

The Christian Messenger.

A RELIGIOUS AND GENERAL FAMILY NEWSPAPER.

NEW SERIES.
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WHOLE SERIES.
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Poetry.

For the Christian Messenger.

The writer of the following lines says: "Halifax to St. John" was written on receipt of the intelligence of the St. John fire, and is, of course, out of date. I did not deem my lines adequate to the occasion, which called for much finer expressions of a city's noble sympathy. Now the only purpose my verses could serve would be to contrast the sentiment of to-day with that which moved Halifax as one man for a few days in June, and to serve as a metrical record of the earlier feeling.

Halifax to St. John.

JUNE 21ST, 1877.

Dear sister, can it really be, and is it true they say,
That while with joy we celebrate our city's natal day,
The fire-flicker's fingers, midst his work, his pall is o'er thee spread,
And thou mournest for thy stately halls, for homes and maimed and dead?
'Tis true, alas! Thy cry for help is flashed along the wires,
While we are keeping holiday, thou sit'st amidst smouldering fires,
Of vanished homes and household gods, and of wealth a garnered store,
And the tidings will our joy to-day, our hearts for thee are sore.
Though aid from every quarter into thy lap will pour,
For surely none will grudge thee now of basket and of store,
Though many a heart be wrung for thee, and eyes with tears be filled,
As a sister we will come to thee, and bid thy fears be stilled.
We will hasten to thee, sister, we'll bring thee of our store,
The mite of hoarded savings, and of our gold galore;
We will gladly share with thee our food, our raiment and our home,
Not one of thy homeless thousands shelterless need roam.
The time has been, our sister fair, when rivalries ran high,
At times we've both been jealous, henceforth we'll only try
To give thee help and sympathy; and when thou shalt arise
Up from thy ashes beautiful, thy triumphs be our prize.

Thou'rt sit as Queen on Fundy's shore, and o'er thy noble stream,
When proud ACADIA shall rise, no more an idle dream;
And we will be thy sister Queen, on broad Atlantic's shore,
ACADIA'S standard proudly borne by us forevermore.

HALIFAX.

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

"The Collection."

Mr. Editor,—

In accordance with a suggestion made at the Western Association, I wish to place before the readers of your paper a plan for raising money in our churches for denominational purposes. In the prosecution of this work a few principles are to be observed:

1. *The reaching of the greatest number.* That method must ever be regarded as incomplete, which only enlists a few of the more wealthy members of the congregation. In this work all should be invited and expected to share. Better to have a given amount raised by ten than by one. There will then be nine more to sympathize and pray, and ten instead of one will be taught to "abound in this grace also."
2. *Sufficient notice,* so that there may be time to lay by them in store. The sending forth of collectors with only a few days' notice, and that too in about the "tightest" month of the year (June), when the winter has consumed all the previous summer, is a sure way to keep the contributions of a church at the lowest figure.
3. *Frequent and regular calls.* Many persons will give only so much if asked to contribute once a year, and they will give just as much each time, if asked to give twice or even four times a year. Spasmodic efforts should be avoided. Reaction is almost sure to follow. Having done some great thing once, many seem to think that all is done forever.
4. *Definite sum.* There is always an advantage in aiming at a definite sum, and it is well if the church itself can be induced to fix that sum.

5. *Simplicity of working.* Any plan for raising money in the church should be simple in its operation. If it be cumbersome, requiring much watching and many agents, it will soon fail.

The following plan conforms to the above principles, and with modifications perhaps, is we think capable of general applications.

PLAN.—Have envelopes prepared as follows:

Front.—Appropriate texts of Scripture around the margin. The following statement placed lengthwise, having under it lines for the names of donors:

"The undersigned members of our family remembering the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and desiring to aid in advancing His kingdom, contribute the sums opposite our names, as our half yearly offering to our Denominational work."

Back.—Name of family.

CHRISTIAN BENEVOLENCE.

The Baptist denomination, in these Provinces is at present pledged to sustain the important interests mentioned below.

As a church, we wish to bear our part of the burden, and desire to raise during the Associational year \$— for these objects. We therefore invite you and every member of your family to aid in this work.

Please enclose your contributions for the half year ending —, in this envelope, and place it on the collection plate the first Sunday in —.

The money will be divided in the following proportions unless donors specify otherwise:

Home Missions.....	30 per cent.
Foreign Missions.....	30 "
French Missions.....	10 "
Infirmary Ministers.....	10 "
Acadia College.....	10 "
Ministerial Education.....	10 "

PRAY FOR THESE OBJECTS.

(We would suggest June 1st, and December 1st, as convenient times for the ending of the half years. In that case the collections would be the first Sunday in June and December.)

Let one of these envelopes be placed in each family belonging to the congregation, a month or two before the time named for collecting. This may be done either by the Pastor or agents appointed by him. After the time has passed for receiving the envelopes, any that do not come in may be called for. Then when sufficient time has elapsed let there be a public statement of the number of families contributing, and the whole amount received.

Instructions. But to make this or any other plan a success, there must be occasional sermons setting forth the duty and blessing of Christian benevolence, as taught in the Word of God; and addresses and readings giving information on mission work &c.

