

Christian Messenger.

HALIFAX, APRIL 9, 1856.

It is never our intention to enter into any differences that may occasionally arise among other bodies of Christians than our own, further than to keep our readers in the current of such ecclesiastical matters as are transpiring in our own Province or elsewhere. With such object in view we may now refer to certain differences which are existing among our Episcopalian brethren in the Parish of St. Paul in this city. The occasion is one of some two or three years standing, and relates to the formation of a General Synod or Diocesan Assembly of Clergy and Laity, to manage the affairs of the Churches of the Province, when such may be deemed necessary. It is in some measure analogous to our own Associations, the Methodist Conferences or the general Assemblies of the Presbyterian Churches. For our own part we cannot but deem such a body a wise and legitimate means of giving efficacy to and enlarging the sphere of Christian effort. Every thing, however, in such a case depends upon the rules by which such a body is regulated and restrained, and the due restriction and control of its managers. Now, both the Episcopal bodies in Halifax, and who form a very large, influential and highly respectable portion of the community, have on several occasions of late signified at public meetings of the Parishoners, numerously attended, their explicit determination not to have any participation in forming the Diocesan Synod, either by sending delegates or recognizing any of its acts. Such resolve is not, as we understand, prompted by any disinclination to the measure itself if properly restricted and defined in its powers, but from the apprehension of the Synod, as at present proposed to be constituted, necessarily conferring, notwithstanding it being made up of clergy and laity, by far too large a measure of Episcopal and Clerical power; especially as giving the Bishop of the Diocese a controlling power in the exercise of a naked veto, or dissent to any measure whatever agreed on by all the other constituent parts of the Assembly. At a general annual meeting of the Clergy, Church officers and Parishoners of St. Paul's on Easter Monday, 24th ult., and in several adjournments of the same, this question came on to be discussed, and has naturally created no small excitement in the community. The opponents of a Synod, by a resolution passed by a majority of 43 to 26, called on the Rev. Messrs. Bullock and Maturin, the two Curates of the Parish, and whose salaries are paid from Parish funds, to signify if it were their intention, in opposition to the expressed wish of the Parishoners, "to attend the Synod as members thereof or to carry out its resolutions, canons or regulations." To this request both the Curates replied in the affirmative, and in consequence of such determination were notified that in such case their connection with the Parish must cease after the expiration of a year. Both Messrs. Bullock and Maturin, however, have formally resigned their curacies and, altho' still we believe officiating merely provisionally, are no longer connected with the Parish. It is not for us to conjecture what may be the result of the difference between the parties. As we before observed our only object is to give our friends an impartial view of the present state of matters in dispute.

The last number of the Church Times contains a Report of the proceedings of a large committee, principally composed of several of the most influential clergyman of the Established Church, chiefly residing in London, who were organized at the close of the past year, to devise and report some plan for Union among Christians—or rather, it would seem, to endeavour to effect the reunion of some of the dissenting bodies with the Establishment. Their efforts, it appears, were first directed to the Wesleyan Methodists, who, altho' virtually, yet had never formally, separated themselves from the communion of the national church, and many of whom in the Mother country, it is said, would willingly renew the connection and adopt the Church service and liturgy. So many obstacles however appear to have offered themselves to anything like a cordial union, that there seems not much hope that

the project will succeed; or if at all, we should suppose, to a very partial extent. If no compromise can be devised as regards the Wesleyans, there appears a far less chance of succeeding with any other of the English dissenting bodies, whose modes of discipline, church government, forms of worship, and feelings are far less favorable to the Establishment. We are heartily for a perfect union among all sincere disciples of the Lord Jesus, but we strongly suspect that to make such a union cordial and useful, it must be confined to a co-operation, as far as possible, in the great object of extending the essential and saving doctrines of the Gospel, and leaving each section of the Churches of Christ to work, either separately or conjointly, as may best suit their own views. To so desirable a consummation we think the temper of the times is strongly tending among all truly Evangelical bodies, and we hail with heartfelt satisfaction the blessed effects that are already becoming manifest from the prevalence of such a spirit. Beyond this we much doubt whether Christian honesty will admit the sincere members of any body of believers to proceed. We think the divisions of Christian brethren in this world a great evil, but we fear there are much worse evils, and such as have and must inevitably result from all effectual measures intended to produce outward uniformity, for beyond this no human persuasion nor human power has ever yet succeeded in advancing. The whole history of the church, in our view, teaches us infinitely to prefer the lesser evils of a separation which must soon end with all other perishable things of earth.

