

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

LETTER FROM ENGLAND.

DEAR SIR,

In entering upon the New Series of the "Christian Messenger," it may be interesting to you and to your readers, that I should exhibit in brief space some few of the facts which shew the position of the Baptist Denomination, in the old country. The view is by no means so interesting or encouraging as I would have it, and yet there are features which stimulate hope. The last census and our indefatigable statistical Secretary of the Baptist Union, enables us now to estimate pretty decisively our actual standing. Figures are not very inviting generally, but in this case figures alone can shew what is desired. Confining our estimate simply to England and Wales, there are 1935 Baptist churches. Of these the particulars are given of only 1348, and these report 120,073 members, or an average of about 89 members to each church. If we ask at what rate is this very small numerical total increasing, the answer is, I confess, by no means satisfactory. With all the agency employed—public preaching, Sunday-schools, tract distribution, visiting, village preaching, &c., only 14 persons per church in each year, on an average, are saved from the dominion of sin, and its present and final curse. This is a sufficiently saddening exhibition, when looked at simply in relation to the existing population. But it is very much increased, when it is known that for years past, the progress has been just about the same, although the population of the country has been increasing so rapidly. And it is worthy of observation that the rate of increase the last four years has been less than in any preceding four years, during the last 20 years. But I am forgetting myself, your readers will never thank me I am sure, for descending thus into mere details. Perhaps indeed I have written enough. If I have, they will not read further. Should they, or any part of them be sufficiently interested, they will read on, whilst I shew them a little more, of our actual position in the country here. Our Missionary Society, ought to be a centre of influence and attraction throughout the whole Denomination. But it is not. The income of our Society has made scarcely any progress, for many years past. By dint of considerable effort, it is kept up from year to year, at about the same sum. Now and then, an extra effort has been made, and an increase has been temporarily effected. But this does not account for the fact, that the whole denomination does not produce more than about fourteen or fifteen thousand pounds. One reason, however, is that there are nearly a thousand churches which never collect for the Society. If it be asked, Why is this? The churches themselves must answer. Perhaps they would refer you to their ministers.

But is there nothing better than this, you will say, to tell of the Old Country, and the Baptist Denomination? O yes, there is. It is an unmistakable fact that the Denomination is rising very much and very rapidly in the social position it occupies. The number of new Chapels opened last year was seventeen, and four others were enlarged in London. More particularly, the change in the character, situation, and number of our Chapels is most marked. I don't know what sort of Chapels you build in Nova Scotia, but our Chapels here are taking places beside the most elegant and finished specimens of Chapel Architecture,—or more properly too elaborate and expensive. But the Independents have gone so far in that direction, that we must needs follow them at a not very far off distance, in order that we may vindicate our claim to respectability. Right or wrong, it is pleasingly true, that we have in London, a greater number of Chapels. We have much larger Chapels, and very much larger congregations, than in any previous period of our history. In almost every case the new Chapel has drawn a congregation which may be counted by hundreds, whereas in the old Chapels they were often to be counted by tens, and this is just as true, where the same minister continues, as where a new minister has come. There are some new features also, in the ministry. In many instances, not only has open air preaching been largely practised during the summer, and very successfully, but in the winter months, ministers have superadded to their regular ministry a service in some Hall, Market Room, Assembly Room, or Theatre. Brown at Liverpool, Lord at Ips-

wich, Thattus at Halifax, and Stent at Hastings, are among the number of those who have tubs acted. The results are most abundantly encouraging. I know these facts will interest you, as shewing that there is vitality in the body, and that it is intensely active. And the proof will be increased, when I tell you that during the last two or three years, our Missionary Society have sent out, six new Missionaries, several of them, men of greatest promise, and there is now one other, just about to sail for Bahamas. The whole ten have not yet been provided for India, whom we have engaged to send out. But they will surely be provided. Mr. Underhill's mission to India is working most beneficially, and there is every reason to hope; that through his intercourse with and influence upon the missionaries, a stimulus will be supplied, which will not only render our position much more firm, but will open to us channels of influence, which will greatly extend the sphere and increase the results of our labors there.

I will stop here. If you or your readers should wish me to go on,—(and I suppose you will if they do) I will give you more of the same sort another day. Meanwhile with best wishes for your ever increasing usefulness and prosperity.

Believe me to be,

Yours very truly,
H. S. E.

Dec. 19th, 1855.

For the Christian Messenger.

Notes of a Begging Tour.

[No. 3.]

