

# Christian Messenger.

A REPOSITORY OF RELIGIOUS, POLITICAL & GENERAL INTELLIGENCE

"Not slothful in business: fervent in spirit."

NEW SERIES.  
Vol. XL. No. 27.

HALIFAX, N. S., WEDNESDAY, JULY 4, 1866.

WHOLE SERIES.  
Vol. XXX. No. 27.

## Poetry.

### Scatter seed.

In the furrows of thy life  
Scatter seed!  
Small may be thy spirit field,  
But a goodly crop 'twill yield;  
Sow the kindly word and deed—  
Scatter seed!

Sun and shower aid thee now?  
Scatter seed!  
Who can tell where grain may grow?  
Winds are blowing to and fro;  
Daily good thy simple creed:  
Scatter seed!

Up! the morning flies away—  
Scatter seed!  
Hand of thine must never tire,  
Heart must keep its pure desire,  
While thy brothers faint and bleed,  
Scatter seed!

Though thy work should seem to fail,  
Scatter seed!  
Some may fall on stony ground;  
Flower and blade are often found  
In the clefts we little heed,  
Scatter seed!

Spring-time always dawns for thee;  
Scatter seed!  
Ope thy spirit's golden store,  
Stretch thy furrows more and more,  
God will give to thee thy need,  
Scatter seed!

## Religious.

### "Pray for the feelings."

When Daniel Wilson, afterwards Bishop of Calcutta, was a young man, he was irreverent and reckless. He indulged often in jesting on religious subjects, discussed the great truths of the Bible in a skeptical spirit, and made sport of his companions who were inclined to a devout life.

One evening he had been maintaining very earnestly in opposition to a young man who held Calvinistic sentiments, that the doctrine of election were true, mankind ought not to be held responsible for sinning; and if converting grace was irresistible, all human exertions were useless.

The young man replied that God appointed the means no less than the end. "But," said Wilson, "I have none of the feelings which God requires and approves." "Well, then," said the young man, "Pray for the feelings."

The words went home, though Wilson turned the discussion with a careless joke. But when he retired at night, they weighed on him. He determined to be able to say he had done all he could, and found himself compelled, therefore, to pray for the feelings. The feelings came, and he grew very uneasy about his state; soon the load of sin pressed him heavily. He no longer caviled, or denied responsibility, or felt himself justified in not going to Christ without an irresistible call. He passed through a profound experience, rare in the English church; with overwhelming convictions of sin, and clear views of just condemnation by the law, and at length found a serene peace in the blood of atonement.

Those random words of his companion were made effectual by divine grace to the conversion of one of the most laborious and useful clergymen of the age. He immediately sought counsel from such men as John Newton, Rowland Hill, and Richard Cecil; and by their advice decided to study for the gospel ministry. He was then an apprentice to his uncle, and it is characteristic of the shrewd wisdom of Mr. Hill, with all his eccentricity, that he told young Daniel he could not run before he was sent, and as the Lord had converted him an apprentice, he must wait until the Lord had released him from the duties of that state, before he aspired to higher duties. Daniel was impatient and energetic, and longed to be preparing for the great work of life, but he accepted the advice submissively, and conformed to it. In his uncle's study he found a full discharge.

The change of life in Daniel was instant and most decided. Light and irreligious books, which had given him pleasure, were all

burned, to prevent them from harming others. His fellow apprentices looked on with wonder, as they saw him night after night, engaged in reading God's word, and other religious books. They often fell asleep, and awaking again, found him still over the Bible, or on his knees in silent prayer.—*National Baptist.*

