

SPOILED SERMONS.

This article shall be a compilation. Every minister can tell of sermons which, after having been carefully prepared, were spoiled and rendered ineffective, humanly speaking, in the delivery. Of a few such I have heard an account, and they will be interesting to many people who are at a loss to know why, now and then, their pastors preach in a way so much less interesting than usual. One pastor speaks as follows: "I have spent much time in preparation, reading sound books, looking up authorities, comparing different views and adjusting explanations and illustrations, and when the sermon was completed I regarded it as in every way satisfactory. But unhappily, before going into the pulpit Sabbath morning, a good friend came to tell me of the misbehavior of a member of the church. It unmanned me. I had great confidence in the delinquent, and to hear that he was so far below what I had thought, scattered the sermon in confusion through my brain, and it was in vain I tried to rally and rearrange it. Stumbling and blundering to the end, I sat down feeling miserable, concluding my effort was useless, and reflecting how bad a thing it is to hear discouraging stories just on the eve of going into the pulpit."

That is our experience, the moral of which seems to be that a pastor should not hear disheartening stories of his church and people when his brain is burdened with a discourse. A second record is somewhat similar. It is this: "I went to church one morning after having given unusual attention to my subject, and with the feeling that I had it thoroughly under control. But in the vestibule I met a person who greeted me with an unkind word. It was not intended to be unkind, but was a mixture of sarcasm and reproach with a seasoning of reflection and advice, all of which had to be patiently borne. A week day repartee, or even a casual retort such as might have been proper in any body but a preacher, might have acted as an antidote; but for me and at such a time there was nothing but to let the poison have its way. It took hold of all my nerves, grew more annoying during the preliminary services, and was bad enough when the sermon came to make it dull, disconnected and pointless. But for that good Christian, who had not learned the excellence of sweet speech, my sermon might have been a joy and a benefit." That is a second rehearsal, the lesson of which is that while people should always speak pleasantly and encouragingly to their pastors, they should be particularly careful to do so in the vestibule of the church on Sabbath morning.—United Presbyterian.

For the Christian Messenger.

THE NEW ACADEMY BUILDING.

Dear Mr. Editor,

The Committee to whom the above object has been committed desire to be thankful not only for contributions in the shape of money, but for cheering words as well. Not a few of these have come to them during the last few days. From letters received from different parts of the country, full of sympathy and promising help, it is apparent that the denomination mean that the building shall go forward. And the Committee heartily join in the resolve. They have not relinquished the work, nor do they mean to until, by the blessing of God, it is finished and paid for. Much larger results would have already been reached, but for the great depression of business, especially in shipping circles. With the improvement of the times help will come from many who now find it impossible to do anything. Several of our ministering brethren have kindly consented to act as local agents in their several fields of labor. Bro. Coburn will operate in Annapolis County where he hopes to raise upwards of \$500, and doubtless he will.

Please allow me thankfully to acknowledge the receipt of the following:

Isaac Blair, Truro.....\$ 30.00

Great Village Collection.....4.00

Richd. Nelson, Acadia Mines.....1.00

Allen McDorman.....1.00

A friend, Wolfville.....1.00

A friend, St. John.....40.00

Previously acknowledged.....1730.44

Total \$1807.44

For the Committee,

D. M. WELTON.

P. S.—There are now indications of a work of grace in connection with these Institutions. This evening I at-

tended a crowded and deeply interesting meeting in the Academy Hall, at which about a dozen of the Academy students arose asking for prayer.

D. M. WELTON.

The Christian Messenger.

HALIFAX, N.S., FEBRUARY 17, 1875.

A GRAND DISCOVERY.

The Presbyterian Witness has discovered that the representations of baptism in the Roman Catacombs are "indicative of sprinkling and pouring, but never of immersion," and that the baptismal fonts found there "are invariably too small for immersion." This discovery, too, is made at a time when learned men of all Christian denominations have acknowledged, and do acknowledge, that apostolic baptism was immersion, which continued to be the general mode for thirteen centuries—longer still, in England.

Our contemporary should be aware that in collecting evidence from the Catacombs on any subject, dates are of the greatest importance. It is easy to say that a representation or an inscription is "attributed" to the second or third century, but proof is scarcely ever at hand.

In the present instance, however, let it be granted that representations of baptism by pouring or sprinkling (we use the common language without admitting its correctness) are found in catacombs of the second or third century; what does it prove? It proves that corruption had already shown itself—and at Rome, the fountain of all corruptions. Some of them had forsaken the New Testament and given heed to human inventions. The same tendency to declension had already taken place in other respects, as is apparent from the writings of Justin Martyr.

