

force, Clarkson, Buxton, Sharp, and blew up the whole abominable institution of slavery, making true the saying which is written, "Slaves cannot breathe the air of England."

The moment that Knibb heard that the Reform Bill had passed the British House of Commons, he exclaimed, "Now I'll have slavery down! I will never rest day nor night till I see it destroyed root and branch." As a proof that his opposition to slavery was the outcome of his interpretation of the great commission, take this extract from his first speech delivered in England on his return from Jamaica—"I daily and hourly feel that the questions of colonial slavery and of missions are now inseparably connected; that British Christians must either join with me in an attempt to break the chain with which the African is bound or leave the work of mercy and the triumphs of the Redeemer unfinished and abandon the simple and oppressed Christian slave to those whose tender mercies are cruelty." During this impassioned speech, one of the cautious officials of the Baptist Missionary Society is stated to have pulled the tail of Knibb's coat by way of admonition; but Knibb went on—"believing as I do that the African and the Creole slave will never again enjoy the blessings of religious instruction or hear of the benefits of that Gospel which Christ commanded to be preached among all nations unless slavery be overthrown, I now stand forward as the unflinching and undaunted advocate of immediate emancipation. I plead for liberty to worship God on behalf of thirty thousand Christian slaves of the same faith as yourselves and if the friends of missions will not hear me, I hope that the God of missions will Aided by British Christians and by Africa's God, I will never cease to plead for the people's love till we wave the flag of liberty over departed colonial slavery, shout with melodious harmony its funeral dirge and proclaim as we leave the spot in which we have entombed the greatest curse that has ever stained the annals of missions, 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will to men.'" This vow registered in such dramatic fashion was literally fulfilled in that memorable midnight celebration in Jamaica when Knibb accompanied by a great multitude of emancipated blacks dug a grave, cast into it the hated symbols of slavery and sang the doxology at the close.

Stanzas from the little poem by Tennyson, seem appropriate here.

Once in a golden hour  
I cast to earth a seed,  
Up there came a flower,  
The people said, a weed  
To and fro they went  
Through my garden bowers  
And muttering discontent  
Cursed me and my flower  
Then it grew so tall  
It wore a crown of light,  
But thieves from o'er the wall  
Stole the seed by night  
Sowed it far and wide  
By every town and tower  
Till all the people cried,  
"Splendid is the flower"  
Read my little fable  
He who runs may read,  
Most can grow the flowers now  
For all have got the seed.

We are glad they've got it. We rejoice to see the splendid passion flower of soul liberty blossoming far and wide in the fields of Nonconformist doctrine; but we think our brethren of the free and evangelical denominations can afford to acknowledge that they found the seed in our Baptist garden.

I must hasten now to point out how our essential Baptist principle has made our place a place of witnessing in behalf of

#### A SPIRITUAL CHURCH.

By a "spiritual church" we mean a church responsive in all its members, to the mind of Christ, and yielding personal loyal obedience to His sovereign will.

Since the Church is Christ's body, membership in the church should depend upon, follow and express a previous personal relation to him as the incorporating and directing head. To admit to the body those who are not joined to the head by a living faith, is to commit a mischievous incongruity. Hence we cannot permit the state to say who shall be members in the church. Caesar must not determine what belongs to God. Hence we dare not say with the Westminster Confession, that "the church consists of all these throughout the world, who profess the true religion, together with their children." We dare not baptize those who can give no sign that they have been born again; baptism is the symbol of regeneration, and must be reserved for those who, in personal confession of His name put on the Lord Jesus Christ.

This principle of a regenerated church membership, more than anything else, marks our distinctiveness in the Christian world today. It is a matter of amazement to us to find ourselves noticed, not so much for insistence on the spirituality of the church, as for the scrupulous observance of an appointed

form. The latter is but incidental to our position; the former is of its very essence. If we stand for believers' baptism and no other it is not simply because we think we have the better of our Pedo-baptist brethren in a matter of exegesis, but because both logic and experience teach its importance as a safeguard to the church from the intrusion of unregenerate life. If we hold to immersion it is because the Master clearly chose that form as the adequate symbol of the death and resurrection by which He achieved His sovereignty, as well as symbol of that death to sin and resurrection to newness of life by which the believer comes consciously under His sovereign sway. The purpose throughout is spiritual.

