

The Christian Messenger.

A RELIGIOUS AND GENERAL FAMILY NEWSPAPER.

NEW SERIES.
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WHOLE SERIES.
Vol. XLVI., No. 9.

The Gospel in France.

SHE COULD NOT MEET THAT ARGUMENT.—M. Vincent, a French Evangelist, had been speaking at a Gospel meeting. Just as he was leaving, and saying a kind word to some persons at the door, "a black nun" came up with her rosary in her hand. She immediately tried to influence the people and spoke slightly of the preacher. At the same time she eulogized the priests, and stated that they were chosen men, out of the best families, and were most devout and charitable. A working man who was present replied, "It is all very well, sister, but I have no confidence in those men." "Why, sir?" she asked. "I will tell you," said he. "Suppose a child of yours fell into the fire, and there was present a man who, being able to snatch it out of danger, should pause and say, 'Madam, if you will give me some money I will take your child out of the fire, but if you do not, I will let it burn on,' would you have confidence in such a man?" "No," replied the nun, "but what has that to do with it? Nobody would do so." The workman answered, "I ask your pardon, Madam, but it is done every day. I am only a poor man, my mother is dead, and according to M. le Cure she is in the fire of purgatory. He said he could easily get her out by means of masses, but I have scarce bread enough for my children, and the priest demands money, and still more, that I should pay before hand; without that he will leave my poor mother to burn in the flames. What confidence would you wish me to have in a man like that?" Looking around on the listening group, the nun felt she could not meet that argument, so she made the sign of the cross, lifted up her rosary and went on her way.

A writer in the London *Echo*, anticipating "the expected wail of the *Church Times*," says, "Mr. Gladstone's visit to the Tabernacle is suggestive of what pulpit treats unbending Churchmen lose, in standing upon the much laughed-at-dignity which can only worship within shadow of the belfry tower. Our British Nonconformity long ago won a front position in classics and literature; a man named Milton, and a dreamer named Bunyan lending the 'kindly light,' which is now sufficiently diffused to dazzle the World of Letters, Dissent has ceased to be uncouth, and its modern culture is contagious."

The Chicago *Evangelist* says that the church which Mr. Moody built up in that city, and in which he holds his membership, maintains that the apostolic baptism is immersion, alone. This doctrine is preached from its pulpit, and all are urged to conform to it. But immersion is not made an indispensable pre-requisite to admission into the church.

That an organ in a church is a sin and a scandal is an opinion which, I learn with some amusement and surprise, is still held by numerous indubitably devout and repentantly sane people in Scotland. At Dundee a certain Major Falconer—no relative, I should think, of George Macdonald's Robert—has presented to the Presbytery of the religious body, ironically known as the Free Church, a memorial against the "kist o' whistles," signed by no fewer than 186 elders and deacons. The major, the elders and the deacons are troubled by the terrible reflection that if one congregation choose to have an organ another might choose drums and fies or even a brass band; and undoubtedly their argument is sound. But Scotch people are rather devoted to Old Testament precedents and the major should reflect that brass cornets and trombones are, perhaps, our

nearest available approximations to the silver trumpets of the Temple.—*Cor. of London Freeman.*

Venor's Weather Predictions for March.

1st. week.—The March blow and bluster is likely to occur about the 3rd, 4th, or 5th, with snow-storms and rains according to location. In Canada and northern sections of the United States this week will be the most winter-like for sometime, with similar weather also West and North-west. Probably snow or sleet at Washington, and very bleak weather.

2nd. week.—Probably cold and stormy weather everywhere through early portion of week, with snow and drift in northern and western sections. There is likely to be a marked "cold dip" toward the 7th and 8th days in Canada, Northern and Middle States.

3rd. week.—Cold and stormy generally, with heavy snow-falls. Cold dips East and West, Lower Provinces (St. John's, N. B., and Halifax), and in all likelihood snow or rains and blustery weather as far south as Washington, D. C., with abrupt changes of temperature. The 17th and 18th may be particularly stormy days. Cold weather in the North-west this week.

4th. week.—Blustery and stormy weather and snowfalls in many sections west to Chicago and westward, about entry of week, or 20th and 21st days. Frequent snowfalls through Province of Quebec.

Milder weather on and after the 22nd day, with rains and sleet-storms of frequent occurrence in most sections. Wet Weather South and East.

5th. week.—Snow-storms probable to westward, and high winds through Canada, accompanied by heavy snows and rainfalls, particularly about 28th and 29th.

