

going to do—well—there's no telling what. He is full of wishes but short of will, and so his buds never come to flowers or fruit. He is like a hen that lays eggs, and never sits on them long enough to hatch a single chick. Moonshine is the article our friend deals in, and it is wonderful what he can see by it. He cries up his schemes, and it is said that he draws on his imagination for his facts. When he is in full swing with one of his notions, he does not stick at a trifle. Will Shepherd heard one of these gentry the other day telling how his new company would lead all the shareholders on to Tom Tiddler's ground to pick up gold and silver; and when all the talk was over, Will said to me, "That's a lie, with a lid on, and a brass handle to take hold of it." Rather sharp this of Will, for I do believe the man was caught on his own hook and believed in his own dreams; yet I did not like him, for he wanted us poor fellows to put our little savings into his hands, as if we could afford to fly kites with labourers' wages.

What a many good people there are who have religious crazes! They do nothing, but have wonderful plans for doing everything in a jiffy. So many thousand people are to give half-a-crown each, and so many more a crown, and so many more a sovereign, and the meeting-house is to be built just so, and nobow else. The mischief is that the thousands of people do not rush forward with their money, and the minister and a few hard-working friends have to get it together little by little in the old-fashioned style, while your wonderful schemer slinks out of the way and gives nothing. I have long ago found out that pretty things on paper had better be kept there. Our master's eldest son had a plan for growing plum-trees in our hedges as they do in Kent, but he never looked to see whether the soil would suit, and so he lost the trees which he put in, and there was an end of his damsons.

Circumstances alter cases;
Different ways suit different places.

New brooms sweep clean, but they mostly sweep up dirt. Plough with what you please, I stick to the old horses which have served me so well. Fine schemes come to nothing; it is hard work that does it, whether it be in the world or in the church.

In the laborious husbandman you see
What all true Christians are or ought to be.

Down in a Coal Mine.

Now that there are so many fearful experiences in coal mines, it may be pleasant to pay a visit to one, at a distance perfectly safe. The writer of the following lively sketch is the travelling correspondent of the N. Y. *Scottish American Journal*. As it refers to one of our province mines it will be all the more interesting to our readers:

THE BLACK DIAMONDS OF PICTOU.

To get to Pictou from Shediac it is necessary to return to Panisee Junction, and proceed thence in an easterly direction. The coal region commences in the neighborhood of Dorchester, the capital of Westmoreland County. A branch of railroad line about a mile long leads to an extensive wharf, from which the coal of the celebrated Spring Hill mines is shipped.

In Pictou County, Nova Scotia, however, where the Albion Mines are situated, there is much stir. A great deal of the coal here is used in Prince Edward Island, at Halifax, and in St. John. The Province of Quebec uses a fair supply, but comparatively little goes to Ontario.

The Albion Mines are most extensive, and to those who have never been down a coal mine a description might be interesting. Before being lowered in the "cage" I donned a sou'wester hat and rubber coat. The signal was given to "let go," and in company with one of the officers and the superintendent of the mine I descended into the bowels of the earth. The sensation was not pleasant. I was not afraid—oh, if I was, I did not like to say so—but I felt exceedingly uncomfortable. The disc of daylight above gradually grew smaller; the air grew moist and close; the momentary flash of a lamp in one of the galleries startled and confused me; and as we approached the lower workings the noise of the distant rumbling of the trucks sounded like peals of approaching thunder. At length we came to the

bottom. There stretching away for hundreds of feet in the dense darkness glimmered the lights reflected from the "safety lamps" placed in the miners' bats; which at a distance looked like rather dull fire-flies flitting hither and thither. Even with the aid of my lantern I could not see clearly more than a couple of yards in front. Above were large blocks of "black diamonds" glistening like polished cubes of jet, at which a miner was picking away with his pick in a very uncomfortable position. The "floor" was a tramway upon which coal trucks were drawn by horses, or sometimes pushed by boys to the "mouth," or opening, where they were taken up in cages similar to the one in which we had descended. Going still further into the workings we passed "galleries," or streets running at right angles, the roofs of which were supported by immense pillars of solid coal. At stated distances the galleries were shut off by air-tight doors, which doors answered the purpose of ventilating the mine. I was told that about 300,000 cubic feet of fresh air was in constant circulation. After being in the mine about a quarter of an hour, surrounding objects became a trifle clearer, when, much to my astonishment, I was shown ample stabling for horses, with stalls, mangers, etc., cut in the coal.