When it is said that some of the fonts were "too small for immersion," it is forgotten that they were far too large for sprinkling, and that in such fonts the candidate was immersed in a kneeling posture, the administrator standing outside, and pressing forward with his hand the head of the candidate till the immersion was complete.

But here is a Catacomb baptistry of another kind, and more original. "The Catacomb of San Ponziano contains the only specimen still extant of a primitive subterranean baptistry. A small stream of water runs through the cemetery, and at this one place the channel has been deepened so as to form a kind of reservoir, in which a certain quantity of water is retained. We descend into it by a flight of steps, and the depth of water always varies with the height of the Tiber. When that river is swollen so as to block up the exit by which the stream usually empties itself, the waters are sometimes so dammed back as to inundate the adjacent galleries of the Catacombs; at other times there are not above three or four feet of water." (Northcote's Roman Catacombs, p. 137.) Just enough, you see, for a complete and comfortable immersion.

THE MISSION OF BAPTISTS.

Is it yet accomplished? Are the different denominations of Christians so far agreed as to the proper position of baptism in their systems of divinity or as to who are its proper subjects, to make further examination unnecessary. No, the various bodies of Pedobaptists are still as far from agreeing with one another on the subject as ever, and perhaps the diversity becomes greater than ever. Recent writers finding themselves embarrassed by the incongruities of their systems and Bible teachings have sought to elucidate the subject, but, instead, have only made what was confusion before, still more confused.

A Presbyterian writer Dr. MacRay has recently discovered that baptism is not to be regarded as an act of obedience to the command of Christ, seeing that he only gave his commands to the baptizer. He therefore supposes that the regarding of baptism as an act of obedience implies a "putting the ordinance upon legal grounds," and therefore that such view becomes subversive of Christian faith.

Any one not encumbered with the idea of Infant Baptism and at liberty to read the Acts of the Apostles and give the plain teaching of the examples found there, would easily perceive how they understood the command of Christ. Whilst He told his disciples to go and baptize, Peter boldly and plainly said to the

converts on the day of Pentecost, "Repent and be baptized every one of you." If this is not a command it would be difficult to find one. Here then is one point on which it is evident that the Mission of Baptists is not quite accomplished. The errors attempted to be engrafted on the plain teachings of the Word of God call for constant exhibition of the truth as it is in Jesus on this subject as well as many others.

AN ICE-BRIDGE ACROSS HALIFAX HARBOR.

The long continued severity of weather has operated on Halifax harbor, nearly the same as it has on other Atlantic ports. Nine years ago the ice formed across sufficiently strong to form a safe bridge, but it is upwards of thirty years since it was so completely covered and strong as it is now. From the cold stormy Monday of last week there was a considerable quantity of ice made, but it had not become fixed till Friday last, when the steam-ferry boats stopped, and the crossing was effected by means of small row boats about a mile north of Dartmouth at a charge of 25 cents each person. This was effected for a while at some risk and much discomfort to those who ventured. Towards night the ice changed its position and filled up the open space, closing this mode of intercourse between the city and its younger sister. On Saturday morning the ice-bridge across the harbor was completed and people walked over without hesitation or danger. The cold continuing on Sunday, and it being a clear bright day thousands of people enjoyed the walk across on the ice. The line was almost continuous for a large part of the afternoon and presented a most picturesque appearance from either side.

On Monday morning horses and sleighs were plying on the harbor and taking passengers across at 20 cents each. Teams with heavy loads were crossing in the afternoon and the whole of yesterday. One team with thirty bags of bran and three men on it were crossing and broke through on Monday but they were got out without much difficulty.

Notwithstanding this change in the means of crossing, the port was kept open, seeing that the ice did not form close up to the shore on the Halifax side at the lower part of the city. The Allan steamer Newfoundland was employed all day on Monday in making channels and breaking away large blocks of the ice around and above George's Island.

A great deal of trouble and some danger was experienced last week in the harbor from the vessels at anchor being carried about by the drifting ice. Some of the buoys moored at different parts of the harbor were also removed and will need replacing as soon as the ice takes its departure.

