

For the Christian Messenger.

Great Village, Dec. 2nd 1864.

DEAR BROTHER,

Having received an urgent invitation from the Baptist Church at Margaree, Cape Breton, to come and spend two months with them, I have made arrangements to do so, and shall leave home, (D. V.) on Wednesday the 14th inst., to go and see the brethren there and preach the Gospel to them.

I have been appointed, by the Board of Governors of Acadia College, to perform an Agency for that Institution, in the Eastern part of this Province, and would now give notice through the Messenger that in going to Margaree, I will pass through St. Marys, Guysborough, and the Strait of Canso, doing what I can in those places for the College, and will also do what I can in the Agency while on the Island.

Yours truly,  
J. E. BALCOM.

ADVERTISEMENT.

Educational Notice. (No. 3.)

MANY irregularities having occurred in the proceedings of the Annual School meetings, in consequence of imperfect knowledge and misunderstandings concerning the requirements of the law, and many Sections in several Counties having failed to provide for the support of Schools,

Notice is hereby given, that—

1. Measures will be adopted by the Government, upon the meeting of the Legislature, for the purpose of legalizing the proceedings of the Annual Meetings at which technical irregularities have occurred.
  2. Where it is deemed necessary, in order to complete the arrangements entered into at the Annual Meetings, or to make provision for supporting schools in sections, in which no provision has yet been made, meetings may be called by the Inspectors, till the 1st of January, 1865.
- Measures will be adopted by the Government to render the proceedings of such meetings legal, as if held on the 25th of October last.
- It must be borne in mind that Schools, unless organized under the Act, cannot participate in the Provincial grants, either of money, books, or maps.
- By order of the Council of Public Instruction.  
T. H. RAND, Secretary.  
Halifax, Nov. 22, 1864.  
Nov. 23rd. 4 wks.
- Tri W. Col., Chron., Sun, Recorder, Citz., Rep., Exp., Journ., Wit., Ch. Rec., Free Press, Yar. Her., Trib., Liv. Trans., Pict. Chron., Stand., Ant. Cask, C. B. News.—4 wks. Editorial Page.

Christian Messenger.

HALIFAX, DECEMBER 7, 1864.

WEEK OF PRAYER, 1865.

The British Evangelical Alliance have again issued their Circular and programme for the first week of the New Year. These occasions have heretofore been profitable seasons to many christian churches and people. It will, of course, be for the religious bodies to exercise their own discretion, as to whether they will adopt the course suggested, and as to how far they will observe the week—a week of Special Prayer. Circumstances may render it necessary in some places for some changes to be made in the programme.

We publish the Circular in full, and doubt not, many of our readers will enter heartily into the arrangement:—

PROPOSED WEEK OF SPECIAL PRAYER THROUGHOUT THE WORLD, JANUARY 1-8, 1865.

The time has again arrived to invite Christians of all countries to make arrangements for observing a week of special and united prayer at the beginning of the coming year.

Few movements of the Church of Christ have been more owned and honored of the Lord than these annual seasons of united supplications. The Evangelical Alliance, therefore, feel imperatively urged to renew their invitation, in the hope of meeting a yet larger response than in former years, and of obtaining still more abundant spiritual and temporal blessings.

The calls for prayer are loud and urgent; the claims of a perishing world increasing as they must with the readiness everywhere apparent to receive the truth; the assaults made against the common faith by a revived Romanism, and by modern forms of infidelity; the war spirit excited among nations professedly Christian; these and other considerations urge on true believers, while persevering in zealous, active effort to draw near to the Throne of Grace, and by united, continuous, and faithful prayer, to "prove God" according to his own Word: "If I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it."—Malachi 3:10.

"I will that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands without wrath and doubting."—1 Tim. 2:8.

The following topics among others are suggested as suitable for exhortation and intercession on the successive days of meeting:

- Sunday, Jan. 1.—Sermons on the agency of the Holy Spirit in the present dispensation.
- Monday, Jan. 2.—Thanksgiving for blessings upon individuals, nations, and churches, together with confession of sins.
- Tuesday, Jan. 3.—Pastors, teachers, evangelists, and missionaries.

Wednesday, Jan. 4.—The children of Christian parents, congregations, and schools.

Thursday, Jan. 5.—Sunday-schools, and all actively engaged in Christian work.

Friday, Jan. 6.—The abolition of slavery and cessation of war.

Saturday, Jan. 7.—The Christian Church: for increased holiness, activity, and harmony among its several sections.

Sunday, Jan. 8.—Sermons: The visible unity of the Church—"That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me."—John 17: 21.

JAMES DAVIS,  
HERMANN SCHMETTAU,  
Secretaries of the British Branch of the Evangelical Alliance.

COLONIAL UNION.

OUR numerous readers will doubtless expect us to take some notice of the great question now before the public, and which deservedly engrosses so much general attention—the Union of the British North American Provinces.

