

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

The Sin of Tobacco-using. Waste.

It is wicked to waste any thing. This is one of the first lessons taught us. The child gets such an admonition when he throws his bread into the fire, that it remains undelibly impressed upon his memory. Were I to burn up a pound note intentionally, or throw a handful of cents into the sea, or even buy five dollars worth of tobacco, and throw it into the fire, what would people say? Suppose I buy a keg of Mr. Smith's "honey dew," getting credit for it, (fifteen pounds, he tells me is the value of the keg,) then I call the boys, and we collect some shavings, some old tar barrels, wheel the whole into the Parade, just opposite the Mansion house, and make a general bonfire of it, sending it up into the air, as an offering to the "Prince and Power of the air," "who worketh in the hearts of the children of disobedience," and all others generally who might relish the perfume;—suppose, I say I should do this, what would be thought of it? why it would be denounced as extravagant, foolish, mad. None but a madman would do it, or an extravagant monster bent on wanton wickedness and waste. But why? smoking tobacco in such a new style would unquestionably "do the smokers no harm," it would "keep up the trade;" it would "employ a number of men," and would afford an hours amusement on a sublime scale. But were even some rich gentleman, who might afford to squander his few pound-notes, to commit such an act, and give the above reasons as his motive, he would be denounced, and deservedly so by every intelligent person.

He would be reminded that the three five pound notes, thus cast into the fire and destroyed, would have purchased ten barrels of flour and might have been given to the poor. But a gentleman informed me the other day that his bill for cigars alone had amounted in one year to fifteen pounds sterling!—FIFTEEN SOVEREIGNS!! burned up in incense to—well, I will not say to Satan, for in a cause of this kind there is no need of either ostentatiousness or rashness—but to a habit formed, if not in this case, yet in hundreds of cases in open violation of the fifth commandment, and therefore unquestionably formed and fostered in harmony with the principles, wishes and temptations of Satan, and all unrighteousness. Whether my worthy friend referred to had or had not learned to smoke against his father's or his mother's well understood wishes, I cannot say; but the enormous cost, for nothing, induced him to abandon the habit years ago; nor has he ever regretted it. Another ponderous smoker, whom I well remember, and whose tobacco furnace was in constant blast all day, and a good part of the night probably, was currently reported to consume the value of five twenty dollar notes per year. I have been told of another smoker who says his cigar bill equals his flour bill. I was credibly informed the other day that so extravagant are many of the lumber men in their use of the weed, that after toiling all winter in the woods among the logs, sucking tobacco, they come out in the spring, not as the bear comes out of his den, after sucking his paws all winter, not fat and in good condition, but poor, with empty wallets, and in debt for tobacco. There are thousands of poor men in town and country, whose families are destitute of the common necessities of life, whose wives suffer from fatigue and cold and hunger; whose children go destitute of education, as well as of "corn and cotton," but who notwithstanding can and do, and suppose they must use tobacco. There are hundreds of professing christians, constant worshippers in the sanctuary, as their odious defilements of pulpit and pew bear ample testimony, to whom when you apply for aid to the cause of Missions, they turn you off with nothing or next to nothing, and assure you, and do so with truth, that they cannot pay their honest debts. But they can puff their tobacco smoke in your face, and ten to one but they can read you a lecture upon the extravagance of missionaries, and the uselessness of wasting money in trying to convert the Burmese, the Indians, or the French Acadians. They can chime in most harmoniously with Judas in snarling over the waste of what is expended in honor of the ever Blessed Redeemer; but they lift up their hands and open their eyes in astonishment when you tell them it is a waste, and a sin and a shame to smoke. Now we ask, and we claim a right to ask, for what purpose is this waste? In what one particular is the man who uses tobacco, better off than the man who does not use it? Select two cases. Bring me a man in health, who is, like myself, fifty-three years of age, and whose circumstances, in other respects, are as poor as my own. He uses tobacco. I do not, and never did. Now let us compare notes. He has, we will say, a good solid constitution. So have I. He needs no medicine. Neither do I. (Drugs are for sick people, not for those in health.) He eats his dinner, however plain and coarse, with a relish. So do I. His food sets well on his stomach, and the process of digestion goes on regularly, as do all the functions of the system, without causing uneasiness or pain, but, on the contrary, affording him pleasure. It is thus also with me. He can sleep soundly and sweetly, and awake in the morning free from all uneasiness, refreshed and happy. So can I. He has never been confined to his bed by sickness a whole day in his life. Neither have I. He can perform any reasonable amount of intellectual or physical labor, without exhaustion or injury. So can I. He can sit, if he chooses, alone, and enjoy himself communing with his own imaginings, as he puffs off the

