

rock in the wilderness, and the chief corner stone. All these, and others, are but illustrations to set forth the work which Christ came into the world to do, and the relation in which he stands to those who truly believe on his name.

When, therefore, he instituted his supper as the perpetual memorial of his sufferings and death, he spoke in the same beautiful, impressive, eastern and easily understood manner. "And as they did eat, Jesus took bread and blessed it, saying this is my body," that is, this represents my body, "and he took the cup and said this is my blood," that is, this represents my blood, "of the new testament or covenant." Even if there were no literary objections to the literal and material interpretation of these words, such an interpretation would be a physical impossibility. Christ was still inhabiting his body; it had not yet been surrendered; he was in it; that bread which he break could not have been a part of the substance of his body. The whole thing would have been a gross absurdity; and if an impossibility and an absurdity in the hands of Christ, how much more in the hands of any human priest.

So, also, in reference to the cup, Christ said "this cup," not the wine in the cup simply, but this cup as it stands, contents and all, represents "my blood of the new covenant, which was shed for many for the remission of sins." The gospel of Luke fortunately settles the spiritual significance of the language beyond a question. Luke says, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood which is shed for you," not my blood, but "the new covenant in my blood." These words reveal to us the full spiritual meaning of Christ in the institution of the supper. The elements, the bread and the wine, were to be the symbols of the bruised body and the shed blood of the Saviour, and were to set forth to the end of time God's covenant of grace to lost men, and the manner by which it was accomplished and proclaimed, viz., by the sufferings and death of the Son of God on the cross.

Moreover, this is entirely in harmony with our use of language at the present time. We say of a picture, that is Washington, or of a statue, that is Lincoln. But the picture and the statue are not Washington and Lincoln, but only representations of them on canvas and in bronze. Washington and Lincoln are not there. In like manner we exhort men to believe on the cross of Christ, and we think of the cross as the symbol of Christ's sufferings and death, just as we think of the bread and wine. All literature is full of such instances. To base an incredible and unprovable dogma upon a simple figure of speech shows nothing so much as a desire to lift religion out of the real into the unreal, out of the reasonable into the mysterious, out of the intelligible into the marvellous. It furnishes a basis for the old fallacy *credo quia impossibile est*.

The simple memorial character of the Lord's Supper is declared in such words as these, "As often as ye do this, ye do it in remembrance of me." Christ did not prescribe any fixed time for its observance or say how often it should be observed. That was not material. It could be left safely to the sense of need and judgment of his disciples. But he did determine its character in the words "in remembrance of me." It was not to be a new sacrifice, as the Roman Catholics say, when they call it "the host," but a grateful and loving spiritual remembrance of the one sacrifice of Calvary, which he himself offered once for all, for all who should believe on his name.

The Apostle Paul in his First Epistle to the Corinthians not only repeats the words of Luke, "This is the new covenant in my blood," thus showing that he had truly apprehended the spiritual meaning of the rite, but he adds, "This do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come," thereby proving that as a memorial rite this second ordinance of the Christian religion was intended to remind all believers of their dying Lord, to bring the heart often to a fresh contemplation of the cross, and so deepen the love and faith, and minister to the spiritual life of the soul. The scriptural view of the supper is tenderly set forth in Gerard T. Noel's familiar hymn:

While yet his anguished soul surveyed
Those pangs he would not flee,
What love his latest words displayed,
"Meet and remember me."

Remember thee, thy death, thy shame,
Our sinful hearts to share!
O memory! leave no other name
But his recorded there.

Any other view than this ministers to superstition, and not to an intelligent faith. It was born of a belief in magic and sorcery, amulets and charms. The consecrated wafer has been known to be carried about the person as a protection against sickness and danger. We cannot emphasize too strongly the spiritual nature of the Christian religion. It exalts faith in a living Saviour, love, obedience, purity of heart, godliness of life, and a belief in the ever-present Spirit of God as comforter and guide and enlightener of the soul. Christian faith having accepted the finished work of Christ upon the cross, knows no such thing as a perpetual sacrifice, but rather the perpetual intercession and glorious reign of the

Saviour. His sacrifice is never to be repeated. In some sense it is true that henceforth we are not to know Christ after the flesh.