The boys attending them were as merry as any mortals on earth; full of life and youthful spirits, and apparently as oblivious of possible explosions as any boys could be. Most of the miners I found were "fatalists." One old fellow, yet hardy and strong at sixty, told me he had worked in a coal pit when he was a boy in the Old Country. He had known boys who had been born in coal pits, and horses who had never seen terra firma.

Then the superintendent began to talk about explosions and fire damp, and falls of coal—which to a stranger were not comfortable topics of conversation at so remote a distance from the earth's surface. The old miner, however, thought what was to be would be, and these things did not trouble him much. Presently the superintendent excused himself: "Would I just stay where I was a moment?—he would be back directly." And I was left alone, while his attention was called away to a distance of about fifty yards or so. To be in a coal mine at a depth of nearly four hundred feet from the outer world, alone, unused to the place, literally a stranger in a strange land, is one of the most depressive feelings I ever experienced. To a sensitive mind it is absolutely painful, and I thought how insignificant a thing man is after all! I tried to fight my courage, and although I knew, as far as I could know, that I was safe, yet the contingency of what might happen forced itself most unpleasantly on my mind. Then I began to recall newspaper reports of terrible explosions, and a slow, starving death, until the feeling grew so expressive that I tried to shout, "Superintendent, where are you?" but I could not hear the sound of my own voice. I found subsequently that this system of leaving one severely alone is a part of the ordinary experience through which all "greenhorns," who visit coal mines in Nova Scotia, have to pass.

Nature is singularly beneficent to miners, who, I am informed, are gifted with acute senses of hearing and smell. They work under conditions which at times bring them into play very strongly. A miner works in all sorts of postures, and he seems to handle his pick in positions which to another would seem simply impossible. In the Albion Mines, as indeed in all mines in Nova Scotia, signal wires are placed along all the tunnels and workings, communicating with the shaft, or mouth, and which are in charge of a person specially paid to look after them.

I was particularly careful to ask the miners whether the mines were regularly inspected by the Government officers and was told "there was always somebody coming down 'em, but they did not know whether they be Government ones or not." Some of the seams vary from nine inches to five feet in thickness. About 150 men were employed in all during my visit. My experience was not altogether an unpleasant one. The boys seem happy enough, and were bright little fellows from 11 to 15 years of age; the men were respectful and small in stature, but they appeared dull

and phlegmatic by contrast with the younger generation.

After staying about two hours I ascended the shaft, and after cleaning my face and hands in a miner's cottage, was pleased to observe the scrupulous care and cleanliness of the interior. In fact I visited them all and came to the conclusion that, in respect of domestic comfort, the miners of Pictou are better off than those of Britain.

A Change would be Better.

[We publish the following lines less for their poetry than for their point and piquancy. The fair author addresses them "to all churches who part from a faithful, pious, self-denying pastor on a plea that a change would be better.]"

You say that a change would be better!
I grant it,—but here let me say
A few solemn words to each member,
In a sisterly, Christianly way.

Are you sure where the change is most needed?
In the pulpit? or is it the pew?
Is the pastor the one who needs changing?
Or, my friend, let me ask, is it you?

Have you prayed for God's blessing upon him?
Have you been to him helpers indeed?
Worked with him, stood by him, upheld him,
And ministered oft to his need?

Has your place in the prayer-meeting always
Been filled, when you knew you could go?
And the Sunday-school brightened and flourished
At your presence and work,—is this so?

Have you given your means to your Maker?
Not merely a dollar or two—
But by twenties, or fifties, or hundreds,
In proportion as He gives to you?

If these questions cannot be replied to
In a truly affirmative way,
Then I beg you to change now, my brother,
My sister,—and do not delay!

And ne'er hope that a pastor, though gifted
As Gabriel, fresh from God's throne—
Or as mighty as Paul—could accomplish
His labors among you—alone!
—Religious Herald.

Going to hear Mr. Spurgeon.

