

Christianity, and you will find their children one by one, sliding away to looser forms of religion, if not to utter carelessness. The same principles apply to expenditures in dress, furniture, equipage, and luxurious living. "Let your moderation be known unto all men."

A SUGGESTIVE HISTORY.—We condense the following from the *Christian Index South Western Baptist*. It has in it a lesson for all latitudes and all times:—

Twenty-seven years ago, the Conech River Association, in Alabama, comprised forty churches and over two thousand seven hundred members. The Association, as a body, was bitterly hostile to Missions, Sabbath schools, Bible societies, and temperance organizations. A few of the churches, however, nine in number, with a united membership of only two hundred and forty, having drunk in the true spirit of the Gospel, withdrew, and formed a new association, that at once threw itself vigorously into the missionary work in the vast destitute region around. It has now multiplied into five associations, one hundred and fifty churches, and over seven thousand members!

The original Association, in the meanwhile became only more fierce in their invectives against the benevolent movements of the day, denouncing them as the unclean spirits of the great red dragon. Piety sought their altars in vain for nourishment. The dove took its flight. The result is while the seceding nine churches, with their two hundred and forty members, grew to one hundred and fifty churches, with seven thousand members, the body that was left, dwindled from thirty-one churches, with two thousand five hundred members, to fifteen churches, with about one thousand members! "They have the shell of orthodoxy, but its spirit, its power, its glory has departed; and they now present a mournful illustration of a people on whose sanctuary 'Ishabod' is written."

Such facts as the above are an impressive illustration of the truth that spiritual activity is a prime law of spiritual life and growth.—*Montreal Witness*.

For the Christian Messenger.

A Labourer.

DEAR BROTHER,—

I have received a letter from brother C. H. Corey, containing information that will be gratifying, I doubt not, to your readers. Brother Corey is stationed at Charleston, South Carolina, and is labouring among the freedmen, under the auspices of the American Baptist Home Missionary Society. He writes thus:—

"During the year 1866 I organized five churches, established six Sunday Schools, and presided over six Councils for the ordination of ministers. The churches organized now range in membership from one hundred and fifty to one thousand. I have occupied eight preaching stations, several of which are more than one hundred miles from my headquarters. More than one thousand have been added during the year to these churches by baptism. I have not baptized the candidates, but have committed that work to the newly ordained pastors. I have remained some time with all the churches, preaching and instructing, but putting the pastors ahead in all instances.

"At the commencement of the war there were about 85,000 coloured Baptists in this State, most of whom are seeking to be organized, into separate churches.

"I think the feeling towards me and my work is improving. There are places which last year I dared not visit, to which I can now go in perfect safety. Persons who last year reviled, this year are friendly and take me to their homes.

"The people among whom I labour are poor, and yet make great sacrifices for the cause. In some instances they worship under trees, amid the ruins of the devastated cities, or in the woods.

"A few weeks since I rode fourteen miles by night (not daring to go by daylight, as there was no garrison), and found the brethren awaiting us. They built a fire in the woods, and there we organized a church, ordained our deacons, and installed a pastor. Hundreds were present, and God also was there. As I said, though in some places there is an improvement, yet in others we have to go where dangers are all around us."

Brother Corey is a true labourer. I rejoice that he is one of Acadia's sons.

Yours truly,
J. M. CRAMP.

March 14, 1867.

A life full of constant employment is the only safe and happy one.

Christian Messenger.

HALIFAX, MARCH 20, 1867.

Baptism in relation to Union.

SECOND ARTICLE.

In our last we very briefly noticed that the differences of opinion entertained among Christians respecting the Initiatory rite to the Christian church,—Baptism,—had more to do with the existence of the numerous divisions of the church into the various sects of Christendom than is commonly supposed.

Although the majority of those who profess a general adherence to Christianity are Pedobaptists in practice, and regard infants as the proper subjects of the ordinance, yet they entertain very different opinions as to what children should be received into their several churches by that ceremonial observance. Whilst there is apparently so little difference in the administration, yet the theoretical variations of sentiment between the different bodies are most strenuously adhered to, without much regard to scripture precept or precedent. The views respecting baptism, more than any other single circumstance, we believe, affect the harmony and fraternal relationship of Pedobaptist churches. They either form a bridge or raise a barrier to combinations, much more so than is commonly supposed.

These may seem minor matters, when considered in themselves, but, if they become stumbling blocks and disturbers of the peace, they are of no small importance in relation to the Christian Church. Some of the zealous advocates for an appearance of Union suppose that it may be effected by a combination of all sects and parties at the Lord's Supper, and imagine that such an act would fulfil the prediction of our Lord that there shall be "one fold and one shepherd." Now we do not believe Christian unity to be dependent on uniformity. Nor do we think that the Lord's Supper was intended for any such purpose, as a standard, around which an army gathers for the purpose of shewing its loyalty. That idea, has arisen, we presume, from the notion of sacramental efficacy with which some Pedobaptist bodies surround the ordinance. Uniting in observing the Lord's Supper would no more prove the Christian unity of the participants than it would prove the sincerity of their profession, or the reality of their conversion.

