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"Go speak to the people ALL the words of this Life."

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Poetry.

HERE AM I, O LORD; SEND ME.

BY J. E. RANKIN, D. D.

Are there those around my door, Whom I, thoughtless, do not see, Sick, neglected, wretched, poor, From their sin and suffering sore? Here am I, O Lord; send me.

Are there those who're far from home, Far from home, O Lord, and there, O'er the wilds who lawless roam, 'Neath the white Sierra's dome? Here am I, O Lord; send me.

Are there those who wretched hide, Sunk in sin to low degree, On some city's surging tide, Lost to love and truth and pride? Here am I, O Lord; send me.

Are there those who know thee not, On some island of the sea? In some lone, neglected spot, Stained by many a crime and blot? Here am I, O Lord; send me.

Send me where, thou knowest best, Where the greatest need may be; Where men are the most unblest, Tossed upon their sin's unrest. Here am I, O Lord; send me.

—S. S. Times.

Original.

TRINE IMMERSION.

"The Brethren baptise by trine immersion because Christ, in Matt. 28, 19, commands to baptize them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, which we cannot see how to perform without doing just as commanded."

If I should tell the boy to dip my pencil into the water, and into the milk, and into the wine, he could not possibly obey the command, short of dipping the pencil three times—once into each substance. Again, if I command the boy to write his name in the book of Matthew, and of Mark, and of Luke, he will at once see that he must write his name three times to do as commanded once in each book.

"This the Brethren do not regard as three baptisms, but three actions required to complete the one (baptism), 'dipping,' spoken of by Paul in Eph. 4:5. An extract from 'The House We Live In,' by Daniel Paulman, pub. by The G. B. Brethren's Book and Tract Work, Dayton, Ohio.

The language used by our Saviour does not require such an interpretation; on the contrary, a fair exegesis of the passage is against that view. Our Saviour commanded his disciples to teach all nations, immersing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. He does not say immersing them three times, but simply immersing them. Now, in order to immerse a person, it is not necessary to put him under the water three times; once under, and he is immersed.

But says Bro. V., "the boy could not possibly obey the command, short of dipping the pencil three times—once in each substance;" and again, "he will at once see that he must write his name three times—once in each book." Very true, but is the relation existing between the water, wine and milk, the same relation that exists between the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit? Clearly there is no relation between the water, wine and milk. They are three distinct things. He could easily dip the pencil into any one of the three, and not into the other two, and vice versa. Can we thus speak concerning the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit? Are there three Gods in the universe in the sense that there are three books, Matthew, Mark and Luke? Can we say that a man may be immersed into the name of the Father, and yet not be in the name of the Son, or of the Holy Spirit? Or that he may be in the Father and Son, while as yet he is not in the Holy Spirit? Let us see how the scriptures represent the relation existing between the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

(1). In the work of creation, the Bible represents the Father, Son, and Spirit as co-ordinate agents and authorities, as doing the same work. Gen. 1:26, "And God said let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And again, Gen. 1:3, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." Note—The original word for God in these passages is Elohim in the plural number. Now, that God the Father was present

and had an agency in the work of creation is clear from Rev. 4:11, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power for thou hast created all things." That the Son was there and exercised his power in creation is evident from Col. 1:16, where Paul says, "For by Him (Christ) were all things created," compare also John 1:3, 14. That the Spirit also participated in the work is seen from Gen. 1:2, "And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters."

(2). The scriptures represent the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit as conjointly the fountain and source of all our blessings; 2 Cor. 13:14, "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all." Rom. 1:7, "Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ." See also 1 Cor. 1:3, &c., &c.

(3). The unity of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in the work of redemption is not only expressed, but is beautifully illustrated in "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, immersing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit," thus setting forth the equality and unity of their authority.

(4). Christ is frequently said to be equal with and one with the Father. John 10:30: "I and my Father are one." John 12:44: "He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me;" this being the Hebrew idiom for saying, he believes not only on me, but on him that sent me. Phil. 2:6: Paul speaking of Christ says, "Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God."

