

Christian Messenger.

A RELIGIOUS AND GENERAL FAMILY NEWSPAPER.

"Not slothful in business: fervent in spirit."

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Religious.

BORN A METHODIST--DIED A BAPTIST.

Another veteran has gone home. Two weeks ago, yesterday, the funeral services of Rev. Stephen Remington were held in the Strong Place Church, Brooklyn. A worthy life, filled up with efficient service for the Master, has worthily closed. Many years ago, Bro. Remington came into the ranks of our Baptist Ministry from the Methodists, among whom he had zealously and successfully labored. His experience would not be an uncommon one, if others would open their hearts as he did to the teaching of the Spirit through the Word. He said:

"A few months ago, I should as soon have expected to have been a Roman Catholic as a Baptist. I was strongly prejudiced against them. I scarcely believed at all in immersion."

He was awakened to inquiry into the subject, by witnessing the administration of the ordinance to some of his own members. He says:

"Several persons belonging to my congregation desired to be immersed. I could not refuse them, though I resolved not to immerse them myself. Accordingly I engaged a brother in the ministry to officiate for me. To confess the whole truth, I felt rather vexed than pleased. The weather was cold, and I thought it presumptuous to go into the river under such circumstances. There were eight candidates, all females; one of whom was very feeble in health, and I was requested to reserve her for the last, which request I readily complied with. Suffice it to say, they went down into the water one by one, and came straightway up out of the water, while I stood upon the shore a silent spectator. Soon, however, the scene began to melt my heart, and something seemed to kindly whisper, *this is the way to follow Jesus*. I felt that Jesus was present to own and sanction his ordinance. That Spirit that descended upon him at his baptism in the river Jordan, appeared to be hovering over us, and to change the whole aspect of the occasion in my mind to one of the most intense interest and delight. At length the last subject came; that feeble young woman went down into the water, and to my surprise she came up out of the water praising God. And every step to the shore she repeated her praises, declaring that the water was not cold, though the ice was swimming all around her. So warm was her heart with the love of God, that she was unconscious of the cold. My heart was humbled, and I felt to mingle my tears of gratitude with hers. The impressions made upon my heart that morning, I trust will continue while memory endures. I went home and confessed to my family that I had spoken unadvisedly about the solemn and interesting ordinance of immersion, and in my heart resolved never to do so again. Moreover I determined to examine more fully than ever I had done, the claims of the Baptists, thinking that by so doing my prejudices might become permanently softened, and my feelings more charitable towards them. Little did I think that such a result would follow as the sequel will show. In the prosecution of this work, my Bible was my text-book, my only authority. I think I was honest, and I am sure I earnestly prayed to be guided into the truth. I had not pursued the examination very far before I became convinced, and as I advanced these convictions increased, till at last, I found myself in doctrine a Baptist."

The results of these investigations have been given to the world in a work issued by our Publication Society, entitled "Reasons for becoming a Baptist"—a work too well known to need criticism now. Bro. Remington's ministry as a Baptist was passed, among other places, in Philadelphia and Brooklyn. The record of his ministry reveals the fact, so suggestive of arduous and successful labor, that two thousand and eighty-three persons united with the church as the fruit of his Christian toils. The writ-

ter had not the privilege of a personal acquaintance, but knew him by the fragrance of his good name. His last days were full of peace in Jesus. And a number—how many only Heaven can tell—of those won to Christ through his ministry, have now welcomed him to his rest and his reward. His was a spiritual life. And this poor tribute to his worth is paid by one in whose memory the lines of his sweet placid face, seen but twice, are stamped forever. Oh, for more men like him! men to whose consciences the truth commends itself, and who, in their public teachings and their private lives, commend themselves, by manifestation of the truth to every man's conscience in the sight of God! Oh, sirs! when will our Christians learn to obey the Master's command!—*Cor. National Baptist.*

CHURCH MUSIC.

CONGREGATIONAL ACCOMPANIMENT.