Divisions, in the church, have been occasioned far more by differences as to the administration of baptism, than that of the Lord's Supper. Those differences are not always recognized but they are nevertheless real and serious. It is maintained by some Pedobaptists that believers and their children are entitled to the ordinance, whilst others throw the door open to all indiscriminately. Some hold that only the children of communicants should partake of the privilege, while others consider it the duty of adherents generally, to bring their infants to the font. Some hold that baptism should be administered in public before the whole congregation, whilst others think it just as proper if done in the privacy of the domestic circle. Some regard sponsors as an essential feature, and that, to complete the initiation to the church, a subsequent Confirmation is necessary; whilst others regard this as an absurdity and a matter of form, in which the vows taken are never intended or expected to be performed.

In addition to these conflicting elements which abound in reference to the observance of Infant Baptism, and which have the effect of separating Pedobaptists from each other, and even sometimes of causing quarrels between those of the same communion, there is another, even more vital, question amongst Pedobaptists which will probably remain unanswered as long as Infant Baptism lasts: viz. What does baptism accomplish for the infant? Does it really save, or if not, what does it effect towards that object. On this there is such a diversity of opinion, even among those who regard themselves as evangelical Christians that an insurmountable barrier is raised to anything like unity or uniformity. Some, holding to the opinion that the entire regeneration of the child is effected thereby, perform the ceremony in great haste if there is danger of the child dying. They have been known so far to encourage the ignorance and superstition of parents as to commence and proceed through the whole service of Infant Baptism over a lifeless corpse. Some hold that baptism is but declaring the child's membership in the church—its innate purity being secured by the faith of the parents. Others again regard the rite as the mere ceremony of christening, in which the proper name of the child is given—having no higher signification or object.

Notwithstanding these differences of views amongst Pedobaptists, it is often intimated that Baptists are sinners above all others, in the matter of the church of Christ being divided by impassable barriers. This we entirely repudiate; and, on the strength of the foregoing, think we have good reasons for doing so. It is supposed by many, even intelligent people, that the great point of difference between Baptists and Pedobaptists is, What is the proper mode of Baptism?—immersion or sprinkling? This we very emphatically deny. The great consideration with Baptists is *Who are the proper subjects?*—what persons are entitled to the privilege? On this we think the testimony of Baptists is clear and distinct. They hold that the Scriptures teach by precept and example that the persons who are to be introduced to the Church of Christ must be *believers*, that the profession must be their own act and deed, whether they be adults or children. If there be good reason to conclude that a child is a believer in Jesus, there is no reason in the world why he or she should be deprived of the privilege of baptism, and then of participation in the Lord's Supper. This they regard as taught clearly; beyond this they dare not go. None others, they hold; have any claim to Christian ordinances.

The mode of baptism, of course, they hold can be but one; but this is only secondary—we repeat it—to that of the subjects. Pedobaptists, who are sound in their reasoning on other subjects, are often strangely perverse on this, and strive to hide the real and most important features of the subject from their followers. It is understood by Baptists that this ordinance is intended to be the line of demarcation between the church and the world, and therefore is of the most momentous consequence, but with Pedobaptists it can never be. Whatever concerns personal religion in the Church of Christ, is not to be trifled with. If believers—those who profess to be such, and give credible evidence of being so, only, were admitted to baptism, the mass of baptized heathenism in, so-called, Christian countries would be greatly lessened. The great disturbances in the church of the present day—whether they be those of ritualism, rationalism, universalism, or any other of the isms existing as troublers of the church—are intimately connected with correct views on this subject.

In taking this stand Baptists, we believe, occupy the only ground on which any organic Union of Christ's Church can be secured, or any hope may be entertained of the church and the world assuming their proper relations to each other. Union must be formed on a foundation of truth, but in many ways Christians may combine to promote the good of their fellowmen without compromising these principles. The more frequent opportunities for doing this are embraced, the greater may we expect the progress to be, of truth and righteousness in the earth.

Our Young Men.

It is with much pleasure we give insertion to the following Circular, and commend it to the special attention of those to whom it is addressed.

YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION.

To Ministers, Parents and Guardians.

The Young Men's Christian Association of Halifax, have among their standing committees, one called "The Strangers and Employment Committee," whose special object is the attention to the interests of strangers in the city, whether with the intention of residing or passing through in the course of business or pleasure. Visitors to the city may pass an agreeable hour in the Association Rooms, which are both commodious and conveniently situated in Hollis Street, opposite the Province Building, where they will have the opportunity of meeting with Christian friends, whose society may add materially to their enjoyment.

