

very well, though these occasionally varied by counting the number of people among the congregation who are asleep.

3. What should be the rule with regard to attending rehearsals?

Ans. If you are a paid singer, you will have to go, of course. If not, don't go unless you choose. The leader ought to be thankful for your services whenever it is your pleasure to give them.

4. How should the leader of the choir be treated?

Ans. Very much as you feel. It is pleasant to differ with him continually in the selection of music to be sung.

5. What should be done in case there is any trouble about a choice of seats?

Ans. Insist upon having the place you want at all hazards. It will be sure to produce an agreeable excitement, and may, perhaps, lead to a division in the Church. It is an opportunity not to be thrown away.

6. How can your importance as a choir singer be made manifest?

Ans. By remaining at home whenever the choir happens to be in a particularly weak condition, or, still better, go to church with "such a dreadful cold that you are unable to sing a note," and you can thus sit with the congregation and enjoy the discomfiture of the choir. Also by ceasing to sing in the middle of some passage in which your voice is most needed. This will have the additional advantage of keeping the leader in a healthy state of vexation.

7. Finally, what are the peculiar and ever-to-be-cherished privileges of choir singers?

Ans. To have uneven tempers, to catch sudden colds, to try the patience of ministers, to set congregations by the ears, and in every possible way to prevent the stagnation which long-continued peace and quiet would be sure to produce in a community.

A CATECHISM FOR CHOIRS. (As it should be.)

1. What is the object of a choir?

Ans. To lead the congregation in the worship of God.

2. How should the time of service be spent?

Ans. In attending to the exercises and the sermon, in the same manner by members of choirs as by other mortals.

3. What should be the rule with regard to attending rehearsals?

Ans. They should be attended promptly and faithfully, just as any other duty would be performed.

4. How should the leader of the choir be treated?

Ans. His suggestions should be carefully attended to, and his feelings treated with proper consideration.

5. What should be done in case there is any trouble about a choice of seats?

Ans. It is a point for the leader, and for him alone to decide.

6. How can your importance as a choir singer best be made manifest?

Ans. By simply showing a disposition to do all you can. By making a special effort to be present when the weather is unfavorable, or when, for any reason, the choir is likely to be less strong than usual.

7. Finally, what are the peculiar and ever-to-be-cherished privileges of choir singers?

Ans. To assist in one part of Divine Service, to encourage and sustain the minister by a spirit of sympathy and co-operation with him in his labors to lead the hearts of the congregation heavenward, and to enjoy the pleasant satisfaction of faithfully performing a most important duty.

Christian Messenger.

HALIFAX, NOVEMBER 28, 1866.

Thursday, the 6th of December, is appointed a special

Day of Thanksgiving and Prayer

for the Baptist Churches of these Provinces. The practice of the Convention, for several years past, in making a similar appointment to this, has approved itself to the brethren. The Day has been observed by many with much profit to themselves, and we doubt not that it has been the means approved of God, so that the prayers have been accepted and answered in blessings on the church and the world.

We might offer some reflections suitable for the occasion, and should find it a pleasing task, but we prefer giving some thoughts of others having reference to a similar appointment recently made by the London Baptist Association. Mr. Spurgeon, at the late session of the Baptist Union, in referring to that day of prayer, said: "At the present moment the Baptists of no place on earth were

more knit together than those of London. The reverend gentleman described a meeting of a number of the Baptist ministers in London at the Tabernacle about a fortnight previously, and gave an account of the spirit of devotion which characterized the gathering. At a subsequent meeting it was agreed that the 5th of November should be set apart for a day of supplication to God on behalf of the church throughout the land. On the 5th of November, therefore, he hoped that all the churches would unite in devotion and prayer. It would be an inspiring thing to feel that in every little village church throughout the kingdom, that in every one of the great parishes throughout Lancashire and Yorkshire, prayer was ascending to God. If he had—as he believed he had—any sensibility of coming storms of grace, then he felt sure that a great and gracious blessing was in store for them. (Applause.) He felt it in the increased love that was abroad amongst them. Such a meeting as that was not possible a few years ago—hear, hear—but now they meant to work together, to cling together, to cling to their common faith and common Master, and above all, to cry until they had a blessing. (Applause.) That blessing was beginning to come already, and he looked onward to the proposed general day of prayer in the hope that it might be followed with abundant blessing. Nothing could more gladden the hearts of those who sighed and cried for souls than seeing the whole of the church unanimously catching the spirit of prayer, from John-o'-Groat's to the Land's End, as well as in the sister isle; and might the Lord send prosperity for His name's sake."

