

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

System of Education

PURSUED BY THE MORAVIAN BROTHERS.

By Mons. Gustave Pèpe.

On the borders of the Rhine, between Bonn and Coblenz, lays the small city of Neuwied, capital of the old principality of Wied, belonging now to the Crown of Prussia. It is a lovely place, Neuwied, situated in the wine-gardens of the Rhine province Prussia, that interesting country, the smallest spot of which has its history. On the other side of the river, opposite Neuwied, stands a monument, to mark the spot where the French General, La Hoche, fell, *pour la gloire de sa patrie*. Lower down is old Andernach, with its time-braving walls and towers, erected, as its chronicle pretends, by Cæsar. Venerable ruins of once mighty castles standing upon vine-covered hills look grave on the waves of the Rhine, as if they would remind us of the vanity of earthly things. Neuwied, itself, is well known: noted more especially, as the residence of the Moravian Brothers.—Herrnhuter, Brueder, and Gemeinde, who have there one of their celebrated educational Institutions for the youth of both sexes. Who is not acquainted with the story of the Moravian Brothers—descendants of the Huguenots and the noble Earl of Finzensdorf, who founded and built in Silesia the city Herrnhut, signifying, under the Lord's care? It was many years ago on a fine bright day that I, holding my father's hand and followed by my good mother, entered for the first time the Institution for boys in N. We were presented to the director of the Institution, and I remember well with what feelings of anxiety I gazed upon the smiling countenance of that school-master king, who at that time seemed to me to be the most important man upon earth. We were guided by a friendly looking teacher through the whole Institution, and my mother, (a true Netherland lady, competent to judge), praised the scrupulously neat appearance of every thing seen. But the hour came at last, when I must say good bye to my dear parents. Ah, well I remember my mother's tearful eyes and her gentle voice of love and tenderness as she embracing me, whispered in my ear, "Don't forget your mother my child," slipping into my pocket a little green purse, containing two lustrous louis d'ors, she continued, "Write me very often, tell me how they treat you, and be a good and pious child." My father could only say, as he took my hand, "Adieu, mon brave garçon." The bell rang, the Captain gave the signal, the wheels began to move, first slowly then faster and faster, and the Victoria steamed down the river towards Rotterdam.

My intention, dear reader, is not to weary you with a dull recital of a school-boy's tribulations but to give you in as few words as possible an idea of the method of education pursued by these celebrated German Teachers.

At the time of which I speak there were 120 pupils and 8 teachers in the Institution, gathered from many parts of the world. That was a strange medley of Englishmen, Netherlanders, Germans, Swedes, Danish, Italians, French, Americans, and one colored person from the Cape of Good Hope. I have seen many Institutions but I never saw one in which order and authority were better preserved than in this. I cannot now recall one instance of irreverent behaviour on the part of the pupils towards their masters. I never saw that spirit of mutiny we find so often in other Institutions where the authority of the teachers appears in a very doubtful light. We were divided into six rooms, where boys of about the same age, from sixteen to twenty-four in number lived together. Each of these rooms had two masters,—one to superintend all domestic affairs, keep order, and be with us while taking our daily exercise, the other superintended the intellectual training of his pupils, watching carefully our morals, striving to form in our hearts right principles, thus fitting us to be good and useful men. This master (who had also to teach a certain branch in the Institution) spent most of his leisure hours with us; he assisted us in our work; he played with us as if he had been a boy like ourselves, he told us many wonderful tales, he was our confident, consoler and adviser in all our little griefs, but also,

"A man severe he was, and stern to view,
I knew him well and every truant knew;
Well had the boding tremblers learned to trace
The day's disasters in his morning face."

The first principle of the Institution was to neglect nothing conducive to the health of its pupils. We all slept in one large hall; rose at 5½ o'clock in the morning, spent a half hour in cleaning our boots, washing and dressing; at 6

o'clock breakfasted, which consisted of white-bread and milk; at 6½ o'clock we assembled in the house-chapel for morning prayer, accompanied with a sacred song and the organ; from 7 till 8 o'clock we were required to remain quietly in our desks to prepare for our recitations; from 8 till 12½ o'clock we spent in reciting, with the exception of half an hour, in which we took a second breakfast, consisting of bread and fruits; we dined at 12½ o'clock, at one table, and to prevent all silly conversation during dinner one of the boys, standing upon a stage, read, in an audible voice, a passage from one of the German classical writers; after dinner we spent an hour in a large park belonging to the Institution. Every pupil who entered the Institution procured a spot of land, tools, and flower-seeds, and amused himself in laying out a little garden. There was, however, in this thing, no compulsion. The manner in which these gardens were kept, was an index to the character of their possessors. I knew a little countryman of mine who rented a small piece of ground of one of his neighbours in addition to the piece allotted him, and with the taste and assiduity of his nation laid out a miniature park, which was greatly admired; another, a Scotchman, I believe, year after year planted turnips, carrots and onions, on purpose to sell to the cook of the Institution. At 2 o'clock our recitations began anew; at 4 o'clock bread and fruits were distributed amongst us, after which we went into the garden, or took a walk, the occupants of each room walking by themselves, or went, if in summer, to bathe in the Rhine, the art of swimming being taught by a master; at 7 o'clock took our supper in the general dining-hall, then retired to our rooms; at 8 o'clock were requested to prepare our written exercises; and at 9 o'clock we had evening prayer, preparatory to going to bed. Wednesday and Saturday afternoons we were exempted from all study, and usually made excursions into the country. Each pupil had a place for his books, &c., &c., and not only was he obliged to preserve perfect order but also was taught to exhibit a taste for harmony and elegance in all his arrangements, so that a book out of its appropriate place gave cause for a reproof from his master. Cleanliness and a certain modest elegance was constantly before us. I cannot help remarking that it is a great mistake on the part of those with whom education is entrusted to neglect this important point. Impressions received in the school-room often follow us through life. An uncleanly and distasteful looking school-hall and corresponding accompaniments are often associated with a demoralizing influence. Idleness and disobedience were punished not by separating the offender from his comrades, he was obliged to remain with them whilst they talked and played, but he was forbidden to join them in any of their recreations, he accompanied his companions in their excursions but was obliged to follow at a given distance.