And yet we are never to forget the price of our redemption. As a memorial rite the Lord's Supper is to be observed by those who love Christ and honor his every commandment, frequently, thoughtfully, prayerfully, gratefully. It is a means of grace of a peculiarly helpful sort. It seems to be more than prayer, or praise, or Scripture-reading. Its bread signifies Christ's constant nourishment of the soul. Its cup is a cup of blessing to every trusting heart. Its observance should not be dependent upon fickle and uncertain feeling, nor upon a sense of unworthiness. When we feel most unworthy may be the very time when we need most its blessed reminder of Christ's sympathy and pardoning love, and its ministry of peace and hope to the soul.

It is not the meek, the penitent, the self-distrustful, but the thoughtless, the irreverent, the profane, that drink unworthily, and thereby drink condemnation to themselves. Christ is present, not as a lifeless flesh, but as living spirit, not in the bread, but in the heart of the disciple, a presence that means infinitely more than any supposed bit of flesh or drop of blood could mean. It is a real presence, because it is a spiritual presence.

The Lord's Supper has its prescribed qualifications, and its fitting place in the order of symbolized truth. It is for the believing and the obedient, whose supreme desire is to walk in all their Lord's appointed ways. It is the command of Christ to every one who has confessed him, and no heart can afford to deprive itself of the privilege, the help, the joy of thus remembering its crucified and risen Lord in the beautiful rite which he in his infinite wisdom has instituted for his disciples.—The Standard.

Planted in the House.

BY OBADIAH OLDSCHOOL.

I can remember very little of my maternal grandmother. She died when I was quite young. But whenever I think of her it is in connection with a lemon tree which was one of the wonders of the northern village in which she lived, and the pride and joy of her heart. That lemon tree was planted in a box on wheels. In the summer it was trundled out into the garden, but as soon as the frost came, or was expected, the precious exotic was brought into the house and placed in a bay window, that it might get as much sunshine as possible; a fire was kept up all night, and when the weather was coldest the lemon tree was wheeled near to the stove. The result of all this labor and care was a feeble growth, a few blossoms and now and then a diminutive lemon.

My mother inherited my grandmother's fondness for exotics. She had quite a conservatory in her sitting room. Her especial favorite was a passion vine, which was planted like the lemon tree in a box on wheels. In the summer it was trained over the dining-room portico, and in winter over the inside of the dining-room windows. When the passion vine bloomed, what pleasure my good mother took in showing her little ones how it illustrated the crucifixion of our Lord, she pointed out in it the cross, the hammers used by the soldiers and the cruel spikes that were driven into the Saviour's hands and feet.

Since I have lived in a semi-tropical country and have seen lemon trees in all their glory, towering to the eaves of the houses and covered with thousands of blossoms and boxes of fruit, I have often thought of my sainted grandmother's tree in a box—her darling house plant—and said to myself, how she would have enjoyed the citrus groves of California. But she has been for years amid grander trees than any of which we can boast, even the trees of life that grow on either side of the river of the water of life.

But visions of those house plants of the olden time come up before my mind today, when I was reading the 92nd Psalm. The psalmist says: "Those that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God." Those that be planted are, of course, the godly, we now call them Christians. The church is the house of God. In its organization and its ordinances it is adapted to the protection and the growth of men and women who are new creatures in Christ Jesus. They are like exotics in this evil world. If left out in the wintry atmosphere uncared for they would be chilled and frozen. They must be housed. But, I asked, can the good Lord mean that we shall be such house plants as those I have described? And I was compelled to answer "no," for those barely lived, while we are told in the Psalm that these "flourish." Nay, more, it is said that they flourish "like the palm tree and grow like a cedar of Lebanon," (see verse 12). The palm and the cedar are among the tallest trees of the land where this Psalm was written. They could not attain their full development in the bay windows of our houses. We learn, therefore, that the house of the Lord—the church of Jesus Christ, is a grand conservatory. It is like a palace of glass, warmed by the fires of celestial love, broad enough and lofty enough for a forest of the trees of righteousness to grow in.