The Pastor should regard this as a part of his work and encourage and stimulate others both by example and oversight.

We offer these hints not because we suppose ourselves possessed of any special wisdom in this matter, but with a desire to aid in advancing the Redeemer's Kingdom.

A. COHOON.

Hebron Aug. 15, 1877.

For the Christian Messenger.

Exposition of Isaiah xlv. 7.

Mr. Editor,—

A friend, in conversation with me recently, intimated that a clause in this text, which represents JEHOVAH as saying, "I create evil," had greatly perplexed him, and tempted him to infidelity; as it seemed to be directly contradictory to many other parts of Scripture. As others may be tried in the same way, it appears to me desirable to suggest some thoughts on the subject.

In studying the sacred Oracles it ought to be borne in mind that one and the same word is sometimes used in different acceptations. Such is evidently the case with regard to the term *evil*. When it is said of any one

that "he did evil in sight of the Lord," (1 Kings xv. 26) moral evil, that is *sin*, is evidently intended; but when Lot said, "Lest some evil take me, and I die," or Judah said, "Lest peradventure I see the evil that shall come on my father," (Gen. xix. 19; xl. 34.) The word obviously denotes natural evil, that is *calamity*, or *affliction*. In this sense the word occurs when Job says, "What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?"

That the term "evil" in the text under consideration, is likewise to be understood in the same sense, is manifest from the words with which it is connected:—"I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things." Here joy and sadness, comfort and trouble, vicissitudes common to mankind, are contrasted, and are referred to the over-ruling Providence of the Most High.

This whole passage (Isa. xl. 1-7) was, by Divine prescience, addressed to Cyrus, called by name, long before he was born. As he would be instructed in the Magian principles, which taught that there were two first causes, or powers, symbolized by Light and Darkness, the one being the author of all good, or *happiness*, and the other the author of all evil, or *trouble*, he is to be apprised that the One self-existent JEHOVAH, who is before all, and above all, regulates events according to His own sovereign pleasure. See *Dean Prideaux's Connection, &c. Part i. pp. 222.*

Why the Almighty has, in His inscrutable Providence, suffered moral evil, that is *sin*, to enter His dominions, is a mystery which finite mortals are unable to solve (Rom. xi. 33). But till we can solve all the innumerable other mysteries by which we are surrounded, we may well be content to remain in ignorance of this. As, however, "it is impossible for God to lie," (Heb. vi. 18) we may rest assured that He can never commit sin, or do wrong in anything (Job. xxxiv. 10, 12; James i. 3). When, therefore, we meet with expressions in Scripture which represent Him as creating or doing evil (Amos iii. 6) we may be certain that they relate to natural evil, that is *affliction*. Whether this is brought upon us directly by the LORD'S own hand, or indirectly, even by means of wicked men, it may, if submissively received, prove highly beneficial to us. See Ps. cxix. 71, 75; Heb. xii. 11.

Yours respectfully,
C. TUPPER.

A Methodist preacher named W. A. Patterson, was recently baptized in Missouri, U. S., and immediately ordained to the work of the ministry. He had preached as a Methodist for twenty-one years.

Mr. John B. Trevor, of New York has just given \$25,000 to be divided equally between the Rochester University and the Rochester Theological Seminary. He had heretofore, at various times, given \$55,000 to the University, and a much larger sum to the Seminary.

President Seeley of Amherst College, is quoted as having said recently: "Let us give up our dispute with the Baptists as to the primitive mode of this ordinance; for we must acknowledge that baptism in the early church was performed by immersion."

Rev. W. J. Hall, of the Methodist Church was recently baptized into the fellowship of the Friendship Baptist Church, Washington county, Virginia, by Elder N. C. Baldwin.

AN IMPORTANT ADMISSION.—Abbe Bertrand, Catholic, in his great *Dictionnaire des Religions*: "Baptism by immersion consists in the total submersion of the recipient into the water; this mode is of apostolic institution, as appears from the express words of Jesus Christ, and from the very word *baptizo*, which means *plunge*; it is still in use in all the east, but has been almost entirely abandoned in the west for several centuries."

The Imposition of Hands in Ordination.

At the meeting of the Baptist ministers of Boston and vicinity, on Monday, July 30, Rev. Dr. Hovey, of the Newton Theological Institution, read a paper on "The Imposition of Hands in Ordination." The conclusions reached were as follows:

1. That, according to the New Testament, imposition of hands by pastors is properly included in a service of ordination to the Christian ministry.
2. That this act, more than any other, represents and declares the decision of the council to set one apart to the Christian ministry, and therefore it ought not to be omitted.
3. That by rejecting the imposition of hands at ordination one rejects an important public act which represents a part of the order of Christ's kingdom. And, trusting to reason for guidance, it may perhaps be added:
4. That since what is represented and declared by the imposition of hands is authorized by a council when it votes to set one apart to the Christian ministry, the latter act asserts as much authority as the former, and, if the latter act is not on that account objectionable, neither is the former.

