

Items from English Papers.

The Sunday after the return of Mr. Spurgeon from his recent visit to the South of France he was able to resume his place at the Tabernacle and preached to an immense congregation, numbers who could not find seats having to stand during the whole of the service.

An inquest was held by the Liverpool coroner, on Saturday, on the body of a middle-aged woman named Maria Shaker, a domestic servant, of Wrexham. About a month ago she went to the Liverpool Royal Infirmary, having swallowed a set of false teeth in her sleep, owing to the plate breaking.

The New Testament Company of Revisers assembled on Tuesday, 2nd ult., at the Deanery, Westminster, for their sixty-eighth session. The company proceeded with the revision of the seventh chapter of Revelation.

Two years ago, George Bidwell, whose forgeries on the Bank of England excited so much attention at the time of their discovery, was transferred to Dartmoor Prison. Soon after his arrival he complained of paralysis of his lower limbs, and has ever since been an inmate of the infirmary. Lately a new governor has been appointed to Dartmoor, and found reason to be sceptical as to the genuineness of Bidwell's illness.

Miss Ann Maxwell Graham, of Williamswood, near Glasgow, has left over £20,000 to form a fund for the relief of Protestant persons bearing the names of Maxwell, or Hutchison, and for the higher education and starting in business of their children.

Mr. Gladstone's new pamphlet, has excited much interest. It is entitled "Lessons in Massacre; or, the Conduct of the Turkish Government in and about Bulgaria since May, 1876." On the title page is the following quotation from "King John," iv. 3:—

Away with me all you whose souls abhor The uncleanly savours of a slaughter-house, For I am stifled with this smell of sin.

The pamphlet consists of eighty pages. Deducing his proofs from the official papers published, the author formulates a series of charges against the Porte, contending that its acts demonstrate a deliberate intention and a coherent plan to cover up iniquity, to baffle inquiry, to reward prominence in crime, to punish or discourage humanity among its agents, to prolong the reign of terror, to impress with a shady coherency upon the minds of its Mohammedan subjects this but too intelligible lesson for the next similar occasion—"Do it again."

The library of the late Prof. Tischen-dorf has been sold to Messrs. Williams & Norgate for the Church College of Glasgow.

A band of Glasgow students, 300 strong marched from the University into the city, and amused themselves by smashing all the windows, signboards, and lamps which they could reach with their sticks. The police, assisted by the public, captured five of the ruffians, and on Saturday four of them were fined £10 each, with the alternative of sixty days' imprisonment.

A scandalous scene was witnessed in a churchyard at Wolverhampton on Monday at the interment of a young man. As the mourners were leaving the grave a local publican went up and emptied a bottle of brandy on the coffin, making the remark that as the deceased loved the liquor in life he should have it in death. The authorities, it is stated, intend to summon the offender.

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger. From Newton, Mass.

Dear Editor,—

This has been an unusually interesting year thus far for the students at Newton. The steady cold weather during the winter has been conducive to vigorous study as well as to good health, and in the possession of this blessing we now gladly hail the genial influences of Spring, and avail ourselves of the open air exercise forbidden by the deep snow and frosty atmosphere of the past months.

We are near enough to Boston to attend pretty frequently the services of the Tabernacle, a privilege rarely enjoyed by Theological students, and one certainly to be highly prized by those looking forward to the great work of the gospel ministry. We get the stiff theoretical class-room Theology tempered with Mr. Moody's practical simplicity. We have the great truths of the Bible interpreted to us by the scholarly professor; we go to the Tabernacle to hear them proclaimed by the illiterate preacher. Study and investigation deepen our conviction of their Divine origin; their wonderful effects upon the masses place it beyond the shadow of a doubt. I do not propose to give you any account of this great religious movement in Boston, as no doubt your readers are pretty well acquainted with it through the city papers, some of which have a wide circulation: but let me simply assure you that it is deep and wide and without undue excitement, and is effectually reaching every class of people, from the highly cultured down to the degraded drunkard and prostitute. In some respects it is greater than any revival of religion ever experienced in Boston. It has steadily progressed, and the results thus far have been declared by Mr. Moody to be fully as satisfactory to him as those in any city in which he has yet labored.