smoke and watches the ascension of its curling wreaths. I can do the same, without the pipe. I can exercise my imagination. I can commune with the absent, I can pray, I can meditate on the great and inexhaustible treasures of wisdom and knowledge, revealed to us, and given to us in the works and the word of God. Wherein, then, I ask, is he better than I? And what better would I be where I learn to smoke, or chew, or snuff? None in the least, I am certain. And every honest physician in the land, of each and every school, allopathists, homeopaths, hydropaths, eclectics, &c., &c., and every other man of intelligence, whether he use tobacco or not, would concur in the decision. The conclusion is obvious. It is a waste of property. It is the use of the article which produces its necessity. Men hanker after it and need it, simply and solely because they foolishly and often wickedly began to use it. I say wickedly, because all who did so in violation of the fifth commandment, and the vendor will be amazed at the number who come under this class, if he will take the trouble to enquire, have undoubtedly done so. Of this more anon. The money spent in tobacco is therefore wasted. This waste is SIN.

A BAPTIST MINISTER.

For the Christian Messenger.

Dalhousie!

So I see, Mr. Editor, that the Presbyterians are trying hard to make sure work of it in the Dalhousie business. Four Presbyterian professors are already appointed. The other appointments will be suitably controlled, there can be no manner of doubt.

The Act was about the cunningest thing I have ever heard of. He who prepared it was a clever fellow, and no mistake. It looks like literality, as though the government meant to do the most generous thing possible; whereas it was intended, all the time, to put Dalhousie into the hands of the Presbyterians. They have been hankering after it a good while.

You have some 'cute men down at Halifax in the winter time. The manner in which that bill was put through the house was quite a caution. It was hustled through, as I am told, in a very quiet, quick sort of way. Some pushed it along, but silently, with a will; others were under orders to hold their tongues. That's how it has been explained to us here, by one who says that he knows all about it. May be it is true.

I hope the petitions will come soon. People of all denominations in these parts will sign them.

I saw a copy of the Act at our Squire's the other day. The eighth clause is a curiosity, I think. It says that "the Legislature shall have power from time to time to modify and control the powers conferred by this act." I don't know why this should be so particularly expressed; but it seems to me that the man who wrote the Act was afraid it would not satisfy every body, and so he put in that clause to show that the Legislature might mend it hereafter if they wished. It was very thoughtful of him.

They say that Dr. Tupper (the medical Doctor, I mean) was made a Governor of Dalhousie to represent the Baptists there. That seems strange, because the Baptists can have nothing to do with it. Perhaps, however, the Doctor will somehow take care that the Baptists are not misrepresented—for some people are very apt at that work.

I am, dear Mr. Editor, A PLAIN MAN.

Oct. 17, 1863.

For the Christian Messenger.

The first Annual Meeting of the Colchester County Sabbath School Convention.

According to notice, this was held at North River, Onslow, on Friday, Oct. 9th, at 2 o'clock, P. M. The meeting was called to order by the President of last year, Rev. D. W. C. Dimock, and after singing, and prayer by Rev. James Reid, Rev. T. H. Porter, Jr., was appointed Secretary pro tem.—the Secretary of the Convention being unavoidably absent.

