

For the Christian Messenger.

Misquotation of Scripture.

MR. EDITOR;

The Apostle James tells us, chap. 3: 2, "in many things we offend all," or it may be rendered "we all offend"—"if any man offend not in word the same is a perfect man and able to bridle the whole body."

During the past twenty years I have had many opportunities of hearing both ministers and members of churches in the three provinces, and am fully convinced that either a careless habit of quoting scripture, or of taking such quotations at second hand, from others as careless as themselves, has given rise to the practice which we seek to correct.

In view of christian effort, I have known Ecclesiastes 11: 6 quoted thus—"In the morning sow thy seed and in the evening withhold not thy hand for thou knowest not which shall prosper, or whether both shall be alike good."

Ezekiel, 33: 11—I have heard quoted thus—"For thou wilt not see the death of a sinner but rather that he would turn from his evil ways and live." Here is a gross perversion of the passage. Psalm 2: 8 has been pleaded in prayer in favour of the conversion of the Heathen, whereas the text and context show in the plainest terms the displays of the Messiah's sovereignty in the destruction, not the conversion of the Heathen. Isaiah 66: 8 we have heard quoted as if the Lord had positively declared that "a nation shall be born in a day"—whereas the Lord asks the question—"Shall a nation be born at once?" "Who hath heard such things? Who hath seen such things?" Again, we have heard christians quote Matt. 18: 20 in the following manner—"For where two or three are met together in thy name, there thou art in the midst of them to bless them and do them good."—Here is an interpolation we cannot justify. Psalm 73: 25 we have heard quoted thus—"And there is none on earth that we should desire before thee." Now while it is true, none but God alone should have the supremacy in our affections, yet why quote the passage at all if we cannot say "there is none on earth that I desire beside thee." James 3: 17 is not unfrequently quoted with the omission of the words "pure"—"full of mercy and good fruits." Now such omissions, and additions as we have glanced at briefly, ought carefully to be avoided. Let the Bible speak for itself, lest we make the Holy Spirit say what is not meant. Let us all "speak forth the words of truth and soberness." Acts 26: 25. Lastly—Habbakuk 2: 2 is often quoted in the present day exactly the reverse of what it reads, viz.—"He that runs may read." Now this alters the meaning. "He MAX RUN that reads it."

Mr. Editor excuse these remarks, while we "so speak and so do as those who shall be judged by the law of liberty."

Your old correspondent, FELIX MERITUS.

Surprise Meetings.

A novel method is being adopted in the United States of shewing appreciation of public service. We give the following as a specimen:—

The Harvard Street Sabbath School gave their worthy superintendent, Mr. Samuel T. Cushing, a very agreeable surprise party on Tuesday evening of last week. By concerted plan, Mr. Cushing and lady took tea with friends. In the meantime the tables were spread, and a bountiful repast was prepared at the house of the unsuspecting superintendent. At a little after eight o'clock the company, numbering about one hundred and fifty, and with one or two exceptions, composed of teachers and scholars, had assembled. A messenger was sent to ask Mr. and Mrs. Cushing home to see some old friends, from the North end, who had called to spend the evening. The rooms were nearly darkened, and all were quiet till Mr. C. opened the parlor door, and then, in an instant, all was lighter than day.

A sea of happy faces met his own, and a joyous laugh broke the impatient silence. The surprise was a complete one. But Mr. C. soon rallied from his confusion, and was greeted by all present in a manner most cordial and gratifying. After the ample refreshments had been dispensed, and prayer offered, Mr. Joseph B. Atherton, in behalf of the school, presented him with a beautiful silver pitcher, valued at \$65, accompanied with a feeling and appropriate address. Mr. Cushing was much overcome by his emotions, and replied in a spirit which touched all hearts, and doubly endeared him to his school as an excellent superintendent and a true-hearted, Christian man. The whole thing passed off delightfully, and will long be remembered as an epoch in the history of the Harvard Street Sabbath School.

Christian Messenger.

HALIFAX, MAY 7, 1856.

THE SERMON published by command of Her Majesty, which we commenced on another page, is from copies sent us by two highly esteemed ministers, with a request from them and a number of other subscribers, that it might appear in the Messenger.

We did hope to have been able to give the whole in one number, but were unable to do so, and shall give the remainder next week.

It is so excellent an illustration of the motto "not slothful in business: fervent in spirit," which has always stood at the head of our own Journal, that we thought it would be desirable to put it in a more permanent form than in the columns of a newspaper. We therefore intend to publish it separately. It will be a small book of 48 pages, and may be had at our office.

