

storms or heat, but refreshed by the soft west wind blowing for evermore. It was chosen by the Rabbis to denote the home of the pious dead prior to the resurrection. In it were the patriarchs; and "plants of healing power and wondrous fragrance grow on the banks of its streams." It was used by Paul as nearly synonymous with the "third heaven," and by John as a name for the holy city of New Jerusalem. It is therefore plain, that by assuring the malefactor of a home in Paradise, Christ assured him of all the blessedness which place can give. And by declaring that he would be in that celestial Eden before the day should close, He virtually declared that at death the souls of good men enter Paradise. The language of Christ will not, it seems to me, bear any other interpretation; least of all will it tolerate the view of those who connect the word "To-day" with the first clause.

Again, the souls of believers after death are said to be in Abraham's bosom. For in the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus it is said that "the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom," and afterwards that the rich man "saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom" (Luke 16: 22, 23). These words contain a reference to the oriental custom of reclining at table. The poor beggar, no longer dependent on the crumbs of human charity, is represented as enjoying a blessed repast at the side of the father of the faithful and reclining upon his bosom. The words of Christ in this passage are therefore illustrated by His language to the believing centurion, as recorded by Matthew: "I say unto you that many shall come from the east and west, and shall recline at table with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven." Besides, it was the current belief of the Jews, sustained by the teaching of their Rabbis, that Abraham was in Paradise, ready to welcome the souls of the pious at death to his fellowship. This doctrine is endorsed by our Saviour as substantially correct. Blessed society! Holy companionship! A celestial Eden peopled with redeemed spirits! Patriarchs, prophets, apostles, martyrs, the pure in heart of every age and every clime, seeing eye to eye and resting in love!

But this is not all, nor even the best that can be said. For the souls of believers at death go at once to be with Christ. This is surely implied, if it is not rather distinctly affirmed, by the language of Paul to the Philippians (1: 21-24), which I will venture to translate from the Greek: "Because for me to live is Christ, and to die, gain. But if to live in flesh—if this for me be fruit of labor, then what I should choose I know not. But I am held in a strait by the two; having the desire to depart and to be with Christ, because it is far better; but to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account." Here the apostle speaks of "living in the flesh" as the more exact expression for the present life to which he refers,—implying, I think, that the dying referred to was to be realized in the flesh only; implying also that there is a life not in the flesh and independent of natural death. Into this life out of the body but with the Lord he expected to enter at the moment of dying; and this life with Christ he esteemed far better for himself, in a personal respect, far more conducive to his own happiness, than to remain alive in the flesh. He longed to be with that glorified One, who had met him on the way to Damascus and made him a new man. Christ was to him the glory and beauty of Paradise, the one infinite attraction of the middle state. For the sake of being at home with Him he would gladly be unclothed until the morning of the resurrection; but, though at the cost of a great struggle, he was ready to live on in the flesh, for the good of Christians needing his counsel.

Finally, the souls of good men will be morally perfect in Paradise. That they are not so in this life is the plain teaching of experience and revelation; that they will be so there may be inferred from the circumstance of their being at home with the Lord (2 Cor. 5: 8), and from the clear language of the epistle to the Hebrews (12: 23). For in this passage the souls of the departed are spoken of as "spirits of just men made perfect"; and whatever else may be included in the perfection here ascribed to spirits of just men after death, it seems to me quite certain that freedom from sin is its special glory,—even as the presence

of sin is their great defect in the present life. Freedom from sin! Who that was writhed in its malignant grasp does not long for this blessed liberty? Who that has known the conflict of a renewed soul with its former habits, and passions, and appetites, does not cry out at times with the apostles: "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Freedom from sin! It will come at the moment of death to the burdened saint. In Paradise he will be perfect in love, perfect in trust, perfect in hope. The last pulse-throb of selfishness will have ceased forever. The last stain of guilt will have been removed from his soul. Place, society, character will all be in harmony. Such is Paradise, or the intermediate state of the righteous.

For the Christian Messenger.

DEDICATION SERVICES AT BILLOW, NEW HOUSE OF WORSHIP OPENED.