It is unquestionably a subject of the utmost importance; more so indeed than any that has ever yet been brought under public discussion since the first founding of the Colonies.

The space which our journal affords by no means admits of our going very fully into the matter, or commenting upon it in any degree to the extent it merits. That the rapid growth and development of these northern Colonies, and especially of our own, is bringing us hourly into closer contact and relation with each other and with foreign countries must be abundantly evident to all. The great question, therefore, is, can we stand still, or how shall we meet this altered state of things.

The General Outlines of the Plan of Federation, as contained in the Report of the Delegation, have been so widely circulated in all the papers, that most of our readers will no doubt be prepared to form some opinion as to how far it is calculated to meet the exigencies of our case.

As we have before remarked the whole subject is too extensive and too complicated for us to have fully made up our opinion on it. The general principles on which the Federation is proposed to be effected, has reference especially to strengthening the means of defence of the Colonies against foreign enemies; introducing uniformity of Intercolonial Tariffs, imports and fiscal regulations; the completion of the great Railway and other means of intercourse among ourselves and with other countries, and generally in placing the united Provinces in the position of a strong and united country, under the protection and as part of the British Empire. As a necessary and integral part of this plan, it is proposed to give the future Government as decided a monarchical bias as the nature of our colonial character and the sovereignty of the mother country would seem to require. The constitutional weakness and inefficiency of the form of Federal Government among our neighbors of the North American States in the event of a serious emergency, affords us a striking caution in this respect; for however well that Constitution may have hitherto answered for the speedy settlement of such a country, it has proved utterly inadequate to afford stability and permanence for governing a great and populous nation, endowed with all the instincts and powers of democracy, but without its indispensable checks and guards. As regards the defence of the Colonies against a foreign enemy, it is evident that should necessity arise, and who can tell how soon that may be, we should be compelled to meet the danger under circumstances never yet experienced.

The British Government have of late years repeatedly intimated that hereafter, with the greatly increased population of the Colonies, and the vast extent and requirements of the Empire, its land forces cannot be made available for our defence to the extent they have hitherto been. This is no doubt quite reasonable, and what we ought to expect. Prudence would seem to dictate that we should make timely preparations for our altered circumstances. It may be said that of ourselves we are wholly incapable of self-defence. Such may be the case, but we neither expect nor believe that we shall ever be thrown wholly on our own resources, but will continue under the protection of the most powerful nation of the earth. The present question is, are we better able, separated as we now are, to meet such a contingency, than if we were combined as one people, and acting with united heart and counsels. We think but one answer could be given, and that in the negative. Would we not, as separate Colonies, become a much easier prey for the cupidity or ambition of some neighboring nation?

One of the greatest hindrances to our Co-

lonial prosperity is evidently in consequence of the various and conflicting duties and tariffs which prevail in the different Provinces. This, no doubt, might for the present be remedied by the mutual action of the several Legislatures in equalizing fiscal enactments; but the question still remains,—could any permanent agreement be effected to insure such uniformity for all time to come? We doubt if anything but a more close and effectual union could accomplish so desirable an object.

There is no doubt but that the completion of the great Trunk Railroad leading to Canada and the United States, is a work that will not, under any circumstances, be long delayed, and that very considerable pecuniary liability must be incurred by us as well as Canada in this respect. We, in these maritime Provinces, whatever may be thought of the Union, cannot much longer tolerate being isolated as we now are from the neighbouring countries. The proposed Federation would at once expedite this great work; and whether as regards this or other objects, we look upon the matter of a larger amount of taxation as a thing inevitable at no distant period. In what respect will the contemplated union augment the burthen? Nova Scotia or New Brunswick cannot possibly remain as hitherto, in happy obscurity, apart from the complications of foreign politics and relations with other countries. To ensure the continuance of such a state of things something much higher and more effectual than the Chinese Wall must encompass our Provinces. But as regards the material interests of these Lower Provinces, we think our advantages are such as to ensure us, not only equal, but greatly superior advantages in the proposed union. Enjoying the nearest approach to the European Continent, with a vast seaboard filled with safe and commodious harbors, the most of them open at all times of the year, teeming with some of the richest and most extensive mines and minerals in the world, possessing exhaustless riches in our fisheries, and admirably situated for importing, manufacturing and supplying the rich inland countries immediately in our rear, and also endowed with great agricultural resources, what have we to fear from any measures that would enlarge our opportunities and stimulate our competitive exertions, or that would open a wider and more promising field to the genius, ability, and enterprise, of the youth of the lower Colonies? To us it would appear that Halifax and St. John must shortly become the two great warehouses of British North America, and surely if the heads grew and flourished the branches must grow and flourish with them.

In making these few observations we hope it will not be supposed that we are taking a blind and partial view of this great question. As thus far advised we are certainly favorable in the main to the leading principles of the union; many of our friends may form a very different judgment of the matter. As the question has now been brought before us in a shape which compels serious and prompt consideration, we have done no more than candidly and briefly to give our views on the subject.