The English Baptist Missionary Society have recently added to the number of their missionaries in India, a native of that country, the Rev. Joshua Chowryhappah. The designation service was held at Southampton on the 14th of January. After a highly appropriate address from Rev. J. Trafford, of Serampore,

Mr. Chowryhappah said he came into this country without the slightest idea of a thought of taking to the ministry, but to learn more of the English language and of theology, and coming among many kind Christian friends, he became a convert to Christianity. Thinking of his own brethren sitting in darkness, after two years appealing to God, he decided to go to India, so that this was not an impulsive action on his part; and, thinking of the teeming millions who were crying, "Come over and help us," he went trusting in the promise given to Jacob, "I will be with you." He asked them to remember him in their prayers, and he thanked them very much; and the brethren of God generally, for the kindness he had received, and concluded by hoping he might be a true servant of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Rev. F. Trestrail, a member of the Baptist Missionary Society for fifty-five years, and secretary for twenty-one years, said in the last chapter of the report lately issued by the Indian Government, there was information of the highest interest in reference to the mission work in that country. He thought it wise that the designation service should be held in Southampton, and he would rather have one native of India like the gentleman present than two Europeans (applause). Their friend would not have the great inconvenience of a foreign language, but he knew all the superstitions of his countrymen, the effect produced upon their minds, and he could stand up and speak to them as one of their own; and he also knew their habits and the degradation in which they have sunk better than it was possible for any European (applause). His health would be better in his own country

than any European's and he fervently hoped that they should never see his face there again (laughter), but that he would live to a good old age, and that he would be blessed by the manly and Christian spirit he had in view.

The following communication will speak for itself. It affords us pleasure to render any assistance to the benevolent and praiseworthy labors of Colonel Laurie:

To the Editor of the Christian Messenger,—

SIR,—Mrs. Birt expects to leave Liverpool towards the end of March with a party of children for distribution in Nova Scotia. Will you kindly give this the necessary publicity so that persons desirous of obtaining children from this party can make early application to me.

Yours obediently,

J. WINBURN LAURIE.

Oakfield, Feb. 12, 1875.

The Baptists of Scotland have been comparatively a small body. We are glad to find them assuming more combination, and presenting a somewhat more aggressive character. The Baptist Union of Scotland has been in existence several years, and has done good work in sending the Gospel to the more destitute parts of the Highlands.

We have been pleased to receive numbers Nos. 1 and 2 of the Scottish Baptist Magazine commenced with the present year, edited by a member of the Executive Committee of the Union.

A number of our readers are interested in the rise and spread of Baptist principles in the north of Great Britain, and will read with pleasure the article on this subject on our first page. After the labors of Messrs. Moody and Sankey in Scotland, we may look for large additions there to churches recognizing only spiritual qualifications for membership. We shall look with interest for this Magazine amongst our exchanges from the other side of the Atlantic.

We have received several communications respecting the differences existing between the North Baptist Church and the Church worshipping in Gerrish Street Hall, and have concluded that their publication is not now necessary for the promotion of the best interests of either of those bodies, or the good of any of the parties concerned. We trust that no further public controversy or discussion will be needed in reference to the matter.

A friend writes from Picton that the proposed Ladies' College in that town is not to be a Presbyterian Institution, but is got up by all protestant denominations. We have much pleasure in removing any incorrect impression we may have unintentionally given by our remarks.

LIGHT FOR AFRICA.

The Journal of Dr. Livingstone, recently published, is full of interest in a cosmical point of view, but far greater in that of the progress of Christianity and civilization. The various efforts that have been made to introduce the gospel to the central parts of that benighted land have all been signal failures. That of Mr. Moffat, the father-in-law of Dr. Livingstone, was the most successful and doubtless laid the foundation of his interest in that vast continent and its teeming millions. The closing scene of Livingstone's life is most affecting. The last words that he wrote, on 27th of April, 1873, were: "Knocked up quite, and remain—recover—sent to buy milk goats. We are on the banks of the Molilamo."

He had suffered much from fever and his remedies had failed to relieve him. His servant men Chumua and Susi had made a sort of palanquin, in which they carried him, having a cover to keep the sun and rain from his face. A party had been sent forward to Chitambo's village to get ready for his arrival.

On reaching their companions, it was found that the work was not quite finished, and it became necessary, therefore, to lay him under the broad eaves of a native hut till things were ready. Many of the people approached the spot where he lay whose praises had reached them in previous years, and in silent wonder. Slight drizzling showers were falling, and as they stood round him resting on their bows, soon as possible his house was made ready, and banked round with earth. Inside the bed was raised from the floor by sticks and grass, occupying a position across and near to the bay-shaped end of the hut; in the bay itself bales and boxes deposited, one of the latter doing duty for a table, on which the medicine chest and sundry other things were placed. A fire was lighted outside, nearly opposite the door, while the boy Majwara slept just within to attend to

his master's wants in the night. On April 30th, Chitambo came early to pay a visit of courtesy, and was shown into the Doctor's presence, but he was obliged to send him away, telling him to come again on the morrow, when he hoped to have more strength to talk to him, and he was not again disturbed. In the afternoon he asked Susi to bring his watch to the bedside, and explained to him the position in which to hold his hand, that it might lie in the palm while he slowly turned the key.

