

Messenger and Visitor

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An Admonition to Baptists.

The Evangelical Churchman, of Toronto, in an article on "The Baptist Position," makes the following remarkable statements: "Baptists are at liberty to believe that *baptizein* means to immerse, although they are by no means agreed upon this. We affirm that this is not its meaning, and that the best scholarship supports our contention."

The Churchman should be more explicit and tell us where that singular variety of Baptists is to be found who do not believe that *baptizein* means to immerse. Surely they must dwell in some corner of the universe as yet unexplored except by the 'adventurous wing' of the Churchman's imagination. Again, when it is affirmed that, to immerse is not the meaning of *baptizein* and that the best scholarship supports this contention, there is a vexatious inconclusiveness in the argument. Why does not the Churchman tell us where this best scholarship is to be found? We are greatly mistaken if, in the Anglican communion itself, the weight of Biblical scholarship does not go to support the Baptist contention as to the meaning of *baptizein*. Would the Churchman kindly name a few eminent exegetes of the English church who declare that the Greek word for baptism does not mean to immerse?

The Churchman declares its belief that to immerse is not the meaning of *baptizein*. Then why not tell us what it does mean. Does it mean to sprinkle, or the sign of the cross made on the forehead of the candidate by the finger of a priest? If baptism means to sprinkle and does not mean to immerse or to dip, why does the Anglican Prayer Book instruct the administrator to dip the infant candidate in water, except in cases of physical weakness, and why, in the name of fair consistency, was a bath tub imported into the Episcopal Cathedral of this Province the other day, in order that at least an heroic attempt might be made to administer adult baptism by immersion?

The article above quoted from concludes with a kindly admonition to Baptists against intolerance and narrowness. "With all that is noble and beautiful in the Christianity of our Baptist brethren," says the Churchman, "we cannot but feel that their insistence upon a mere piece of ritual, and their exaltation of a rite into the place of essential truth, produces narrowness and intolerance of spirit."

We cordially agree with the Churchman that any undue insistence upon a mere piece of ritual, and any exaltation of baptism out of its proper place must inevitably tend to narrowness and intolerance. But who is it that makes so much of ritual, and whose doctrine and practice of baptism is it that tends to narrowness and intolerance? The Baptists hold baptism to be an ordinance enjoined by Christ and the door of entrance into the fellowship of His church,—an ordinance which is indeed without saving efficacy, but which strongly appeals to the Christian mind and heart through its beautiful symbolism of the believer's union with his Lord in His death and resurrection. The Anglican church on the other hand makes baptism a sacrament of grace which, administered to the unconscious babe, makes that babe a child of God and an inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven. The Baptist doctrine, making baptism an ordinance to be submitted to by those only who have experienced spiritual regener-

ation, recognizes the unbaptized Christian as an inheritor of the Kingdom of Christ, and therefore a brother in the Lord, though not a member of the church. But, according to Anglican doctrine, there is for the unbaptized no Christian recognition. If the baptized child die it is accorded the rites of Christian burial, and even if the baptized have grown old, living a life that affords no evidence of repentance or faith, still he is recognized as Christian, and dying, his body is committed to the dust "in the sure and certain hope of glorious resurrection." But for the unbaptized, living or dying, the ritual-bound Anglican church has no recognition. The unbaptized may be a babe in helpless, unconscious innocency, or a mature person who professes and gives evidence of repentance and faith, it matters not; not only does the church not recognize him as being within its pale, it does not recognize him as having any part or lot with the people of God. Living, the church has for him no Christian fellowship, and dying, no Christian burial.

We desire to say nothing unkind of the Evangelical Churchman, or of the community it represents. Its tone is not unfriendly and its heart, we dare say, is more generous than its creed. But in view of what the Anglican doctrine of baptism involves, it does seem remarkable, to say the least, that the Churchman should think it necessary to accuse Baptists of a too rigid insistence upon a mere piece of ritual and of teaching a doctrine of baptism which promotes narrowness and intolerance.

Paul's Last Words.

In Paul's second epistle to Timothy we have probably his last recorded utterance. In addition to the intrinsic value of its teachings the epistle is of special interest for the glimpse here given into the apostle's mind and heart when he has come near to the end, when for him life's toil and endeavor are well-nigh accomplished and the goal is now in sight. Those who desire to get an intelligent grasp of the Bible lesson for next Sunday, taken from the fourth chapter, should read very carefully the whole epistle.