Last Sunday night Mr. Spurgeon held another of his quarterly services for strangers, from which all the obedient members of his usual congregation were asked and expected to be absent; and being attracted by this chance of getting into the Metropolitan Tabernacle on equal terms with everybody, and desirous of hearing Mr. Spurgeon on "the strangers' evening," I found myself at a quarter to six one of the crowd of people outside the front doors under the porch of the largest Nonconformist place of worship in London. Being young, I did not mind so much as some the prospect of fifteen minutes' lateral pressure, but the crowd being great the doors were opened seven minutes before six, the time appointed for admission, and, thanks to other people's muscles rather than my own, I entered without any difficulty.

At six o'clock the seats on the ground floor and most of those in the first gallery of the building were well filled with a respectably dressed and expectant audience, though one could easily see many of the persons present were of "the right kind," workmen and others, whom the very influence of a place of worship had made appear at their best. When the preacher appeared on the platform, the whole of the huge building was crowded in every part, and one could not help wondering whether Mr. Spurgeon's usual congregation would not feel rather small if they could see how little he depended upon them for an audience. With characteristic promptness Mr. Spurgeon commenced the service two or three minutes before half-past six, as though to make up for the defects of some of his followers in the ministry with regard to punctuality. The opening prayer was pointed and earnest for a special blessing that evening; this was followed by a hymn, the first on the printed sheets distributed throughout the building, and given out by the preacher in such a manner that one felt the service would have lost much had some well-disposed deacon been left to read that hymn. The lesson was chosen from the eleventh chapter of Luke, and the first twenty-eight verses, Mr. Spurgeon commenting upon it as he went along. Next came a hymn, and then another prayer, which was shortened because of the closeness and heat of the Tabernacle, the fault not of the ventilation arrangements so much as the oppressive state of the thundery weather outside.

The preacher then took his text from Isaiah lvii. 14, specially building his

remarks upon the words, "Take up the stumbling-block out of the way of my people."

The sermon commenced with a brief outline of Christ's life upon earth and His departure thence, with a short statement of the way of salvation. "Trust in Christ," said the preacher, "is the entrance to the way, is the continuance in the way, is all the way." It seemed to him so easy that he wondered there should be any stumbling over it. Still there were stumbling-blocks, some of which he would name, and then set to work to remove them. There were stumbling-blocks, because this was such an uncommon way people did not understand it, but wanted to see and to argue. And then men when really seeking salvation were often, as John Bunyan would say, much tumbled up and down in their thoughts. Conscience pricks them, a sense of sin blinds them, and they grope in the noonday like blind men for the wall. Conscience made cowards of us all, and made stumbling-blocks for us too.

Another cause of stumbling was that men were often ignorant of the way of salvation. He himself, though brought up with religious surroundings, would have given anything when anxious about his soul to have been clearly told the way of salvation. And then there was Satan always ready to prevent souls from finding Christ. Some people he let alone because he knew they would be his at last, but when once a man shook himself and said, "I will find heaven if it is to be found," then Satan cried out to all the devils, "Shoot your arrows upon him; we shall lose him unless we make a desperate effort to hold him." And now, said Mr. Spurgeon, to take some of the stumbling-blocks out of the way, for the text said, Take up the stumbling-blocks.

And then the preacher proceeded to describe in characteristic style men with various difficulties which he meant to remove. One man wondered whether Christ would receive him. Yes, "him that cometh unto me I will in nowise cast out." There was never a man yet who came and was refused. Another said, "I am a very peculiar person, I cannot think He will save me because I am so odd." He should like to know that man, because he was odd himself, but still he had found while he had been minister of a church numbering nearly 6,000 members, most of them were about as odd as he. An odd man was just the man to be saved. Heaven will be a wonderful museum of curious persons. One said, I have such a horrible sense of sin, and another, That is just what I have not. But the Bible nowhere said that horrible thoughts were necessary to salvation; neither need they prevent it. Both the despairing one and he not despairing might look to the Cross.