One of our greatest and most recent privileges of the year however has been that of listening to a course of lectures on "Baptist History," delivered by the learned and venerable Dr. William R. Williams, of New York. This lectureship is for the special benefit of the students, and is provided for by some benevolent friend of the Institution whose interest in us is sufficiently deep to draw from his pocket the sum of five hundred dollars thus appropriated in our behalf. This is divided between two courses of lectures the second of which is to be given by Dr. Pepper of Crozier Theological Seminary. I will not attempt to present even an abstract of Dr. Williams's able and eloquent productions, as they are to be given to the public in a short time in book form: but that they were highly appreciated, you will be well assured by the following expression from the students, given at their close:—

"Respected Brother,—After listening with so much interest and profit to your lectures on the history of our denomination, we earnestly desire to express our obligation for the instruction imparted and our delight in the manner of presentation.

For years we have heard associated with the talent of our pulpit and with the learning of our denomination, the name of Dr. William R. Williams. To him we have looked as the representative of our ministry, and in him we have hoped to acknowledge the writer of our history. The hope thus long entertained has now been in part enjoyed. Some of the materials of Baptist History have already been placed within our reach, and we rejoice that we have thus been enabled to enter to such an extent into labors so earnestly and so successfully performed.

We rejoice that the attractions of the study have been for a time withstood; we are grateful that the fatigues of journeying and visiting in a strange place have been endured; and we are especially glad that the seclusion of the scholar has been exchanged for the publicity of the teacher, in order that we might enjoy the benefit of the treasure for which you have so successfully toiled.

We thank you for the profit and inspiration we have received, as you have shewed us how the principles we hold have been honored by noble disciples and respected by candid opponents. We thank you for the attractive manner in which you have depicted the history of our people, thus throwing around the history of our predecessors a charm which will hereafter invest the study of their characters with an interest never to be lost; and together with our thanks for what you have given us of historical

information adorned with the charms of a most graceful style, we would express our appreciation of the interest which we know by your coming, you must feel in our institution, and in us, as those who are to preach the gospel in the place of those who with you will sooner or later lay down the duties of your office.

Hoping that the results of so many years toil embodied in the lectures of which we have heard a portion, may soon be put before us in permanent form, we again gladly express our obligation and gratitude for the information you have imparted to your pupils in learning, and kindness you have manifested toward your brethren in the Gospel."

Let me say in conclusion that the attendance this year at the Institution has been quite as large as usual, and the work in the different departments has been vigorously and thoroughly performed. A class of sixteen is to graduate in June, well equipped for the services of the Master. Two of them are from Nova Scotia.

Yours sincerely, A. J. S.

Newton Theo. Institute, April 5, 1877.

Decline of Infant Baptism.

Mr. Editor,—

Sir,—The close-communication Baptists numbered in the United States in the year 1836, 450,307, and the M. E. Church, North and South, 650,103 the same year. In 1876 the former numbered 2,335,906, and the latter, 1,932,055, the Methodists shewing an increase during the 40 years of 360, and the Baptists 430 per cent., or 70 per cent. more than the Methodists.

But the growth of our distinctive principles is further evidenced by the increase of adult and the decrease of infant baptisms among the Pedobaptists and particularly the Methodists. In the Methodist Episcopal Church, North, there were baptized in 1876-79, 232 adults and 56,181 infants, shewing an increase of 12,414 in the former and a decrease of 2,037 in the latter, since the previous year, shewing a marked progress in the right direction. At this rate infant baptism would pass away from the Methodists in about twenty-five years, these are some of the results of a bold and uncompromising advocacy of the truth, "as once delivered to the saints," by our brethren over there.

The following is from the columns of a recent number of the "Journal of Commerce," Boston. "In one of the churches in the State, there had not been, a few years since, an instance of infant baptism for the seven preceding years. Last year there were seventy Congregational Churches in New Hampshire that reported no infant baptisms. This year ninety-six, or one-half in the State, report none. If this indifference continues, the ordinance will soon become extinct in the Congregational Church. Wherever the Baptist doctrine of each individual's direct personal responsibility to God is faithfully preached, it extends its influence through the entire community, affecting more or less, the great mass of those who retain their connection with some other denomination."