### Baptism and sprinkling contrasted.

The following from the *Examiner* is evidence of progress among Pedobaptists on the question of baptism. It creeds and confessions of faith were set aside, Pedobaptist ministers silent on the question, and the authoritative teachings of the New Testament earnestly studied and obeyed, the ceremony of sprinkling would soon become obsolete. On a recent Friday evening the pastor of the Plymouth church, Brooklyn, administered the solemn and expressive rite of baptism in the true apostolic way, to fourteen persons, in profession of their faith in Christ. At the same time and place, three others were baptized by the pastor of another Congregational church. The scene was impressive and suggestive, and was witnessed by a very large and deeply interested audience. At the close of the ceremony, Mr. Beecher made a brief address, in which he dwelt forcibly and with much feeling on the beauty and spiritual significance of baptism by immersion. A Baptist would have supposed himself listening to a minister of his own denomination, so touching and so eloquent were Mr. Beecher's remarks in explanation of the rite; and would have wondered how, entertaining such views on the subject, he could ever bring himself to administer it in any other form. But Mr. Beecher, as is well known, believes that the form is a matter of personal choice, and will immerse or sprinkle according to the wish of each one who applies for admission to the church of which he is pastor. On Sunday week, in the presence of many who witnessed the baptism on Friday evening, he received a large number by touching their foreheads with a little water from a bowl, as they knelt before him. The contrast alone must have been the best sermon ever preached against sprinkling as baptism. We think Mr. Beecher himself must have felt this. He had nothing to say of its spiritual significance, nothing of its beauty or impressiveness as an emblem of resurrection, to newness of life, from spiritual death to sin and the world. How could he, indeed? It was a mere ceremony, cold, unimpressive, significant of nothing. We cannot but hope that Mr. Beecher, who is gathering so many baptized members into his church, may at length be brought to a truer view of baptism, and be led to adopt the only mode authorized by our Lord himself and which alone is significant and typical.

### Recent Testimonies as to Baptism.

In every generation the Baptists are able to point out many of the most illustrious scholars in the various denominations, who practice sprinkling, distinctly acknowledging that baptism was originally immersion. Take examples, for instance, of the following:

Ewald a German Professor, is the leading spirit of the age, and has also written on nearly the whole of the New Testament. In his "History of Christ" (2d edition 1857), he speaks of the persons baptized by John, as by his hand, plunged into the depth of the water, and emerging to that new life whose meaning and duties he had explained to them, and added: "The immersion into the depth of the flowing water under the hand of the Baptist, became thus the strongest visible and tangible sign of purification of life and spiritual regeneration."

Hilari is a member of the French Institute, and has great celebrity as an oriental scholar. In the "Life of Jesus" (Paris, 1862) he repeatedly speaks of John's baptism as "total immersion."

Schmiedel, a German Professor of considerable reputation, in a work on the life of Jesus, published in 1865, tries to depict the feelings with which Jesus "walked down to the waves of the Jordan for baptism at the hands of the Baptist."

The two latter are more than half infidels, and do not care what their "Church" teaches

or practices. Ewald also is unorthodox in many respects. The rationalizing scholars of Germany never seem to think of anything else than that baptism in the New Testament was immersion. Whether this is because they are free from ecclesiastical prejudice, and speak of it simply on philological grounds, or because they love to set themselves against current usage, is a point on which there may be difference of opinion.

But HAGENBACH is orthodox, and has a high reputation as a Professor and author, in this department of Church history. In his latest work, "Outlines of Liturgies and Homiletics," 1863, says: "That baptism is no longer performed, as formerly, by submersion, but by mere sprinkling, results from the changed outward relations. It is however to be granted, that an essential part of the meaning of the symbol, the 'being buried into the death of Christ,' is thereby lost, and only the image of purification retained."

A. P. STANLEY is well-known as the biographer of Arnold and the author of several learned and valuable works. He is now Professor of Ecclesiastical History in the University of Oxford, and recently declined the position of Archbishop of Dublin. In his "Lectures on the History of the Eastern Church," 1861, we find the following, which he introduces as showing the superior wisdom of the Western Church: "There can be no question that the original form of baptism—the very meaning of the word—was complete immersion in the deep baptismal waters; and that for at least four centuries, any other form was either unknown, or regarded, unless in the case of dangerous illness, as an exceptional, almost a monstrous case. To this form the Eastern Church still rigidly adheres; and the most illustrious and venerable portion of it, that of the Byzantine empire, absolutely repudiates and ignores any other mode of administration as essentially invalid. The Latin church on the other hand, doubtless in deference to the requirement of a northern climate, to the change of manners, to the conveniences of custom, has wholly altered the mode, preferring, as it would fairly say, mercy to sacrifice; and (with the two exceptions of the cathedral of Milan, and the sect of the Baptists) a few drops of water are now the Western substitute for the threefold plunge into the rushing rivers, or the wide baptiseries of the East."