Dear Brother,—

You will be pleased to learn that our new Baptist Meeting-house in Billow, has been completed and dedicated to the Most High God.

Thinking that many of your readers may be interested by seeing a sketch of the opening services I forward one to you for the *Christian Messenger*, and if you deem it wise to do so, you will give it a place in its columns.

The house was dedicated yesterday, the 14th inst., and though the roads were in a bad state and the weather not very favorable, still the congregations were large—and, judging from the attention given, I should say that all who came were amply repaid for facing the difficulties of weather and way.

It was much regretted that, owing to stormy weather and delicate health, the Revs. Dr. Cramp, and Dr. Crawley of Wolfville could not be present, as was hoped. But we were delighted to welcome among us the Rev. I. E. Bill, the Rev. Dr. Sawyer and the Rev. David Freeman—by whom the services were conducted.

Three sermons were preached—all of which were deeply interesting—highly instructive and eminently practical.

I shall venture to send you some of the leading ideas contained in them; though at the risk of incurring the displeasure of the authors for failing to do justice to their productions.

The Dedicatory Sermon by brother Bill was founded on Isa. xvi. 7. "I will glorify the house of my glory." The leading idea is the spiritual church of God represented by a house. This idea is frequently found in the Bible.

The text calls attention to the church as being the *House of God*—the *House of God's glory*, and it also places before us *God's gracious promise* in reference to this house of His glory.

I. The church is *God's House*. 1. God has chosen for it a site. Do you ask where it is? I answer, in this sin-stricken world.

2. God has selected for it a foundation. This foundation was laid, *virtually* in His purposes, from before the foundation of the world—*manifestly* to some extent, in His promises, but *finally and fully* in the agonies of Calvary.

3. God has chosen the *materials*. As in the erection of this house of worship, the materials were found in the wild forest, and in their rough or native state; so God, in the selection of materials for this *spiritual building* went into the wild forest of sin, and laid His hand on the unregenerate—and fashioned them after His own pleasure.

Wonderful process this! Carried on only by the great Agent, the Holy Spirit.

II. *It is the house of God's glory*. "I will glorify the house of my glory." The first reference here is to the temple. All in connection with this was but *typical*. Christ dwells in the church. He is *embodied* in the church—and this constitutes her the house of God's glory.

Again, the church is the house of God's glory because it is the seat of the divine operations of God, the Holy Spirit. The Day of Pentecost will illustrate this thought. That was a wonderful day for the church of God. Marvellous gifts bestowed—marvellous work done.

III. *The Promise of God* in reference to this house of His glory ought not to be passed over. "I will glorify the house of my glory."

God fulfils this promise in various ways:

1. By making the church the *standard of morals* in the world. Go outside of the church of Christ to the various organizations of the day, and look for true morality—it cannot be found there only as the principles which govern them are drawn from the word of God—the guidebook of the church.

But you say; "The church is imperfect." True; still the true standard is with her.

2. By making her the medium of communication to a lost world. Is the gospel to be preached—the church must do it. She is "the light of the world—a city set upon an hill."

3. By accepting her offerings or services. This is a very pleasing thought to the Christian. He says "all my services are unholy." God says, "I will accept thy offerings and thy sacrifices."

4. By extending its influence and celebrity, ultimately, throughout the world. What has been done by the church in the earth is but an "handful of corn upon the top of the mountain," compared with what shall yet be done. The whole earth shall yet be filled with God's glory. The time is coming when, through the church the arts and sciences shall be converted to God—when railways, steamboats and telegraph wires shall be laid on God's altar.

5. By protecting her from all her adversaries. He has done so in the past. He will in the future.

6. By consummating all her principles of righteousness, faith, love, etc., in the heavenly world. I said that God has chosen a site for His church on earth. He has also prepared a place for her in heaven—and He will yet come and receive her to Himself. Then will her glory be consummated and this promise completely fulfilled.

The speaker then referred, very touchingly, to his former connections with Billow and vicinity—where he was born, converted, baptised, married, called to preach the gospel, etc. Undivided attention was given throughout. Oh, may the Head of the church make the sermon a great blessing to this community.

