

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

Rev. A. B. Earle. Tremont Temple, Boston.

MESSRS. EDITORS,—

Your readers have doubtless seen some notices of the work of God which has been going on these few months past in Tremont Temple, Boston. Brother Hall, in his interesting "Jottings by the Way," has minutely described this place, and made some pleasing allusions to its minister, also to the recent revival. I do not write to add any thing to what he has said; but my object is to speak of that work in connection with the Rev. A. B. Earle, an Evangelist, already well known in one of these Provinces for his labors of love, and the extraordinary blessing which has crowned them. I wish especially to present him before our churches. It was his design in the month of May last, and I hope he still cherishes it, to visit Nova Scotia in the course of the summer, and, if duty called, to remain several months, perhaps through the winter. He informed me that he had received an urgent request from the pastor of one of the churches, to come and spend some time in Nova Scotia, laboring through the Annapolis Valley and so on up to Windsor.

I feel sure from acquaintance with the man from the testimony of pastors with whom he has labored, as well as from results of his labors in Boston and elsewhere, that a great blessing would follow his visit among the churches of Nova Scotia. But in order to his coming and prolonging his stay, he should receive further and more urgent requests from some of our ministers. Permit me to press this matter on their attention.

I do not believe in *man-worship*. I would not for a moment insinuate that the pastors of the churches in the region alluded to are inefficient or not blessed in their labors. The cheering results of the past winter attest their faithfulness and the divine approval of their ministry. But I do believe God from time to time raises up men specially fitted to stir up the churches and to be instrumental in converting sinners. Brother Earle has given full proof of his being such a man. He has spent fourteen years in Evangelistic labor, during that time he has never gone into a place and commenced laboring without witnessing a revival of greater or less power. That is a significant fact.

It was recently my privilege, and I hope the privilege was one of profit, to spend a fortnight where he was laboring. It was at Andover, Mass. Rev. Wm. McKenzie, the Pastor of the Baptist Church in that place, is well known to many in Nova Scotia. I wish he could give your readers some account of the exercises of mind he himself passed through during Brother E's stay with him. He experienced indeed, as he calls it, "a new conversion." It was a new era in his Christian and ministerial life.

Brother Earle allows no one to escape, or to excuse himself. Private opportunities he diligently improves. And the tests he applies to a church the pastor is compelled to feel come home directly to himself.

In the early part of his meetings he devotes his attention almost wholly to the church, talks a good deal about *consecration*, explains it in such a manner and so minutely as to make the majority of the church feel, although they profess to know the meaning of the word and to be acting it out in their lives, that they in reality understand but little of the true import of the term. If he asks an expression from the church as to whether they have made or are willing to make an entire consecration of themselves to their Divine Master and his service, to the direct work of saving souls, he takes care to request them to give an "honest" expression, and not to resolve thus to dedicate themselves—their time, property, their all—for a few weeks, for February or March only,—"God will not accept any such consecration as that,"—but for their life-time. Other tests he sometimes applies, such as requesting all, who can do so conscientiously, to kneel down and unitedly offer up the silent prayer,—"Thy will be done." I know such measures as these are in the minds of many an objection. Some say they are "mechanical," or they are designed to work upon the feelings. A certain D. D., listening to some account of Mr. Earle's meetings, replied, "he is exceedingly adroit." Such objectors would do well to attend Mr. Earle's meetings for a time.

The effect of his course of procedure at Andover and in Boston was certainly of the most salutary kind. No one, possessing the spirit of Christ, felt that he is a mechanical man, that he showed great "adroitness," &c.

The eyes of each individual Christian were turned within, the silent personal enquiry was made—Have I made this consecration? am I willing to give myself up now and forever?

The moment of *silent prayer* was an awfully solemn and impressive moment. And if human instrumentality is ever made successful in awakening a church to a sense of duty, Mr. Earle is such an instrumentality. Why, at Andover, in a few days, parents were heard entreating prayers for their children, wives for ungodly husbands,—and if a request was made by a wife who had not set a godly example before her husband at home, not much sympathy would such request receive from Mr. Earle till that wife had gone home and perhaps for the first time discharged her duty. The result of this state of things was the conversion of those husbands, of many of those children, or friends, or neighbours.

Prayer, with the humble faithful discharge of duty, seemed marvelously efficacious. At Andover the number of conversions was not large, but the place is a hard one. The work, so far as it progressed, appeared eminently thorough. To the church worshipping at Tremont Temple, by this time, more than a hundred additions have been made since March last, and at least a hundred others have been hopefully converted and joined other churches.

Let me add a few words from the testimony the Pastor of Tremont Temple Church gave to Mr. Earle on the morning he introduced him to his pulpit. In alluding to Evangelists, turning to Mr. Earle, he told him that he, in conjunction with his church, had selected him as the most "judicious," the most faithful, the most godly man in the whole class of evangelists within their knowledge. Before the meetings had progressed far, this high encomium was shown to be just.

