

Contributions.

A Breath of Spring.

PETER ANDERSON.

How old shall we be when the breath of spring
No quickening beat to our hearts shall bring?
How hopelessly old and how stonily cold
When we catch no glow from the warming mold,
No conscious gleam of an answering birth
In the new-born joy of the waking earth.

Soft wind of the south; over many a scene
Of verdure and bloom has your journey been,
Since you idly lay where the sunlight smiles
And the currents play round the Indian isles,
Till the subtlest dream of those slumbering seas
Was woven in woof of your unborn breeze.

You have toyed with the bloom in the woodland shades
And the sun-flecked nooks of the everglades,
And on sandy ridges and surf-washed coast
Have the whispering plumes of the pine trees tossed,
Till you blend the perfume of resinous pine
With the delicate bloom of the mustardine.

You have caught the tones of the sounding rills
That are flashing down on a hundred hills,
As you passed where the wooded mountains be
And the sun-kissed vales of Tennessee.
You have strayed where the blossoming peach trees stand
A vision of beauty in Maryland.

And there comes in your train the clash of wings,
And the first sweet strain that the wild-bird sings;
And you blend their songs with the music of streams,
With the Southern ocean's murmured dreams,
With the whispering tones of the pine trees tall
And the roaring bass of the waterfall.

And you echo their music softly and low
In a requiem sweet for the vanishing snow.
You waft all your incense of odors sweet
To the Northland, old winter's last retreat.

And you breathe in his face such a balmy breath
That he joyfully sinks at your feet in death.

O balmy breath of the budding south,
You come o'er the snow on your breezy wings
As pure as the kiss of a sinless mouth,
Where the fragrant breath of an infant clings.

You come with a breath of our own lost youth
That still to the time-worn spirit brings
The fragrance of purity, love and truth,
That seemed so fair in those far off springs.

And the visions and dreams of the springs long ago
Still reach us across all the years that are gone,
Although heads black and brown may be sprinkled with snow
From the winter that comes so relentlessly on;

Like an odor of spring that our senses beguile
They come up from our youth on the breezes that blow,
From the slumbering seas, round the beautiful isles,
Where the currents of childhood forever shall flow.

The fair visions and dreams—they shall fade not away,
Nor the loves and the hopes find an end in despair,
Although heads black and brown may be blending to gray,
And time groove our faces with furrows of care,
Our hearts shall be young though our heads have grown old,

And the childhood of age but more certainly bring,
That the frost-blighted buds of our lives shall unfold
Where the flowers never fade—in a winterless spring.
Hepworth, Ont.

The Commission vs. Denominationalism.

XIII.

T. B. KNOWLTON.

Before dismissing the action of baptism, several other important facts sustaining the commission are worthy of mention.

1. It is an undisputed fact that the almost universal practice for the first thirteen hundred years of the Christian era was immersion; as Dean Stanley says: "That for the first thirteen centuries the almost universal practice was that of which we read in the New Testament, and which is the very meaning of the word *baptizo*; that those who were baptized were plunged, submerged, immersed into the water." And he further adds, "Baptism by sprinkling was rejected by the whole ancient church, . . . as no baptism at all." Whitby also says: "This immersion being religiously observed by all Christians for thirteen centuries." In harmony with this, G. T. Stokes, D. D., Prof. of Ecclesiastical history in the University of Dublin, says: "The method of sprinkling is completely unknown to the church, ancient or modern, and should be absolutely rejected, as tending to a disuse of the element of water at all." And Moses Stuart says: "Thirteen hundred years was baptism generally and ordinarily performed by the immersion of a man under water." The testimony of Catholic scholars is to the same effect, as, for instance, Dr. Dollinger, "Baptism by immersion continued to be the prevailing practice of the church as late as the fourteenth century." And so says F. Brenner in his learned work, and adds, that sprinkling and affusion "were called in question and even prohibited."