DEAR BROTHER,

My last letter left me in the coach on my way to Halifax from Truro. My friends there expected me, and had been told what was my errand. I had come for money. I told them I counted upon getting about £30 in Truro and Onslow. I was not sure but I would make it £50. They laughed at me. If I obtain £7 10s., I might consider that I and they had done wonders. I had unfortunately, it was hinted, happened there in rather a bad time. The Presbyterians who form the largest portion of the population were just making an effort in behalf of their college, I believe it was. The Methodists were also collecting, or had been, or soon would be, for some object; and as to the Baptists, I can't tell for how many objects they were continually asking support. This would have been somewhat appalling. But I have been at all sorts of places, at all seasons of the year, and never knew the circumstances of the case to be varied much. "We have so many calls." This is a sentence which one gets by heart, and cannot easily forget, he hears it so often. Nor is it without significance. True, you don't often hear it from those who are in the habit of responding to those calls. Ask a man kindly whether he gives something to all the objects of benevolence? Whether he responds to all the calls, when he makes this objection, and he will generally acknowledge that he does not. Because if he says he does, he is in for it at once. If he gives to all he must hand over a share to your object. If he does not, he is mounted upon the other horn of the dilemma. In the mean time we made our arrangements to hold a public meeting at the Court House on Monday evening. On Sabbath I had the opportunity of preaching the gospel in the Baptist chapel both morning and evening. At the close of the evening service I made a short statement respecting our progress in the Micmac Mission.

Monday was somewhat of a leisure day. I took the opportunity to comply with the kind invitation of the Rev. Mr. Forrester to visit the Normal School. I was pleased to see so many young people of both sexes, from all parts of the Province, with countenances beaming with intelligence, congregated there, listening to Mr. Forrester's instructions on the subject of a previous lecture.

I am not sure but I might almost say of my Lecture in the Court House in the evening as Bro. Hall said of his sermon at the Eastern Association, that it was "an hour and a quarter long, yet the interest did not flag." I am not sure, however, that the speaker is the best judge about the "interest flagging." Is it not quite possible that we may think we are having a "swimming time," when our patient courteous hearers are wishing heartily that we would have done "swimming?" and let them escape. Be that as it may, I collected about £25 in Truro for the Micmac Mission. I lectured in Onslow on Tues-

day evening Nov. 27. I did not do much there. My time was limited. I could not well go to Debert, and the weather was unfavorable. Nearly all I called upon gave, and seemed to give cheerfully. One man said after handing me a piece of silver, "I suppose the Roman Catholics don't often give you," I said, "No. Are you a Roman Catholic?" "I am," was his reply. "Thank you, was my answer, your donation is all the more valuable for that."

The reader will see that I wish it to appear that if I did not obtain quite £25 in Onslow, it was not from any want of interest felt in that place in the welfare of the Indians. This is assuredly my own view of the case.

But I have not left Onslow yet. I was requested to call at a School kept by a young man by the name of McCurdy, and was informed that the children were preparing an offering. I called accordingly, was ushered to the chair, and the teacher read an Address on their behalf, from which the following are extracts:—

ONSLow, N. S., Nov. 28th, '55.

DEAR MR. RAND,

"We are young scholars. Some of us went to hear your Lecture last night. We are glad that we went. Our teacher forgave us if we had not our lessons quite as well as we wished, because it was Missionary meeting."

"We send you all the money we could collect—(about 10s.) We wish it was more. We desire this letter to be translated into Micmac, and read to the young Indians. Perhaps you will please to send us a copy of the Micmac translation soon. We pray God to bless you and the poor Indians."

Signed on behalf of the School by the Teacher.
THOMAS McCULLOCH McCURDY.

To Rev. Mr. Rand.

Missionary to the Micmacs.

I thanked them for the Address and collection, and promised to comply with their request to translate the letter into Micmac, read it to the Indian children, and send them a copy; and lest they might not learn much after all from the looks of the language as to what it is like, I translated it and read it to them next day, giving them sentence by sentence, reading the Micmac and translating it back into English.

On Friday evening I had the honor of delivering a lecture to the pupils of the Normal School. Phonography and Phonetics was my subject. As I sat there on Monday looking and listening and reflecting, taking notes in Phonography, I could hardly help exclaiming to the pupils, or teachers you might call them. What a thousand pities that each and every one of you where not in the possession of the art of Phonography! Then the pencils and paper you hold in your hands could be turned to some account. And then you would, on resuming, or commencing the business of teaching, be able to disseminate one of the most important of modern inventions—a beautiful system of writing, by which the labor and time of writing may be easily reduced five-fold, and by a little extra diligence the pen may be made to keep pace with the tongue. And then again I wanted to say to the Lecturer, the Principal—and to all the Teachers of the Normal School; "Success to your efforts! toil on at your task; make the road to knowledge—the ascent of the hill of science, as smooth and as inviting as you can. But there stands at the basis of the hill—an almost impenetrable THORN HEDGE, in our abominable, so called Orthography. Adopt the Phonetic system. Give us a letter for every elementary sound, and let the same letter have the same sound under all circumstances, and spell every word exactly as it is pronounced. Then you make all easy."

