

SELECTIONS.

NOT IMPOSSIBLE.

[The following question and answer we find in an old number of the *Christian Standard*.—**EDITORS.**]

Will you please explain Acts ii. 41. Were the three thousand baptized in one day? Anti-immersionists ask us if we think the few apostles could have immersed three thousand in one day. Being unable to answer satisfactorily, we will turn to you for instruction.

We think the fair construction is, that the 3,000 were immersed on that same day, for it was by baptism that these 3,000 penitent believers were added to the original 120 disciples. Supposing that none but the apostles baptized, there would be but 250 persons for each of them. It was the third hour of the day when Peter began his discourse (verse 15), that is, nine o'clock in the morning—for the Jews began to count the hours from the morning. Allowing three hours for the sermon, the inquiry, the response, and the preparation for baptizing, they would have from noon to sundown—6 hours—in which to attend to the baptizing, or about 42 each hour, less than one each minute. It is possible to immerse more rapidly than that, and without improper haste.

But there is no need to suppose that the apostles alone did the baptizing. See Acts x. 48; I. Cor. i. 14-17. There were 120 disciples present (Acts i. 15). From these the apostles could easily select a score or two to aid them in the work of baptizing. To keep it within bounds, say they selected only twelve assistants—that would make 24 baptists, and each one would have 125 to baptize, or 20 each hour for six hours. We have kept all these suppositions within bounds. The instance in Acts ii. is not the only instance in which 3,000 were baptized in one day. In the center of a remarkable fountain in the north of England, called, "The Lady's Well," there is said to stand to day a large crucifix, on the base of which is the following inscription: "In this place Paulinus, the bishop, baptized three thousand Northumbrians, Easter, DCXXVII." In Constantinople, A. D., 400, at Easter, Chrysostom's presbyters baptized "about 3,000" Catechumens. Only a year or two ago, 2,200 Teloogoos of Ongole, India, were baptized in one day—the immersions occupying only nine hours, and but two ministers officiating at a time.

"THE OLD-FASHIONED HYMNS"

Under the title of "The Old-Fashioned Hymns," the *Christian Observer* remarks:

Of late we have witnessed the introduction, in our churches, of the lighter forms of music for the worship of God. Such books as Gospel Hymns, with their simple music, easy chords, and rapid movement, have become popular with a large class of the people. Is the tendency a happy one for the progress of the church?

Many of these tripping sentimental ditties sung in revival meetings, and by wandering soloists, and classed as revival music, may be said generally to operate upon the spiritual man as false stimulants do upon the physical man; they may produce a temporary elevation, of the circulation, but the final result will be far from beneficial. There is no doubt that these hymns constitute an immense attraction, and stir the enthusiasm of the masses, and minister to them a kind of piety of a highly emotional order, but when it comes to permanent impressions, and the spiritual invigoration of the soul, they are simply nowhere. The people have already too much froth and nonsense, and certainly too much superficiality in their religion; they need more strength and real permanent life-force in their religious convictions, in order that they may sink deeper and rise higher in religious character, and be visibly effective upon the world for good. It is undoubtedly true that singing has considerable influence in shaping religious character; hence the class of songs sung should be such as to inspire the noblest consecration and the highest devotion in the Christian life. The present writer must be allowed to express his decided preference for the grand old chorals of our fathers set to such words and real poetic sentiment as to lift the soul into glad and joyful communion with God and Christ and saints, which to his mind has a great advantage over the sentimental dittyism of modern revivalism. Our hymns, like our religion, are becoming rather thin, and one is about as transient in its effects as the other.—*Apostolic Guide*.

Every man takes care that his neighbor shall not cheat him. But a day comes when he begins to take care that he does not cheat his neighbor. Then all goes well. He has changed his market cart into a chariot of the sun.—*Emer-*

BORDER CHRISTIANS.

"I am sick and tired of these border Christians, these church members who are always on the dividing lines between the church and the world. First on one side and then on the other. If they are going to be followers of Christ, let them come out squarely on one side, and if they are going to be nothing more than border Christians, let them stay on the other side until they get ready to identify themselves wholly with God's people." So said a good man recently. The great curse of the present age is the vast number of border Christians in our churches. They are the least useful and most unhappy people on the face of the earth. While nominally in the camp of Israel, they still long for the flesh pots of Egypt. They have a taste of religion, but not enough of it to brighten, beautify and elevate their lives. We have sometimes thought that a little decided persecution would do good among our churches, making each one "stand up for Jesus" boldly, or forcing him to go to the other side. Dear reader, are you a "border Christian?"—*Central Baptist*.

CHAPTERS AND VERSES.