Our London contemporary in a short article referring to the same thing, says:

"What is now proposed is purely spiritual in its aim. We are not looking around, and craving more wealth and more worldly respectability, more or grander churches, greater number, or greater secular influence for our churches,—we propose to humble ourselves rather, to gain a clearer perception of our deficiencies, to take shame to ourselves for all wherein, as churches, we come short of what our LORD would have us to be, to open our eyes to the inroads made on our religious life and habits by the maxims and habits of the world in which we live; in a word, to deal faithfully with ourselves, and to prepare our hearts to sacrifice all, however dear, which is unworthy of our high and holy calling. We propose to ask for ourselves such a presence and power of the HOLY SPIRIT as shall make us worthier and more useful members of CHRIST and His Church on earth, and shall make us and our families temples and churches of the living GOD. We would especially not forget the condition of our beloved country in reference to the kingdom of God. We have to deplore for it that a Hierarchy of worldly grandeur diffuses a wholly corrupt conception of CHRIST'S kingdom; that Romish superstition and sceptical ideas are, in this national Hierarchy, depraving the religious views and sentiments of the young especially—to deplore it as being part of the nation which thus, by its institutions, is sowing the tares in the field itself where the good seed had been sown; generally, too, we have to confess, that on the one hand all the sects have too much neglected the perishing multitudes, on the other, that they have given growing attention to external display in worship. In these days of Ritualism, Popish doctrine, of betraying Christ under professions of honouring Him, and of aesthetic services, we need, indeed, to ask for the impartation of a humble yet vigorous spiritual life to all real churches and members of CHRIST, a life which shall renew their Christian health, and free all the churches from disease too often mistaken for health."

Our brethren will be ready to heartily adopt such sentiments as these, and in the spirit of them come together on the day appointed, and engage in exercises of devotion. If "the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much," and the Saviour has given special promises to those—even two, see Matt. xviii. 19.—who "agree" in making a petition to the throne of heavenly grace, may we not regard the union of churches in such an act as affording still greater warrant for expecting the blessing.

We recommend our brethren to peruse the Report of the committee on "The State of the Denomination" previous to attending the said meetings. The report may be found in the Minutes of Convention. Those who have not a copy of the Minutes may find it in the *C. Messenger* of the 29th of August last.

This will furnish material for taking an enlarged view of our state, our prospects, and our aims as a body of Christians, and give a greater degree of definiteness to our thanksgiving and prayer.

The London *Freeman* of the 9th inst., gives the following account of the meeting referred to above:—

THE SPECIAL DAY OF PRAYER.

London Baptist Association.—Last Monday was the day appointed for the union of the Baptist Churches in the metropolis, for special prayer and fasting. The meeting was held in the Rev. C. Stovel's Chapel, Commercial street. At eleven o'clock, the time for commencing the services, the area of the chapel was well filled

with ministers, deacons, and delegates, and it was obvious, at a glance, that all had come there in a chastened and devout spirit. The Rev. W. Brock, chairman of the Association, opened the proceedings of the day by reading an appropriate chapter, giving out a hymn and praying. The Rev. C. H. Spurgeon suggested the plan that should be pursued throughout the devotional exercises. The first two hours were devoted to confession of sin. No part of the service was more impressive than this. One after another, honoured ministerial brethren confessed their short comings in connection with their pastoral work. Deacons confessed the sins of their work, and all confessed the sins of the churches. It was impossible to resist the impression of the solemnity and true brokenness of spirit in which these prayers were offered. The deep feelings of several of the brethren checked their utterance, and these feelings were evidently shared by the whole of the assembly. After this the whole strain was changed into one of thankfulness and joy, and many prayers were offered in acknowledgement of the Divine forbearance, and of the blessings vouchsafed to the churches. This again was succeeded by prayer for prosperity in the churches; for development of the Christian life in the families of the godly; for the success of missions, Sunday schools, and all other agencies at work for the spread of vital religion; for national blessings; for the Queen, and for all in suffering. The prayers concluded at about half-past four o'clock, and then the whole service was crowned by the observance of the Lord's Supper. Throughout, the spirit of prayer was most manifestly present, and we do not remember ever having been more deeply impressed with the spontaneousness as with the fervency of the devotions. All the assembled brethren were of one heart and mind. Singing, the reading of short passages of Scripture, and prayers, succeeded each other in such quick succession that throughout the day there was not the slightest indication of weakened interest or even of hesitancy. The chairman had nothing else to do but to give himself up to the impulses of the meeting over which he presided. Of his part in the service we feel bound to say that it was admirably performed. Altogether we feel that we must thank God for the day. In itself a most blessed day, whilst, as a pledge of still further blessing, demanding the most confident hope and the most implicit faith. On Sunday last, special prayer was offered in all the churches of the Association for God's blessing on the services of the morrow, and scarcely a sermon was preached without some reference to them. The meeting at Mr. Stovel's chapel was representative of the convictions of the whole denomination in London. Nay, it was even more than this, since the day was set apart for the same purposes in Birmingham, in the West Riding of Yorkshire, in Devonshire, in some parts of Wales, and, no doubt, in many other places beside. May the God from whom all true inspiration to prayer comes, keep His churches in an attitude of expectancy for the answers which are sure, and which, perhaps, will not be long delayed.

Church Matters in Halifax.