Yet if we look upon ordination, not as a sacrament imparting inward and official grace, but as a ceremony investing the candidate with a right to do the work of a bishop in the churches, it may be added:

5. That the decision of a properly organized council—made after careful examination—that the candidate is qualified for the work of the ministry, and should be entrusted with that office and commended to the churches by a public and solemn service, is the strictly indispensable fact. A suitable announcement of this decision is a matter of great importance; but the decision itself and its publication in some way are indispensable. And in its publication, as far as I can judge, the imposition of hands is fully as important as the prayer of ordination, the right hand of fellowship, or the charge.

Confusion in the Workshop.

Yes, sad to relate, there was confusion in the clerical workshop. Tools designed to work together in harmony were, instead, grumbling and fault-finding, if not, indeed, actually set by the ears.

Bishop Blacksmith smote his forehead in despair, as he looked on his diocese, and heard the angry clatter of discussion concerning the great questions of the day; while all Carpenterdom was engaged with equal violence upon the methods of individual labour.

"I contend," exclaimed the profound Rev. D. D. Auger, "that brother Plane is superficial in his work. He makes a great flourish of shavings, but does not go beneath the surface! I have no patience with him! I believe in going to the depth of things!"

"Yes, you bore one so!" whispered a stupid little blockhead, with a yawn.

"I acknowledge," said the Rev. Forcible Hammer, "the depth of your wisdom, and I admire your penetration; but you must confess your powers of influence are limited to a very small circle."

"Stop, stop, brother Hammer," cried Deacon Tempemy Nail, "I grant you make a great noise in the world; but my experience is that your performance affects only the head, after all!"

Little Gimlet, a preacher of very small calibre, here put in a feeble protest against the surface work so badly prevalent. He did not think that there was much heart-work accomplished by all this excitement and noise.

A couple of Old Saws put their heads together ominously, while one mumbled to the other through his broken teeth:—"I have long been dissatisfied with the state of things in this workshop. In my day the motto was 'Slow and sure.' I went to work

on a log of wood, not expecting to convert it in a minute into a pile of lumber. Back and forth, through and through, I tore away, until every fibre yielded, but it was tough work, and very slow. Nowadays, it seems to me, you just turn a crank, hear a shriek, see a puff, and the thing is done."

"Well, now, Father Saw, we are not talking about old times," said pert, bright brother Chisel. "We have heard all you have to say on that subject over and over again. The question of to-day is, 'Which is the best mode of working?' or rather, 'What is it that is lacking in our most active instruments?' The Rev. Mr. Hammer has been severely criticised, but I have worked under his direction a great deal, and I must say that his style is powerful, and his arguments convincing. Every blow tells."

At this juncture, Horseshoe, a lay member of St. Anvil church, stepped in, and entered into the contest:

"I have felt the full power of Mr. Hammer's arguments, but I acknowledge I have been more benefited by the influence of brother Bellows. It is warmth that is required to melt the heart which will not yield to force! Where should I have been were it not for the fire and fervour which he brings to the work?"

There arose a general cry for Mr. Bellows, which puffed up that functionary considerably.

Forgetting where he was, and the inflammatory nature of his audience, he cried out with enthusiasm: "Ah, yes! Could we but have a forge in every work-shop, could the fire of zeal but spread, what might we not accomplish? Warmth, warmth is all that is needed!"

Professor Grindstone, who had been listening with a somewhat contemptuous expression, turned around slowly upon this, and addressed the company. He had been engaged in sharpening the intellects of a class of young Hatchets, of different grades of capacity. The dullness of some of these had exhausted his patience.

"Excuse me, gentlemen! Warmth is not all! If thoroughly effective work is to be done, more than mere fervour is required. I have had large experience, and have seen many sparks fly which did but light a little tinder. Acuteness, polish, culture in its widest sense, must contribute to the qualification of every truly competent instrument. The times demand culture."

Upon this brother Screw, a circuit-rider, turned significantly upon brother Vice, who was totally unpolished, but a faithful and successful worker.

"My plan," said brother Vice, rather roughly, "is to get a good grip, and then hold fast. I seize upon everybody that comes in my way. As I draw them in, brother Screw just turns around, and keeps them from slipping away. We work together."

"Yes!"—eagerly broke in brother Plane, who had been taken aback by the remarks of the right reverend at the beginning, and now saw an opportunity to say a word of himself—"Yes! We believe in co-operation. When I see a subject in the grip of brother Vice, I know that it is my time to work. You must confess that in smoothing away difficulties, none of you excel me."

Friend Rule and friend Compass, who had kept their places on the bench in silence hitherto, now expressed a concern that none in undue zeal should go beyond proper bounds. As far as their memory served them, there was no instance on record of work prospering that was not in the line of duty. It must be clearly marked out.

"I am sure," soliloquized brother Hammer, "I have fastened a nail in a sure place many a time without any such restrictions."

He seemed to forget for a moment the hand of the Master Builder that had controlled him.

Just at this juncture the "Carpenter's Son" entered His workshop. The talk among the tools ceased. No work had been going on during the discussion. But now, strange to say,