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## FACING THE FUTURE.

BY M. T. PLYLER.

Enough time has elapsed for the testing of the proverbial new year resolutions to be on in earnest. Some have already grown weak and begun to waver in their new endeavor, ready to fall in with the usual compromises. They fail to break with the ignoble past and are perplexed by the failure to realize the expectations of their loftier moments. The days gone, marked by disappointments, cruel anxieties and headaches, leave the earnest souls of earth full of questionings, all of which tend to beget a timidity in facing the future. Prolonged efforts to escape business wreck, weary watchings through the long nights for the morning that never comes to the wrecked family circle, and the trying ordeal of concealing a breaking heart behind a smiling face, cause the first shadow of coming trial to assume the aspect of the black night of despair. Only the brave, trusting heart can face the future with unruffled calm.

Why not this be the lot every follower of the Man of Sorrows during these coming months? March steadily on without the slightest misgivings because of your inability to dip into the future, for, God knows; and and raise the joyful shout, even when men forget, for God cares. Leave behind your enmities and destroy enemies by making friends of them; repent of your sins and leave the load with the great Burden-bearer; profit by your sorrows and failures until they become the wings by which you rise. Up and on should be the glad watch-word.

The ministry should these winter months compass new fields of thought, led by the master-spirits that have taught the world to think, and should make new friendships with God in the deep silences of life where the familiar associations with the eternal are formed. To repeat the empty jargon of worn-out theological phrases, with sublime confidence in the piety of it all, is to engage in the most contemptible cant when the people should have a message from God. Good many of our well-worn expressions like "get religion," "be saved," "old-time religion," etc., need to be born again in the thought of the ministry and filled full again for the people. To many, they are but empty sounds devoid of life and power. When fresh and full they throb with new force and energy.

In our town and city pulpits should be men filled with the spirit and courage of the old Hebrew prophets to save from the dry-rot of respectability and the death stupor of worldly indulgence—men so conscious of the Divine as not to be abashed or abused in the presence of a sordid age filled with its sin and shame. Men afraid to wrestle with any new phase of thought, or lacking in a desire to be filled full of God, would do well to keep out of our centres and float in the stagnant places of the world's life. Only the face hard-set to the future and the heart hard-pressed against the heart of God is of any real worth in these eager uncertain times. To walk with God like Enoch, to delight in the Master like John, and to press forward like Paul, makes men to triumph at all times.

The spiritual desolation in the pew, manifest with some in poverty of soul, with others in an unsatisfied hunger of heart, calls for a determined

effort to secure a real advance in all our Zion. Too many do not even lift up lame hands of faith to the Father over all and in all. They have never practiced Peter's gospel of addition, much less joined in Paul's shout of triumph. A few cling with fond memory to a "meeting" years ago when "God blessed their soul," many do not have quite so inspiring a record, as they drift along somewhere, some whither. Oh, man of a few days, set your face forward and place your feet in the way to Beulah land.

## THE NATURE, THE MODE, AND SUBJECTS OF CHRISTIAN BAPTISM.

BY REV. L. L. NASH, D. D.

**"Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh."**—Ezekiel 36:25, 26.

Those who believe in, and practice the ordinance of baptism by any other mode than that of immersing the subject in water, are frequently condemned and criticised for so doing by those who contend for exclusive immersion. They generally lay so much emphasis on the mode that it becomes necessary for us, who practice any other mode, to give our reasons for so doing. This is our reason for discussing the question. We do not attach enough importance to the manner of applying water in baptism to make the mere mode of sufficient importance to alienate Christians from each other. We allow the largest liberty on this subject, and administer the ordinance as may be desired by the person who wishes to be baptized in the Christian faith. But we prefer baptism by affusion, for the reason that we believe it to be more clearly taught in the Scriptures than any other mode; while we do not contend that any mode is so clearly taught as not to allow the largest liberty on the subject. Many practice exclusive immersion, for whom we have the highest regard and the deepest Christian charity. We believe it is our duty to give those who hold a different view from us our reasons for practicing baptism by affusion; and I propose to do this in the spirit of Christian charity.

We believe the text taken here contains a prophecy of the blessings of Christ's Kingdom, which is fulfilled in the regeneration of the soul and typified in the ordinance of Christian baptism. The sprinkling of clean water in baptism is typical of the cleansing from filthiness and from idolatry; and is an outward sign of the taking away of the stony heart and the giving of a heart of flesh in that marvelous change that takes place in the moral and spiritual nature of man when he is born of the Spirit of God. Passing from these brief introductory remarks we proceed at once to the discussion of

### The Nature of Christian Baptism.

We have two sacraments, ordained of our Lord, in the Christian church. The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper and of Baptism. The Lord's Supper was instituted first, and signifies what Christ did for us by His atoning death. The Sacrament of Christian Baptism was instituted after His death and resurrection, and signifies what the Holy Spirit does in us in the regeneration of the

soul. It is necessary for us to keep the purpose of our Lord in mind that we may have a clear conception of the meaning of these simple but significant sacraments.

Christian baptism has been frequently confounded with the baptism of John, which preceded Christian baptism and was practiced to signify a different thing. The meaning and purpose of John's baptism passed away with the dispensation in which he flourished. It was a baptism unto repentance, and was prophetic of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, of which Christian baptism is a sign and a significant recognition. The nature of baptism is of much more importance than the mode of administering the ordinance. John said: "I need baptize you with water unto repentance; but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear; he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire: Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." (Matt. 3:11, 12.) We find under the ministrations of St. Paul that he kept the distinction in mind. "And it came to pass that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts, came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples, he said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? and they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance saying, unto the people that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they heard this they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Ghost came on them: and they spake with tongues and prophesied." (Acts 19: 1-6.)

To be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus meant to be baptized in the formula given by him, in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost. No one was baptized in this name until after the resurrection of Christ. He gave the command, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." (Mark 16: 15-16.) "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." (Matt. 28:19, 20.)

This was the origin of Christian baptism. Paul commanded the twelve men spoken of in the 19th chapter of Acts to be baptized in this name, after they had been baptized in John's baptism; and after they had been thus baptized he laid his hands on them, and the Holy Ghost came on them and gave the divine approval to the ordinance. Our Church holds that: "Baptism is not only a sign of profession and a mark of difference whereby Christians are distinguished from others that are not baptized; but it is also a sign of regeneration, or the new birth."

This being clearly the nature and meaning of baptism, it is a misconception of the nature of baptism to speak of it as referring to the death and burial of Christ. The being buried with him in baptism relates to the nature of the spiritual baptism whereby the soul is regenerated by the Holy Spirit, of which baptism is the outward and visible sign.

(To be Continued.)