

ORDER IN DIVINE SERVICE.

OUTLINE OF A SERMON BY REV. STUART ROBINSON, D.D., EXTRACTED FROM THE "CHURCH MISCELLANIES" OF THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, KINGSTON.

Realizing the importance and appropriateness of the suggestion made in regard to order in divine service, the pastor not long since preached a discourse of which the following is the brief outline. There was necessity in the apostolic age to speak of the conduct becoming the house of God, and that necessity continually exists. We should not fail to remember that the object is to worship God. While there may be the form without the spirit, spiritual worship will always assume becoming form, and the one has its influence on the other. There should be preparation of heart in our homes for the hours of worship. A burden of domestic care, the excitement of hurry, and vain thoughts concerning the personal appearance greatly disqualify us for worship. God looks upon the hearts of those who appear in His house.

1. We should be regularly in our own place of worship on the Lord's day. There is the power of habit in ourselves and of influence on others. Those who wander from place to place both receive and do but little good. Their actions declare that they are not making the worship of God their chief object.
2. All should be punctually in their places at the hour of worship. God's honour, our obligations to others, and our own good, call for this. The first part of the service is that exclusively devoted to acts of worship. All hindrances to this should be overcome.
3. A devotional spirit and demeanour should be assumed on entering the house of God. "Holiness becometh Thy house, O God, forever" and all the time.
4. Every one should participate in the exercises of the hour. Praise, prayer, reception of the truth and the offering to God of our substance is for all, old and young. We should not go to church to be ministered to but to worship the Eternal God; and this we cannot do by proxy or profession.
5. We should close the acts of worship and leave God's house in a becoming manner. In the presence of an earthly sovereign, the audience stand until the royal personage passes out. It is not becoming to prepare to leave the presence of God before the benediction is pronounced, or even then to make for the doors at once. It is seemly to pause for a little, in prayer, and with the interchange of Christian salutations, to pass quietly out.
6. It is of great importance that we should reflect on and practice the truths of God's Word heard. This is to the soul what assimilation and exercise is to the body. We are not to be "hearers of the word only, but doers of it likewise." As a gentleman was going out of the door of a church a boy asked, "Is the sermon done, sir." The reply was, "No, it is preached, but the people have yet to do it."

THE IRISH FAMINE.

There can, we think, be little doubt about the reality of the destitution at present prevailing in Ireland, and of the likelihood of that destitution becoming severer and more wide spread during the coming months of spring and summer. It is equally evident that the present crisis is not for one moment to be compared with that which followed the potato failure in '46 and '47, either in extent or severity. In the north of the island there is little if any suffering. At least what may be to be met with in that quarter is of a very mild type, such as can easily be relieved by local and private benevolence. About the extent and severity of the destitution even in the worst districts, there is also considerable diversity of opinion, and many who are not by any means of the harshest and least charitable dispositions do not hesitate to affirm that the picture has on a good many cases been given with unnecessary blackness. This is only for political and party purposes. The unceasing wranglings over the whole situation and the evident desire of Parnell and Company to spot their political opponents, rather than to feed the hungry or clothe the naked, are anything but edifying exhortation. No wonder that many, in the circumstances, are tempted to turn away with disgust, and to refuse to give a farthing, either to one

fund or another. The hollow selfishness and ranting imbecility so ostentatiously displayed by those who claim by way of eminence to be the champions of Ireland's rights, and the relievers of Ireland's miseries afford a very good excuse to those who are seeking any of the kind, for their "passing by on the other side." To withhold help from the perishing would be very wrong; but at the same time, thoughtful on-lookers cannot help asking how it should so often come to pass that this assistance is chiefly, if not exclusively, needed in those parts of that unhappy island where there is at once the most fertile soil and the most genial climate; and how it is that the destitute should be found almost exclusively among the Roman Catholic section of the population. We have no doubt about the land laws being bad, and we are as fully convinced that this very crisis will greatly help to their being very much improved. But after allowing as much as we possibly can to the injurious influence of those laws and the depressing and paralyzing effects of many of the social arrangements of the country, are we not forced to look for some other agency in order fully to account for the strange and perplexing phenomenon presented by the chronic condition of many parts of Ireland? And are we not shut up to the conclusion that that agency is the system of religion by which so many Irishmen are held in thralldom? We know very well that the merest hint of such a thing is always denounced in many quarters as the exhibition of ignorant and antiquated bigotry. We can't, however, help that, for everything is more and more confirming what has with indefinite frequency been asserted, that Popery is not only Ireland's great spiritual curse, but the great cause of her social misery and material wretchedness. The evidence in support of this accumulates as the years pass by? Why should so many in the very best parts of that island be always, even in the best times, trembling on the very verge of destitution—and these almost exclusively of one religious persuasion—while others, with a sterner climate and less fertile soil, are scarcely ever found in such deplorable circumstances? There is not one thing apparently in which these fellow-countrymen differ, except in their religion, and is it then unnatural for onlookers to conclude that that religion which is so generally associated with poverty and struggle must be the chief factor in causing the marvellous and disastrous difference in outward circumstances? We do not say that this is any reason why Protestants should stop their ears to the cry of distress or withhold their help from those who may be suffering and destitute. But it comes to be a matter of very serious consideration, all the same, to settle what is in the circumstances dutiful, and may very naturally lead not a few to think that it would be better upon the whole for each church to help its own poor, so that if in any instance it cause the evil, it may also take good care to apply the remedy.—*Canada Presbyterian.*

MODE OF BAPTISM.

