

given by Christ. Prior to A. D. 1600, no man or class of men of whom we have any record, regarded dipping as anything more than a *mode* of water baptism, or denied the Scriptural character of baptism by sprinkling. Exclusive dipping is a very modern theory indeed, and so, of course, close communion, which is based upon it. But the theory and the practice, born but as of yesterday, are likely to be short lived, and they have just received what will probably prove the death blow. Dr. W. H. Whitsitt, President of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky., has lately published a book entitled: "A question in Baptist History." The question is, Did the English Baptists, in the early part of the seventeenth century, baptize by dipping? This question the learned Baptist President is compelled to answer with an honest and emphatic no. Prior to 1641, the Baptists of England, he tells us, baptized by sprinkling or pouring. President Whitsitt's book has thrown the whole Baptist Church of the South into a fever of excitement, and the trouble has extended into the Baptist churches of Canada. Not that President Whitsitt has announced any new truth that scholars of other denominations did not know before, but he has given such "irrefragable proof" of the truth that no fair-minded, intelligent writer will ever again call it in question. From original documents preserved in the British Museum, President Whitsitt shows in a way that does not admit of successful contradiction, that "immersion was introduced into England about the year 1641." He quotes profusely from books and tracts written about the middle of the seventeenth century, showing that dipping was a novelty at that time. It is spoken of as "an yesterday conceit," "a new invention," "a sparkle of new light," "a new crochet," etc., etc. On page 130, President Whitsitt says, "In the year 1641 the change from pouring and sprinkling to immersion was duly inaugurated;" and on page 133, he says: "Whatever else may be true in history, I believe it is beyond question that the practice of adult immersion was introduced anew into England in the year 1641. Few other facts are capable of more convincing demonstration."

And yet it is upon this "novelty," this "crochet," that Baptists claim that their fellow Christians of other denominations are not baptized, and have no right to the Lord's Supper. If the Churches to-day which baptize by sprinkling have no Scripture baptism or ordination, then all the first Baptists of the seventeenth century had none, for President Whitsitt proves that they, too, baptized by sprinkling.

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To the Baptists denying our sacramental rights, and assigning us a lower place in the kingdom of God, we will patiently but confidently present the remonstrance of the Apostle, "Why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ (Romans 14: 10)."

Woodstock, Ont.

The Blessedness of the Rut.

This constant travelling in a rut, "the everlasting routine," "the perpetual grind"—how common such expressions

are, and how familiarly they voice the discontent of people who cannot find anything more serious or distressing to complain about the sameness of their days! It would almost seem, from the prevalence of this sort of grumbling, as if man were by nature a complaining creature, born to protest, to worry, to covet the things he has not and cannot have, dissatisfied all ways with present conditions and necessities, and disposed to attribute his unhappiness to his lot in life rather than to his own attitude and point of view with respect to life. What other explanation seems adequate to account for a condition so universal and persistent? For we find all classes of men complaining about the monotonies of life. Even great men, doing a great work, are apt to speak of their time as consumed by weary and uninteresting routine. Lives which the more humble of us picture as full of interest and variety and inspiration are how often declared by those who are living them to be wearisomely dull and monotonous! What is wrong with men and women in general, that they should find life so cursed with sameness and tedium and lack of that fresh delight and buoyancy of service which is so essential to best achievement?

The trouble seems to be that we do not rightly interpret and value repetitiveness or sameness in life as a quality conducive to truest happiness as well as largest success. It is in the so-called monotonies of life, did we but realize it, that the greater part of the quiet, deep, equable happiness of life consists. Someone has expressed this thought of the joy of the smooth routine of life in a most happy phrase—"The dear, everydayness of life." And when one thinks of the matter reasonably and candidly, is it not true that the sense of peace and safety and mastery and wontedness that attaches to the routine of our days is, or should be, one of the deepest sources of personal satisfaction? The task that we are accustomed to do and perform with practiced ease and accuracy; the duties that we approach with a full understanding of their requirements and method of performance; the daily events so like each other as to be free from shock and strain, the smooth and at the same time useful alternation of rest and toil, planning and performing—are not these repetitious experiences of daily life full of a serene satisfaction and comfort, if we only estimate them rightly?

Let a few days of life be broken in upon by unwonted experiences, even such as might be pleasurable in anticipation, and how glad we are to get back again to the accustomed rut! The sense of strain and confusion disappears when we get back to our wonted routine, and we breathe a sigh of restful content as we resume the old round of familiar duties.

And still more, if the experiences that have broken in upon the routine of life are of a distressing or exacting character—sickness, suspense, a trying ordeal of any sort—what grateful, what blessed relief to return to the dear everydayness of life once more! We wonder how we could ever have grumbled over it. How could it ever have seemed to us anything but the only serene and happy path for our feet to pursue?

The remedy for dissatisfaction with the routine character of life seems to be simple enough—a temporary suspension of the routine, with all the special and unaccustomed strain that such a departure

from one's regular habits entails. We have only to demonstrate thus in personal experience, from time to time, how dear the everydayness of life actually is, in order to be weaned from that dissatisfaction and spirit of grumbling that are so unworthy a child of God. By thus attaining the right viewpoint we shall get rid of the notion that there is anything regrettable, anything that ought to be changed, in God's appointment of routine to be the normal condition of life. We shall see clearly that it is the very condition which is, on the whole, productive of the greatest amount of peace and happiness. Out of no other ordering of life could so much real and permanent happiness proceed.

And if the routine of life is the condition of the highest average of happiness, it is even more evidently the condition of life's highest average of achievement. In no other way than by performing the same kind of tasks over and over again, day after day, could the individual or the race accomplish the greatest amount of enduring work. This in itself should be an additional cause for rejoicing in the monotonies of life. If we accomplish more by following the rut than we could in any other way, we ought to be glad that our appointed pathways fall into ruts. There is still another satisfaction, then, besides the peace and ease of the rut—the satisfaction of knowing that we are thus realizing our highest possibilities as workers, as contributors to the welfare of the race.

How ungracious, then, to grumble at the very wisest provision which God has made both for our happiness and our fruitfulness in life! Of all the paths that strike across the world, there is none, after all, so pleasant and so profitable as the commonplace rut. Abolish it, and you would have a world full of confused, erratic, unhappy, ineffectual men and women—a human chaos. Blessed indeed are the habitual things that regulate conduct, and concentrate effort, and fill our days with that quiet, lasting happiness which is the most precious heritage of human experience.—The Interior.

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