"The house of the Lord"—our Saviour told his disciples that in it are many mansions. And Paul wrote to

the Ephesians about "the whole family in heaven and earth." Then is not that part of the family which is still here below living in one of the mansions of the house? Is not the visible church an outer court of the abode of the glorified which John saw in his Sunday vision on Patmos? If so, the soil, the shelter, the light, the warmth and the culture in the conservatory of the plants of righteousness is celestial, divine. We are "rooted and grounded in love." God himself is our light and our salvation. He is a covert from the storm. He pours out his Spirit upon us in floods, upon the dry ground. All his angels are ministering spirits to the heirs of salvation. Surely, then, we ought to flourish like the palm and grow like the cedar. We ought to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour by the rich foliage of our Christian graces, and by bearing much fruit. But, alas, too many of us are like my grandmother's lemon tree, we live, but we do not flourish. We have enough of the new growth to show what we are, but not enough to illustrate the excellence of the provision which God has made for our spiritual development. "The house of the Lord." The visible church is everywhere today. But how few palms and cedars in it. With God there is no respect of persons, the lowliest might become the loftiest if he would improve his opportunities. The soil is deep and mellow enough, the irrigation is ample the walls of glass that shelter from the wintry blasts of earth, while they admit the light divine, are as broad as the world and as high as heaven. There is no excuse for spiritual dwarfishness.

One reason that we do not flourish as we should is that we do not realize the full force and meaning of the word "planted." Our interest in the church and its ordinances is too superficial. We do not root ourselves in it, and in the great truths to which it testifies, as we should. We take ourselves to God's house as if we were orchids—air plants; and when the services are over we take ourselves away, and try to grow in an atmosphere of worldliness until the next Sabbath day. No wonder, then, that palms and cedars are rare! When we are ready to plant ourselves, to make our religion the great interest and business of our lives, we will flourish in the courts of our God.—Interior.

Our Baptist Creed.

J. MILNOR WILBUR.

Ever since I was old enough to know anything I have been told that "Baptists have no creed." I never could understand this, for if a Baptist is asked what Baptists believe he will proceed to enumerate some distinctive Baptist doctrines. Ask another and he will do the same and in almost the identical language, and so on to the end of Baptist succession. How comes it that this is so to the jot and tittle of our ideas?

If a creed is what it is: "a summary of fundamental points of religious belief," it seems to me Baptists have one, and a right rigid one, too, as rigid as Baptist ritual. To be sure, it never was passed on by the churches that met in Jerusalem to consider circumcision, nor indeed by the Southern Baptist Convention nor the Northern Anniversaries in convention assembled, but how about the associations? Here we come to what looks somewhat like a court of appeal. Before a church is admitted into fellowship with this body, a committee is appointed to whom the application is referred; and this is, "we have examined their articles of faith, etc." Were they right or wrong? Were they Baptists or not? How do we tell? Why, by comparing it with our Baptist creed. Where is it found? In the Bible, to be sure, but that's not where we go then to look for it. If we haven't Hiseox or some other like that, we have it—some of us anyway—in our heads; and if it isn't according to that "summary of points," that church is not received.

They tell us that some of the greatest poems have come down to us by oral transmission, and have only been written in later years; but we recognize them, nevertheless, as belonging to certain writers. This is the case with our Baptist creed; it has been orally transmitted, let us hope from Pentecost, but it is as unchangeable as the Thirty-nine Articles or the Westminster Confession, and its recognition is just as essential to a Baptist church as these others are to an Episcopal or Presbyterian church.

We have all heard it stated—I did only a few weeks ago—that one thing that Baptists glory in and one thing that differentiates Baptists from other denominations, is that we stand alone on the Bible as our creed. That has always seemed to me an unjust charge or a false claim for two reasons; first because Baptists have a creed as truly as the others even though it be unwritten, and second, because others base their creeds, from their point of view, as truly on the Bible as we do. It has never seemed to me that Baptists had a monopoly on the Bible and others a monopoly on creeds. I believe the Baptist creed is founded on the Bible, it is in the Bible, it is the Bible. The Presbyterian believes the same thing about the Confession, and it looks something like presumption to say that Baptists believe the Bible more truly than others. Men in other folds would leave them in a moment if they did not believe they were following the Bible as they see it. Do not we Baptists rather miss it when we claim for ourselves exclusive conscience in following the Bible?

I don't know why we are so afraid of admitting that there is a Baptist creed, and one, though "unwritten," can be written any time it is asked for, and as a matter of fact is written in hundreds of church manuals and books and tracts and other places. Baptists differ from other folks, and most of us glory, not in the fact of difference, but in the point of difference, but certainly a creed or no creed is not that point. I am glad we have a creed which is the basis of our denomination; I am glad it is the common belief of so many who are trying to do the Master's will. A Baptist creed is an essential.—The Commonwealth.

Baltimore, Md.