

Christian Messenger.

HALIFAX, MARCH 5, 1856.

AMID the floods of open ungodliness which in this, as in every other age, deluge the earth, the wide-spread latitudinarianism on the subject of religion so prevalent among the more moral classes of society, and what is still worse, the worldliness and unfaithfulness of large numbers of the professors of the gospel of Christ, there is one feature of the times that is highly cheering and delightful. We refer to the almost universal feeling among Evangelical Christian bodies, that their adherence to these distinctive differences, so long and so tenaciously cherished, have been a great and sore evil and hindrance to the cause of their common Christianity—an offence and stumbling-block to their own unconverted associates, and a by-word to the Infidel and the Romanist. We rejoice that various denominations of Protestant Christians, who hold the same great and fundamental doctrines of the gospel in common, and are only separated by distinctions and peculiarities of opinion, which they all admit do not affect the integrity of their christian faith, are coming together for the first time upon a platform on which each may operate within their own sphere, and at the same time cooperate with others, in "striving for the faith once delivered to the saints." We appear at last to be coming to the conviction—one that ought long since to have been arrived at—that it is infinitely more judicious and useful, more in accordance with reason and scripture, to unite heart and hand in endeavouring to effect, either in our denominational or conjoint capacities, what we all acknowledge to be a work paramount to all others, rather than contend with all the zeal of sectarian bitterness, to bring all others to think and act with us in all things. The proofs of the growth and prevalence of this good spirit are to be found at present throughout Protestant Christendom in the formation of numerous bodies and associations affiliated by the common ties of love for each other, and the souls of men, and pledged to carry forward the great work of disseminating the Scriptures, evangelizing the heathen, instructing the ignorant and enlightening the blind. Bible Societies, City Missions, Sabbath School Unions, Protestant Alliances, and Young Men's Christian Associations are some of the leading forms which betoken this truly Catholic spirit, and are consequently effecting a combination of the real disciples of Christ under whatever name they may be ranked, which, strange to say, has never yet thro' the long lapse of centuries since the first ages of Christianity, been understood or appreciated. Experience in ten thousand cases has taught or attempted to teach mankind, that exact uniformity or rather identity of opinion can never in this life be attained. Whatever semblance of it may at any time have existed, has only been brought about by persecuti. The bow-string has made every Turk a Mahomedan, the Inquisition, every Spaniard and Italian a Romanist. Satan has been too long successful in sowing the seeds of dissension among the real followers of the Redeemer. It is a happy omen for the church, even amid all the laxity and lukewarmness that prevail, that brethren are beginning to find out that there are common grounds on which they all may work, for what they all really most desire, instead of wasting their energies and making themselves a derision to their enemies, by bitter recrimination on points which they all allow do not really affect the bonds of Christian brotherhood. We are glad to see that our Young Men's Christian Association in Halifax is following the good example, elsewhere set them, of having a course of Discourses preached in the different pulpits of the metropolis, for promoting the excellent objects of the Society. We hail the labours of this Association as among the first fruits of the more enlightened views of Christian duty so generally awakened by the prevalence of the spirit which we so much commend.

It has often been remarked with much truth, that the ranks of Baptist Churches are replenished from those of all other denominations of Christians and classes of men, to a very large extent—perhaps one hundred fold—beyond what any other profession of Christians can claim as seeders

from the Baptist body, taking into consideration at the same time the fewness of their numbers in certain portions of the Christian world as compared with other religious bodies. Were we to turn over the leaves of our periodicals for but a very few years past, we might name scores of ministers of every other Protestant denomination, and some Roman Catholics, who have renounced their previous opinions and entered into the Baptist ministry. Among the most prominent of these is probably the Hon. and Rev. Baptist Noel, long one of the most popular preachers in the Church of England, and highly distinguished for piety and learning. But probably one of the most unexpected accessions to the Baptist church, is that of Mr. Sheridan Knowles, long celebrated as one of the first Dramatic writers of the day, but for some years past a member of the Baptist body, and occasionally a preacher. The following scrap from the London Baptist Reporter of December last, forcibly marks the value which he places on his present, as compared with his former views and occupations. We were much pleased, not long since, to read in one of the leading English secular Reviews, a very strong testimonial to the sincerity of Mr. Knowles' change of sentiments, and the integrity and worth of his private character.

MR. SHERIDAN KNOWLES, in a letter to the Morning Advertiser respecting a review of his work on the Gospel of Matthew, which appeared in its columns, says, with reference to his literary labours in this new field:—"Since it has pleased my God and my Redeemer—as I firmly believe it has—that I should put my hand to the plough, I would not quit my hold of it, or even look back were I sure that, by doing so, the mantle of Shakspeare himself would fall upon me. I can conceive no stronger temptation."

Since writing the above we attended a meeting at the Temperance Hall, on behalf of the Atheneum Reading Room. One of the gentlemen gave some very beautiful poetic and dramatic readings from the former writings of Sheridan Knowles, and in his prefatory remarks stated that he believed Mr. K. had now become a Presbyterian clergyman. We should not have noticed the slight inaccuracy, but having previously written the above, we thought it well to make this explanation lest it should be supposed it was given in consequence of that reference. He is Professor of Elocution at Stepney (Baptist) College, near London, or was some short time since.