The hindrances to the success of congregational singing are various. Among them may be mentioned the use of unsuitable tunes, the difficulty in obtaining a good vocal lead, the lack of interest among the people themselves, and last, though not least, the vagaries of the organist. The first three points have been often discussed, but we think the last mentioned stumbling-block has not usually been sufficiently considered. Yet it is of the highest importance. The congregation may be fully prepared for the exercise, and the precentor or the choir ready to do their part properly and efficiently, yet all be spoiled by the manner in which the organ is played. We know no reason why it should be so, but practically, it seems to be the most trying position in which a musician can be placed to accompany the singing of a congregation in a simple tune. In the first place the opportunity it affords for elaboration is a temptation that many are unable to resist. Dundee and Boylston and the rest are quite too simple in themselves, and so they must receive an embroidery from the fancy of the player. An organist who plays the tune through in the prelude so that one half of the listeners have no idea what it is, and the other half can only make a rough guess, will not be likely to encourage the singing of the people very much by his style of accompaniment. But, leaving this class of players entirely out of the question, there seems still to be a difficulty even if the organist has the right object conscientiously in view. We will offer a few suggestions for the benefit of those who may be seeking improvement in this respect.

The one prevailing fault in organ accompanying is the tendency to play too connectedly. The tunes are all run so completely together that it requires an effort on the part of the singer to follow the instrument. Of course it is necessary to avoid anything like a chopped-off effect; but there is a way of playing in which the true character of the instrument may be maintained and yet the movement of the tune be plainly marked. It is dangerous to try to indicate by description that which can only be properly shown by an actual example, but the following may be accepted as a general suggestion. Let the upper part in each hand (i. e. the soprano and tenor), be pretty firmly sustained and closely connected, while the lower parts, the alto and base, may be played somewhat more staccato, thus indicating clearly the movement of the piece without losing too much of the organ-like effect. Another trouble with players is with regard to time. In playing for the congregation nearly all organists are inclined to take too slow a movement, giving a heavy and dragging effect, which soon takes the spirit of singing completely out of the worshippers. Yet it is just as bad to go to the opposite extreme. We have heard players who seemed to make up their minds that whatever else happened they were bound to be ahead. They would strike the chord always in advance of the singers as if they were trying to goad them on to destruction. We think this fault is worse than the other. The true method of accompanying may be briefly summed up as follows: Be careful to take the right movement to

start with. Play the tune as it is written. Deliver it plainly and distinctly. Play it firmly yet without squareness. Do not make violent transitions by changing the stops from loud to soft, or vice versa during the singing of the congregation. Attend carefully to all these points, and you will not only help the people in their worship, but your playing will be a means of leading them on the way of constant improvement, and you may be able to do as much for the cause of congregational singing, as the pastor, chorister, and deacons all combined.—*N. Y. Musical Gazette.*

"RELIGIOUS NOTICES."

BY THE REV. J. I. BOSWELL.

Suppose a man becomes a pastor of a city church. Suppose he fails to draw the crowd which for once shows no anxiety to hear "some new thing." What then? Let him advertise in the daily papers. Let him vie with the vendors of patent medicines in throwing tempting baits to a greedy public. Others do it—why should not he?

Here are a few specimens of advertisements. They are rather sensational, but in perfect harmony with the spirit of the age:

"Rev. Darling Littlejohn, the celebrated boy preacher, will preach on Sunday morning, April 1st. Subject: Original Sin and Total Depravity. Seats free, and strangers welcome."

Sometimes the young orator is introduced to an astonished public as the "Youthful Apostle," the "Second Summerfield," or the "Modern Apollon." The whole world is invited to come and hear how well a boy can preach. Such a pulpit prodigy ought to heed the words of the sainted Baxter: "Nor should men turn preachers as the river Nile breeds frogs, when one half month before the other half is made, and while it is yet but plain mud."

"Rev. Josiah Cream, the converted Mormon, will preach in the Chestnut-street Tabernacle next Sunday evening. Music by a sacred quartette."

Sometimes it is the converted "Romanist," or "Jew," or, best of all, the "Converted Infidel," who begs for a congregation. It is never the "converted sinner," since all preachers may claim that title, and therefore it lacks the charm to attract. In one case, the pastor announced to his audience "the Rev. Mr. M—, a converted lawyer, who will now preach the sermon."

Another method is to announce a reply to a preacher whose popularity is widespread. It is good to thrive in the shadow of another man's reputation:

"Rev. Ebenezer Small will preach in the Institute next Sunday morning, and expose the fallacies contained in Rev. H. W. B—'s late sermon on the Doctrine of the Trinity. A challenge to meet in public debate was sent by Mr. Small to the distinguished pastor of — church, Brooklyn, but no reply has been received."