EXTRACTS FROM A SERMON PREACHED BY REV. STUART ROBINSON, D.D., AT THE SECOND CHURCH, LOUISVILLE, JANUARY 11TH, 1850.

(Concluded.)

Here, beyond all question, wash and baptize are equivalent words. Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. iv. 33) is said to have "been baptized (*ebaphte*) with the dew of heaven." Here wetting with dew is termed baptizing. These examples suffice to show that in all the Scriptures, washing, whether by pouring or sprinkling, was termed baptism. What becomes, in all these cases, of "dip and nothing but dip?" It is further confirmation of the fact that *baptizo* was regarded in the earliest times as a sacred technical word that the Latin translation known as the Vulgate, the earliest of Christian translations, dating back within a century of the apostles, merely transferred, without translation, the word *baptizo*. If it meant in that era "immerse," why did not the translator say "*immergo*" and "*immerse*," as the Latin called for? Evidently *baptizo* was, in that early age—before that ritualistic fanaticism arose in the Church which, regarding the washing of the body as literally a washing away of sins, therefore argued that the whole body must be

washed—the word was understood to be a sacred technical word which no longer was limited to the classic Greek meaning, but technically used. And it is a most significant fact that translations of the Scriptures in all languages ever since, with the exception of recent Baptist sectarian versions, have followed the example of that early Latin translation, and transferred, without translating, *baptizo*. All the scholars for 1,700 years, it seems, have failed to see that the word means "dip," nothing but "dip," but have deemed *baptizo* a technical word designed to describe a sacred rite, symbolizing by water, purification, without reference to the mode of applying the water.

And in still further confirmation of all this is the fact that, had the Holy Ghost intended to use a word that should mean "dip, nothing but dip" the Greek language furnished precisely that word in *dypto*, "to dip or dive." That he passed by *dypto* and selected *baptizo*, shews plainly enough that his purpose was to express, generally, cleansing by water as a symbol of his work on the soul, without restricting the mode of its application.

Lightfoot, recognized as the greatest "of all the scholars" in Biblical learning, commenting on the baptism of John, says.

"For as it is undoubted that John brought those who were baptized to the river, so it is almost as little to be doubted that when they were there he threw and sprinkled the water upon them, both to answer the types of sprinkling that had preceded in the law, and the predictions thereof that were given by the prophets (Ezek. xxiv. 26), 'Then will I sprinkle clean water,' etc. 'The manner of the baptizing (of Jesus) differed not from the common manner that John used with others, saving in one particular (confession), for he went into the water, had water sprinkled upon him, and prayed as well they.'" (Lightfoot Harm. Works, vol. iv., pages 274 and 305).

Since Lightfoot's time the excavations and explorations among the early Christian houses and churches have brought to light pictures of the baptism of Jesus, as painted in the earliest days of the Church, and the baptisms of others, which shew that among primitive Christians, at least, this view of Lightfoot obtained. These pictures represent Jesus standing, stooping or kneeling in the water, and John pouring water on His head. I remember seeing such a picture, of John pouring water upon the head of Jesus, among the frescoes of a disinterred house, which pretty reliable traditions held to be the house of a Christian contemporary of the apostles. It does not follow, therefore, that *baptizing* in Jordan means *immersing* in Jordan. And as to baptism elsewhere in the primitive ages of the Church, it is well known that in the Catacombs, where Christians sheltered and worshipped, have been found baptismal fonts too diminutive for baptism by immersion; and Dr. Edward Robinson affirms the same thing of the relics of the ancient Christian churches in Palestine, as at Tekoa and Gophna. The fonts are so small that any immersion in them was impossible.

I doubt whether even the rude immersions in the corrupt and fanatical times succeeding the Apostolic age were properly baptisms at all. Many of "all the scholars" are of opinion that the men under the care of the deacons, and the women under the care of the deaconesses, first went into the bath in accordance with the fanatical notion that the washing of the body cleansed from sin, and, after thus bathing, put on white robes and came before the minister and received the formal baptism by sprinkling or affusion.

A GOOD PRACTICAL SUGGESTION.

As to the cases of Christian baptism—for remember John's was not Christian baptism—I can only commend a method of examination, which I have no space to enter upon—a method suggested by a minister of our Church—to any who can read or get read for them the Greek Testament. Prepare a table of three columns, one headed, "Certainly by immersion;" the second, "Probably by immersion;" the third, "Certainly not by immersion." Then, divest your mind of all theories; and, as you read carefully the several cases of ritual baptism performed, mark down