So the hours stole on till nightfall. The men silently took to their huts, whilst others, whose duty it was to keep watch, sat round the fires, all feeling that the end could not be far off. About eleven, p. m., Susi, whose hut was close by, was told to go to his master. At the time there were loud shouts in the distance, and, on entering, Dr. Livingstone said, "Are our men making that noise?" "No," replied Susi, "I can hear from the cries that the people are scaring away a buffalo from their dura fields." A few minutes afterwards he said slowly, and evidently wandering, "Is this the Luapula?" Susi told him they were in Chitambo's village, near the Molilamo, when he was silent for a while. Again speaking to Susi, in Soaheli this time, he said, "How many days is it to the Luapula?"

"I think it is three days, master," replied Susi.

A few seconds after, as if in great pain, he half sighed, half said, "Oh dear, dear!" and then dozed off again.

It was about an hour later that Susi heard Majwara again outside the door, "Bwana wants you, Susi." On reaching the bed the doctor told him to boil some water, and for this purpose he went to the fire outside, and soon returned with the copper kettle full. Calling him close, he asked him to bring his medicine-chest and to hold the candle near him, for the man noticed he could hardly see. With great difficulty Dr. Livingstone selected the calomel, which he told him to place by his side; then, directing him to pour a little water into a cup, and to put another empty one by it, he said, in a low, feeble voice, "All right, you can go out now." These were the last words he was ever heard to speak. It must have been about four a.m., when Susi heard Majwara's step once more. "Come to Bwana, I am afraid; I don't know if he is alive." The lad's evident alarm made Susi run to arouse Chumua, Chwopré, Matthew and Munyacré, and the six men went immediately to the hut. Passing inside they looked towards the bed. Dr. Livingstone was not lying on it, but appeared to be engaged in prayer, and they instinctively drew backwards for the instant. Pointing to him, Majwara said, "When I lay down he was just as he is now, and it is because I find that he does not move that I fear he is dead." They asked the lad how long he had slept. Majwara said he could not tell, but he was sure that it was some considerable time. The men drew nearer.

A candle, stuck by its own wax to the top of the box, shed a light sufficient for them to see his form. Dr. Livingstone was kneeling by the side of his bed, his body stretched forward, his head buried in his hands upon the pillow. For a minute they watched him: he did not stir, there was no sign of breathing; then one of them, Matthew, advanced softly to him and placed his hands to his cheeks. It was sufficient; life had been extinct some time, and the body was almost cold. Livingstone was dead.

One item from his diary written on his birthday shortly after Stanley left him indicates something of his spiritual exercises:

18th March.—Birthall; I again dedicate my whole self to day. My Jesus, my King, my life, my thee. Accept me, and grant, O Gracious Father, that ere this year is gone I may finish my task. In Jesus' name I ask it. Amen. So let it be, DAVID LIVINGSTONE.

It is gratifying to learn that already a movement is being made towards the establishment of a Mission in the land so recently explored by Dr. Livingstone. Only a week or two ago a meeting was held at Glasgow at which it was resolved to form a mission at Lake Nyanza, in Central Africa, to be called Livingstonia. Subscriptions were intimated at the meeting amounting to £4,200. Mr. James Young, of Kelly, and Mr. James Stevenson, of Glasgow, each subscribed £1,000.

This will be the finest monument that could be erected in honor of the great explorer. May it be crowned with success.

WILD CATS have been giving the farmers much trouble in Hants county. At Riwdon they have killed quite a number of sheep. They do not eat much of the carcasses but seem to attack them, and, after sucking the blood, go for another and another, and so on till, in one case, a farmer lost twelve sheep by this means. One of these animals attacked Mr. M. Carr, of Chaverie a short time since, and continued until he obtained the assistance of Mr. Joseph Armstrong who came with a gun and shot the animal. When killed it was found to weigh 47½ lbs.

A WINTER BUTTERFLY.—The editor of the Kentville Chronicle has been presented with a full grown butterfly, found by one of the officers of the W. & A. Railway.