The Princeton "Quarterly Review," the ablest organ of the Presbyterians in the United States, says: "Fifty years ago there were about two hundred children baptized for 1000 communicants; now fifty, only one fourth as many; fifty years ago there was one child baptized for every twenty-five members, now but one for every twenty. In 1811 there were only 28,639 communicants, and yet there were 4677 baptisms. And yet in 1856 with ten times as many members, we have only twice as many baptisms of children, or to be more perfectly accurate, had the baptisms borne the same proportion to the communicants in our church that they did in 1811, 46,249, would have been the number reported instead of 11,921, shewing (with the proportion of 1811), 34,328 children excluded from the holy ordinance within the past year, being three fourths of the infant members of the church."

And the Rev. F. S. Mines, Presbyterian, said, "From Maine to Florida, so few already are the infants baptized in the Presbyterian denomination in this country, that it differs but little from a Baptist community, and may in strict propriety of phrase be called a semi-baptist church. It is demonstrable from facts and figures that if infant baptism grows as rapidly into disuse among

Pedo-baptists for the time to come as it has done for fifty years past, one hundred years hence Pedo-baptist Churches will exist no more."

And Bishop Pierce, of the M. E. Church said, "Baptism is not enquired after and urged in the churches as it ought to be. The baptism of children is neglected to so large an extent in our churches, that the neglect is fast becoming the rule in our families, and infant baptism the exception."

A little book just published in the United States, has the following on page 139.

"It is a fact, in the second place, that infant baptism is rapidly decreasing in this country. It is most neglected among the Methodists and Congregationalists, and most carefully observed by Catholics and Episcopalians. Ninety Congregational Churches of New Hampshire, report not one case of infant baptism in 1866. Church and national statistics show that of twelve children born in the country, eleven go unbaptized. A hundred years ago, of twelve children born, at least eight, if not ten, were baptized."

The New York Independent says that, "the baptism of infants is now the exception rather than the rule among Congregational churches," and the same is doubtless true of the vast Methodist Church. More than half the children of Pedo-baptists are not baptized in these United States; and this proves beyond question our controversy.—The third fact, which is, that there is a widespread infidelity on this subject, among the Pedo-baptists themselves. They do not believe God has commanded it—they regard it as a vain useless ceremony, and hence while they do not openly oppose, they have no faith in it and will not practice it. I have encountered many such members of Pedo-baptist churches, and they are to be found in all the churches in the land."

What tangible proof of the potency of truth over error, that notwithstanding the fact, that our Pedo-baptist friends will immerse their converts rather than lose them, we have outgrown the most progressive of them, by 70 per cent. during the past 40 years, and their clergy are coming over to us at the rate of from 40 to 60 per annum, for several years past: and that at the present rate of the decline of the infant rite and the increase of believers' baptism, that in a little over a half a century, they will all except the Catholics and Episcopalians be practically Baptists.

Yours, &c. W. H. For the Christian Messenger. Ordination at Shelburne.

A Council called by the Baptist Church at Shelburne, convened in the Meeting House, on the 20th March last past, at 1/2 past two o'clock, P. M. Organized by Rev. Edward Whitman, Moderator, and Austen Locke, Clerk.

Prayer was offered by Rev. Geo. O. Gates.

The clerk of the church read from the records of a meeting of the church an extract relating to the call of this council, stating the object to be 'the consideration of the ordination to the work of the gospel ministry, of Bro. Thomas Trotter, of Woodstock, Ontario, who has labored with this and neighboring churches at Sand Point and Indian Bay for some time with a marked degree of acceptance and success.'

The following churches were represented, as per credentials presented by the brethren, as follows:—

Shelburne Baptist Church, Deacon Harlow, Deacon Johnston, Deacon Ryer, Deacon Grovestone and Bro. E. Taylor, Church Clerk.