Greatly did Mr. Earle shrink from going to Tremont Temple. He knew the floating character of that immense congregation, the popularity of its pastor, &c. The moment of decision seemed to him a crisis of no ordinary importance. I was in his room at Andover on the morning he wrote the final answer. Seldom have I seen a man so completely unmanned,—he wept like a child, and to weep is not a usual thing with Mr. Earle. After united agonizing prayer by himself and one or two others in the room, he felt that he had an answer, and sat down and wrote that he would come.

In no place is one so favorably impressed with Mr. Earle as in his private room. There it is seen, it is felt, that he is an eminently godly man, that he is emphatically a man of prayer. Much of his time out of meetings he spends in prayer, and, when in the house of God he lifts up his voice in prayer, you feel oftentimes in listening to him that his soul is bathed in the influences that have followed him direct from the mercy-seat. And although you may wonder at the familiar earnestness of his petitions, or may admire his zeal in preaching, yet you feel it is a God-given earnestness, a God-given zeal.

This is the amiable peculiarity of Mr. Earle in the pulpit and out of it. You lose sight of the man in the Christian. No one can be acquainted with him without more than esteeming him, but you do not so much admire or love the man as his eminent piety, his meek, charitable, cheerful Christian spirit. In the pulpit he is solemn, earnest. Putting no confidence in human measures alone, he implores the Holy Spirit, and the Spirit's power and influence do seem to be with him in an eminent degree.

Perhaps the most fitting epithet that can be applied to Mr. Earle is, that he is a lovely man; he is not a man of brilliant talents, yet his preaching evinces striking originality and simplicity, combined with a rare discernment of human character, and an equally rare faithfulness—a faithfulness whose arrows sometimes seem pointed with diamond, yet they have always been previously dipped in love. In a word, Mr. Earle is quite willing to stand behind his Saviour,—he aims to present Christ and his cross as the theme of all his preaching, private and public, not himself or any thing "save Christ and him crucified."

Now, lest some may think this too exalted a description of imperfect human nature, even when renewed by grace, let me make the common reserve—Brother Earle no doubt has his imperfections. I do think, however, there are few men who breathe more of the spirit of heaven, and shed more of its fragrance around them.

In regard to his preaching, I may be allowed here to allude to what appeared to some others, what seemed to me a deficiency. There is perhaps not a due proportion of *law* and *grace* in his preaching. The sinner is not made to feel so sensibly that he is a sinner and condemned as

perhaps he ought to be. The consequence is that many of the converts at the time that they are hopefully converted do not manifest any very pungent convictions of sin; they do not allude much to past life, but rather speak of their present happiness, and, turning round, invite others to come and partake of like joy. It may be that in this impression I am wrong; if right, how many other preachers fall into the same error as that of Brother Earle.

A word more with reference to the *measures* Mr. Earle employs in revivals. From personal observation, and from the testimony of three pastors, with whom he labored most harmoniously and successfully, and who formed for him an attachment of the most intimate and lasting character, I feel no hesitancy in saying that Mr. E's whole course of procedure in a revival is almost entirely unobjectionable, perhaps the least so of any man among what are termed "revivalists," whilst perhaps the labors of none have been more blessed to churches and to the salvation of souls.

I might here speak of other commendable peculiarities of Brother Earle,—of his liberal Christian spirit,—his earnest endeavor wherever he goes to get the pastors and churches of all evangelical denominations, as far as possible, to unite in the series of meetings in which he engages; also, of his repeated urgency in requesting all the congregation to unite in the exercises of worship, in prayer and in the singing. A frequent expression of his is—"Let us all unite in prayer." But I earnestly hope many of our churches will, by sweet experience, derive a lasting blessing from Brother Earle's labors ere another winter passes. What a gracious blessing has descended during the past year! How well prepared will such churches be, by the encouragements of the past, and by God's ever faithful promises, to make a fresh aggression on the world the coming autumn and winter! And shall not the long-parched vineyards be watered again? Let this be our prayer and our labor.

Should any by letter wish to find Bro. Earle, letters addressed to George W. Chipman, Hanover Street, Boston, (the place at which he stopped while in Boston,) would no doubt be forwarded to him. He is now, as I suppose, at his home in New York State, recruiting. He expected to be obliged to remain at home three months.

A FRIEND OF ZION.

For the Christian Messenger.

Consolation in Sorrow.

The following extracts from a letter of a Christian brother to his afflicted friend, known to many of our readers, will be read with benefit by others besides him for whom it was written. Surely such friendship as this indicates is to be continued and perpetuated beyond this frail, fleeting state. Is not such fellowship, even in this world, a commencement of the heavenly state?

WINDSOR, June 16th, 1859.

"My dear Brother,—I little thought, when we parted at the Railway Station, I was taking my last leave of Mrs. —, and that I should so soon be called to sympathize with you in your great bereavement. We deeply feel for you, and at our prayer-meeting last evening you were most affectionately remembered by many well known to you and to our dear departed friend. The transition for her from a protracted period of much physical suffering to the glories of the beatific vision cannot be described in human language, and the most vivid imagination cannot conceive of the eternal weight of glory of which she is now the happy possessor. We cannot penetrate the scheme of Divine Providence, in connection with which some of God's beloved ones are led through weary years of ill health to their final rest; only of this we are assured that it is through much tribulation of one kind or another the gates of the celestial city are entered. It is, indeed, to the Christian, a most cheering consolation that, in all his afflictions, the Great High Priest of his profession was afflicted,—that there is a "needs-be" for every affliction, and that his afflictions, termed by an apostle "light," in reference to eternity will yield, in the end, an eternal weight of glory.