The month, however, will probably close generally mild, with indications of a calmer period.

WHERE'S THE TROUBLE.—"An entire year in the church, and I have not made a single acquaintance." The man who said this was furious in his complaints of the congregation that thus neglected its members; but the blame should be the other way, for a man who can stay that long among a set of Christians without compelling them to know him proves that he is of little use.—*United Presbyterian.*

AN "UPSETTIN' SIN."—At a negro prayer-meeting, one of the brethren earnestly prayed that he might be preserved from what he called their "upsettin' sins."

"Brudder," said one of the elders, "yer haift' zactly got de hang ob dat ar word. It's besettin'—not upsettin'."

"Brüdder," replied the corrected, "ef dat's so, it's so; but I was prayin' de Lawd ter save us from de sin ob' 'toxication, and ef dat aint a upsettin' sin, I dunno."

Continued interferences with the proceedings of the Salvation Army are reported. At Sheffield one of the leaders, known as the "Converted Wrestler" was cruelly beaten, and taken to the infirmary in a dangerous condition. The Lord Mayor of London had to punish a man last week for a most unprovoked attack at their place of meeting in Victoria-street where there could be no excuse arising from an exciting procession. It seems strange that as yet the import of these disturbances does not seem to be generally understood. It is the vigorous attack of the Salvation Army on public-houses that is the offence. The disturbances of the processions are fomented at one common origin. The movement is a very successful attack on the drinking habits of the working classes. The drink traffic is in danger wherever these processions go. It is really desirable that this should be clearly recognised.—*Freeman.*

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

The Pulpit as seen from the Pew.

No. II.

Mr. Editor,—

Will you permit *Pew* to supplement, with one or two more reasons, his plea, why he should not be held alone responsible for *pulpit's* failure to interest and keep a congregation. 1st. *Pulpit* many times is not logical enough! In this age of accurate expression, of sharp clear-cut distinctions, of close thinking, the faulty logic and loose reasoning of the pulpit in many cases, produces an effect upon the pew, which I shall not attempt to state more definitely than to say, "it does not draw." When a lecture is announced, we expect from the platform a logical statement of fact and consequence, a consistent application of every illustration of its points. And woe betide the platform if it fails in this respect. It is subjected to a torrent of criticisms from which the pulpit is shielded by "universal respect." When a lawyer addresses a jury, he uses all diligence that there may be no weak points in his argument. No contradictory "therefores"; his words are chosen to convey the exact meaning, and not because they are grandiloquent. Everybody except "pulpit" is compelled to reason closely, and speak plainly. A blunder of a century or two in history! A careless affixing of authors' names to quotations, would ruin anybody else, and hurts even *pulpit*, giving *pew* the undeniable privilege of pleading "not alone guilty" to the charge of "small congregations."

Now we do not ask "pulpit" to be profound, we are killed with *profoundness*—we simply ask him to be logically consistent when he talks about common things! We would not have "pulpit" think that by this we demand a display of "osophies" or "academy." The fact is that our complaint comes home, as directly in many cases, to the pulpit which bears the label "Seminary" on its front, as it does to less pretentious ones! And if the court will permit we would like to throw in here a little bit of advice between the sections of our plea. That is, "pulpit" must dismiss the idea that the label gained by four years attendance at a college, hides all defects. The public, after all, is not so fastidious about labels as some suppose. They will weigh a man correctly and set him down at his honest weight, label or no label. And further, that stubborn thing, public opinion, persists in classifying many of our ministers who do not write capital letters after their names, much higher than many who do. It is not the A. B., or the A. M., but the work done for the cause that brings down the scale. *Pew* believes in education, in the very best culture; there are more *pews* than *pulpits*, each one has a vote, and all believe in setting a man down for exactly what he is worth, labelled or unlabelled.

Feb. 18th, 1882. PEW.

For the Christian Messenger.

Premature Ordinations.

"Lay hands suddenly on no man," is still imperative. But that many have been ordained to the gospel ministry without due consideration, is apparent from the history of the denomination. The moral character of the candidate, at least, should be satisfactorily known before "the laying on of the hands of the presbytery."

In considering the propriety of ordination, a statement is generally required concerning the candidate's Christian experience, call to the ministry, and views of Bible doctrine. A few questions upon the cardinal doctrines of the Scriptures, are asked and answered. If the candidate has not completed his

studies, a long discussion ensues concerning educational qualifications of the ministry. The discussion ended, and the examination considered complete, the young man is duly set apart as a preacher of the gospel.