One of our correspondents in the western part of the province, has called our attention to statements which have lately appeared in the "Presbyterian Witness," respecting the provision made in Nova Scotia for Collegiate Education, and the necessity which exists for a great Metropolitan University, and wonders why we do not reply, and "set those prating fools right, and make them treat us respectfully."

If our friend supposes our silence has arisen from any disinclination on our part to advocate the interests of our own institutions, or from any idea that our College at Horton is not fully equal to any that might be established by any combination in this Province such as that projected in the periodical referred to, we assure him that he is very much mistaken. Acadia College occupies a position far beyond the reach of any such attempts to depreciate Provincial Institutions. The high character it has attained and the efficiency of its present staff of professors are well deserving the confidence reposed in them by the denomination throughout the Lower Provinces.

Let it not be supposed that we were inattentive to the late abortive effort of some of our neighbours to make use of their political influence to obtain possession of Dalhousie College. We saw clearly that no interference on our part was necessary to prevent their success. We presume they are themselves now quite aware of the obstacles standing in their way being fully sufficient to preclude the most remote prospect of the accomplishment of their wishes.

The greatness of the prize seems to have had such a dazzling influence on their imaginations that they overlooked other objects standing between themselves and its attainment; and after a vain pursuit found that those upon whom they supposed they might rely, were not quite prepared to surrender that institution without some much greater inducements than they could present.

We are not disposed to step aside from our path for the purpose of attacking our contemporaries without some sufficient cause, and yet at the same time shall always stand prepared to vindicate the character of our institutions, and sound the alarm if any danger threatens them.

We have seen nothing on this subject under either of the two heads of the periodical referred to, which would live much beyond the date of its publication, and we should be only beating the air to put ourselves in an attitude of defence before we saw some sign of an attack worthy of our consideration.

As to the observations in opposition to the Bible Union in an article copied from an American paper by the Presbyterian Witness, we do not consider it necessary that Baptists should have the approval of Presbyterians, before they commence any

effort to translate, revise, or circulate the Word of God, nor do we believe any aspersion of those engaged in it will interfere in any way injuriously. It will rather excite enquiry, and like other attempts to stifle free discussion will only defeat the object they wish to serve, and induce closer examination of a subject so important as "the Bible faithfully translated for all the world."

With regard to assaults on the Bible Union from Pedit-baptists it is strangely inconsistent for them to attempt to lay the blame or give the credit of a new version of the English Scriptures to Baptists, when it is well known that Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Methodists and other denominations are actually engaged with Baptists in the work of revision. No, brethren, we have nothing to fear from,—we will not say our enemies,—but those who entertain other sentiments than those we learn from the Bible. Let us endeavour to cultivate a spirit of earnest enquiry, and a willingness to obey whatever commands we find left by our Divine Master for his servants, and we shall most effectually serve the cause of truth and righteousness in the earth.

Our churches will be much gratified to hear that the revival in Liverpool is still in progress. The following extract of a letter from a friend at that place, dated the 31st ult., affords the intelligence that "Brother Bentley's Church is enjoying a blessed revival. Bro. B. baptized 7 yesterday evening 5 young lads, and 2 young females. This makes 50 brought into the church in the late revival. Brother Hobbs spent the day at Milton, where he was expected to baptize several (2 or 3 I believe) in the morning."

Under present appearances we fear that the increase of our churches during the present year will not keep pace with that of the last or indeed of many former ones, for altho' there has been much occasion for gratitude to God for the almost unbroken peace and harmony that have prevailed throughout our churches, yet it has not certainly been a year of extensive revivals among them. Let us pray that He, with whom is the residue of the spirit, may revive the graces of his people, knowing that "the Kingdom of Heaven suffereth violence" and that, "the violent take it by force."

The Provincial Normal School

Has held its examinations at the close of its first term during the past week. We are unable to give a detailed account of the various exercises in consequence of want of space. We were informed, by a gentleman who was present, that the whole proceedings afforded him much satisfaction and shewed that very successful exertions had been made by all parties concerned, especially by Dr. Forrester and his assistants, Messrs. Randall and Mullholland, and that they deserved much commendation for their devotedness to the work.

First class Diplomas were given to only four of the students, Jos. H. Webster, Wm. Parker, Henry Waddell and Jeremiah Willoughby. These would each be entitled to a scholarship of £5.

Second class certificates were awarded to fifteen—nine females and six males. These would also be entitled to similar scholarships, provided they came recommended by a Board of Commissioners and pass another term at the Institution.