In the case of young men coming from the country to reside in the city, the Association affords peculiar advantages, and the committee would take this opportunity of bringing to the notice of Ministers, Parents and Guardians, the desirability of introducing young men, exchanging a rural for a city life to the Association, where by precept and example, they may be secured against the allurements which stand in the way of the youthful and inexperienced. It is felt that many go aside from the straight path of rectitude, not so much from a desire for what is wrong, as from a want of proper associates and the extension of due sympathy, they are driven of necessity, (since society is indispensable) to mix with those who have lost self-respect, and lowered themselves in the social scale. "The Strangers and Employment Committee," composed of members of all evangelical churches will be found a valuable means of introduction, not only to the members of the association who frequent the comfortable and well provided Reading Room and Library, but to others whose position and influence will be found of the greatest benefit.

The Committee would not recommend as a

rule the sending of young men to the city in search of situations, yet in the case of those who come recommended to their notice and have not obtained employment, they will exert themselves as far as possible on their behalf.

The Reading Room is provided with the city and foreign newspapers, and the leading periodicals of the day, while the Literary Catalogue contains a judicious selection of religious, moral, scientific, and useful books. The frequent Prayer Meetings and Bible Classes, and the Course of Lectures during the Winter months, add to the usefulness and increase the importance of the Association, the benefits of a connection with which the Committee would impress upon Ministers, Parents, and Guardians, are of the highest value. The whole of the above privileges can be obtained for 5s. per annum.

Communications, with an application to Henry Theakston, Secretary of the Halifax Young Men's Christian Association, Hollis Street, will receive the strictest attention.

Much might be said on the subject to which allusion is but briefly made in the above. Pious or well disposed young men, coming to the city, are often subject to great loss of time, and sometimes of character and good influences, by depending on the accidents which may throw them into good society, or that of an opposite kind. In the matter of their church relationship they sometimes wish to enjoy the freedom of going around and seeing the different churches, and hearing the various ministers of the city, and not unfrequently, by some specious appearances, they are induced to refrain from uniting themselves to the particular church or congregation which their friends expected, and so commence the formation of wandering habits which soon unfit them for the usefulness and happiness they might otherwise secure. There is, we fear, too much indifference on the part of ministers in the case of young men from their congregations coming to the city to dwell, or they would be more careful to advise them to lose no time in seeking fellowship with the churches to which theirs are fraternally united.

We have received the following notice, and insert it, according to request, for the purpose of showing the whole-hearted invitation and the excellent method adopted by the Chicago brethren to shew kind attentions, with as little difficulty as possible to the visiting brethren, rather than with any idea that many of our brethren from Nova Scotia will attend. If any should do so, we shall be glad to receive some notes by the way for our pages.

United States Baptist Anniversaries, May, 1867.

TO BE HELD IN CHICAGO, ILL., FROM MAY 22 TO 30 INCLUSIVE.—Arrangements are now being perfected for the entertainment of two thousand or more. The churches of Chicago send Christian greeting to our brethren of the East, and West, North and South, assuring them that no effort will be spared to facilitate their attendance and provide for their entertainment.

That the details of arrangements may be as perfect as possible, the Central Committee has instructed the undersigned to request that all persons proposing to attend these Anniversaries, and desiring entertainment, will send him, as soon as possible, a written notice of the same, stating the number of individuals, whether ladies or gentlemen, and church with Post Office address, including State and County, to whom cards of introduction will be returned, giving the name of the family, street, and number, to which they are assigned.

A large attendance is earnestly desired and expected. Come one, come all; and our hearts desire and prayer to God is, that this Anniversary occasion may be one of the richest blessing to all.

LYMAN BRIDGES,
Cor. Sec. Central Committee,
70 Washington Street,
Chicago, Illinois, }
March 1, 1867. } Chicago, Ill.

"THE MODE OF BAPTISM.—The Editor of the *Witness* under the above title says. "A correspondent takes a contemporary to task for some remarks in connection with an announcement of a Presbyterian minister turning Baptist." The editor then inserts his correspondent's argument for the mode as observed by Presbyterians."

His "argument" is almost worthy of the sceptical Bishop Colenso. He supposes that the number of those who came to John's baptism was so great that it would be impossible, because of the length of time it would require, for their baptism to have been by immersion. He therefore concludes that it was "by pouring or sprinkling the water upon their faces." What a profound argument!

We remember, a number of years ago, seeing a supposition from another person, who had some difficulties on this question. Knowing that it would take about the same length of time to pour or sprinkle upon each one separately, he offered the suggestion that