Another man said, "I cannot trust because I do not know that I am one of the elect." Well, he could not tell him, not having been to heaven to examine the roll. If, when they left that building and wanted to go home a man were to say, "I will not go down the steps because I don't know whether I am predestined to go!"—"You are predestined to be a fool if you talk in that manner." Trust in Christ, and He would tell him whether he was one of the elect to a certainty. "But," said another, "I am afraid I have committed the unpardonable sin." He himself had not been able to find out what the unpardonable sin was, but if a man wished to be saved he knew he had not committed that sin. "My stumbling-block," said another, "is not that, but the whole thing seems too good to be true." Well, so it did, but it wasn't; we must treat God as God, and remember He was much greater than we are. But there were some stumbling-blocks Mr. Spurgeon could not remove. One man says, "I would believe in Jesus, but look at some of his followers, they are hypocrites." Yes, some of them were.—"But," said another, "they are all hypocrites." "No," said the preacher, "that won't do, they are not all hypocrites. The very fact that there are some bad ones proves there are some good." He would not refuse a good sovereign because there were bad ones about, it was because the good ones were so good that the bad ones were to be found, and if there were no good Christians, it would not pay to be bad ones. Judas kissed his Master, and betrayed Him, and there were many

Judas; but suppose Judas did betray Christ, they were not asked to trust in Judas but in Christ. "Ah!" said one, "I know a little about revival services and conversions." It was true that a lot of discount had to be taken off them, but still there was a clear profit notwithstanding, and that was worth having. He had heard of an Irishman who found a sovereign, but as it was of light weight he only got eighteen shillings for it, so next time he saw one he would not pick it up because he said he had lost two shillings by the other. Equally foolish were they who would not come to Christ because there were failings among those who had professed to come. God give them sense; he could not remove these difficulties. "But," said another, "I should have to alter my whole way of living." Quite true, a lot of them would have to, and so much the better, and give up the tricks and dodges of trade. But another said, "I could not bear to be laughed at." That would not hurt. He thought he had had a tolerably large share of that, but he did not recollect his bones aching much in consequence. Let them remember that if men laughed them into hell they could not laugh them out again. "A dead fish floats down stream, but a live one goes up it. Ridicule and opposition were stumbling-blocks he would not remove if he could. The last stumbling block he could not remove was the difficulty a man had in trusting Christ whom he had never seen, and seeing Him whom he could not see. In conclusion, Mr. Spurgeon said he had pointed out the way of salvation and some of the stumbling blocks to it, and the responsibility of their salvation rested not with him; if they believed in Christ they would be saved and have the gift of everlasting life.

The service ended with the well-known hymn, "For ever with the Lord," which was heartily sung, and the benediction having been pronounced, the mass of life poured out into the streets where—if my experience holds for others also—all recollection of the service was knocked out of them in five minutes, until, in the quieter atmosphere of home, it re-appeared as fully in their memory as ever.—Special Correspondence of the London Freeman.

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.
Baptist Churches in Ontario.

PUGWASH, Sept. 8th, 1880.

Dear Brother Selden,—

Last Spring while in Ottawa, I prepared a letter for the *Messenger*, intending to have forwarded it to you as soon as I obtained a few facts for which I was waiting to complete it. In the meantime I was taken very ill, and my letter was for the time forgotten, and that until the flight of time had carried away the greater portion of all that was interesting in it. A few historical facts however, connected with the organization of one of the first Baptist Churches in Ontario, as given to me by Pastor Cameron of the Ottawa Baptist Church, and the fact of a Church of baptized believers being organized on the mighty deep, of members from Perthshire, old Scotland, will be read with great pleasure by many of your Perthshire readers on Prince Edward Island.

I am yours in christian love,
EDWIN CLAY.

About the year 1875, a number of heads of families from Breadalbane, Perthshire, Scotland, formed themselves into a Baptist Church, on board ship, while immigrating to Canada. They settled in the township of Lochiel Glengary, Ontario, naming the settlement Breadalbane.

This was the origin of the Breadalbane Baptist Church; the mother church of the whole of Eastern parts of Western Ontario. Rev. Wm. Frazer was their pastor for 20 years. He afterwards with a number of his members settled in the County of Bruce—where a new church was organized—this is known as the Tiverton Baptist Church, of which Dr. McDonald is now the pastor. The Rev. Mr. McPhail, formerly pastor of the Ottawa Church, assisted Mr. Frazer, in laying the foundation of the Baptist cause in Eastern Ontario. Mr. McPhail visited Bruce in 1863, and during a revival which resulted from his labours, the son of a