A week or two since we addressed a few thoughts to our readers on clerical vestments and ritualistic observances, as they are being manifested in some of the English churches. We then made reference to Halifax. Although we have as yet had no such glaring displays or obnoxious proceedings in this province, yet a discussion has arisen between the Bishop of Nova Scotia and clergymen of the Church of England, concerning those views and tendencies. As pamphlets on the subject are now published and offered for sale, we presume they challenge public attention. We have no wish to interfere with the parties *pro* or *con*, yet we should be regarded as failing to serve our intelligent readers, were we to eschew all notice of what is awakening so much interest in the religious community of the capital.

The dismissal by Bishop Binney of the Rev. J. C. Cochran from his curacy at Salem Chapel, was the first act which gave publicity to the existing dispute. The publication by the latter of the correspondence between himself and his Diocesan, indicated that for some time past Mr. C.'s preaching in a black gown had been objected to by the Bishop. Mr. C. urges that his having worn the gown for forty-two years, and more than eleven of them in Salem Chapel, where he was now required to change it for the white surplice, was a reason for his being unwilling to adopt the change demanded by the Bishop, and especially as he entertained conscientious scruples on the subject—"remembering that wearing the surplice in the pulpit was one of the earliest steps in that movement which has led so many of our clergy and people to Rome, and is still producing those innovations in the mode of worship in hundreds of our English churches, which make them hardly distinguishable from Roman Catholic Chapels."

This week another pamphlet has appeared, containing, in the form of "A Letter to the parishioners of St. Paul's, Halifax, by Rev. George W. Hill, Rector," correspondence between Mr. Hill and Bishop Binney, on the great ritualistic questions.—"Church Furniture, Clerical Millinery, and Posture making." Mr. H. evidently believes that there are ritualistic tendencies in the administration of

His Lordship, although as yet they are developed only to a very limited extent. The Bishop denies any desire of having anything more than greater simplicity in the vestments by the use of only the surplice; and in the church furniture he recommends, he contends, that it is merely the suitability and adaptation of it for the purposes intended that induces him to prefer a higher communion table, &c.

We have no intention or wish to express any judgment on the points at issue. The Episcopal Church having no state rights more than other denominations in this province, the clergy have the liberty of using as little or as much of ceremony, in their Public Worship, as they think proper. They are, however, bound by the Canons and Rubric of the church, and serious differences of opinion exist as to the proper interpretation of them. How they are to be understood and how far the Bishop's decision is to be followed is the cause of the present trouble. We are in no position, however, to judge of what is due by the clergy to their ecclesiastical superior, at the same time we do not see the value of the Episcopal organization except the Bishop is allowed to determine points of order in the churches recognizing him in that office.

Whilst we would give all honor to men who,—in the spirit of the ancient christian martyrs, would sooner die than throw the morsel of salt on the heathen sacrifices,—refuse to trifle with what their consciences dictate when guided by the Word of God,—yet we would not encourage insubordination to properly constituted authority, either in Church or State.

THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER FOR 1867.

We have been reminded by some of our friends, in a very

PLEASANT

manner, that another year will shortly be here. They have begun the

WORK

of gathering up New Subscribers. We take the present opportunity of inviting others to join in similar labors of love.

By way of inducement, and

FOR THE

purpose of preventing the difficulties of adding them all, just at the

COMMENCEMENT OF THE YEAR,

we shall place on our list all new names, as they come in, from the present date, charging them only from the 1st of January,

1867.

We hope therefore that no time will be lost, but that our friends will proceed without delay, to search out amongst their neighbours and acquaintance some who are not at present receiving the paper, and give it a word of commendation.

Although our circulation is in fair proportion to that of our contemporaries, and equal to the best, yet there are still hundreds and probably thousands of families in our land, who entirely accord with us in sentiment, but who have not yet joined the band of intelligent christian men and women, we are proud to call our subscribers.

We earnestly desire to give, week by week, such information as will instruct and satisfy subscribers, and benefit their families; so that we may have a succession of permanent patrons who shall retain their interest in the paper as long as life shall last, and their children then follow in the footsteps of their forefathers, growing in confidence and esteem year by year.

We might mention the names of some who will furnish our pages with literary matter during the year, and might include amongst them, ministers and merchants, professors and poets, teachers and travellers, farmers and fishermen, but in doing so might seem to disparage others not named. Our corps of educated men and good writers in each of these professions was never so great as at present, and we shall endeavor to enlist the services of the ablest amongst them. Our highest desire is to present our readers with the best supplies that can be procured from at home and abroad, and provide for them a weekly reprint unsurpassed in British America. We hope, during the coming year, with the aid of our worthy Agents and other friends, to approach nearer to our highest aspirations in these respects than we have ever done before.

WANTED AT OUR OFFICE.—All amounts due.

TRINITY CHURCH in Jacob Street, is to be opened on Sunday next, Dec. 2nd. The Building Committee have appointed the Rev. J. C. Cochran to officiate therein. The building is a handsome structure and fitted up in a neat substantial style, well adapted as a free Episcopal church.