The afternoon sermon by the Rev. Dr. Sawyer was just what we might expect from him—a solid mass of heavenly truth, clearly and forcibly presented. To get any correct idea of the sermon it must be heard or read. The text is found in Matt. vi. 10, "Thy kingdom come." The prayer of the text was the topic dwelt upon.

I. What is contained in the prayer? When we pray this prayer we pray, in effect, 1. That every thing opposed to that kingdom may come to an end. If this prayer were answered now much in which we are deeply interested would cease. A right hand would often be cut off—a right eye often be plucked out.

2. That God may use His own appointed means that His kingdom may be established.

How much is needed for the growth of a single tree! germ, soil, air, etc. If God makes the tree grow it is by the means that He has appointed—so of a nation. How much more complicated and numerous the means that God uses for the establishment of his kingdom!

II. What the prayer implies in those who offer it. 1. A readiness to receive this kingdom.

2. A willingness that it should be established by God's means—and in God's way.

In conclusion let Christians encourage themselves by considering that *this prayer is in the line of God's promises*.

Let the unconverted enquire what their condition will be when this kingdom shall have been accomplished?

The evening sermon was preached by the Rev. David Freeman. It was eminently practical—and thoroughly denominational—well calculated to benefit all who heard it. It was founded on Acts ii. 41, 42. "Then they that gladly received his word were baptised, etc."

I cannot now attempt a full description of this admirable sermon. Suffice it to say that the preacher found in this passage:

I. *The two steps* into—and II. *The four pillars* of the church of Christ.

The two steps are Faith and Baptism. The four pillars are Steadfastness in the apostles' doctrine; Christian fellowship; The Lord's Supper and the Prayer-meeting. All these points were clearly presented.

Oh may the Master crown these efforts of His servants with abundant success. J. F. KEMPTON.

Lakeville, April 15, 1872.

P.S.—I had the pleasure of baptising three persons on the first Sabbath of this month.

17th.—Before sending my letter to the office, let me add a word in reference to the religious exercises of Monday and Tuesday. At 11 a. m., on Monday, there was an educational meeting, addressed by Dr. Sawyer; who presented the claims of our Denominational Institutions at Wolfville, in a very interesting and forcible manner. His arguments in favor of liberal giving for the cause of education, were so powerful that one present declared, before the meeting closed, that if he had thousands of dollars in his pocket, and desired to keep them, he would rather be exposed to all the robbers and pick-pockets of "Broadway," than to come to a meeting of that sort.

After the Dr. closed his lecture, the meeting was addressed by Rev. I. E. Bill, S. B. Kempton and D. Freeman in a most effective way, on the great importance of rallying around our beloved institutions, and making them superior to anything of the kind in the country.

In the evening Bro. Bill preached from the words, "Who is on the Lord's side?" It was a stirring discourse. Meetings were held again on Tuesday morning and evening, both of which were addressed by Bro. Bill.

Neither age nor affliction appear to diminish the earnestness and affection of this servant of Christ in the work of proclaiming the gospel to the perishing. May he long be spared and greatly blessed. J. F. K.

We have obtained the following particulars respecting the building from the Architect, Mr. Jas. Dumaresq, (now Dumaresq & McVean, Halifax.)

The building, which is beautifully situated, is constructed on the Nave and Aisle principle, and cost about four thousand dollars. Its length is sixty feet—width of nave twenty five feet—total width including aisles forty feet. Height of nave from floor to ceiling thirty two feet six inches. Each aisle has four arched bays. The windows in aisles and clerestory are circular headed with obscured glass. The window over the minister's platform has stained glass.

The audience room contains sixty-six pews, each averaging five sittings. It has an end gallery over the vestibule with forty sittings. The choir's platform is elevated fourteen inches from the floor and arranged immediately in front of the minister's. The pews are all cushioned. Two ornamental chandeliers hang from the arched timbers in the roof of the nave, suspended by bronzed rods.

The basement contains a vestry, class room and pastor's room, with stairs leading from the latter to the minister's platform in the audience room.

To all whom it may concern.