THE CHRISTIAN INSTRUCTOR, No. 3, gives a review of a work on Polynesia, &c., in which is the following copy of a letter from the author to the Rev. P. G. McGregor of this city:—

"27, Belle Vue Villas, Holloway, London.
"MY DEAR SIR,
"On my way to this country from the South Sea Islands, I had the pleasure of calling at the island of Aneiteum in Western Polynesia, where I again saw your excellent and devoted missionary, the Rev. Mr. Geddie.
"In 1846, I was there in our Mission ship, and could not land on the island, the people were so wild and savage. All I did was to leave a native teacher. And now, Oh how great the change! What hath God wrought! Since my return to this country, I have issued from the press a missionary history of each of these islands in Western Polynesia; and hope the publisher will send you a copy. If you can get them circulated among your churches, I think they will encourage them in this great work, and otherwise do good. I have seen Rev. Mr. Gordon, sent from Nova Scotia to proceed to these lands, and hope we may yet have many such men as brother Geddie and he to aid in the great cause.
"With kind regards, and wishing you and your churches every blessing,
"I am, my Dear Sir,
"Yours very truly,
"WILLIAM GILL.
"Rev. P. G. McGregor."

A testimony such as this to the efficiency of the mission in connection with the Presbyterian Church of Nova Scotia will afford its friends much encouragement and satisfaction.

THE excellent article on Individual Responsibility in the C. M. of Feb. 13th, was from the fertile pen of our worthy friend, the Rev. C. Tupper. The signature was unintentionally omitted at the time. The subject is an important one, and the paper might be read a second time with profit.

The weather on this northern continent still continues severe, and Halifax harbour is almost the only one on the Atlantic Coast as far as Virginia, which is not frozen up. This of course will inflict much injury on trade.

THE Canada arrived on Friday morning last with the English mails. The latest dates are to the 16th ult. Our extracts will be found to contain whatever is most interesting. The Peace negotiations were progressing favourably and without interruption. Paris is fixed on as the place of deliberation and it was expected that the Conferences would open on the 20th ult. The peace is more popular in France than in England, but it is reported that it is very distasteful to the French army in the Crimea. It seems to be now generally believed that the Russian acceptance of the peace propositions was made in entire sincerity, and the anticipated difficulties in carrying out the terms of the propositions appear to dissipate as the Conferences approach. It seems uncertain whether Prussia will be admitted to a share in the proceedings, but it is generally thought not. The troops in the Crimea are in excellent health, altho' the weather there has been extremely trying. Unabated vigour and activity still prevail in the preparations for the spring operations both by sea and land, so that if unhappily the pending negotiations be broken up without effecting their purpose, not an hours delay will have been incurred in carrying on the War.

The news from India is generally favorable. The Santhal insurrection in Bengal has been effectually suppressed. A very destructive fire had occurred at Rangoon in British Burmah. Lord Dalhousie was very shortly to return to England. His successor as Governor General is Lord Canning, who is on his way to assume his charge.

Great dissatisfaction appears to prevail in the Austrian dominions, both in Germany and Italy, with the Concordat with Rome, and even the civil Government does not lend its aid to the Priests in enforcing its terms on the people.

The political aspect of Spain is rather unfavorable, and it is quite uncertain whether the seeds of discontent and revolt in that unfortunate country can be much longer effectually suppressed. Espartero, the leader, and in reality the very life of the present constitutional party in the Peninsula, has all his ability taxed to maintain things quiet. He unfortunately is almost the sole exception among the statesmen of Spain, of honesty and disinterested love for his country, but he is said to be wanting in decision and energy.

We have continued the report of the Legislative proceedings up to the latest possible period, altho' little has yet been done in the way of business, except in the Committees. The sittings of the House of Assembly have for the past week been chiefly engrossed with questions of general policy, involving that of the present Government, and several animated debates have taken place on the subject.

General Intelligence.

Fatal Railway Accident.

We regret to record the death of Mr. Elias Woodworth, by an accident which occurred on Monday last. About eight o'clock Mr. Woodworth and Mr. Feetham started from the Station, where some time had been spent in clearing the ground and freeing the points and crossings, taking with them no passenger Cars but only a flat Platform Car, with 15 laborers upon it, with picks and shovels with them for removing obstructions. About a quarter of a mile beyond the Three Mile House, perhaps ten yards of the track were covered with snow two or three inches deep. Probably assuming that there was no hard ice under it, he attempted to run through, instead of stopping and clearing the track as had been done in all other places. This fatal error in judgment cost the Engineer his life, and endangered the lives of others. Hard ice, extending under and beyond the snow, sent the engine off the track, down the embankment in front of Letson's Tanyard. It fell wheels up, in two or three feet of water. Mr. Woodworth must have been stunned by the fall and suffocated in the water. No man heard him cry. The Fireman, a lad named Corcoran, was badly scalded and was nearly 20 minutes in the water before he was rescued. Fortunately the rod which connected the Platform Car to the Engine broke, and the former was left on the road. But for this Providential disconnection the laborers (all of whom with the exception of one who broke his leg in leaping off) might have been killed or badly injured.