After some introductory remarks by the President and the reading of the Constitution and Minutes of meetings held during the year, together with the letters from the Schools and the Statistics, the Annual Report was read by the writer, Rev. D. W. C. Dimock. This gave evidence of progress, and also indicated that there is still room for improvement.

The officers for the ensuing year were then elected, the place for the next Annual and Quarterly Meetings to be left to the decision of the Executive Committee, and timely notice thereof to be given through the Christian Messenger.

Brother Porter was appointed to prepare a

paper to be presented at the next Quarterly Session, and Bro. T. H. Rand, the Secretary, to an Agency requiring as thorough a canvass of the field embraced by the Convention as possible, in order to awaken a deeper interest and promote greater efficiency in our schools.

The Convention then recommended that a public meeting be held at 6 o'clock, in accordance with an invitation from the North River School, and after prayer by Rev. B. Scott the meeting adjourned.

On account of unfavourable weather and other unpropitious circumstances, the evening meeting was not large.

Brother Faulkner, the President, conducted the services.

After singing, and prayer by Rev. D. W. C. Dimock, he made some remarks, referring to his own experience in connection with the work which we were met to aid, and the advantages of such an organization as the Convention.

He then called upon the Rev. J. Reid, who spoke in his usual affectionate and interesting manner, dwelling principally upon the idea that the Sabbath School seeks the conversion of the young, through the presentation of divine truth.

Rev. T. H. Porter, Jr., then addressed the meeting, urging the necessity of laboring directly for the children's salvation rather than merely to impart instruction of a religious nature, and to keep up a feeling of interest in the school.

Rev. D. W. C. Dimock responded by shewing that we should aim to present saving truths in a manner likely to reach the heart, through the understanding, and eloquently set forth the blessed results that have flowed to individuals in connection with S. Schools since their first establishment.

Rev. B. Scott then spoke of the difficulty in many cases of ministers engaging in this glorious work, and very affectively urged some important practical thoughts upon the audience.

After some remarks by Brethren D. Blair and William Cummings respecting the good results attending such meetings, and the necessity of a fresh outpouring of the Holy Spirit to give success to our efforts, the meeting concluded with the Dismissal hymn and the Benediction.

T. H. PORTER, JR., Secretary, pro tem.

Brookfield, Oct. 17th, 1863.

For the Christian Messenger.

Our Public Schools.

The education of a country is evidently among its first interests, and should largely occupy the attention of enlightened minds. Two considerations, among many, should influence the opinions and conclusions of those entrusted with the direction of our Public Schools. One is, to supply, if possible, every youth with the means of acquiring knowledge; the other, to provide such means as cheaply as possible. Public Schools and Institutions of learning may exist, but if the expense of attending them be large, a large portion of the people are evidently excluded from the benefits. If the character of the instruction is graded to a low standard, for the sake of cheapness, no real benefit, but harm, must result. First we should aim to provide for our youth instruction of the highest kind, then, we should seek to bring this blessing to the largest possible number.

In giving a little attention to the Public Schools of this province, I think there is reason to conclude, that the above thoughts, have not, to a large extent, swayed the minds, now directing our Educational interests. A large number of the people of this country find themselves forced to conclude, that, after all, our Provincial Institutions, are costing a large sum whilst they supply the country with but indifferent teachers. That is, we pay by far too much for the men who are sent out from our Normal School. Interested parties may controvert this, but the fact is fixed to the minds of the people.

With all the demand for progress and improvement, which is heard daily, we may inquire what ought to be done? what can be done? who can suggest a scheme, less objectionable, because less deceptive? I have had an opportunity for knowing something of the men who teach our District Schools; the majority are from the Normal School and a few from the various Colleges. These last I believe generally give satisfaction, being superior men, better teachers, because better educated, and furnished for their work. Henceforth, we think, unless controlled in their choice by other influences, the people of Nova Scotia will look to the Colleges for their best Teachers.