It is noteworthy that the practice of infant baptism is falling more and more into disuse among the evangelical denominations, while the old grounds for its administration have been largely surrendered. In the interests of a spiritual church it should, we believe, be discontinued entirely, discarded as an outworn tradition, and shunned as a garment spotted by the flesh.

As I bring this paper toward conclusion, there are two other matters that I must touch upon, if ever so lightly and briefly. One is the place which our essential Baptist principle has given us in the great modern movement of

#### WORLD EVANGELIZATION.

The nineteenth century, with all its marvels, witnessed nothing more wonderful than the rise and spread of the Foreign Missionary movement. The spirit of that movement found its incarnation October 2nd, 1792, when twelve men of Baptist faith organized the first society of modern times, for the avowed purpose of giving the Gospel to the heathen world. The little town of Kettering was the Bethlehem of this movement. While the collection of £13 2s 6d., taken up in the parlor of Widow Wallis, provided the swaddling clothes in which they wrapped the holy child.

It was by no accident that this movement came of Baptist birth. World evangelization is a corollary to the doctrine of the Lordship of Christ. In William Carey the doctrine found a new interpretation and expression. By him it was clarified and restated in terms of the great commission. The older doctrine of divine sovereignty had sterilized the church. Hyper-Calvinism running near to fatalism, had chilled evangelical enthusiasm. It had hidden the young manhood of the church "sat down", declaring that when it pleased God to convert the heathen, He would convert them without human help. From such a theological obscurantism, with its sad consequence of religious quietism, Carey brought deliverance. He gave the church a new horizon, kindled within her a new light, created within her a new soul. Carey was no mere ecclesiastical mechanist, he was a great prophet and inspirationist. It was a new thought of God and of man that he gave to the world, or rather an old thought brought to newness of life. His contribution was splendidly revolutionary. It is with us still a thing of life and power and blessing. "Time cannot wither, nor custom stale the infinite variety" of its beneficence in the Christian church at large. In the exaltation of her ideals, in the enlargement of her sympathies, in the intensification of her zeal, in the sanctification of her life, in the purification and simplification of her doctrine, the Christian church owes more to William Carey and his mission, than to any other man or movement since the days of Paul. Upon the trellis of the Foreign Mission enterprise, the vine of the church has run over the wall. It has given her, spiritually, a southern exposure, through which she has felt at her heart the thrill of a new vitality, while bearing on her outmost branches a burden of precious fruit for the vintage of the skies.

The last matter upon which I shall touch is closely allied with this; namely, our place of steadfast

#### LOYALTY TO THE AUTHORITY OF THE CHRISTIAN SCRIPTURES.

The sovereignty of Christ and the supremacy of the New Testament as the rule of life, are practically one doctrine. Whether we ground the authority of the New Testament in the fact that Christ gave it to us, or in the fact that it gives us the Christ, the result is the same. The Christian consciousness and the Christian scriptures are not, and cannot be, with us, two separate sources of authority. They are one in Christ. The New Testament creates the Christian consciousness and appeals to the consciousness it creates. It also corrects the Christian consciousness and progressively justifies itself therein. Hence it is and ever must remain for us the word of final authority. It is the imperial sceptre of the Son of God. It has been said that the chiefest contribution of the Baptist people to the Christian church has been her succession of great preachers. That would not be strange if true. The Baptist principle has continually driven our preachers in upon the scriptures. Standing there, they have felt the Rock of Ages beneath their feet. Standing there they have beheld the glory of the Lord. They have gazed upon the Cross red with blood of atonement. They have beheld the throne of God with the Lamb in the midst thereof. The Baptist preacher has never needed to go peeping cautiously about to see what other men were doing, or to put his ear to the ground to listen for the word from human lips. It has been for him to hear

what God the Lord would say, and to speak the word from his mouth. Hence through all the messages of our great preachers, there has ever throbbed the deep, awful, gracious note of Calvary. Their testimony has been sown with the fire of the holy gospel, and it has filled all the church with light.

