

"General, I bet you, that Bible your wife gave you at parting, months ago, is just as nice and clean as it was when you received it at her hands."

"Ah, not quite so," responded the listener; "I think I can say what neither you nor any other officer present can say."

"What is that?"

"Sir, said he, 'I have not let pass a single day since I entered the service, without reading a chapter in my Bible.'"

"Upon your honor?"

"Upon my honor, sir."

"What! not during the terrible times at Stone River?"

"I was in the thickest of the fight, but I did not fail even then to find time to read my daily chapter in the Bible; and if you will take and examine my Bible, you will find chapters marked as read in daily order." No one could doubt the word of the speaker.

"For what knowest thou, O wife whether thou shall save thy husband?"

For the Christian Messenger.

European Correspondence.

Naples, September, 1863.

FROM ROME TO NAPLES. THE BAY. MOUNT VESUVIUS.

MR. EDITOR,—

The time having arrived for our departure from Rome, we packed up, and *unwillingly* left that old and interesting city. Till within a few months, travellers had to proceed to this place in a coach, or by a more circuitous route by sea; now, thanks to modern improvements and English Capital, we journeyed the whole distance, 162 miles in a good rail-car with much comfort, completing the journey with many stoppages in ten hours. After leaving the walls of Rome, we saw in various directions, old castles and deserted villas, with numerous other ruins which spoke of times past; we crossed and re-crossed the *Appian way*, the old Roman road to Naples, and for some miles followed the course of the ancient aqueduct, whose arches yet exist, and which still conducts the distant waters to the city, as copiously as it did in the time of the Cæsars.

The country for the first fifty miles was quite level, but here no marks of good cultivation, or abundant harvests. The chief crop seemed to be maize (Indian corn) which was now being gathered, and was piled in heaps to dry, alongside of the roads, the ear is much smaller than what is raised in Nova Scotia; so also is the berry, and of a deeper yellow, and it makes a very good quality of meal. Men, women, and children were at work with this grain, and were dwelling in *campi* made of a species of flag; as their food consisted of fruit and bread, there would be no cooking required, consequently a few days absence from distant cottages would be no disagreeable change.

At Caprāno, 76 miles from Rome, we stopped at the last station on the territory of his Holiness—in five minutes after leaving which, we found ourselves on the soil of another ruler—Victor Emmanuel—at this point was a guard house well attended by Roman police here; for the fourth time in as many days, our passport was examined, and permission given us to proceed by paying the usual fee. In a free country, living under so good a constitution as we do in Nova Scotia, the inconvenience experienced in entering or leaving a despotic government, cannot be well imagined. With us in the cars, was a young man who had travelled but a few miles; when here his passport was demanded, but possessing none, and not having \$2½ to pay for one, he was not allowed to proceed. I observed a watchful Policeman eyeing his movements, lest he should slip away without permission, and I felt for the young man who might only have been going into Neapolitan territory, for a few hours on a little business, so I asked what would be the consequence if he went over the proscribed line, and was informed, that if he had property it would be confiscated, if not, he would be imprisoned when he returned; but I was treated kindly and civilly by all parties in the country of Pope Pius, and look forward to the day when even there, the enlightened policy will prevail, of allowing its subjects to go and return at pleasure. We had frequent opportunities of viewing the Italian peasantry, and were not very favourably impressed with their appearance. They were mostly small sized and thin, with dark unintelligent countenances; the women would no where pass for beauties, their out-of-doors employment gives them a deeper bronze than even the men, and a more care-worn and forbidding countenance; the organ-grinders who visit our towns and villages are a fair sample of Italian Peasantry, we saw women at work making rail-roads,

and carrying baskets of earth on their heads, and others mixing mortar, and conveying it in a similar manner to the masons. In fact the labouring population look dirty, ignorant, and unambitious; under different culture, where the priest was less consulted, and the school-master more valued, a better state of things would doubtless exist.

As we proceeded south the country lost its level character, and was diversified by hill and dale. Its hills were very precipitous, and on their steep sides numerous villages were scattered, which could only be reached by travellers on foot, or by the cautious climbing mule. On our journey here, we passed groves of Olive trees, which are as large as old apple trees, with leaves like the willow; Fig-orchards were also plentiful, with those of walnuts and chestnuts; no useless or ornamental trees were passed, but plantations of the useful kinds were numerous and well cared for. Large fields of water-melons, which are much eaten in their season, by all classes, were seen by us, in one of which was planted a *wooden cross*, to keep away evil spirits I presume, but how effectually it would operate on predatory boys I cannot say.