It is one of the educational principles of the Moravian Brothers to teach few branches, but to thoroughly educate their pupils in what they do teach. This is a general rule of all continental schools, and you will hardly find a Gymnasium on the continent in which so many branches are taught as I found announced in the catalogue of a N. S. Academy; but I would also state, that on the continent we do not find so many universal geniuses as we often meet here. A man on the continent does not know a great variety of sciences, but it is a noted fact that he is thoroughly acquainted with his own language and its literature, and that he possesses an extended knowledge of the few branches he professes to know. Why is it, that the European continent produces more real savans than any other part of the world if it be not because the attention of the individual is not scattered to the four winds of heaven, but concentrated upon a few objects? The branches taught at this time in Neuwied were: the German Language and its literature, one Modern Language, Arithmetic and the elements of Geometry, Algebra, Latin and Greek (not for pupils under 14), Geography, General History, Natural History, Drawing and Singing,—Religion taking the precedence. The way in which these branches were taught was as practical and simple as possible. We had few books, and the teacher himself was quite independent of books. We were taught Arithmetic without a book, the teacher dictated examples, which we committed to memory. In Geometry he pursued the same course. If time and space permitted I would prove the efficiency of such a system. When Socrates and Pythagoras taught had their disciples big books? History does not inform us, the probability is, that they had not. History, which in many schools is but a mechanical committing to

memory, without soul, was there considered by every pupil as a charming recreation, and I enjoy recalling these delightful hours when our eyes were fixed upon our master, from whose lips poured a stream of eloquence, inspiring us with a longing for truth. In Geography our memory was aided by a detail of interesting peculiarities of the countries, the names of which we had to remember. Great attention was given to the singing, and the expressive and melodious German songs we learned in this school were carried by us into all parts of the world.

In one particular the Moravian Brothers differed essentially from almost all other schools: each pupil was classed according to his attainments, so though in one branch he might be in the junior class, yet in another he might be in the senior.

There are many things to mention but time and space will not permit me to say more, I will only add that the cheerful festivities and the journeys we made during the vacations, accompanied by our teachers, have a place among the sweetest remembrances of my life, and it is with a deep feeling of gratitude that I recall these happy memories.

Acadia College.

For the Christian Messenger.

College Agency.

DEAR BROTHER,

We have rainy weather to-day in this place, I therefore avail myself of the opportunity to let my friends know the place of my present operations.

In the first place traveling is very bad—heavy and disagreeable. I have twice recently journeyed across the North Mountain, preaching and soliciting aid for the object of my solicitude, and have done something in the Valley called Pleasant.

Deacon Parker was the first to respond here, he gave a portion to swell the scholarship began by his brother James, at Billtown, to be denominated the "Major Nathaniel Parker" Scholarship. This extensive and honourable family of Baptists, which has in its connection between 12 and 20 ministers of our denomination, will doubtless make up several hundred pounds, for one scholarship would be like a drop in the bucket to such a host.

Our devoted Brother Isaiah Shaw gave his obligation for £40, repeatedly expressing gratitude to God that he had given him the ability and will to help his cause in this way. A few days after giving the note he handed me £5, which was endorsed on the back.

Among others I called on Mr. Jeremiah Bligh, to finish up a "Bligh" Scholarship swelled to £75, he treated me kindly but demurred to my appeal, still there was something so agreeable and frank in his manner and conversation that I was encouraged to plead. While conversing on the subject he took my subscription book, and saw where Bro. S. gave 5s., and then 12s. 6d., and then £10. Mr. Bligh said, "I must get rid of you as quickly as I can lest your demands increase." The requisite document was prepared and signed forthwith, and the "Bligh" Scholarship completed, after which I took my leave.

Other sums of less magnitude have been received and will be accounted for.

I intend setting out for home this month, having been absent nearly five months.

Yours, in the labour and patience

of a College Agent,

A. D. THOMSON.

Berwick, Cornwallis, April 6th, '58.

