

Christianity; but there were covert insinuations against seriousness and vital godliness. For instance, an account was given of a man who made a long prayer, and yet was found to be a great knave. It can not be denied that such cases do sometimes occur; but the story was evidently introduced with a design to represent a profession of piety, with the offering of prayer, as a cloak usually worn for the accomplishment of some nefarious object. On examination I became convinced that my mother's view was correct.

As my novel-reading was thus checked and abandoned in an incipient stage, happily I do not know much of its influence from my own experience; but from reflection and observation I have long since arrived at the decided conclusion, that it is ordinarily pernicious. Of course some novels, containing profane language, scoffs at true religion, lasciviousness, &c., are much worse than others. Their general tendency, however, not excepting such as are professedly religious, is evidently bad. As the eating of unwholesome food usually destroys the appetite for that which is wholesome and nutritious, and consequently injures the constitution, so the reading of fiction indisposes people to read what is real, instructive, and useful, and consequently prevents the improvement of the mind. If there be a piece of fiction in a paper, persons of vitiated taste will devour it with avidity, while not an article of all the interesting intelligence, the edifying communications, and other substantial matter, which it contains, is noticed by them. The infatuated readers of novels can not ordinarily bring themselves down to the perusal of true history, geography, or any scientific, philosophic, or religious treatise, which might inform the mind, improve the morals, or benefit the soul.

Novel-reading frequently creates a morbid sensibility, which leads people to weep profusely over tales of imaginary sorrow, but renders them deaf to the cries of actual distress. While it, like the theatre, has drawn multitudes into the whirlpool of vice, in numerous instances it has produced such nervous excitement as has undermined the constitution, destroyed both mind and body, and rendered the persons themselves wretched, and a source of grief to all around them.

It obviously tends to obliterate the important distinction between truth and falsehood. It also naturally leads to infidelity. Those who are accustomed to roam in the fairy regions of fiction, are likely to regard true history, and the infinitely momentous verities of the Christian religion in the same light.

Had I devoted my time and attention to this kind of reading, of course I would never have made proficiency in any useful study. It would probably have been ruinous to me. I consider it, therefore, a great mercy that I was led in early life to regard novels in their true light as "poison." "A word spoken in due season, how good it is!"

For the Christian Messenger.

Opening of the New Baptist Meeting House at Amherst.

While giving an account of the Opening Services of the new Baptist Meeting House at Amherst, I have concluded to give first a description of

THE CHAPEL,

whose lofty spire is the first object to meet the eye on approaching the village in either of several directions, and occupies a prominent situation in the centre of the village on a slight elevation from the street. The first impressions received upon coming in full view of the chapel, are of a building—massive, solid, plain and unpretending. Its size is, eighty by forty-five feet and twenty-five feet posts, with a tower fifteen feet square in the middle of the front end, projecting four feet, and sixty feet high, surmounted by an octagonal spire, the sides of whose base are perpendicular to the height of fifteen feet, with eight lattice windows enclosing the belfry; above which are a projecting fringe and cornice, each angle of which is supported by a doric column standing out in relief. The distance from the ground to the summit of the spire is one hundred and thirty feet. The foundation walls are built of stone, (the part above ground being finely cut), except that enclosing the vestry, which is of wood sanded to correspond with the stone. The wall extends to four feet above the surface of the ground in front, but the ground declines towards the rear which is occupied by a vestry forty-five by forty feet, and ten feet high, entered by a side door on a level with the ground. The front is occupied by the heating furnaces and fuel.

The entrance to the main floor is by semi-circular steps leading up to the door, which is recessed in the tower under a gothic arch. The windows are double gothic and the door is surmounted by a gothic window, all of which are of rough rolled plate glass one-eighth of an inch thick, except the quatrefoil in the top of each window, which is of stained glass, bearing the figure of a descending dove. The House is painted white, except the doors, which are painted in dark oak.

In the interior—a lobby occupying a few feet, extends the whole width from which the main room is entered by three doors—one in the centre and one on each extreme side; it also contains the stairs leading to the gallery. At the opposite or rear end is situated the platform, with circular front, 16 feet deep by 30 feet wide, elevated in front 3 feet, which is increased to 5 feet at the back. The front space is occupied by the minister's seat and desk, and the remainder by the choir and organ, which is in the middle at the rear; the remainder of the main floor contains three aisles and four rows of pews, containing 20 in each. There is also an end gallery in front, with curved front, containing 20 seats, besides a back row, the succeeding tiers of which are well elevated.

The whole of the pews are uniformly lined back and front, with crimson moreen, which imparts a cheerful aspect. The caps and arms are of stained mahogany; the graining of the inside, is in light oak. The plastering presents a smooth and even surface, except the three fancy centres in stucco work upon the ceiling which can scarcely be excelled for neatness, and the heavy plaster cornice with corresponding astragal and frieze which surrounds the wall. It is lighted by three chandeliers, containing ten large Kerosene lights, and heated by two hot air furnaces placed in the basement.

Upon the desk is a handsomely bound Bible, presented by Mrs. Charlotte Lusby.