The Coroner's Inquest, which sat upon the body of Mr. Woodworth in the afternoon, brought in a verdict of accidental death. We believe there is but one feeling of sorrow pervading the community for the loss of a courageous, zealous and skillful officer. Mr. W. has left a widow and one son to mourn his irreparable loss.—Chron.

ON Wednesday last Mr. W. SCOTT, brother of His Worship the Mayor, and for several years the Grand Scribe of the Sons of Temperance in Nova Scotia, after a short illness, was called to pass from this scene of suffering and sorrow, we trust to enter his final state of rest. He was highly respected by all classes of the community, and will be greatly missed by the various societies with which he was connected. On Saturday afternoon a large number of merchants and others with a numerous body of the Sons of Temperance attended to pay the last tribute of respect to his remains, by following them to the grave. After the Rev. Mr. Scott had addressed the large audience in the Cemetery, Rev. Mr. McLearn read the beautiful and impressive burial service prescribed by the Order of which the departed was so devoted a member.

Two parties were out moose hunting on Tuesday, 24th inst., near the new Guisboro road, when a young man named Gough met with his death in the following manner. Having stooped down to examine some tracks in the snow, he was in the act of straitening himself up when he was observed from a distance by another person named Logan, and as it was becoming somewhat dark, was mistaken for a moose. The consequence was that he was instantly fired at, received the charge in his body, and died a few hours afterwards, leaving a wife and young family to deplore their loss.

FIRE AT YARMOUTH.—A Telegraph despatch at the Merchants' Exchange Rooms on the 20th inst., from Yarmouth, states that another fire occurred in that town at 4 o'clock same morning, which consumed one shop, one store, two houses, and two barns. Another house was partially destroyed, and one store was pulled down, for the purpose of saving another building.

ACCIDENT.—On the 22nd ult., while in the act of driving a team, loaded with cord-wood, down the North Mountain, Mr. William Troop, son of Mr. Whitfield Troop, had his leg badly broken.

NORMAL SCHOOL.—A public examination of this Institution took place on Friday the 22nd ult. The day was favourable; and in consequence the number of spectators was large. Several members of the House of Assembly had gone to Truro on the previous day in order to be present. These gentlemen, we are informed, expressed themselves highly gratified with what they had seen and heard.—Witness.

CORNWALLIS ELECTION.—The new Financial Secretary, Hon. S. Chipman, will be opposed by P. Pineo, Esq. It is, however, generally supposed that the Hon. Mr. Chipman will take the seat. Monday was the day of nomination.—Rec.

At a meeting of the Board of Health, held on the 21st ult., the following resolution was unanimously passed:—

That his Honour the Recorder be requested to prepare the draft of a Bill to be sent to Parliament to confer on the Board all requisite powers for such sanitary regulations as they deem necessary, with proper penalties to enforce the same, and for the appointment of Health Officer in the City and Port; for regulating the duties, &c., and for providing for his remuneration,—the Board being fully satisfied with the Gentleman at present filling that office, but being desirous to rectify what they deem an anomaly in Civic affairs.—Col.

The zeal of some of our Roman Catholic contemporaries does not appear to do them much good. The following from the American Celt, published in New York, shows how absurd is ecclesiastical interference in political affairs. In allusion to the coming Presidential election the Celt styles it "a struggle between the seven sacraments and the seven thousand false ideas which the fanatics disguise under the name of liberality." Upon which the Express remarks:

For the first time in the history of our beloved country, the seven sacraments are to be dragged into the political arena,—so that instead of slavery, and Kansas, and Missouri compromises and Wilmot proviso, the Romish platform is to be:—
Baptism, Communion,
Confession, Extreme Unction,
Confirmation, Holy Orders, and
Matrimony.

Candidates for the Presidency, we may expect, now, to be called upon to say whether they are sound on the sacraments,—not whether they are in favor of a high tariff, a distribution of the proceeds of the public lands, internal improvements, a Pacific railroad or any other of the ordinary politicalisms of the day.—Toronto News of the Week.

CHILD KILLED BY A RAT.—A boy of 8 years of age, at Goulburn Bay, P. E. I., night of 23rd ult., awakened his parents by his cries, when it turned out that the little fellow had been, during sleep, set upon by a rat the teeth of which had made an incision in the jugular vein resulting in death. The voracious vermin had already been destroyed by a faithful cat before any of the family came to the child's relief.

United States.

THREATENING FROM KANSAS.—Gov. Chase has communicated a special message to the Legislature of Ohio, on the basis of the following circular, which has been addressed to other Executives:

Lawrence City, Jan. 21, 1856.
To His Excellency, the Governor of Ohio:
SIR,—We have authentic information that