With humble thankfulness we claim as ours John Bunyan, the immortal dreamer of Bedford jail; Christmas Evans, "the one-eyed man of Anglesea, and a prophet sent from God;" Andrew Fuller, who held the rope with a giant's grip while Carey went down into the well; Charles Haddon Spurgeon, who in this city exercised the most fruitful ministry since apostolic times; and Alexander MacLaren, the prince of all expository preachers of any age or country, the incomparable stylist of the nineteenth century pulpit, who has left a scroll of light about every text which he has touched, a poet, in the garden of whose imagination the flowers have never ceased to bloom or the birds to sing, and who presides over this Congress today, a benediction to us all, honored and beloved as the Grand Old Man of the Baptist Brotherhood of the world.

Fathers and Brethren! The place of Baptists in the church of the future is destined to be a larger place than we have yet achieved. The world has not outgrown the need of Baptist principles. It was never in greater need of them than it is today. Our principles have not yet manifested the full force that is in them. New light and power are to break forth from them in the days to come. Loose them and let them go. They have in them, through the quickening of the sense of personal answerableness to Christ, the power to sanctify the family, and make the home a place of richer spiritual culture. They have in them the power to secure for the church a more intelligent, comprehensive and universal consecration of her members. They have in them the power to mitigate the antagonisms of commercial life. Setting before capitalist and tradesmen alike the higher standards that necessarily accompany the sense of personal responsibility to Christ, they will go far to break the tyranny of both combined capital and organized labor. They have in them the promise of succor and deliverance for millions who now groan under the oppressions of the autocratic governments of the world. In a word, they bid each man who lives under the blue sky, to stand upon his feet and harken to his Lord and Master, Jesus Christ, and go with Him up the heights of noblest manhood.

May God make us worthy of the trust committed to our hands. May we prove the divinity of our principles by the increasing splendor of our achievements. May we be good soldiers of Jesus Christ, and strong helpers of mankind. Then when the day is done, we shall have a royal diadem to cast at Jesus' feet. Our principles with our achievements we shall weave into a crown. As jewels for that crown we shall gather all the names that have shone starlike and clear in the galaxy of Baptist history, and with a joy unspeakable and full of glory we shall raise all our voices to "Hail the power of Jesus' name," and lift all our hands to "Crown Him Lord of all."

#### George Muller, Bristol England, on Prayer.

No man was better qualified than Muller to tell the secret of how to secure divine guidance in the affairs of life. This is how he sought it.

1. I seek at the beginning to get my heart into such a state that it has no will of its own in regard to a given matter.
  2. Having done this, I do not leave the result to feeling or simple impression. If so, I lay myself liable to great delusions.
  3. I seek the will of the Spirit of God through, or in connection with, the Word of God.
  4. Next, I take into account providential circumstances. These often plainly indicate His will in connection with the word and spirit.
  5. I ask God in prayer to reveal His will to me aright.
  6. Thus through prayer to God, the study of the Word, and reflection, I come to a definite judgment according to the best of my ability and knowledge. Then if my mind is at peace, and continues so after two or three petitions, I go ahead.
- It will be seen how carefully Mr. Muller used all the natural sources of guidance in connection with prayer. We wish all who profess to be led by the spirit were as careful.

Why should you carry troubles and sorrows unhealed? There is no bodily wound for which some herb doth not grow, and heavenly plants are more than medicine. Bind up your hearts in them, and they shall give you not only healing, but weave with you the perfume of the blessed gardens where they grow. Thus it may be that sorrows shall turn to riches; for heart troubles, in God's husbandry, are not wounds, but the putting in of the spade before the planting of seeds.—Southern Churchman.

Life is springtime, and the gathering years are lengthening days, calling to constant endeavor.—Rev. W. D. Williams.