Jordan River Baptist Church.—Dea. Thorburne, Deacon David Dunlap, Dea. Gordon McKay, and Charles Hardy.

Sand Point Baptist Church.—Deacon Benjamin Downie, Deacon John Dall, and Bro. Irwin,—latter from Jordan Bay Branch of this church.

Liverpool Baptist Church.—Rev. Geo. O. Gates.

Osborne Baptist Church.—Rev. E. N. Archibald.

Lockeport Baptist Church.—Rev. Edward Whitman, Dea. Joshua Chadsey, Deacon Austen Locke, Bro. Jacob G. Locke, Bro. John McKenne, and Bro. Xenophon A. Chipman.

It was voted 'That friends present, not delegates, be invited to remain as spectators of the proceedings of the Council.'

Bro. Trotter, by request of the council,

related in a clear and concise manner the circumstances of his conversion and call to the Gospel ministry, and stated his views of Christian Doctrine, a Christian Church and its ordinances.

Bro. Trotter having retired, members of the council expressed themselves entirely satisfied with the statement he had made, and it was decided by a unanimous vote, 'That his ordination be proceeded with this evening in this House, service to commence at 7 o'clock.'

Agreeably to this decision, a meeting was held, and the sittings and aisles of the house were packed by a very respectable audience, consisting of members of the various christian denominations worshipping in the town of Shelburne.

According to arrangements made while the council was in session, Rev. Geo. O. Gates preached the Ordination Sermon from Isaiah lv., part of the 4th verse, "Behold I have given him for a witness to the people."

Rev. Edward Whitman asked the candidate questions on doctrine, drawing from him a full and free expression of his views on the particular doctrines which Baptists teach, and for which they are sometimes reproached for teaching, by those who differ from them.

Rev. E. N. Archibald offered the ordaining prayer, and gave to the candidate the Right Hand of Fellowship.

Rev. Edward Whitman gave the charge to the Candidate.

Rev. George O. Gates gave the charge to the Church, and the services closed by prayer.

And the Benediction by the Rev. Thomas Trotter, the newly installed pastor of the Shelburne Baptist Church.

AUSTEN LOCKE, Clerk. Lockeport, April 5th, 1877.

In Memoriam.

MR. CORNELIUS KENNEDY,

of Mahone Bay departed this life on Wednesday, April 4th, 1877, in the 58th year of his age. Our brother was converted in early life, and united with the Baptist Church at Paradise, Annapolis County, under the ministrations of Rev. Nathaniel Vidito. He remained a consistent member of that church for several years, and labored very successfully in the Sabbath School and prayer-meeting; after which he removed from thence to Graywood. Here his desire to work for Christ grew stronger; and some time during his stay in this place he was greatly impressed with the idea that God had called him to a far more noble work than that in which he had been engaged. He accordingly began to preach in the smaller districts, with some degree of satisfaction. The church of which he was a member being somewhat pleased with the success attending his labours, granted him a license, Sept. 19th, 1861. He then began to work more arduously among them, and the Lord blessing his labors, sinners were converted and added to the church. Some time after this he removed to Colchester County, where the church previous to his coming amongst them were blessed in a very remarkable manner; and many were brought into the fold of Christ. This work of grace continued to progress during his labors with them. He also labored in adjoining counties with some success. During the last two years of his christian-like work, he labored in the County of Lunenburg, with the church at Summerside. Here it pleased God to lay the hand of affliction upon him. Previous to his illness he was a strong hearty man, but was soon weakened by the disease, of which he was a victim. He was smitten down in the strength of his days, having been sick of the palsy nearly three years. During this time he was a great sufferer, but willingly submitting to the will of God he bore his sufferings patiently. Although he, by reason of his disease, often felt cast-down, yet he could rest upon the precious promises of Christ; and often expressed his desire to "depart and be with Christ, which is far better." He leaves a wife and three children to mourn the loss of an affectionate husband and kind parent. May the widow's God, who is also the Father of the Fatherless, sustain the bereaved ones; and grant them the pleasure of meeting their loved one, on the eternal shores of Heaven, where they shall be forever with the Lord.—Communicated by Rev. John Williams.