2. The Greek church, which now numbers some 84,000,000, and in whose language is the word *baptizo*, used in the commission, has never practiced anything but immersion, as Mr. Stuart remarks, "The mode of baptism by immersion, the oriental church has always continued." Nor does that church allow sprinkling or pouring to be the meaning of *baptizo* at all. "The Greek and Russians," says Bishop Patton, of Moscow, "always use the term *immersion*." And Prof. N. Bonwetsch, of Dorpat University, said as late as 1890, "As far as the ceremony of the Greek-Russian church is concerned, immersion is the only method used in baptizing." They even look upon the "Pope of Rome as an unbaptized heretic." And, let it be remembered, furthermore, that so strong is their prejudice against sprinkling, that even Protestant pedobaptist churches drop the practice of affusion and practice immersion in Greece. Dr. W. D. Powell, writing from Athens says: "I found that all churches in Greece—the Presbyterians included—are compelled to immerse candidates for baptism, for, as one of the professors remarked, 'the commonest day laborer understands nothing else for *baptizo* but immersion.' . . . I asked a professor what *baptizo* meant, and he said: "It has but one meaning—to submerge, to immerse. Why do you ask?" And we are informed by Dr. Powell, in the *Western Recorder*, Jan., 1891, that "once they," the Presbyterians, "sprinkled some children, and it created such a scandal that it came near breaking up the church, and they

were compelled to have a small baptistry made." It is certainly a fact of much weight, that the very people in whose language is found this word, and who have the best right to know its primary use and meaning, should constantly practice immersion, and stoutly reject sprinkling and pouring. It is true, as Moses Stuart says: "They maintain that *baptizo* can mean nothing but immerse, and that *baptism* by sprinkling is as great a solecism as immersion by aspersion; and they claim to themselves the honor of having preserved the ancient sacred rite of the church, free from change and from corruption, which would destroy its signification." But once more—

3. If the statements of scholars and critics are to be credited, there is not a version of the New Testament, either ancient or modern, in which *baptizo* is translated by either sprinkle or pour! So testifies Gotch of Trinity College, Dublin, and A. Campbell. Likewise, Prof. E. D. Barclay in his "Hand-Book on Baptism," after a careful examination of every occurrence of the words *Bapto* and *Baptizo* in the New Testament, says: "Neither sprinkling nor pouring is, in any case, a translation of *Bapto* or *Baptizo*." And when Mr. Campbell in his debate with Rev. N. L. Rice confidently asserted that "no translator, ancient or modern, ever rendered *Bapto*, or any of that family of words, to sprinkle," Mr. Rice thought he had found one exception, in the rendering of Rev. xix. 13, in the Syriac version; where, he asserted, *bebannemon* was rendered, "Sprinkle with blood." It is now known to every scholar that the oldest and best MS. yet discovered, the *Codex Sinaiticus*, by Dr. Tischendorf, in 1859, has *periteranmenon* from *rains*, to sprinkle, in Rev. xix. 13; and the new revision correctly renders it therefore, "And he is arrayed in a garment sprinkled with blood."

4. It is an undisputable fact, furthermore, that the allusions to baptism in the New Testament all present the idea of immersion, rather than of affusion, and, while the environments are all necessary to the act of immersion, they are not necessary at all if that act was mere affusion. For example, "And they were baptized of him in the river Jordan," would be required for immersion, not so for sprinkling. "Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John into (eis) Jordan," fills the requirements of immersion, and is impossible in the case of affusion. So too, "And straightway coming up out of the water," etc. "Except a man be born of water" (a body cannot be born of anything smaller than itself). "And they both went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him. And when they came up out of the water," etc., this was not necessary in sprinkling. "We were buried therefore with him through baptism." "Having been buried with him in baptism, wherein ye were also raised with him," etc. This was impossible in a case of mere sprinkling. "He saved us through the washing (laver) of regeneration," etc. "Having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and having our body washed with pure water," and John also was baptizing in Aenon near to Salim because there was much water there," etc., etc., all of which was necessary to immersion, but not to affusion. Here, then, are fourteen incontrovertible facts sustaining the proposition, that the baptism commanded by Jesus Christ in the commission was immersion; and proving also that affusion is simply an innovation, "brought into the church by Popish schoolmen, and English dissenters adapted it from them," as says *Gill's Part and Pillar of Popery*. In brief,