As some of our Advance Payment Subscribers have omitted—probably forgotten—to forward the amount of their Subscription for the present year, we take the liberty of reminding them that we shall be glad to hear from all such of our friends, as early as possible. Some of these, also, who do not pay in advance have not yet forwarded the amount for the past year. We shall be pleased to hear from them too, without further delay. We greatly need all amounts due to meet pressing demands.

The Christian Messenger.

Halifax, N. S., April 24, 1872.

THE UNIVERSITY QUESTION.

The October number of the *Journal of Education* contained an article on a Provincial University, which excited considerable remark at the time by reason of its imperfect statement of facts and its inconsequential reasoning. Judged by itself, it gave no clear indication of the true purpose of the writer. But the appearance of the University Bill, some abstract of which has been given in the *Messenger*, furnishes the needed explanation. It was an illustration of the common adage that "coming events cast their shadows before." Some portions of the article, read in the light of later developments, now deserve attention. Here are the first two paragraphs.

"The subject of Colleges and collegiate education is, very naturally and properly receiving, just now, an unwonted share of public attention in this province. By the extent of the interest in the subject, although not in the excitement it causes, one is reminded of a period in our Provincial history about thirty years ago, when the great battle of the denominational Colleges was fought out. The tide of public opinion now, too, unquestionably sets in a different direction from what it then did."

"The establishment of Denominational Colleges, of course, by the popular wish was owing, nevertheless, rather to a series of circumstances, over which the great body of the people have no control, rather than to any decided feeling on their part in favor of such institutions. We have no wish, nor would this be the place to re-open the old controversy of the period referred to. It is sufficient for our present purpose to remark that Denominational Colleges were founded, whatever the cause; and that they have now, as such, been in full operation for about thirty years. We must add that there is a rapidly growing opinion in the community that these institutions are not up to the present requirements of the country."

Many will not be willing to accept these statements on the history of the origin and existence of what are called Denominational Colleges. But whatever may be said on this point, the question is not now between sectarian and unsectarian institutions; but whether Colleges may be maintained on the voluntary plan, or shall every thing of the kind be under State patronage and control. We suppose that the writer quoted above means to say that public opinion now unquestionably sets in favor of State institutions. We venture to question the correctness of the assertion. Outside of Halifax, we find the prevailing opinion to be that existing institutions should be maintained. This is certainly the case among our own people, so far as any expression of feeling has yet been made. No Baptist within our knowledge has declared himself willing to accept the University Scheme; but a large number of our leading men have publicly advised to the contrary. It cannot be wisdom for us as a people to abandon a plan that we know can work well, for something uncertain and visionary.

The assertion that "these institutions are not up to the present requirements of the country," is so indefinite that no satisfactory answer can be made. In what respect are they not up to present requirements? Are they all alike under this condemnation? Who pronounces what the requirements should be? About all the interest in higher education there is in the country, is due to these same institutions so summarily dismissed as having done their work. Some of them at least have improved from year to year quite as rapidly as other public interests, and have done more than any other agency to foster our system of public schools. It is fairer and more generous to suppose that the good work which such an institution has done, is a promise of better in the future, and that if in the past they have met the requirements of the day, they will continue to deserve the commendation of all reasonable men.

Other portions of the article to which reference has been made, will receive attention hereafter.

A.

THE PAPACY IN EUROPE.

The new movement which commenced by the decision of the so-called Ecumenical Council at Rome, declaring the pope to be infallible, shows no signs of terminating without a positive and important result. The conflict is now, as it was in the sixteenth century, between the Papacy on the one side, and the State and an ecclesiastical combination on the other side. Those affected with the doctrines of Wycliffe and the Lollards, did not oppose the church of Rome in Great Britain with such crushing resistance, as did Henry the Eighth and his Parliament. The doctrine, that the Roman Pontiff held supreme power over earthly rulers, went far in destroying Roman Catholicism in Britain; but in Germany the Bible was more in the front of the battle. The Papacy is, and always has been, the implacable foe of the free circulation of the Word of God, and of governments free from ecclesiastical influences. The State will not submit to the Hierarchy, because its demands are an unconditional surrender;