Without a question as to his Christian character or aptness to teach, if he has completed his studies at the College and the Theological Seminary, the principal matter is settled. But lacking this qualification, his ordination is considered "premature," and denounced as wrong by spleeny critics.

Permit "one who knows" whereof he affirms, to make a plea on behalf of the prematurely ordained (so-called) by giving a few brief statements:—

1. That poor men are often called to preach the gospel.

2. That they cannot acquire a college education without money.

3. That they cannot make nearly enough money during their vacations to pay their college bills.

4. That they are compelled therefore to stay out of school at least three years during their entire college course, or be overwhelmed in debt.

5. That while laboring as Licentiate, they are often at a great disadvantage to obtain ordained preachers to administer the ordinances of the church.

6. That when they stay out of college for the purpose of obtaining money for an education, by refusing to be ordained, they defeat their purpose, 1st because churches which pay large salaries will not employ unordained ministers, or at least licentiates unwilling for ordination; and 2nd, because no marriage fees are received by them.

7. That they must spend two years, one at least, in the Academy, four years in the College, three years in the Theological Seminary, and three years preaching as noticed in statement (4), making in all twelve years to complete a full course of instruction, and that during all this time they must positively refuse to heed the unanimous voice of their churches calling for their ordination.

8. That they must thus refuse to be ordained for the sole reason that they have not completed their studies.

If the above plea justifies the ministerial student in consenting to premature ordination, upon whom rests the blame of the so-called premature? Upon the College for not aiding ministerial students more liberally in securing their education? Or upon the churches for insisting that they must have ordained ministers?

Will some one who has canvassed the subject of premature ordinations, answer and oblige,

Yours, interrogatively,
JUSTITIA.

For the Christian Messenger.

To the Nova Scotia Eastern Baptist Association.

Dear Brethren,—

"Suffer," from one of your number "the word of exhortation." I come to you not in the way of fault-finding, I am too deeply conscious of my own faults for that. I do not set myself up as a teacher, but, as if face with you, I sit down for friendly, brotherly talk.

Our spiritual progress the topic, a topic alike interesting to you and me.

My thoughts instinctively revert to the vestry of the North Sydney Baptist Church the last morning prayer-meeting in connection with our last session of the Association. I seem to hear the echo of that solemn request for prayer, not for an individual, nor for a family, nor a church, but for the entire Association, for the ministers, the churches, and all that wait upon our ministry. The request was, "that God would greatly revive His work during the ensuing Associational year in all the

churches; the small, and weak, and pastorless, as well as those that are stronger, and supplied with the ministry of the Word."

It comes to my mind, too, how earnestly the request was taken hold of. What importunate prayer was presented before God, until, if the place where we were assembled were not shaken, our hearts were by the mighty power of God.

Again and again has that scene confronted me, and almost always with the same result, viz.: to quicken to renewed prayer and greater effort in the portion of the field committed more especially to me for cultivation.

I have watched with deep interest for items of news from the churches, and greatly rejoiced when anything encouraging appeared. But, so far, very few of the churches have reported progress.

Perhaps some are enjoying refreshings from whom we have not heard. Dear brethren, let me affectionately ask you if God is blessing your work in the conversion of souls. Even though extensive revivals are not enjoyed, let your brethren know, through the

CHRISTIAN MESSENGER, (the Editor is always glad to insert such items). It will encourage and stimulate others to special prayer and effort.

Let me further ask. Are we doing all we can for the revival of God's work in the churches over which we are placed? Might it not be well to call the brethren together for special prayer?

Has the old-fashioned protracted meeting, which has been such a powerful instrumentality in building up the Baptist Churches in these Provinces and elsewhere, lost either its charm or power? Have we any reason to doubt, if the pastor of any church can get even two or three of his brethren to meet together for special prayer, and consecration to special work for God, that it would be labor lost?

We, who are leaders of the flock of God, must set an example, and be satisfied with nothing less than a thorough yielding up of ourselves to this work. We sometimes wait to see the right time to commence special services. Of course there are seasons of the year when it is more convenient for those to whom we look to be our helpers in the good work to give their time and attention, as also for those whom we hope to benefit. But, beyond this, if there is a necessity for a revival in the church, and souls to be converted, I cannot see the propriety of waiting.

