

## The Baptism of Clovis.

BY THE REV. J. H. CHANT.

FIVE hundred years have nearly passed away,  
Since that glad morn, when o'er fair Beth'om's plain,  
A light, resplendent as the glow of day,  
Shone down from heaven, and holy angels deign  
To sing the sweetest song e'er heard by mortal ear,  
Which fills sad hearts with joy and drives away their fear.

Clovis, of the brave Franks the king and sheen,  
Heard from Aurelian of a maid to wed,  
Matchless in feature, and of graceful mien,  
"Zenobia of the Alps," Aurelian said,  
"The daughter of a noble old Burgundian king,  
Clotilda is her name, fair maids her virtues sing.

"She dwells among the Alps, in forest glade,  
And by the shore of its most famous lake;  
But fairer than that land is this fair maid,  
And brighter than its peak at morn's awake,  
A Christian girl is she whose heart God has renewed,  
And her fine comely mind with grace and truth imbued."

Then Clovis, by Aurelian, sent a ring  
To this fair damsel whom he hoped to wed;  
She took the ring, and soon king's daughters sing  
The marriage hymn, as he to altar led  
This lovely Christian maid, they plight their nuptial vows  
And the old priest invoked a blessing on their brows.

Then on her head a coronet was placed,  
And she sat down by Clovis on his throne;  
And never was a throne so highly graced,  
Nor ever monarch felt less sad and lone;  
He finds in her a bride, and counsellor as well,  
And happy are the men who in her palace dwell.

In tones of eloquence, and words of power,  
The wondrous story of the cross she told;  
Christ's lowly birth, pure life, and of the hour  
When he, to bring us to his heavenly fold,  
Bore on the cross our sins, and opened mercy's door,  
Then from the dead arose to reign forevermore.

Soon on Tolbiac's bloody field the king  
Led on his troops against a mighty foe;  
A foe too strong, for soon, though no weakling,  
Clovis retreats, his men returned no blow,  
But fled as timid sheep before a beast of prey;  
The conquering Alemanni will surely win the day.

"Oh king, cry on Clotilda's God for aid!"  
Shouted Aurelian, as the monarch fled;  
Then on his helmet Clovis his hand laid,  
And lifting it, these words the monarch said:  
"My gods have failed to help, O Christ, Clotilda's God,  
Grant me thy mighty aid, and I will kiss thy rod!"

On the French pennons triumph perches now;  
The foe is routed by Clotilda's God!  
And Clovis asks to have upon his brow  
The symbol of her faith, for 'neath the rod  
Of the eternal King he bows his regal will,  
And waits, with heart devout, Christ's purpose to fulfil.

On Rheims now dawns a cloudless Christmas morn,  
And flags of silk and satin grace each tower;  
This is the day Clotilda's Christ was born,  
And to his cause a great triumphal hour,  
For see on carpet stretched from church to palace door,  
A grand procession march, of two score priests or more.

Remigius had led the way, and then,  
Assisted by his priests, on monarch's brow  
And on the brows of full six thousand men  
As they before the holy altar bow,  
The water from the font he sprinkled down like rain,  
Thankful that his blest Lord so many hearts should gain.

## The Two Sacks.

THERE is an ancient legend that tells of an old man who was in the habit of travelling from place to place, with a sack hanging behind his back and another in front of him.

In the one behind he tossed all the kind deeds of his friends, where they were quite hid from view—and he soon forgot all about them.

In the one hanging around his neck, under his chin, he popped all the sins which the people he knew committed; and these he was in the habit of turning over and looking at, as he walked along, day by day.

One day, to his surprise, he met a man wearing, just like himself, a sack in front and one behind. He went up to him, and began feeling his sack. "What have you got here, my friend?" he asked, giving the sack in front a good poke.

"Stop, don't do that!" cried the other; "you'll spoil my good things."

"What things?" asked number one.

"Why, my good deeds," answered number two. "I keep them all in front of me, where I can always see them, and take them out and air them. See! here is the half-crown I put on the plate last Sunday, and the shawl I gave to the beggar girl, and the mittens I gave to the crippled boy, and the penny I gave to the organ grinder, and here is even the benevolent smile I bestowed on the crossing-sweeper at my door, and—"

"And what's in the sack behind you?" asked the first traveller, who thought his companion's good deeds would never come to an end.

"Tut, tut," said number two, "there is nothing I care to look at in there! That sack holds what I call my little mistakes."

"It seems to me that your sack of mistakes is fuller than the other," said number one.

Number two frowned. He had never thought that, though he had put what he called his "mistakes" out of his sight, every one else could see them still. An angry reply was on his lips, when, happily, a third—also carrying two sacks, as they were—overtook them.