THE ORGAN

Was erected in the chapel by the builder Mr. E. L. Holbrook, of East Medway, Mass. Its fine case of gothic design, eighteen and a half feet high, grained in imitation of black walnut, to which the groups of large gilt pipes in front form a pleasing contrast, adds greatly to the architectural appearance of the interior of the chapel. The tones of the full organ, with the rumbling of its deep mouthed basses are very deep and powerful, while some of its stops are capable of producing the most delicate tones. The mechanical action is very perfect, enabling every pipe to speak promptly. For the benefit of those versed in organ craft we give a literal summary of its contents.

There are two manuals or banks of keys from C C to G, 56 notes. Twenty pedals to sub bass, from C C C to G, 20 notes. Twenty Registers (Musical and mechanical) embracing in all about 700 pipes, distributed as follows;

Great organ 1 open Diapason, 2 stopped Diapason Treble.

Three stopped Diapason Bass, 4 Principal, 5 Kewulophon, 6 Hohe Flute, 7 Mixtine, 8 Trumpet.

Seven organ, 1 open Diapason, 2 Principal, 3 Viol de Gamba, 4 Violin, 5 Hautboy, 6 swell bass.

Pedal organ, Double stopped Diapason. Mechanical movements, Coupler swell to Great, Coupler Pedals to Great, Coupler Pedals to swell Bass, Sub Bass Pedal check, Bellows Alarm, Swell Pedals.

THE OPENING SERVICES

commenced on Sunday morning, 7th June inst., the day was fine and the attendance very large. After the pews were filled, vestry seats were placed in the aisles and lobby, and many persons could not obtain admission.

The Organist having played a solemn voluntary, and the choir having sung the Anthem "O God of Hosts" the second Hymn in the Psalmist was given out and sung; the Pastor, Rev. G. F. Miles, read the Eighth Chapter of 1st Kings, and Dr. Clay offered an impressive prayer.—Hymn 937 was then sung, and the Rev. J. E. Balcan preached the opening sermon from the ninth verse of the xxii. chapter of Revelations. He first briefly referred to John's Vision of Heaven, and the command he received to worship God, not his fellow man, then argued that God is the only true object of worship, being omnipotent, possessing the power of creating and destroying, hence the certainty of the fulfilment of his promises; expatiated upon his omnipresence, holiness, unchangeableness, and as the hearer and answerer of prayer. He then referred to the designing and building the Temple for God's worship, which was done in a manner befitting the object to be worshipped, the object and result of these means used, the salvation of

souls from Hell, and that proper worship should be made to God. A comparison was then made between the worship of the true God and of Idols, the depraving effects of the latter, and the ennobling results of the former when true religion dwells in the depths of the human soul. The Christian is then better fitted for the discharge of the social and civil duties devolving upon him, the character becoming refined as it approximates to God, and he is thus enabled to abstain from even the appearance of evil. Any house built for God's worship without this change being effected upon the heart of the worshipper, would be built in vain. The worship of God is calculated to give happiness, David's experience given as an illustration. The erection of houses of worship is an evidence of the spiritual advancement of the community; he then closed by enjoining upon all, their obligations to worship God. He, being the first great cause, and more especially for the gift of his Son, who came to bring us nigh unto God, and invoked the blessing of Heaven upon the worshippers in the House.

Rev. D. McKen made the closing prayer—While the collection was being taken up, the choir sang the Anthem "O be joyful." After singing the 934th Hymn, the Pastor pronounced the benediction. Mr. J. Albert Black performed on the Organ, and although an amateur player, manifested much skill and musical proficiency. In the

AFTERNOON

the House was again filled, and after the usual exercises, the Rev. D. McKen announced his text, the 13th verse of the 6th chapter of Zachariah. He first referred to the resemblance between Joshua and Jesus, their priesthood and the nature of their crowns, the uses of the Temple and the order of worship. He quoted various passages of Scripture, in the Old and New Testament, where references are made to God's Houses, and shewed the harmony existing between the temporal and spiritual structure.—The materials for the building of the Temple were all of the best quality, and the design perfect, being given by the great Architect—so with the Church designed by God himself, the materials of which it is composed must be made perfect through Christ. He showed the superiority of works designed and executed by God, over those by human Architects, and portrayed in eloquent terms the beauties of nature, and the wisdom of God made manifest in their creation, as also in the plan of Salvation, then dilated upon God's superior rule, and the efficiency and completeness of all his works; and in concluding, appealed to his hearers to examine themselves, if they are members of the spiritual temple, polished stones, prepared for the coming of Christ.

IN THE EVENING,

the sermon was by the Rev. Thomas Todd, from 4th chapter of 2nd Corinthians and part of the fourth verse: "The glorious gospel of Christ." God's glory, he shewed, was made manifest in the creation of the world, in man's physical structure, and in the gospel of Christ. He divided his subject into two parts,—1st, the gospel, which he explained originated in and with God, and 2nd, its glory, exhibited in leading the sinner to a suffering Savior, and its benefits in giving liberty to the slave, bread to the hungry, sight to the blind, and life to the dead. David's version of his own experience referred to, in proof of its glory,—and closed by expatiating on the glorious rest of the Christian.