For the Christian Messenger.

American and Foreign Bible Society.

DEAR BROTHER,

Rev. J. M. Harris, of Ithaca, New York, informs me by letter, that he took subscriptions last summer in the following places, viz: Hantsport, Horton, Cornwallis, and Nictaux,—for the American and Foreign Bible Society, for the purpose of supporting a Bible reader in this province, when a suitable person could be obtained. I hereby notify, that according to his direction, I will receive such funds, and hold the same, subject to the order of the above Society. I would be thankful to have the name and acquaintance of a suitable person for the above named service, as no one is yet engaged.

WILLIAM BURTON.

Hantsport, April 3, 1858.

For the Christian Messenger.

Donation Visit.

The church at Newport having made arrangements for a Donation Visit, the party met in agreement therewith on Wednesday, December

30th, 1857, at the Rev. Mr. Bancrofts, at Wodville, numbering upwards of eighty. A splendid Tea was served up by the good sisters, who had as usual come well prepared. After which Deacon Levi Dimock was called to the chair. The donation, amounting to £30, was then presented by Dr. William Denison, accompanied with appropriate remarks; also, a letter received from F. P., Esq., containing one pound, which was frankly acknowledged in a clever speech by Rev. Mr. B. Singing and prayer followed. Three pounds two shillings and six pence was afterwards sent in by persons who did not attend the party, making in all £34 2s. 6d., of which sum Twenty-two pounds sixteen shillings was in cash. On the 10th March upwards of twelve cords of good wood was added to the foregoing donation.

THOMAS SANDFORD.

Newport, March 29, 1858.

Religious Intelligence.

A NEW CHURCH was organised at Marsh Bridge, St. John, N. B., on the 29th ult. Sixteen members of other churches presented themselves for fellowship. The exercises were performed by Revs. E. N. Harris, James Ring, Samuel Robinson, I. E. Bill, and Wm. Goucher.

REVIVAL NEWS.

New York.

In this city the Baptist churches seem to be more under the blessed influence than most others. The first faint indications of the approaching work, so far as they can be traced, are found in the call for a union prayer-meeting which was signed in the cars on the Long Island R. R. by a number of our pastors, on their return from the sixty-seventh anniversary of the N. Y. Baptist Association, in May last. The influence of this meeting was excellent, and it did much to warm the hearts of those who gathered together, and led to the establishment of the Union Prayer-meeting, which is now in progress among the Baptist churches of this city.

NORTH CHURCH.—For more than two years they have enjoyed a steady continuance of religious interest, and baptisms have occurred in every month of the past twenty-seven, with but one exception.

NORFOLK STREET CHURCH, Rev. Dr. Armitage, pastor.—This church has shared largely in the blessed influences of the present awakening, and though no extraordinary measures have been adopted, and but few extra meetings held, the earnest united efforts of the church and pastor have resulted in the baptism of seventy-seven persons since January 1st, while more than forty others await the ordinance and a still larger number are manifesting the most serious anxiety for their salvation. The ordinary services are so crowded that hundreds are often denied admittance to the church.

One remarkable case of conversion is that of a young man, whose grand-father and uncle are distinguished clergymen. He has been for years engaged as a professed magician or juggler, but under the awakening influence to which he has yielded, he has sought advice of Dr. Armitage as to the best way to dispose of his magical apparatus that he may the more consistently serve the living God.

"BURTON'S" was probably never so crowded by any theatrical attraction, as it is now for the purpose of prayer. Those who start for the place a few minutes after the opening, are met by returning acquaintances who tell them there is no use in going—"can't get near the entrance."

BOSTON.—Although this city does not yet witness such scenes as are blessing New York, the religious interest is quietly extending, and throughout the city, meeting after meeting is opened, and at a union-prayer meeting held recently in Rowe street church, (Dr. Stow's,) a most excellent spirit prevailed. In one of the vilest portions of the city—the Black Sea—a prayer-meeting is in active operation. From all parts of the State come reports of the continuance of special interest, which is best shown in the fact that our exchanges report the conversion of over 2,500 in the Baptist churches of Massachusetts, during the past month.—N. Y. Chron.

They Come, They Come!

A gentleman from Cleveland, O., informs us that eight hundred persons have been recently received into the evangelical churches of that city. The number of conversions in New-Bedford, Mass., is estimated at six hundred, and at from 500 to 600 in Newburyport, Mass. It is said that the revival, for some time in progress at Rockaway, L. I., has had such an influence upon the community, that there are not more than half a dozen adult persons in the place who have not become members of churches. Among those who have been recently converted are three hundred fishermen. The Hartford Courant says of Connecticut, that "it would be easier to specify the towns free from a revival influence than to enumerate those which enjoy it." The Hartford Religious Herald learns "on good authority," that in one of the villages in Simsbury, there is not an adult to be found, who has not been converted.—Er.

EFFECTIVE PREACHING.—A shipbuilder, on being asked what he thought of Whitefield, replied: "Every Sunday that I go to my parish church, I can build a ship from stem to stern under the sermon; but under Mr. Whitefield I could not lay a single plank."