The first two men at once pounced on the stranger.

"What cargo do you carry in your sacks?" cried one.

"Let's see your goods," said the other.

"With all my heart," quoth the stranger, "for I have a goodly assortment, and I like to show them. This sack," said he, pointing to the one hanging in front of him, "is full of the good deeds of others."

"Your sack looks nearly touching the ground. It must be a pretty heavy weight to carry," observed number one.

"There you are mistaken," replied the stranger; "the weight is only such as sails are to a ship, or wings are to an eagle. It helps me onward."

"Well, your sack behind can be of little good to you," said number two, "for it appears to be empty," and I see it has a great hole in the bottom of it."

"I did it on purpose," said the stranger; "for all the evil I hear of people I put in there, and it falls through and is lost. So, you see, I have no weight to drag me down backward."

## Ellis Norton's Integrity.

BY BELLE CHISHOLM.

"HERE, Ellis, is a ticket good for seventy-five miles," said Mr. Baird, as he set his valise down in the depot at Chillicothe, one stormy day last winter. "I paid two dollars and twenty-five cents, honest money, for it; and that careless conductor never turned his head in my direction, as he hurried through the train. You travel over this line every time you go to your grandmother's—make use of it on your first trip. It is as good as when I first bought it."

Ellis Norton held the bit of card-board between his thumb and fingers while Mr. Baird spoke; and then, deliberately tearing it in two, he walked to the fire, and held the pieces over the flame until they were consumed.

"There!" he said, "all temptation is now removed. With that in my pocket and money scarce in my purse, I might have ventured to use it."

"As I told you, it is bought with honest money, and it was no fault of mine that it was left in my

possession. The company would not have been any wiser if you had used it."

"Nor much the poorer, either; but, you see, I would be the loser, Mr. Baird. I would not lose my own self-respect and peace of conscience for twenty times the amount," Ellis replied, earnestly.

"It is an unfortunate thing to have a tender conscience in connection with so much pride and poverty," Mr. Baird muttered, as he watched the boy shoulder his load and start up street.

Yet a few weeks later, when one of his clerks proved dishonest, Ellis Norton was surprised to receive the offer of the situation.

"A boy who scorns to cheat a railway company will make an employee who can be trusted," the merchant said to himself; but to his neighbours he explained that he wished to assist a poor boy who was nobly striving to support an old mother and an invalid sister.

## Look Out for Fire.

A MICHIGAN school-teacher recently took a piece of burning charcoal from his stove one evening and dropped it into a tub of snow in his kitchen, so as to have it ready for an experiment the next day in his chemistry class. During the night he awoke, and thought he smelled smoke. Upon making an examination, he found that the coal had melted its way through six inches of snow, through the bottom of the tub, through an oil-cloth carpet and the floor, and was lying on the bottom of the cellar.

We knew of a pipe which had been used for smoking—a very objectionable chemical experiment—left at night, with a bit of fire remaining in it, in a tobacco-box, on a mantel-shelf. The box was set on fire, and burned a square hole through the shelf, and the ashes were found in the morning on the stove hearth beneath.

We saw the burning of an old plantation-house, at the foot of Look-out Mountain, the fire being caused by a pail of ashes, left by a negro in the kitchen, burning through the floor and igniting shavings in the cellar.

The lesson of the three experiments is the same: Look out where you put your hot charcoal, your tobacco-pipe, and your ashes. The second article might safely be thrown into a snow drift before being lighted—and left there.—*Exchange.*

## Mosses.

DID you ever examine mosses closely, to see how beautiful they are? Is there anybody sick near you, who would love to have a little saucer filled with the exquisite green things, fresh from wood or roadside, beside the bed? Here is what a great and good man has said of them:

"Mosses—meek creatures, the first mercy of the earth, veiling with hushed softness its tintless rocks, creatures full of pity, covering with strange and tender honour the scarred disgrace of ruin, laying quiet finger on the trembling stones, to teach them rest. No words that I know of will say what these mosses are. None are delicate enough, none perfect enough, none rich enough.

"How is one to tell of the rounded bosses of furred and beaming green, the starred divisions of rubied bloom, fine filmed, as if the rock spirits could spin porphyry as we do glass, the traceries of intricate silver, and fringes of amber—lustrous, arborescent, burnished through every fibre into fitful brightness and glossy traverses of silken change, yet all subdued and pensive, and framed for simplest, sweetest offices of grace? They will not be gathered, like the flowers, for chaplet or love-token, but of these the wild bird will make its nest, and the wearied child its pillow."