We cannot omit the opportunity of saying a few words on the character of the discourse referred to, which was preached by the Rev. John Caird, a minister of the Church of Scotland, before the Queen, on her last visit to her Highland summer retreat. It is without question one of the very best compendiums of the great duties and objects of Religion in its true sense which we have ever met,—religion wholly independent of all local or sectional names or outward characters, and embodying in its concise and energetic diction, and its apt and forcible illustrations, the very pith and marrow of all christian obligation. We never recollect to have seen in so short a compass the delusive and ruinous distinctions which mankind are so eager to establish, and which have so long and so widely prevailed, between a priestly and a popular christianity, a Sabbath and a week-day religion. It adds not a little to its intrinsic interest, that it was preached by the plain pastor of a Country church, before unquestionably, the most powerful of Earth's Monarchs, and it surely merits no slight commendation, that it was appreciated as it so well deserved to be. We some time since published a faithful and excellent discourse preached before Her Majesty, by Dr. Cumming. The Sovereign of the British Empire is happy and dignified far above most of her fellow monarchs of the earth by ruling over a free and loyal people, but we may esteem her far more fortunate in the opportunity she possesses, and the desire which she manifests, to hear the faithful proclamation of those great and glorious truths, the cordial reception of which is equally essential to the salvation of "every creature," be she the possessor of the British throne, or "the maid servant that is behind the mill." As a nation we enjoy peculiar and exalted privileges; need we say that it is a sacred duty of every christian in the realm, to persevere in prayer to God, that our amiable Sovereign, whose moral example is above all reproach, and whose enlightened views of what is true religion is so far beyond most that have gone before her, may enjoy the choicest blessings of that faith, to the preaching of which she lends a willing ear.

OUR readers and friends will doubtless have been much gratified of late with the notices we have published of the extensive revival which for some time past has been in progress in Liverpool. We rejoice in the hope that the additions to the churches there, which have chiefly been from among

the youthful portion of the society, will on that account operate more effectually as a permanent blessing to the Church of God. The account we now furnish bears also the impression of a powerful spiritual influence on the youthful mind of that community. Amid the many new and strongly developed feelings that first arise in the minds of the true subjects of divine grace, scarce any is more intense than the deep solicitude they experience for the salvation of the souls of others. Such appears to have been the case in the instance of our young brethren and sisters, who have but newly tasted the love of Christ. It has constrained them to look around and weep over the moral desolation that is, alas too evident in every region of this our ruined world. A society formed upon the plan of the "Juvenile Missionary Society" having for its immediate object the supply of a faithful gospel ministry for the county, is well fitted to do its peculiar work; for however general and expansive the principle of Christian love, it is in the nature of things, more energetic and effective where the objects of christian sympathy are within the sphere of our immediate action,—where the fruits of our labours are quickly known and easily tested. We cordially wish "God-speed" to the youthful society.

Registration of Births.

It will be in the recollection of many, that an attempt was made some years since, to introduce a measure into the Legislature, providing for a general registration of births. What the result of the effort was, whether it was defeated, withdrawn, or allowed to slumber and be forgotten, we cannot call distinctly to mind.

It may also be remembered that, in consequence of its not being carried into operation, churches were recommended to keep a book for the purpose of entering the names and dates of births in families belonging to their congregations.

We are not aware if that recommendation has in any case been acted upon.

The importance of some general provision is increasing daily, and the neglect of this duty to our children may entail on them very serious inconvenience.

Now that the arguments for infant baptism are so generally given up, and comparatively few, even in Pedo-baptist churches, feel that the Word of God requires them to administer that ordinance to their children, and in some congregations, with more pretension to consistency than others, it is administered to none but the children of communicants; so that the practice is comparatively but little observed, and a large proportion of the births in Pedo-baptist congregations, and all in Baptist families, are without any legal evidence of age or parentage, the question assumes a still more serious aspect.

As no registration is required by law of those who administer baptism to infants, it is very probable that many of those even, who have had this rite performed upon them, have no record to which they could appeal, so that the necessity of provision for a general registration is equally great to all, and we hope it may receive attention at an early day, so that we may secure our children from the consequences which may arise to them from any further neglect or delay.

These remarks have been called forth by a case of Life Assurance having come before us, a few days since, where a widow was experiencing great anxiety and difficulty in obtaining the necessary certificate of the age of her deceased husband, before she could obtain the sum for which he was assured. A certificate may be obtained in this case, but we may easily suppose hundreds of other cases occurring of those born in this Province, in which the policies for which payment has been made for many years, will be endangered, from the circumstance of the survivors being unable to procure any satisfactory record of the age of those assured.