The Report of the Delegation contains much that our limited space has precluded our touching on. The various details of the Plan are such as require and deserve very mature consideration, in order to enable the most experienced in such matters to make up even probable conclusions. They are and indeed must be in their very nature to a large extent wholly experimental. We may in a future number, however, offer some further thoughts on the subject, and consider the objections to the proposed Union that appear most obvious.

EDUCATIONAL MATTERS, AND THE "MORNING CHRONICLE."

We have no objection to any of the smart men who manage the Morning Chronicle making an editorial out of our articles occasionally, if it is done fairly and honorably. Our article of last week on Educational matters was intended to supply what we deemed was required, to subserve the best interests of the people in relation to that subject. These we consider of far higher importance than any party political ends, and we dare not trifle with them. We hold the editor of the Chronicle guilty of a piece of impertinence when he intimates to his readers that

"The article in the Messenger reads to us very much more like the production of the Superintendent of Education than of the editor of the Messenger. Prepared by whomsoever it may, it is evidently a cross between an apology for the framers of the Bill and a defence of the Act."

We would not have it supposed that any production of the pen of the Superintendent of Education would not be well worthy of

our pages, but to allow him to make such use of our columns, as our contemporary insinuates, would not comport with our conscientious feelings any more than we believe it would with Mr. Rand's. It may be the practice of some political editors to allow men to write up their own work in their columns, and defend themselves and the positions they take, under cover of newspaper editorials, but our code of morality is not broad enough to permit public men to do such things in the Messenger, whatever may be the practice, in that respect, in the Chronicle.

We hold it as a duty incumbent on us, and one from which we would not shrink, to discuss, from a christian stand-point, all our social arrangements, as occasion may require, and to shew how we believe they will affect the present and future well being of the country. This we have done, and shall continue to do, without regard to the party from which those arrangements may have emanated, or the persons who are now opposing or sustaining them. Our connection with education for the past quarter of a century, we think, whatever may be the opinion of the Chronicle editors, entitles us to speak for ourselves on that subject, without consulting any official personage who may happen to have that department in charge.

We claim no credit however for any of the revisions of our present law on this subject. A copy of the bill we were informed was sent to some of our neighbours for criticism, before it was introduced to the Legislature but we had no such compliment extended to us; and therefore feel no special obligations to use the Chronicle's elegant figure, to "nurse the poor little wretch"—the Education Act.

When the writer tries to give a different meaning to our language, from what a candid reader would put on it, we feel it right to administer a slight correction. He says:

"He (ourselves) more than insinuates that the worst feature of this Bill was that which characterized a Bill introduced some seven years ago by the present Chief Justice—a Bill which never passed into a law, but resulted in overturning a Government."

This we deny, we insinuated no such thing, unless our contemporary means that the supporting of Schools by Assessment is "the worst feature of this Bill." Is that his meaning? We should like a straightforward, honest answer to that question. We should then like to ask him another question or two. Is the editor of the Chronicle in favor of an Assessment for the support of Schools, or no? If he is, would he have it dependent on a vote of the people, or would he make it compulsory Assessment? As he has taken us to task, we think in all fairness he should favor us with answers to these interrogatories.

When Mr. Young introduced to the Legislature the Bill referred to, we expressed emphatically our approval of it. And if, now, we were to reject this one on account of its Assessment features, we should be guilty of as great inconsistency as our neighbor.

If this writer had read all that we have said on the subject of the Education Act, we can hardly imagine that he would have been guilty of the folly of styling us "the ingenious defender of the measure," or else he does so from pure love of mischief. Instead of our being entitled to that appellation, we are not sure that the editor of the Chronicle himself did not obtain some of the best parts of his late Educational articles, from suggestions in our own columns. At any rate, we have noticed, in our pages, some of the real defects and objections to the Law long before they were amplified and colored in the Chronicle.

Whilst we consider the School Bill far from perfect, we do not see that it would benefit the subject to persuade the people to dwell on its imperfections, and, because they exist, reject the good that it is calculated to effect.

Whether the Education Act is altogether impracticable or not, is yet to be proved. If it is applied in one Section, and affects advantageously the work of education there, it will shew, that it may, also, do the same thing in others. Its being inoperative in one section does not shew that it is therefore impossible to apply it to other places, under better auspices.

We doubt of any law of equal importance on our statute book, ever passed the Legislature with more general acceptance; certainly no party opposition was offered to it; and now we trust that it may be taken as an approximation to what is required. At any rate we should think it the height of folly for any Section to imperil the existence of a good school, for even a year, for the sake of opposing a law which is not wholly acceptable to all the inhabitants. We do not apprehend that with a proper adjustment of the Assessment Law there would be much injustice arising to any parties in supporting a good school in their neighbourhood under its provisions.