these facts are: (1) The Church of Rome has always admitted that immersion, and not affusion, was the original, apostolic baptism. (2) The Roman Catholic church frankly admits that she has altered the original action of baptism from immersion to sprinkling and pouring, but charges Protestant churches with doing the same thing. (3) The Catholic church has never attempted to justify the practice of affusion by an appeal to the Scriptures, but relies simply upon the church's right to change ordinances. (4) The first law sanctioning sprinkling and pouring was given by the Pope of Rome. (5) Some of the most scholarly men in the pedobaptist ranks testify that immersion was the baptism commanded by Christ and practiced in the primitive church, and that sprinkling was introduced at a much later date. (6) The scholarship of both the Catholic and Protestant churches gives immersion as a primary meaning of *Baptizo*, the word used in the commission, and many declare that sprinkling and pouring are altogether out of the question. (7) There is no controversy over immersion. All religious bodies accept it as genuine and Christian baptism. (8) There not only is, but always has been, strong opposition to affusion, and it has been condemned from its first introduction by a large portion of the Christian world as a transgressive and wrong. (9) All Greek lexicons, of any note, Greek and English lexicons of the New Testament included, give immerse, dip, plunge, as the primary (and the New Testament does not differ from the classical use of this word in this respect) meanings of *baptizo*, while none give sprinkle or pour as a primary meaning of this word. (10) Pedobaptist critics and commentators show that immersion and not sprinkling was the New Testament baptism, and the primary meaning of *baptizo*, used in the commission. (11) Immersion was the almost universal practice of the church for the first thirteen hundred years of the Christian era. (12) The Greek and Eastern church has always practiced immersion only, and affirmed that this is the only correct meaning of *baptizo*. (13) No version of the New Testament, ancient or modern, has translated *baptizo* by sprinkle or pour. (14) The allusions to baptism in the New Testament are all in favor of immersion, and against affusion. In every case immersion makes good sense and perfectly fills all requirements, which is not true of affusion.

Now, I venture the assertion that, if the Christian world would act on this whole question, according to business principles; if the professed children of light were to act as wisely as do the children of this world, sprinkling and pouring would everywhere be rejected as spurious, and there would not be another case of affusion in the whole Protestant church. What responsible business house or bank would receive, without challenge or protest, either note or coin, against whose genuineness could be offered one hundredth part the evidence that is brought against affusion? Not one! Men, acting along true business lines, carefully avoid and reject the doubtful. Why do men act, with respect to their salvation and the ordinances of God, as they would not act in the mere matter of dollars and cents? Would either church or preacher receive as payment of subscription or salary, paper bearing such evident marks of spuriousness? Truly, "the sons of this world are for their own generation wiser than the sons of the light." I am aware that the claim is sometimes rather boastfully made, in support of this denominational practice, that immersionists are greatly in the minority. Even were

this true, it would in no wise show that the practice of affusion has any divine sanction. But, in the light of the facts in the case, such an assumption will hardly be accepted by the well-informed, even among the pedobaptists. When this question came up in the debate between A. Campbell and Rev. N. L. Rice, already referred to, Mr. Campbell showed that the number of those immersed since the beginning of the Christian era, compared with those sprinkled and poured, would be as seven to one! "In making this statement," said Mr. Campbell, "we have given all that have been immersed in the western half of Christendom for the last five hundred years, to compensate for all the clinics that were sprinkled during the first thirteen centuries. After making the most reasonable deduction which can be demanded, we have an immense majority of immersed professors, compared with the sprinkled, . . . so that the question is not, where shall we find a Baptist church (immersed believers) in any century, but where shall we find a church of sprinkled Christians?"

Let me say, that more space has been given to this great question, the action of baptism, than to some others, for the reason that denominationalism has paid the more attention to it by persistent efforts to maintain a mere Popish rite, in place of the commandment of Jesus Christ as given in the great Commission.

St. Thomas, Ont.

There has been much said pro and con concerning the Parliament of Religions which is to be held in this city as one of the auxiliaries of the World's Columbian Exposition. That it will result beneficially, if wisely managed, we have no doubt. Certainly the Christian religion, as revealed to the world in the New Testament, has nothing to fear in such a friendly conference as is proposed in the Parliament of Religions. Christianity should not hesitate to give a reason of its hope before such a world-assembly. The *Advance*, in its leading editorial in its issue of last week, among other interesting utterances says: "Representatives of the great historic faiths from all parts of the world will come together, simply as men, in frank and friendly conference over the common facts and problems of man's spiritual nature. The conference will be one which Christians of all others can afford to welcome. The existence and the transcendent importance of the religious instincts, needs, cravings, fears and hopes of mankind will be taken for granted. All will admit that 'deep calleth unto deep,' and that nothing short of the truth can ever satisfy the deep cry of the human heart. Each form of religion, from whatever land, will be asked and given freest opportunity to tell what answer it has to give."—*The Oracle*.

The love of Christ is like the blue sky, into which you may see clearly, but the real vastness of which you cannot measure. It is like the sea, into whose bosom you can look a little way, but the depths are unfathomable.—Mc-CHRYNE.

In one single quiet hour of prayer, the soul will often make more progress than in days of company with others. It is in the desert that the dew falls freshest and the air is purest.—H. BONAR.

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