With such things before us, we inquire of those entrusted with the education of the country: Whether the Colleges with a little aid from

the province might not supply at a cheaper rate a superior class of teachers for our District Schools? Dalhousie is now before the public; all denominations, but one are unfavourable to the proposed plan for opening it. We are told that it has a revenue of £900 per annum, I am not aware of the sum expended on the Institution in Truro, but believe it to exceed £2,000. A less amount than that sum, divided among the existing Colleges, would enable them so to arrange the instruction, as to supply teachers, well suited to this work, and cheaper for the province. A Board of Examiners might be appointed by the Government, and the apportionment to each College regulated by the report of this Board. Not only would this plan supply better teachers, but it would greatly benefit general education, by promoting a spirit of honourable rivalry, and stimulating to noble effort. To us the idea seems not only reasonable, but practical. Will the friends of education give it a passing consideration? Assured am I, that whatever relates to the education of the people is most important.

A FRIEND TO EDUCATION.

For the Christian Messenger.

Job ii. 9.

MR. EDITOR,—

I have often heard that passage quoted, which our good old bible puts in the mouth of Job's wife "Curse God and die," but I have never heard any very satisfactory explanation of it given. Perhaps one reason is, that it appears difficult to explain exactly what the idea was that Job's wife really did mean to convey when she gave Job this (to me) singular piece of advice. In my younger days I used to wonder at this strange custom among those people away over there in the land of Uz. It appeared to me, from this passage, that this was a method they had of getting rid of life—a sort of suicide, as though if a person should say—curse God—he would be sure to die, it would be certain death to him. Therefore Job's wife—seeing him in such misery, and supposing he would eventually die; after suffering a great deal, thus addressed him—"My dear husband, do you still hold fast your integrity—still trust in God, when you see he will not regard you, that this incurable disease that is tearing off your flesh, and preying on your vitals, will kill you, and me too, taking care of you, when all this is so apparent, why do you not "Curse God and die" at once, and thus put an end to all this misery and wretchedness that we endure?" &c. I do not know if other young people had any such vague ideas of the meaning of this passage, but it was some such undefined meaning that I attached to it, and that, when I quite a grown up child too. But older people, especially in these enlightened days, of course understand better—for instance, I lately heard a person (a teacher) say "he thought Job's wife was a regular termagant, and that this was only a common ebullition of her wrath, &c."

This was the explanation he gave, but I see the Bible Union, in these revision of this ancient book of Job arrive at quite different conclusions in the matter—They make Job's wife to say "Bless God and die," which in a foot note they explain as follows: "bless God and die—i. e. bless and praise God as thou wilt, yet thou must now die—thy piety towards God is vain—bless God, if you will, and die, for that is all it will profit you" &c. This was certainly a taunting reproach from the old lady either way, but perhaps if we consider the circumstances in which she was placed, we shall be better prepared to sympathize with her in her trials, and make allowance for her complaining. They tell us Job's disease was the "botch," like that described in Deut. xxviii. 35—incurable—consequently she supposed he must die, and leave her a lone widow,—she who had been the richest Queen in the East, now brought down to the lowest depths of poverty and wretchedness, as all their children and great property had been swept away as in a moment; their friends, too, had forsaken them. Hear his complaint: "But now they that are younger than I have me in derision, whose fathers I would have disdained to have set with the dogs of my flock."—Job xxx. 1. "They abhor me, they flee far from me, and spare not to spit in my face."—xxx. 10. Nothing was left to her but him, and he laying there in the ashes, scraping himself with a fragment of an old pot, but with strong confidence in his God, able to trust him in life and in death, should it come, rejoicing in this great fire of affliction, while she who had but just now been surrounded with every luxury, cared for by faithful attendants, and receiving the homage of all who saw her, was now worn out with care