### Sleeping in Church.

Our census returns, though very full and particular on many points, do not undertake to give the number or proportion of persons who are addicted to the habit of sleeping during the public worship of God. It is known, however, to be very large, and is thought by some to be increasing. The practice is not confined to the ungodly; but is likewise found among professors of religion, and even among the officers of the church. There is hardly an association, or a county, which has not at least one church, in which there is at least one deacon who often sleeps in meeting. It has been said, indeed, that ministers and even doctors of divinity, have been seen nodding; if not napping; but this is probably an exaggeration. Or, if it is true of the last-named class, they may find some extenuation of their fault in the natural and almost inevitable reaction after the overstrained bodily and mental efforts by which they have purchased to themselves this good degree. "Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee."

There are various classes of sleepers. There are careless sleepers, who doze away their time in church, because they have no love for the Word of God, no interest in the preacher's message. There are full-fed sleepers, who have overladen their stomachs with food, not understanding, perhaps, or not considering, that on the day on which they do not work, neither should they eat as much as on other days. There are foul sleepers, who become stupefied and fall asleep because they breathe a heavy, polluted atmosphere, which has been breathed over and over by their fellow-worshippers and fellow-sleepers. There are tired sleepers, who are unwillingly paying to nature the debt of sleep, out of which they have been

\*This word is to be understood figuratively.

trying to cheat her, by working too much and sleeping too little. And finally there are constitutional sleepers, whose bilious tendencies tyrannize over them, especially in crowded and ill-ventilated churches, in spite of their resolves and efforts.

What is the cure for this evil? Some treat it with solemn rebuke on the irreverence and indecency of the practice. This may do for the first kind; but it is not adapted to all cases. Some resort to bitter irony, or merry ridicule, hoping by these to induce sleepers to open the eyes and to mend their manners. We have not much confidence in either of these remedies; and we think that the preachers who use them sometimes profane the house of God quite as much as the sleepers themselves. The remedy should be adapted to the peculiar type of the disease. In some cases fasting would be more efficacious than prayer without that accompaniment. Light food in moderate quantity on the Sabbath is best for both body and soul, and most conducive to the spiritual enjoyment and beneficial effect of Divine worship. Proper ventilation is an excellent antidote. The responsibility of much of the sleeping in church belongs to architects, and building committees, and sextons. The wholesale distillers of drowsiness are more to blame than the moderate drinkers of it; especially as the fault of the last is involuntary. More sleep and less work would help some to keep awake in church. They ought not to labor so hard on Saturdays. They ought to go to bed earlier Saturday nights. If they cannot do either of these without taking pains and making sacrifices, they ought to be willing to take pains and make sacrifices. It is hard to prescribe for the constitutional sleepers. Let them attend to their general health and take suitable medicines.

It is an ancient evil, this sleeping in meeting, and we sometimes wonder that, among the many things said and written about it, more attention has not been paid to the Scripture treatment of it. We have two examples in the New Testament, one of sleeping at an evening prayer-meeting, and one of sleeping after an evening sermon. When the disciples repeatedly fell asleep in the prayer-meeting in Gethsemane, Jesus used no harsh denunciation, no biting sarcasm, no provoking ridicule, but a mild admonition, a gentle rebuke, a tender expostulation, even a generous apology. When the young man at Troas got asleep under Paul's long sermon, and fell from an upper window, the apostle did not say, "Good enough for him; he might have kept awake; let them go and bury him as soon as they please." No, he considered that the hour was late, that the sermon was long; and he went down and prayed the young man to life again, and sent him and his friends away rejoiced. There is something to be learned from these examples.—*W. & R.*

### First-class preachers.

An old friend wants to know what we mean by first-class preachers. We will take up the question:

1. Negatively. 1. A first-class preacher is not a drone, not a ministerial parasite living on other men and eating them up.
  2. He is not stupid, doing nothing to improve his mind.
  3. He is not stuck up—too proud to visit and pray with the poor, even with the poorest of God's poor.
  4. He is not a coward, moral and physical.
1. Affirmatively. 1. A first-class minister is a man of sense and some education.
2. He is decent in his habits, and knows how to approach and teach other men.
  3. He is deeply, most earnestly devoted to God, unselfish and Christ-like in spirit and actions.
  4. He works for the salvation of men, and he prays with himself. Paul knew not what to pray, or unless the Holy Ghost joined himself with him and helped him with groans unutterable; but the Pharisee had not need of that; 'twas enough that he and himself were together at this work, for he thought without doubting that he and himself together could do it.—*Bunyan.*