NAPLES is the largest and finest city in Italy, it contains 500,000 inhabitants. It is built around a most beautiful Bay, which is in the shape of a horse-shoe. Its waters are clear and of transparent blue, being studded by Islands, and covered with fishing boats, and is traversed by a multitude of fine steamers and sailing vessels presenting an appearance not to be met with, in any other part of the Mediterranean. The city extends around the bay for several miles; the hills arising from near the shore, are covered with the beautiful Villas, belonging to the higher classes of society. The houses are very high, mostly of five and six stories, and the streets quite narrow, and I might add, anything but clean. The churches here too, are numerous, being in number over 300. Some of them in the style of architecture if not in size, will compare with any in Europe; the statuary, paintings, and pillars in some I visited, exceeded anything I had yet met with. In one Cathedral we were shown 48 *images* of pure silver, and nearly life size, these represented the various saints of the establishment St. Peter, Paul, Joseph, Virgin Mary, &c. On many of these were placed rich jewels, containing a lock of hair, a small bone or nail or tooth of the saints; these are brought out, and exhibited in processions on the particular days dedicated to each, and must have cost a large sum of money, each one probably several thousand pounds. Among them was a shrine presented to the church by the late King of Naples, just before he was driven out of his sovereignty, which cost \$80,000. I thought if Paul were now to rise up and preach a sermon to the people here, the silver-smiths would make as great a commotion as they did at Ephesus when they cried, "great is Diana of the Ephesians."

In this church also is kept the phial, which holds the *reputed* blood of St. Januarius, and is said to liquify, semi-annually in September and February; we could not see it, as it was in a closet-doubtfully locked, one key being kept by the head-temporal ruler, and the other by the chief spiritual one. We were told of many instances of cures of plagues the city had experienced, and other sore calamities through the miraculous power of this saint's blood. In Naples, we see more *exhibitions* of the *superstition* of the people than even in Rome; in the streets at various corners, over the doors of houses, and in niches in the city walls, were placed shrines containing some guardian saint's bust; with candles or lamps burning before it, even in the sunshine of day. We climbed to one of the highest hills, to visit the cathedral of *San Martino*, which is extremely rich in statuary and paintings. Here reside in the Convent connected with it, 24 Carthusian Monks, who never visit the outer world, their dress is a white flannel robe reaching to the feet, with a girdle around the loins; their heads are cleanly shaved, but from the chin hangs down a long flowing beard, they look fat and contented. There is a fine garden attached to the Convent which is well taken care of and abounds in fruits and flowers. No female is allowed to enter the precincts of this church.

From the eminence on which we stood, we had a most magnificent view of the city which lay at our feet, and the bay which stretched out before us for many miles. On our left as we faced the harbor, rose in proud eminence *Vesuvius* with its smoky crest, seeming just at hand though eight miles distant; at the base of which, in slumbering ruins repose the buried cities of Pompeii and Herculaneum. On our right a few miles distant, is seen the village of Peuteoli, in the same position as when visited by Paul on his journey to Rome, Acts xviii. 12. Here he found

brethren who requested to tarry with them, I fear were he to land now there would be few to greet him. I thought much on my journey how differently Paul must have travelled to Rome in his day, the journey probably 200 miles had no rail-road to aid the traveller, but on foot day after day he journeyed on to his final resting place in the old imperial city.

I shall have to ask space for another letter as I cannot crowd all I wish to say into this.

J. W. B.

Christian Messenger.

HALIFAX, DECEMBER 9, 1863.

Registration of Births, Marriages, and Deaths.

Perhaps there is no law on our Statute Book so much disregarded, or so inefficient if its provisions were complied with, as that for the Registration of Births, Marriages and Deaths. Indeed for all practical purposes we may be said to be without law on the subject. We take no part of the blame to ourselves for this state of things, as we have for the past six or eight years—under the last two or three governments—repeatedly had the matter brought forward to public notice in our pages. Some advances seemed to have been made by a bill being introduced to the two last Legislatures providing a remedy for this defect in our social arrangements. The bill *pro forma* introduced by the government at the opening of the last session was a recognition of the necessity for an enactment, but it was, of course, not intended to be acted on, or it would have appeared in another shape. The imperfect registration of marriages is at the present time causing much trouble to many afflicted families in the United States. The following paragraph from one of our exchanges will show how this defect operates to the injury of those who are sufficiently unfortunate without having such additional difficulties to contend with.

"It is especially important, just now, that clergymen, in marrying a couple, should not neglect to give a certificate of the marriage, or to make a registration of it. In the case of the death of a soldier, the widow must have a certificate of marriage before a pension. A New Jersey paper, in speaking of this subject, as it respects that State, says: Upon searching the records within the past year for marriages, nearly half the unfortunate widows have been turned away with the remark: 'The clergyman performing the ceremony has neglected to comply with the law.'"

We know not what the prevailing practise in this matter is, in this province, but we think that every minister performing the marriage ceremony should keep a register in a substantially bound book, of all the names he thus unites together. The parties being married should not neglect to see that this is done and should receive from the minister, a certificate of the same, for which service he should receive a fair remuneration, say not less than two dollars, and as much more as the happy pair can afford. It is possible that the matter will come before the Legislature during the approaching session. It is a subject in which all are concerned. The longer it is delayed, the greater will be the evils which will arise from this desideratum.