THE present division of our Bible into chapters dates from the thirteenth century. There are two claimants for the honor; Hugo, of St. Cher, France, who was made a Cardinal in 1245, and died at Orvieto, Italy, in 1263; and Stephen Langton, Archbishop of Canterbury, who died in 1227. It is impossible to decide certainly between these two. The divisions were first made in the Latin Vulgate, and transferred within a century or two to the original Hebrew and Greek texts. They appeared in the printed Bibles from the first. The *verse* divisions of the Old Testament were made much earlier, by Jewish scholars, in the Hebrew text. This points dividing the verses in Hebrew, are certainly as old as 800 or 900 A. D., and the divisions themselves were known (transmitted orally or indicated by spacing) several centuries before that. The verses in Hebrew Bibles were not numbered, in the present fashion, until the seventeenth century. The present verse-divisions of the New Testament were made by Robert Stephens (Stephanus, Estienne), and first appeared in the fourth edition of his New Testament in Greek, Geneva, 1551. He issued a text of the Vulgate (O. T. and N. T.) with verse-divisions, in 1555-58, and thus they passed into all the versions. In the English Bible the verse-divisions first appeared as we now have them in the Geneva New Testament (1557), and the Geneva Bible (1560).—*The Critic*.

WHERE YOU SHOULD BE AND WHAT YOU SHOULD DO.

Every Christian ought to be where for the time being he belongs. He ought to be, at every moment of his life, just where he would be glad to be found if his Master were to come seeking him. Whether it be work or recreation that is his duty for the hour, that is the thing for him to attend to then. And as a man's duty never can be at two places at the same time, a Christian believer who is at the place where he belongs, can rest assured that his Master would not wish him to be at any other point in the universe than just there. This is a good test for a Christian in his deciding what he had better do for this evening, or for this morning. He ought to do that which he ought to do; and whatever he does should be that which he believes that his Master wishes him to do above anything and everything else.—*S. S. Times*.

GOOD PREACHING.

The best evidence of good preaching is found in the reformatory and elevating influence it exerts on the conduct of the hearers. Elegant discourse, which encourages people to live in their sins, is inferior to a coarser article which drives the sinner to repentance and reformation. "I do not remember the text," said a trader, "but when I got home I burnt up my scant half-bushel." The gospel that does one good, is always the gospel that drives us to burn our defective measures, and conducts us forth in honest and reputable ways.

CANT.

In the missionary conference of the young men from College at Northfield, Professor Drummond had happened in an address to refer to cant. When the hour came for him to answer questions one of the students asked him what he meant by cant. "There is," said he in reply, "such a thing as the religion of a young man; and there is such a thing as the religion of an old woman. Now when a young man talks as if he had an old woman's religion, that is cant."

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RECONCILIATION.

I was struck with the story of two men who were used to give exhortations at meetings, who had fallen out with each other; and one of their brethren who, grieved to think two servants of God should be at difference with each other, went to reconcile them. He called upon the first and said:

"John, I am very sorry to find you and James have quarreled. It seems a great pity, and it brings much dishonour on the Church of God."

"Ah," said John, "I am very grieved, too, and what grieves me most is that I am the sole cause of it. It was only because I spoke so bitterly, that James took offence."

"Ah, ah," said the good man, "we will soon settle this difficulty then," and away he went to James.

"James, I am very sorry that you and John cannot agree."

"Yes," he said, "it is a sad thing we don't, we ought to do so, for we are brethren, but what troubles me most is that it is all my fault. If I had not taken notice of a little word John said, there would have been an end of it."

The matter, as you may guess, was soon rectified. You see there was at the bottom a true friendship between them, so that the little difficulty was soon got over.—*C. H. Spurgeon*.

SECRET OF PULPIT SUCCESS.

The true secret of pulpit success, says an exchange, has been well said to lie, not in grace of manner, nor richness of voice, nor fullness of matter, nor even all these combined; but in that indescribable unction which is obtained by prayer, by a profound meditation upon divine truth, by a deep conviction of the overwhelming importance of eternal things to speakers and hearers. This is the ineffable anointing of the Spirit, which no man can counterfeit, and which no people can mistake.—*Millennial Harbinger*, 1862.

BE CHARITABLE.

You see the faults and the failures of others, while they see yours. Perhaps yours are as disagreeable to them as are theirs to you. Some have fallen very low, and the world despises them; don't imitate the world, but try to raise them. Do it with pity and kindness. You do not know how long and how hard they struggled before they fell, nor yet what peculiar temptations assailed them. Perhaps, had the same temptations met you, you would be as low as they have fallen. If God's merciful providence surrounded you with special protection, do not despise them because the same protection was not about them. Perhaps the Lord shielded you that you might rescue them; that may be a part of your mission in life. Never push another down when he is struggling to stand, and never disgrace yourself—that is what it will be—by kicking another already down. Help him up. No matter how he got there, it is for you to get him out of that position and trouble; go to work at once to do it. Do it as to a brother whom you determine to save. If you save him for Christ, he will be your brother for heaven, if you are a Christian yourself.—*Forward*.

"I don't believe in his religion," said a critic regarding a well-to-do farmer who was an active church member. "He is too lazy to get ready for meeting in season Sunday mornings, always starts late, and then whips his horse pretty much all the two miles to get there in time. No, I don't believe in his religion." How is that, brother?



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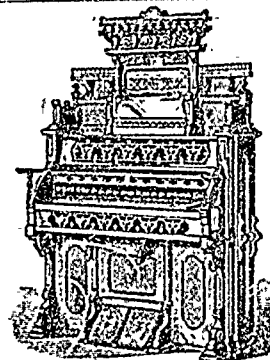
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EDUCATION.

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