Not only in cases of Life assurance but in that of any contested title to property the party having an undoubted certificate of birth would have decided advantage over one without such evidence. We would therefore urge the subject on the attention of our Legislators, and in the meantime would repeat the recommendation to our churches, to enter carefully in a book, kept for the purpose, the names of parents, dates and name of every child, born in the families of their congregations.

The letters on "Revision" in C. M. of April 23rd by the Hon. J. McCully, and in this number by Rev. Dr. Cramp although not of so much interest to the general reader as to the learned, for what they actually contain, are yet of much value to all, as shewing the searching examination given to even the least important passage of the sacred volume.

At a meeting of the American Bible Union the Board of Managers on the 2nd ult., a letter from Rev. J. G. Oncken, of Germany was read, expressing his thanks for one thousand dollars received from the Bible Union in aid of its Bible colporteurs in circulating the Scriptures in Germany. Mr. Oncken reports that the preaching stations of the German Mission now exceed 500. More than 81,000 copies of the Holy Scriptures, and about 700,000 Tracts, etc., have been brought into circulation.

WE have absolutely not a word of European news this week, but are daily waiting for the English Mail by the next steamer, now due. It is not probable that she will bring the news of the final ratification of peace. Two regiments, the 62nd and 63rd, are said to be ordered to this garrison from the Crimea.

The best news we have on this side of the Atlantic is that the high price of all kinds of Breadstuffs are on the decline. As the whole world will now be open to commerce, no doubt some considerable changes will take place, and the demand and supply of the great staples of life becoming more regular, the high prices that have so heavily pressed upon the poorer classes of society will cease.

We are sorry to hear that some of the great Canada Railroads are suffering under the pressure of heavy difficulties. We observe by some of the papers that Messrs. Brassey and Betts, two of the great contractors, have lately gone to Canada to adjust the affairs of the Contract.

General Intelligence.

PROVINCIAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE, Halifax, April 29, 1856. APPOINTMENTS.

His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor in Council, has been pleased to declare—the Ports of Truro, in the County of Colchester, and Bear River, in the Counties of Digby and Annapolis, to be Ports of Entry and Clearance.

To be Controller of Customs for Truro—Thomas M. Crow, Esq.

To be Controller of Customs and Collector of Colonial Duties for Bear River—John Barr, Esq. To be Collector of Colonial Duties at Little River, in the County of Sydney—James Randall, Esq.

To be Seizing Officers: In King's County—Abraham Ogilvy, Esq., at Marshall's Breakwater, Annapolis—Samuel Stone, Esq.

To be Surveyors of Shipping in the County of Annapolis—Samuel Stone and Robert G. Troop, Esqrs.

To be Commissioners for the purchase and management of the Cornwallis Bridge, under the Act passed in the last Session to authorize the sale thereof—Thomas C. Campbell, William Johnson and Judson Harris, Esqrs.

To be the Commissioners of Schools for the Western District of Annapolis—Peter Bonnett and James Gray, Esqrs.; the Rev. Wm. Godfrey, Alexander Henderson, Robert Mills 2nd, Wm. Hallett Ray and Charles Forbes, Esqrs.

To be the Registrar of the Court of Probate for the County of Cape Breton—Donald N. McQueen, Esq., in the place of the Hon. James McLeod, deceased.

To be a Commissioner for taking Affidavits and Recognizances of Bail in the Supreme Court, and for the Relief of Insolvent Debtors, in the County of Cumberland—Charles Dewolf, Esq.

To be Commissioners for deepening the River and improving the navigation of Pictou Harbour—George McKenzie, Alexander Fraser, Roderick McGregor, J. W. Carmichael and Thomas Fraser, Esqrs.

To be Commissioners for removing obstructions in the Port Medway River from Mills Village to the Brookfield Settlement—Edward Davison, John Norris and Edward Seely, Esqrs.

To be the Commissioner of Schools for the Eastern District of Annapolis—Major Chipman, Esq., the Rev James Robertson, and Alexander Fowler, Israel L. Bent and John Primrose, Esqrs.

The following appointments bear date April 21, 1856:—

To be Justices of the Peace for the District of Argyle—Peter J. D. Entremont and M. M. Willett, Esqrs. For the County of Queen's—Nathaniel Freeman, of Greenfield, and John Carten, of Liverpool, Esqrs. For the County of Richmond—Josiah Hooper, Esq., of Planboin; Kenneth McLeod, Esq., of Loch Lomond; John J. Jeans, Esq., of Arichat; Chas. Boudroit, (son of