"So little were we expecting such afflictive news that, yesterday, before the *Christian Messenger* came, Mrs. — was intending to write and urge her coming to us for a few days, in hopes that the change would be beneficial.

"You need not, my dear friend, any one to point you to the only true source of comfort; you will, indeed, feel her loss irreparable, and, in one sense, when you remember her transparent Christian character, devotedness to the Saviour and his cause, her strong sense, her many amiable and conjugal virtues, so well calculated to make your home a happy one, your grief will be increased; yet, when you remember that those excellencies of Christian life, the fruits of Christian experience prepared her for the holy employments of the Spirit-world, you will feel disposed to adore the wisdom which, when the silver was fully refined, removed it to the heavenly garner. You have a new interest now in heaven, and the strongest ties that bound

you to earth are severed. A few more years of patient continuance in well-doing and submission to the will of Him who "doeth all things well," will re-unite you to the departed beloved one, where partings are not known, and where the Saviour himself will wipe all tears from every eye.

"May you find His grace sufficient, who, for our salvation, poured out his soul unto death, and who, on the mediatorial throne, is as mindful of the best interests of his people as when he suffered for them in the flesh.

"I remain, your affectionate friend."

For the Christian Messenger.

Epistle for C. Tupper and others.

MESSRS. EDITORS,—

Yesterday, at Chester Basin, some fifty miles from Halifax, a gentleman put into my hands a late copy of your journal, containing an article written by C. Tupper, a Baptist minister of reputable name in Nova Scotia. He speaks of Disciples, to whom he gives another name; and will you allow me, as a disciple of the Lord, to place in your columns a short chapter of strictures upon Mr. Tupper's utterance?

Passing over what neighbor Tupper avers while he determines not to call the Disciples what they call themselves—passing over what he declares concerning a covenant not to enter into a covenant—passing over what he is pleased to say in respect to no one teacher among Disciples holding himself responsible for what others teach, let me fix attention upon the following capital points:—

1. Friend Tupper has something to affirm respecting "the system introduced by Mr. A. Campbell." What is that system? When was it introduced? Where are the people who have accepted and adopted it? To me it is as plain as the letters of Mr. Tupper's name, that any system introduced by any man or body of men can be defined and described; and if a system of theology or of religion has come forth from Bethany, Virginia, such system can be christened and the chief features of the theological creature pictured in orthodox writing. I, as a Disciple, and as one who can cordially account Alexander Campbell a brother in the gospel, respectfully solicit the evidence of a religious system having been introduced by the aforementioned Campbell. Upon the evidence being adduced, I hereby avow my calm resolve to regard Mr. Campbell as unworthy of the slightest countenance as a relative in the spiritual family.

2. "It is," says brother Tupper, "a distinctive principle of all Baptists, that those persons only ought to be baptized who make a satisfactory profession of being born of God, of having repentance to life, and precious faith, and so being pardoned and justified, and consequently in a state of acceptance with God, and of having received the Holy Spirit as a witness of it." No less than ten passages of scripture are pointed to as evincing the truth of this statement relative to what is held by real Baptists in contrast with all unreal Baptists. Brother T. will please receive my christian compliments for appealing to the oracles of heaven rather than to much-lored "usages." This is hopeful. I am so gratified that Brother Tupper refers to the inspired instead of the uninspired scriptures to decide a question of this character, that I will not (at present) review the passages he quotes, but dwell with pleasure on the fact that, avowedly, both he and I agree in presence of all your readers to baptize as the oracles of Jesus direct.

But for the sake of investigation, and by way of contrasting a real Baptist with a real disciple of Jesus, (and a Baptist may be such a disciple) let me state that it is a distinctive principle with all the Lord's enlightened pupils, that they teach that those and only those ought to be baptized who have such faith in Jesus as openly to confess him to be Lord and Messiah, possessing such love to him as prompts the fervent and obedient inquiry, O Lord, what henceforth is thy will?—not our will, but thine be done, thou dear and divine Jesus.

3. The "idea" that neighbor Tupper attributes to disciples, that dead men need aid to make them alive, and this aid imparted by baptism, is an idea so foreign to the religion of heaven that I trust my friend will put the mark of Cain upon it. Baptism never gives life. Birth and life are always distinct whether in nature or in the grace of the gospel.

After thus expressing myself, you will doubtless allow me to ask if friend Tupper and others among the Baptists in this Province are prayerfully, by the oracles of God seeking to occupy ground on which all who are ready to obey the will of heaven may stand in the purity and unity of the one gospel of the one Lord? Division now exists among those who by the gospel may call and account one another brethren; and on whom is the responsibility of this division? Lord is it I? is a question that every man ought to