ON MONDAY MORNING

short services were held, when Dr. Clay preached from 1st and 2nd verses of the 66th chapter of Isaiah. He spoke first of the inability of man to accomplish any good of himself. God designs men to accumulate wealth—he commends diligence, industry and prudence, and they secure wealth,—yet we are but God's stewards, and the proper and benevolent use of this trust will not secure heaven,—but the necessity of contrition of heart exists, and recourse must be had to the Cross of Christ. He said, that Baptists are not a republican body; we have no church government; God is our King; the Bible our Laws; we only execute the laws.

The sale of the pews then commenced, and continued until the afternoon, when it was adjourned until the fourth day of July, at one o'clock P. M.

For the Christian Messenger.

Obituary Notice.

ABRAHAM MARSTERS

Died at Newport, on the 26th March, 1863, in the 81st year of his age. Brother M. made a profession of religion about 20 years since, was baptized by the Rev. George Dimock, joined the Baptist Church at Newport, and remained

a member of the same till death. He was a kind parent, an obliging neighbor, a faithful friend, and a stable christian, aiming always to fill his place in the House of God. He will be much missed in the family, in the church, and in the community. While we mourn our loss, we are comforted by knowing that he was faithful unto death. On visiting him a few days before his death, the writer enquired as to the probability of his recovery, he replied, "It is doubtful, but if it be the Lord's will to raise me up, I shall be pleased to have it so; or, if it be his will to remove me, I shall be satisfied. I can remain here but a short time at best. Let Him do with me as seemeth good in his sight." The white locks and the smiling countenance of the venerable man gave pleasing indication of the peace that reigned within.

J. BANCROFT.

Woodville, June 6th, 1863.

Religious Intelligence.

Canada.

KINGSTON, C. W.—In February last our pastor (the Rev. W. H. Watts) was impressed with the conviction that the time had arrived for the members of the church to make a special and united effort to bring before those of our congregation, who were yet undecided, the supreme importance of the soul's salvation, and the necessity for immediate decision for Christ.—The special services, which were commenced in February, were held every evening for the space of about three months. The plan adopted by our pastor was that of giving short pungent addresses. He is also an advocate of short prayers at such meetings, and often did he warn us of the seriously dangerous practice of long and wearisome and unmeaning prayers. He availed himself of what speaking faculty the church possessed, and even the female voice was sometimes heard in earnest and touching devotional supplication.

The numerical result of these meetings is as follows:—Baptized, 18; restored, 5; letter, 2; total, 25. Of course, this addition of twenty-five members to a comparatively small church of about sixty members, is highly satisfactory; but those of your readers who thoroughly watch the progress of our inner church life will not forget the unsatisfactoriness of mere statistical statements. They fail to express the best results of any work of grace. It is impossible to endeavour to tabulate the tone of piety of a christian community, the spirit of concord and love that breathes through its members. Figures fail to express the character and influence of additional members.

Perhaps one of the most pleasing features of the recent work is the restoration of five persons to church-fellowship who had "fallen away," but who had now sought forgiveness with tears and sorrow.—Correspondent of Canadian Baptist.

American and Foreign News.

Latest from the States!

[From Telegrams to Morning and Evening papers.]

JUNE 16.—A despatch from Chambersburg dated yesterday reports that the Confederates are advancing in three columns; there is one column at Green Castle of 5,000, principally cavalry, supported by infantry and artillery.—A Harrisonburg despatch says that they entered Chambersburg last night.

Baltimore despatches say that Milroy was surrounded at Winchester by eighteen thousand Confederates, but fought his way through and united with the Federal force at Harper's Ferry. He lost two thousand in killed and wounded.

The Governor of Ohio called for 30,000 volunteers to protect the border.

New York is also preparing to respond. The Federal lines at Vicksburg are contracting.

An exchanged Federal officer from Richmond reports that the trains had brought to that city two or three thousand troops daily, for the past three weeks. The same party states that Stuart's Cavalry and mounted Artillery numbered thirty thousand men.

The Washington Republican says that Gen. Lee's whole army are in the Shenandoah valley, having entirely left Fredericksburg. Business in Philadelphia has been entirely suspended.

Reports from Harrisburg, the seat of Government in the State of Pennsylvania, states that the Confederate forces are at Carlisle, only eighteen miles distant from that capital, and that all important public documents are being removed from that place. All is alarm at Harrisburg.

The Savannah Republican, of the 9th inst., reports that the Confederate General Johnston succeeded in crossing the Big Black River, and was throwing reinforcements into Vicksburg city.

JUNE 17.—Harrisburg advices to midnight, 15th, state that Confederate cavalry were still at Chambersburg—not exceeding 2,000. Officers stated they were only waiting for infantry to move forward. The farmers were sending their horses and cattle into the mountains. Enemy also occupied Littleton, yesterday, 11 miles from Gettysburg. Herald's special despatch says Lee threatens Hooker with 60,000 at Warrenton. Enemy's force in Maryland and Pennsylvania estimated at 40,000. Harper's Ferry invested on Virginia side. Federals have strong force on Maryland Heights. Business has been suspended at Pittsburg, and workmen are throwing up entrenchments. Active military move-