The examination on Agricultural chemistry was most satisfactory.

Life Assurance.

The principle on which these institutions are based has been increasing in popularity for some years past. It is now held that all who make a prudent use of the means at their disposal will include this with the other claims of their family, except for some very special considerations.

We believe that none of the various companies now formed for this purpose have a better claim to the attention of those disposed to assure, than the "Colonial Life Assurance Company," advertized in another column.

The London Chronicle speaks of it as follows:—

"This office, set on foot especially for the behoof of the Colonies, may be looked upon as the pioneer, as the popularizer of Life Assurance in the colonial appendages of Great Britain.—Figuratively, we may say, from all we know, that it was received with open arms by the colonists; and when we record the fact that in these nine fleeting years £30,159 has been paid to claimants in the different colonies, we think the reader will go along with us when we say that the directors of this office have done the British colonies good service."

We have been endeavouring to give as much of the Parliamentary proceedings as our space will admit. Some speeches have been delivered well worthy of being reported, but we must have excluded the actual business to have given only a brief sketch of them. The reports of debates published by authority are brought out so slowly that they are comparatively useless.

The summary we have given has comprised all the topics of interest in the debates. If, however, after the close of the session, we find in any of the speeches matter likely to interest our readers we shall not fail to give as much as our space will admit.

It is stated in the morning papers that the "Athenaeum" Temperance newspaper is stopped. We are not informed if it is more than a temporary suspension. We would recommend, however, if it be revived that its size and price be so regulated as to give some prospect of its affording remuneration for the labour performed upon it, and becoming permanent, or but little satisfaction can be expected by its patrons and the friends of the cause.

THE EDUCATION BILL with its clauses for separate Schools for Roman Catholics, seems to be quietly slumbering. Whether it will appear in the House of Assembly during the present session is to many a matter of doubt.

The Portrait of Rev. Edward Manning, an advertisement of which appears in another column is a handsome well-executed lithograph, and a striking likeness of that veteran soldier of the cross and pioneer of the Baptists in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. It will doubtless be obtained by many of our friends who cherish the remembrance of one who was so extensively useful in the cause of our Lord and Master.

THE REV. MR. ROBERTSON of Wilmot, has received the honorary degree of D. D. from the University of Aberdeen.

THE telegraphic despatch from New York brings up our European news to the 22nd ult., from which it appears that the Peace Conference were becoming daily more certain in their results—indeed that Peace was considered as virtually concluded. It was said that the ratification was expected to be signed on the 24th. Our own English mail which would have left on the 29th, will in all human probability bring us certain news of this most important and desirable event. Surely it will be abundant cause of gratitude that the devastations and horrors of war have been so soon arrested by that arm to which the nations of the earth must submit, however little they may perceive or acknowledge the interference. Nothing further appears to have transpired in regard to the specific terms of the Peace. It is by no means improbable that concessions will have been made, little in accordance with the sanguine expectations of many, especially among those who have for a long time cherished a strong belligerent spirit, and who may think no terms too humiliating to impose upon our enemy, who so recklessly provoked the contest, and has been the occasion of so much bloodshed and national loss. We doubt not however that the substantial ends of justice will be answered, and the peace of Europe ensured for a lengthened period of years.

The Empress of the French has presented the nation with a Son, who it appears is to bear the title of King of Algiers, in imitation no doubt of the act of the first Napoleon, who nominated his son the King of Rome. It is high cause of gratulation no doubt to Louis Napoleon—what the poor child's future destiny may be is another thing.

Nothing has been heard of the Steamer Pacific, all hopes of whose safety must now be abandoned.

Telegraph Despatches.

Merchants' Reading Room, April 2, 1856.

The Steamer Atlantic has arrived at New York. Liverpool dates to the 19th March.

Peace is considered as virtually settled. A "King of Algiers" has been born to France. British Parliament has adjourned over Easter recess.

Nothing new in American affairs. Breadstuffs dull, but without change from previous prices. Sugars buoyant and active. Consols 92 1-8. Money market steady.

APRIL 4.

The Cunard Steamship Asia, arrived at New York this afternoon. Dates from Liverpool, to 22nd March.

Treaty of Peace expected to be signed on the 24th.

No other news of interest.

Nothing of the Pacific.

Consols for money are quoted at 92 to 92 1/2.

Breadstuffs—Market dull—prices irregular and nominal. Corn declined one shilling.

Provisions—Prices unchanged.