The inference to be drawn from the last sentence is that Rev. Mr. B— is afraid to meet such a zealous advocate for the truth as Rev. Mr. Small."

Another method is to announce a special sermon to a certain class:

"Rev. A. Rodomontado, formerly of Ireland, will preach to thieves in the brick church on Sunday evening. The body of the church will be reserved."

Of course the church is densely crowded—with honest persons, without their pocket-books. Not a single thief goes to be stared at by a silly crowd and by a dozen sharp-eyed policemen.

"Rev. Zealous Champion will preach in the new Zion church on Sunday morning. Subject: The verse in the Scriptures which Christians do not believe."

The attendance was large, and a really eloquent discourse was preached from the text which contains the words: "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

"Elder Frost will discuss, in the church of Progressive Reasoners, the question: Is there an orthodox hell? At the close of the discourse his painting of Death Victorious will be exhibited."

Much skill is often shown in the selec-

tion of attractive topics. Here are several subjects which are intended to draw a curious crowd: "New wine in old bottles, and the consequence;" "Common-sense;" "Cuvier, the Christian Naturalist;" "A man as a hiding-place, Isaiah 32: 1, 2;" "Marriage—a sermon to young women;" "Novel-reading;" and "Ephraim, the unturned cake, Hosea 7: 8." It would not be difficult to multiply the list.

One Sunday morning, the telegraphic wires flashed the glad news over all the land: "Richmond is taken." Church-bells rang, and great was the rejoicing. But there was one loyal man at the North who was in despair. He was a preacher; he must do justice to the subject by an elaborate sermon, and he had no time for preparation. As he was not a Methodist preacher, he could not trust to the occasion for an extemporaneous flow of sacred eloquence. The newspaper appeared on Monday morning, and in it the following religious notice:

"Rev. O. B. Joyful will preach a special sermon in the lecture-room of his church this evening. Subject: It is the Lord that taketh the city—Jeremiah 19: 12."

Alas for the sermon! Before evening came, the whole country knew that Richmond was not yet taken, and that Lee's army was still in battle array.

A TIMELY DISCOVERY.

In the midst of the excited discussion concerning religious liberty, in the Spanish Cortes, a discovery was made which must have brought consternation to the ranks of the Papal party. In making excavations for improvements now in progress in Madrid, the workmen laid bare a series of long black layers, extending 150 feet in length and about two feet in depth, which at first were taken to be a geological formation, but on examination were found to be leaves from quite another book than that of nature. It was, indeed, the old site—called *Quemadero de la Cruz* (burning place of the cross)—where in the days of the Spanish Inquisition the victims of that terrible tribunal suffered the *auto de fe*, and these black layers were the ghastly witnesses of the intolerance and cruelty of the Romish hierarchy. One who visited the spot describes the layers as consisting of "coal coagulated with human fat, bones, the remains of singed hair, and the shreds of burnt garments."

The excitement in Madrid, upon the discovery of these horrid evidences of fanatical hatred, was intense.—Thousands visited the place from curiosity, or to satisfy themselves of the fact, and the scene must have recalled vividly to mind the time when other thousands had crowded thither to witness—perhaps with jeers of delight—the expiring agonies of martyrs to the cause of religious freedom.

The discovery was used with telling effect by Senor Echegaray, a young but eloquent liberal, in a speech against enforced unity of religious belief, delivered just before the Cortes voted upon the religious clause in the new Constitution. He said—and the passage is worthy of notice, as showing the absolute freedom of speech now, in the interrogium, enjoyed in Spain:

In this place Senor Caneja has said that the Church never persecuted individuals.—In lieu of the word Church let us substitute another word, and call it the "theocratic power." Has the theocratic power never persecuted individuals? Walk through the street of Aneha de San Bernardo, turn to the right, and there, close to the monument of Daoiz and Velarde, you will see the *Quemadero de la Cruz*. Not many days ago (and I vouch for the fact) a boy with a stick happened to be poking into this mass, and drew forth from those layers three objects full of eloquence—three grand discourses in favor of religious liberty! These were a piece of oxydized iron, a human rib almost calcined, and a braid of hair burned at one extremity! These constitute three very eloquent arguments! I wish the Deputies who defend religious unity would submit them to a severe interrogation. I would