The present is the season when mostly all classes of our people have more leisure to attend to extra services than at any other time in the year. But it is passing rapidly, the Spring will soon be upon us, the evenings are becoming shorter, and the best opportunity for special work will soon be past, and with some of us it may be our last opportunity.

Let us arouse ourselves, and, in dependence upon Divine strength, let us "go forward." We are holding special services in Truro, and God is blessing us. The church is much revived, and sinners are being converted. We will soon report additions by baptism.

Yours in the work,
J. E. GOUCHER.

Truro, Feb. 24, 1882.

For the Christian Messenger.

News of the World.

Mr. Bradlaugh on Wednesday last, while his case was being considered in the House of Commons, took upon himself to go in and take his seat, whereupon Sir Stafford Northcote moved that Mr. B. having disobeyed the chair in contempt of the House, be expelled, which motion was sustained by Mr. Gladstone, and carried 291 to 83. Mr. B. then quietly left, and it was ordered that a new writ be issued for Northampton.

At a meeting on Wednesday night of the Lord Mayor's Jewish Fund

committee, Sir Alex. T. Galt, resident Minister of Canada, recommended emigration of Jews to Manitoba.

An Irish informer named Bailey was shot dead in the streets of Dublin on Saturday.

The Cotton masters of Manchester are considering if it is not necessary in consequence of declining prices to reduce the production by short time to the extent of two weeks in March.

The London *Telegraph* says: "The belief prevailed in political circles that, owing to the action of the Lords concerning the investigation of the Land Act operations and the consequent difficulty of continuing Government in Ireland, Mr. Gladstone had determined to resign."

Rome cannot get along without its carnival. Among the other senseless things they have at that time, just before Lent, is a horse-race of horses without riders. On Thursday last, whilst this was going on two persons were killed and thirteen injured by the horses.

On the trial of the Nihilists at Petersburg, all but two of the prisoners pleaded guilty. One was pronounced insane. The prisoners acted very disorderly and the court sat till midnight.

The village of Mottin, in Austria, was attacked by a band of robbers on Saturday week. They burned a number of houses. Ten women and six children were killed, but the villagers eventually defeated them.

One hundred and fifty persons have been killed in a coal mine explosion in Austria.

From Constantinople we learn that Commander Seiby, of the British man-of-war Falcon, who was wounded by an Albanian recently, has died.

On Thursday the Senate at Washington passed a bill authorizing the President, in recognition of the eminent public services of General Grant, to appoint him to the rank and grade of a general to be placed on the retired list, with pay accordingly.

Three hundred and twenty-five Jewish refugees, from the province of Kieff, Odessa, and Warsaw, in Russia, arrived on Thursday last at Philadelphia. Every effort was made to help them.

A sailor from the sunken steamer *Bahama* was picked up at sea by the brig *Pearl*, and brought into New York on Thursday last. He had clung to a piece of the fore-castle deck for six days, having only one biscuit to eat during that time.

The floods in the Western States have been fearfully destructive. Great loss of life, of live stock, and property has resulted. The water has entirely covered many properties and plantations. In Illinois the water is higher than it was at the great floods in 1867. It was never known as bad as it is at present. Hundreds of families have been entirely deprived of their means of living.

Between Cincinnati and Vicksburg the river is said to be a foot higher than was ever known, and water extends back on either side of the river in many places for fifteen miles. The houses in many streets are badly wrecked.

At St. Helena all the mills and workshops in the lower part of the city have suspended operations, and many laborers are thrown out of employment. Business is at a standstill.

Small-pox is extending its ravages at Chicago. The Mayor has ordered all gambling houses to be closed.

Great efforts are being made against the Mormons, and anti-polygamy meetings are being held in many places.

Mr. Conkling is nominated to the Bench of the Supreme Court. The effect of this nomination will be to retire him from active politics.

The Town Hall of East St. Louis is burned. Loss \$250,000.

A telegram from Salt Lake city says a family who were swept off in the big Cottonwood snow slide have been recovered under forty tons of snow, not frozen, but lying naturally in bed, husband, wife and infant in one bed, two boys and two girls, the eldest, 11 years in another, smothered instantly in their sleep.

A WESTERN ILLUSTRATION.—"My brethren," said a Western clergyman, "the preaching of the gospel to some people is like pouring water over a sponge—it soaks in and stays. To others it is like the wind blowing through a chicken coop. My experience of this congregation is that it contains more chicken coops than sponges."