The epistle is largely an admonition to Timothy. Paul knows that his own work in the world is about to end, the time of his departure is at hand. Naturally he thinks of the work which his hands must lay down, the interests for which he can no longer personally care; he thinks of the trials and perils that impend and of the men upon whom will rest the duty and responsibility of carrying on the work of the gospel ministry; he thinks of Timothy, his beloved son in the gospel, and he writes this letter to hearten and inspire the young minister for the service to which God has called him. The apostle's appeal is not to the young man's love of fame or distinction. There is nothing to say about preferments or ecclesiastical titles, and dignities as inducements to faithful service. The appeal is to the heroic elements in the man and the minister. The call is to a life of purity, of self-discipline, of constant activity and strenuous endeavor in the service of the Divine Master, the demand is for a man who, for the sake of Christ and the church, can put all love of ease and personal ambition beneath his feet, prepared to endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

The demand for that kind of men in the Christian ministry is still present. Still Christ calls for heroes, and there is now, as of old, abundant opportunity for heroic service. Men are not now indeed in much danger of being beheaded or burned for their faith, but no one shall look in vain for opportunities nor listen in vain for calls to endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. It may be said that this lesson is especially a lesson for ministers. That is true. Timothy was in a special and official sense a minister of the church. But what Christian is there who is not in some real sense a minister of Christ, and who is there to whom there is not possible a heroic life of self-sacrifice corresponding to that to which Paul calls Timothy?

It is well for us to give particular heed to that which constitutes the ground of the solemn charge of Paul to Timothy. Why should the man be faith-

ful in his ministry? Because God takes account of it and Christ the Lord will judge it. Because there is coming a day of judgment and a revelation of Christ's kingdom, when all His servants shall be vindicated and all His enemies made ashamed. That Day, that day of judgment and of revelation,—how often Paul speaks of it! With it were connected, for him, how much of desire and of expectation. And in these days do we, in our preaching, our teaching and our living, give the place which should be given to that Day which seemed so significant to Paul?

And now that the end is near—now that the sword of the Roman executioner will soon fall upon the apostle's neck and his life be poured out as it were an oblation on the altar of Christian faith, what has Paul to say concerning himself? What of the past—what of the future? Very little; only that life has been for him a battlefield, and that the conflict in which he has been so strenuously engaged has been a good fight. Life had been to him as a race course; he had run the race; he had kept the faith. There was no doubt in Paul's mind that the battle had been worth fighting, that the race had been worth running. And as to the future, his eye is fixed on the prize, the crown of righteousness. There is no fear and no boasting. Paul claims for himself no reward which shall not equally belong to every believer, however humble his station or ability, who has loved his Lord's appearing. No chariot of fire appears to take Paul to heaven. He is to die the martyr's death. He expects that, and it disturbs him not, for he knows whom he has believed and is persuaded that He is able to keep that which he has committed to Him against that day.

Editorial Notes.

—Dr. Gunsaulus, one of the most eloquent and distinguished preachers of America, has found it necessary, because of broken health, to press his resignation as pastor of the Plymouth church, Chicago.

—The letter from Rev. W. V. Higgins, which appears in another column, will be read with interest. Everyone will be glad to learn of the arrival of our missionaries in London, after a safe and fairly pleasant trip across the ocean. May a kind Providence watch over them through all their journey.

—Having alluded to Dr. Berry's visit to Boston, the grand impression that his sermons and addresses there made on the large congregations who heard them, and the fact that, after preaching in Washington for Dr. Newman, Dr. Berry sails on Dec. 8th for home, the Congregationalist adds: "God speed his efforts on behalf of international arbitration. If he could only get the ear of those incorrigible senators they could not help yielding to his winning manner and cogent arguments."

—For the interesting report, found in another column, of Dr. Berry's address at Tremont Temple, the readers of the MESSENGER AND VISITOR are indebted to Rev. H. Morrow, late of Tavoy, Burma. As our readers know both Mr. and Mrs. Morrow have been compelled, for health's sake, to return to America. They are residing now at West Newton, near Boston. Mr. Morrow writes that though still far from well, he is much stronger than he was.

—Alluding to the situation as to temperance in Charlottetown, the Guardian of that city says that the Scott Act "was enforced fairly well, though frequently violated. Drunkenness has greatly increased since its repeal, a few months ago by a small majority. The vote on the question of repeal took place on the day after the general provincial election, and some politicians to get rid of the liquor vote assisted powerfully to obtain a majority against the Act. We believe that could the question uncomplicated by other issues be now submitted to the people a majority would be found in favor of restoring the Scott Act."

—The steamer 'Gaelic,' which arrived at San Francisco from the Orient a few days ago, brought information of terrible destruction of property and appalling loss of life in the Philippine Islands, by

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