Now what does all this prove? It shows, first, that the relation existing between the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is not analogous to that existing between the water, milk, and wine. And, second, that a man cannot be immersed in the name of the Father, and at the same time not be in the name of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; or that he might be immersed in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and as yet not be in the name of the Holy Spirit, as one is led to infer by both illustrations. But the Lord Christ wished to express seems to be that one immersion brings us, at once, into relation with Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The Son himself having said (John 14:10, 11), "Believest thou that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself, but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father in me."

Did the immediate disciples of Christ so understand it? We will examine a few passages. Peter on the day of Pentecost said (Acts 2:38), "Repent and be immersed every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ." Simply immersed, not thrice immersed. And Luke gives the account as if Peter thought when a person was immersed in the name of Jesus Christ, that the commission was being carried out, i.e. that by so doing he was immersed in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. The case of the eunuch is equally clear. He does not ask "What doth hinder me to be thrice immersed?" Neither does Luke tell us that Phillip thrice immersed him; it is simply immersed. And thus we might go through the Acts of Apostles, and in every instance it is not thrice immersed, simply immersed. And, from any case of immersion recorded in the scriptures, it is impossible to find a single thought that would naturally suggest trine immersion. On the contrary we find Paul in Eph. 4:5, saying, "One Lord, one faith, one immersion." What does all this mean? Just this, that trine immersion was not practiced by the Apostles of Christ, who were guided into all truth, and who were to have brought to their remembrance all things whatsoever he had said unto them. Otherwise with so many occurrences of immersion we would find some mention of this practice. We look in vain for it.

But says one, "if it did not originate with Christ or his inspired apostles, when did it originate? It is here, and over half the religious world who immerse, practise trine immersion. When did it come into the church?" I do not know the day and hour, nor do I care. Sufficient for me to know that it did not originate with Christ or his inspired apostles; and anything not as old as they are is too new to be of authority. For instance, you take a bank note to the cashier

and ask him for gold in exchange. He takes the bill, examines it, and declares it a counterfeit. That note may have been in circulation twenty years; do you demand that he shall state when that note was made? O no; he says it is counterfeit, and that settles it. It is just so with trine immersion. Did Christ or his apostles originate it? It cannot be proved they did; therefore, we cannot accept it.

In regard to its origin we may say this: The first time it is mentioned by a church teacher, it is spoken of in such a way that there is no room for doubt as to the fact that he knew it to be an innovation. I refer to Tertullian. Writing in the beginning of the third century, in his treatise, *De Corona* §3, he makes reference to this practice as follows: "When we are going to enter the water, but a little before, in the presence of the congregation, and under the hand of the president, we profess that we disown the devil and his pomp and his angels; hereupon we are thrice immersed, making a somewhat *angler* pledge that the Lord has appointed in the gospel." This is the earliest mention of this practice; however, it soon becomes for a time almost the universal practice.

It might be interesting to know how far the church had departed from apostolic practice, before the close of the third century. We have found trine immersion either near the close of the second or in the beginning of the third century. The first mention of infant baptism is found here; and, according to Neander, it arose out of the doctrine of inherent guilt cleaving to human nature on account of Adam's transgression together with the notion of a magical influence connected with the baptismal water. From this perversion of the ordinance arose the office of sponsor, or god-father. The "Apostolic Creed" was substituted for "The Good Confession." This required the office of Catechist, Exorcists, or persons who expelled evil spirits from sinners and consecrated them to God before the administration of the ordinance. In this century, too, we find the first reference to the shameful practice of divesting candidates of their clothing, this indecent practice growing out of the prevalent supposition of an inherent, sanctifying efficacy in the baptismal waters. It is here also that effusion was substituted for immersion in the case of the sick. It soon became common in the case of others, and gradually obtained recognition as a legitimate practice.

So from the time John wrote his epistles there were Gnostics and certain sects of these denied the divinity of Christ. Now may we not suppose that in order to keep persons who held these views from entering the church, it was decided to practice trine immersion; thus clearly setting forth the divinity and equality of Christ, not seeing the inconsistency of their act in that it destroyed the unity of the God-head.

Rodney, Ont. P. B.

Selections.

JUNE MEETING IN CANADA.