New Subscribers for 1864.

Our duty to our patrons and the cause committed to us, demands that we shall endeavour to make progress. Each year should witness an advance on its predecessor.

We desire to have an addition to our present very respectable list of names to whom we send the *Christian Messenger*, and shall be glad to receive

FIVE HUNDRED

good New Subscribers, with which to commence the coming year. In almost every community where the *Messenger* is taken, we believe that there are many families who only require to have the paper introduced to them, with a word of commendation, to induce them to desire its weekly visits. They would doubtless soon learn to appreciate its value as highly as any of its present supporters.

A little exertion from each of our present patrons would, we doubt not, secure the above result. Respected Reader, will you not TRY?

We have this week sent a few extra copies of the *Messenger* to those friends in the different parts of the Province who favor us by acting as Agents in their neighborhoods; and shall be much obliged if they would place them in the hands of such persons as they may suppose would be an acquisition to our list, accompanying them with a few words of recommendation.

We shall be glad to receive new names,

and place them on our books as early as possible, but shall not charge them for the weeks previous to the 1st of January, 1864. Although we have been obliged to pay more for paper during the past year than in any previous one, yet we have, with difficulty, retained our former price, hoping to have additions to our number of subscribers that would help us to meet the increased liabilities. We shall be obliged if our friends will bear this in mind, and make prompt payments, and thus aid us all they can in securing the above object.

Post Office Money Orders.

The following is a list of the Post offices where money orders may be obtained:

Amherst, Antigonish, Annapolis, Arichat, Baddeck, Bridgewater, Bridgetown, Barrington, Canso, Digby, Guysboro', Halifax, Kentville, Lunenburg, Liverpool, Pictou, Port Mulgrave, Port Hood, Shelburne, Sydney, North Sydney, Sherbrook, Truro, Windsor, Wallace, and Yarmouth.

We beg to inform those of our friends who wish to forward, direct to our office, the amount due us, or to make payments in advance for their papers, and have no means of doing this but by letter, that if they would prefer doing so by Post Office Money order, they can get such order for any sum under and up to \$10, on payment of what they desire to send and five cents additional, at either of the above offices; for an order up to \$20, ten cents are charged, and so on up to \$100, for which sum an order would be charged fifty cents. The Money order so obtained is then enclosed in a letter, and no further risk is run, as there might be in sending bank notes. This mode of transmitting money is a great public convenience, and there are but few who would not prefer it.

Another advantage of this method is that it is as easy to forward an odd sum of dollars and cents as an even number of pounds, and so avoid sending postage stamps in letters.

We hope our friends who do not make payments to our agents, will make use of this information as speedy as possible, and so enable us to mark payments of all that is due against their names on our books. We might then commence the New Year with a light heart, and pay cash for the necessary new type and material we are importing.

FRAUD! CAUTION!—We are informed that some of our Presbyterian friends in their new zeal for an *undenominational* (!) College have used various means to raise the amount required for the endowment of their professorships and governorships in Dalhousie, and have represented to parties belonging to other denominations that such professorships were not peculiarly Presbyterian and therefore that those belonging to other denominations might contribute towards the endowment and hold an equal claim in it with others. On this representation a considerable sum of money, we are informed, was subscribed by said parties, without any intention of placing it under the control of a Presbyterian Synod. This complaint having reached us, we cannot help thinking it a fraudulent means of making up what should have been obtained by our Presbyterian friends from among themselves. Whatever character the College, as a whole may sustain—and we can see nothing in it but Presbyterianism—surely the chair sustained professionally by separate denominations, or at least the funds provided through them, are denominational, and cannot be otherwise. The real character of such endowment has been pronounced to be denominational, by the President, as we understood at the St. Andrew's Church in this city, and it may be further known by asking what would become of the amount invested or subscribed should the "Dalhousie experiment" be pronounced by its managers a failure. In case of such decision and each member of its faculty were to go to his own place, Who then would have the appropriation of the funds so given towards the endowment of said denominational chair? Why, of course the Presbyterian body, under whose auspices it had been collected. We would not offer the slightest objection, but would rather commend the appropriation of money by those belonging to one denomination, to assist those in another, provided a fair understanding were given, or even if it were to raise up another strictly denominational College. But we hope that such fraudulent means as those referred to above will not be encouraged, but that they will be frowned upon, denounced, and exposed.

The folly of attempting to make the present effort to resuscitate Dalhousie anything more than a Presbyterian "experiment," may be easily shown by asking the question, "What would become of the College if the Presbyterians were to withdraw from it?" If some step were taken which proved to be distasteful to the Presbyterian body, so that they felt themselves compromised, or their