On Friday evening I unexpectedly came upon the classes assembled in the Academy where they had been listening to a Lecture from one of their members on a kindred subject, Mnemotechny.—I seized the opportunity and offered to explain the principles of Phonography. The motion being put and carried, I mounted the rostrum. I did not harangue for an "hour and a quarter" this time, but the "interest did not flag," as I could see—I could not see much of any thing by the way, by the dim light of a few tallow candles. I am encouraged to hope my "feeble remarks" were not altogether in vain.

Like the Roman senator who closed every speech, whatever were the subject, with *delenda est Carthago*, "Carthage must be destroyed"; I did not forget to close my lecture with an "Indian melody," and the presentation of my subscription list—and got several donations. I obtained for our object in Truro and Onslow over £32.

Yours truly,
S. T. RAND.

Temperance.

For the Christian Messenger.

PROHIBITORY LIQUOR LAW.

OBJECTIONS CONSIDERED.

[No. 3.]

MESSRS. EDITORS,

Another objection to this law, regarded by many as a very formidable one, is, that it will tend, as they think, to diminish the provincial revenue. At this point of view the subject presents itself as a question of *gain and loss*.

That it is desirable to have a large revenue is unquestionable. The way, however, by which it is to be raised, should be regarded as a subject of attentive consideration. It may be augmented by means unjustifiable, and injurious to the pecuniary interests of the people at large. In such case it will be readily perceived, that the loss exceeds the profit; and consequently that such measure should be abandoned, as unwise, and prejudicial to the general welfare.

The inhabitants of a province may be fitly regarded as composing one large family and the government as the head. Let it be supposed, then, that one man shall make the following proposal to another:—"Give five pounds to be employed in measures adapted to impoverish and ruin your family, and you shall have one pound—it must be made up by themselves—to aid in supporting them." Would it not be indignantly rejected, with the inquiry, "Do you think that I am a fool or a madman?" One of these he certainly must be that would accede to such a proposal. The expending of money by a family in the purchase of needful and substantial articles of clothing and provisions, produces no diminution of the property possessed; but all that is laid out for rum, gin, brandy, &c., to be used as a beverage, is utterly lost. The cost, however, of the liquor is the smallest item in the bill of losses. The time, which is money, usually squandered in connexion with drinking it, the neglect and mismanagement of business subsequent upon this, the destruction of health, and frequently of reason, disqualifying persons either to labour or attend to any useful occupation, and involving heavy additional expenses, &c. &c., make up a fearful amount. What observant man has lived half a century in this country without noticing numerous instances in which families, once in affluent circumstances, have been reduced to abject poverty through the use of intoxicating drinks?

What is true with regard to a particular family, is applicable to the whole family inhabiting a province. The sending of money or products out of Nova Scotia, for the purchase of necessary and useful articles of equal value, does not diminish the amount of property owned in it; but all that is sent abroad for intoxicating liquors—used as a beverage—is absolutely lost: as are also the valuable materials converted at home into pernicious drinks. The place is unquestionably so much poorer. For every thousand pounds received into the provincial treasury from this source—paid by the people themselves—it may be computed that not less than five thousand are taken from the wealth of the province. The large amount thus expended annually, is not simply lost, but is devoted to the impoverishing and ruining of the inhabitants. It undoubtedly causes an immense waste of precious time, unfitting multitudes both physically and mentally for every useful employment, produces destructive riots and ruinous lawsuits, and occasions vast losses by extensive failures in business, disastrous shipwrecks, devastating fires, &c. &c. It fills our poor-houses, hospitals, prisons, penitentiaries, and insane asylums; and consequently subjects our parishes and counties to heavy taxes, and draws a great amount yearly from the public treasury. If, therefore a prohibitory liquor law should produce a slight diminution of receipts into the treasury, it would obviously effect a great saving of expenditure therefrom, while it would relieve the community from heavy burdens imposed on them through intemperance.

Moreover, whatever tends to drain the Province of its resources, must necessarily diminish the means whence the revenue is to be raised; but that which aids in retaining and augmenting the wealth of the people, increases the facilities for replenishing the public chest. When therefore the inhabitants of Nova Scotia become improved in their circumstances by deliverance from the ruinous effects of the liquor traffic, they will undoubtedly provide for their families greater supplies of useful articles on which duties