The June meeting of the Disciples in Canada assembled June 6-10, with the church in St. Thomas. Some of us "from the States" resolved to go over and see what a Canadian June meeting is like. We find it not exactly like June meetings on this side of the line. The Canadians have several items in their June meeting programme which are omitted from ours. Indeed, it is only lately that ours had any programme, and what we have now is somewhat of an innovation and off-hand at that. The Canadian brethren do not meet for social and spiritual reunion only. Theirs is more in the nature of a business and a missionary meeting. The mass meeting idea is not made so prominent as with us. We have brought back with us several suggestions which we desire to commend, especially to the disciples of Western New York.

1. We think the object of the Canadian June meeting worthy of our imitation. Mere annual mass-meetings, however pleasant they may be to many, hardly justify the outlay of time and expense of attending them. They should be associated with some more positive and practical purpose. We should meet in the interest of missions, of Sunday Schools, of church edification and kindred ends. We may miss the old-

time "arousement," but religion is not principally to make us feel good, but to do good. Such objects need not exclude the best features of our June meetings in the past, but add to them other and better features. The Canadians, in making their meetings more practical and purposeful, set us an example worthy of imitation.

2. We commend to our people likewise the orderly business procedure which we saw at St. Thomas. This meeting of the Canadians was conducted according to a well-matured plan.

No one seemed to speak without having something to contribute to the purpose of the meeting. There was no casting about for ways to put in the time. The work had been marked out beforehand, and the meeting proceeded to consider and discharge it with proper deliberation and dispatch. We confess to some surprise at this, having understood that the Canadian Disciples were somewhat averse to "plans" and "societies." So far from this they adopted a written constitution for their future co-operation with very little dissent and with no unseemly contention whatever. The spirit of the meeting was excellent throughout. The sober sense of the English mind, which characterizes those sturdy, conservative Canadians, sees that the work cannot go on without some settled plan and rule, and so they adopt such without much ado. We think there are some on our side of the lakes who might profit by their example. True, there are many Canadian disciples and some churches who oppose all this, as indeed there are among us. But the great majority, there as here, see that some sort of regulations are indispensable to the work of evangelization. To repudiate all plans is in the end to repudiate the work and give place to others.

3. Most heartily do we approve and commend the interest which the brethren generally take in their meetings and work. This St. Thomas meeting was by no means a ministers' meeting. The brethren were present, certainly, in goodly number, and had their share in the proceedings; but they did not, by any means, monopolize or manage the meeting. All the officers of the meeting were from the pews, and excellent officers they proved themselves to be. And the speeches of brethren not ministers were as many and as much to the point as those of the preachers. All the brethren manifested an intelligent interest in whatever was proposed. In fact, what struck a visitor with greatest force was the honor attached by the brethren to such work. If one was elected to office or appointed to any service by the meeting, he took it as a compliment and an expression of confidence, and addressed himself to his duties in a worthy and manly way. Now, is this the case in these parts? Is the office of elder, of deacon, of clerk, of secretary, of committeeman, accounted of any honor by the average American church member? Is he not more than willing to unload all such responsibilities on the pastor? If elected to political office he accepts with alacrity, but an office in his church or in a missionary society he counts beneath or perhaps above him. "Brethren, these things ought not so to be." And they are not so in Canada, at least to any such deplorable extent as we have it in this country.

4. We commend, finally, the character of the preaching chosen by the co-operation. Bros. Moffett and McLean are able preachers on any theme, but exceptionally able on the subject of missions. And since this was to be a missionary meeting these men were invited to make the addresses of the occasion. Powerful and stirring addresses they were, which cannot fail of permanent as well as immediate results. And the hearing they had was equal to the preaching.

We must not bring this already tedious article to a close without commending the hearty and abundant hospitality of our Canadian brethren. In this they do not excel the disciples on this side, but they do not fall behind them. We were glad also to see a goodly number of our Canadian preachers. They all impressed us as excellent men worthy of the great and growing field in which they have chosen to labor. Since we cannot mention all their names, we will mention none. One exception we must make: our old friend and classmate, T. B. Knowles, pastor at St. Thomas, discharged the duties of host in a manner altogether in keeping with the occasion. —J. M. T., in *The Church Voice*.