not allow our conscientious differences to be belittled. Sometimes in a Union service you will hear a well-meaning and warm-hearted man begin to gush, till at length he speaks quite scornfully of the trifles that divide us. In such a case one must find some means of diverting the dear brother's mind to another topic, and either publicly or privately inform him that such talk will not quite do. Indeed this is coming to be better understood than was the case a few years ago. In Young Men's Christian Associations, for example, one seldom encounters now the unwise speeches in this respect that were once somewhat common. We must learn how to distinguish between abandonment of principles and mere practical concessions in order to conciliate—a distinction well illustrated for us in Acts xv. and in Paul's action as to Titus and Timothy. In the case of Titus the apostle would not yield an inch, would not give place for an hour, because a distinct issue of principle was made; and shortly after he voluntarily did in the case of Timothy what he had before refused, there being now no issue of principle. It may sometimes be difficult to make the distinction, but that is a difficulty we may not shirk. One of the great practical problems of the Christian life, especially in our times, is to stand squarely for truth and squarely against error, and yet to maintain hearty charity towards Christians who differ with us. This assuredly can be done. The very truest and sweetest Christian charity is actually shown by those who stand most firmly by their distinctive opinions.

6. Finally, let us cultivate unity among ourselves. The Baptists of this vast country are in fact united. Dr. Barnas Sears, who had exceptional opportunities of observing, spoke to me not long before his death of the fact that our Theological Seminaries are all teaching the same doctrines without any central authority to keep them united. And the fact is more general. Apart from mere exorcism, American Baptists are wonderfully agreed, wonderfully if you remember that it is an agreement reached and maintained in perfect freedom. This unity becomes more manifest to any one in proportion as he gains a wider acquaintance. For example—pardon my taking local names to illustrate—there is many a brother in Mississippi, with no knowledge of New England, who if he should spend a few weeks in Boston, would be astonished to find himself surrounded by real, right-down Baptists. And if some brother in New England should go among those dreadful Landmarkers, whom they have seen so severely censured by newspapers that do not seem to know even the meaning of the term, they would conclude that most of the said Landmarkers are really very much like themselves, and not dreadful at all. Dr. Fuller was fond of giving a story told by William Jay. Mr. Jay walked out one day in a dense English fog. Presently he saw approaching him a huge and monstrous object that made him start. As they drew nearer together, it assumed the shape of a gigantic

man. And when they met, it was his own brother John.

And American Baptists are becoming more united just now. A few years ago there was in some quarters a movement towards the propagation of "Open Communion," which at a distance awakened concern. But the estimable brethren engaged in that movement have gone in peace, or have peacefully subsided into quiet. And in some other quarters ultraists are losing influence, and brethren who once followed them seem now disposed, not at all to abandon any principle, but to avoid pushing differences among ourselves into an occasion of denominational disruption. So the general outlook is now very encouraging.

Let us cultivate, I say, this unity among ourselves. In order to do so, our watch-words must be freedom, forbearance, patience. There can be no constrained unity among us. The genius of our ideas and institutions quite forbids it. That newspaper, seminary, or society which undertakes to coerce American Baptists into unity, will soon weary of the task. We must be forbearing and patient, and not discouraged by many things which under the circumstances are to be looked for. Competing journals and other institutions may get up an occasional breeze; each great city may show a too exclusive interest in societies there located—that is natural, if not wise; personal rivalries may sometimes curiously complicate themselves with questions of principle and of general expediency—it may cause regret, but need not cause wonder; East and West may pull apart in some respects, and North and South; even the "celestial minds" of our noble women may not always perfectly agree about organization; we cooperate fully in some matters, partially in some, perhaps work separately in others, yet with hearty fraternal kindness—but let us cultivate freedom, forbearance, patience, and we shall be substantially united, more and more.

This growing unity among ourselves gives us increasing power to impress our denominational opinions upon others. And the more zealously we strive to teach our distinctive views to others, the more we shall become united among ourselves.

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