

Christian Messenger.

HALIFAX, OCTOBER 4, 1865.

Those who have not yet paid their subscription for the Christian Messenger, will much oblige us by sending it on immediately, as we are in great and pressing need of all that is owing.

OUR SCHOOL ARRANGEMENTS. THIRD ARTICLE.

We might confine our remarks, in these articles, to a few generalities on the benefits of education, and the dangers arising from a condition of popular ignorance, but, if we understand the present position of this subject, it requires something more practical to be of any value. Our new state of affairs in regard to education needs elucidating, and the law made known, in its details, and how it will affect the people.

It is much easier to discover mistakes after they have been made, than to avoid them while endeavoring to meet a difficulty.

Much care was taken, we believe, in preparing our present School Law to make its parts harmonize so that it should be as free as possible from incongruities. It has perhaps fewer inconsistencies than might be expected under the circumstances. The introduction of amendments in the passage of an Act through Parliament, whilst they may sometimes make it more acceptable to the members, and possibly to the people, yet the doing so is very likely to cause confusion, which is discovered as soon as it is brought into practical working. We had no opportunity of seeing the Act as it was passing through the Legislature, nor until a few weeks since—three or four months after it had become law,—and therefore have been unable to answer many of the questions put to us, respecting its provisions for the City of Halifax. We were informed in the Unionist of May 3rd, that the bill had passed both branches of the Legislature, with amendments suggested by "the leading gentlemen in Opposition in the Legislative Council." We have no desire to blame any parties in this matter, but an exposition of the law demands that we shall state the facts, as they are, with the hope that a remedy may be found for whatever is unsound or impracticable. As shown by an article on this subject in our last, there is a difference between the provisions of the law for Halifax and those for the other Districts in the province. A similarity exists between them respecting the two-thirds assessment, but there the resemblance ceases. Whilst the other Sections must not resort to assessment to make up the supplementary amount required, but must raise it by subscription, the city Section and District must, for said supplementary amount, levy an assessment upon the inhabitants.

This part of its arrangements we think is open to very serious objection, and such as we believe will be fatal to its operation. The tax must be levied by the Commissioners, and collected by their Secretary or his agents, "and in default of payment they (the said sums) shall be collected by warrant from the City Treasurer, as other City rates." The first call for this rate is to be made by the School Secretary, but the second by the City Treasurer, we presume, from a list of defaulters handed in to him by the Secretary.

It has been a subject of complaint that our water rates are made a separate tax from the poor, county, and other rates, and it has been suggested that a great saving would be effected by an amalgamation of these demands on the citizens. But what will be said when it is found that there are to be two School Assessments, one of which is incorporated with the poor and county rates, and another distinct one to be made by the Commissioners—two sets of officials to do parts of the same work—one of these a definite sum, but the other one an unlimited amount? If, instead of having this double assessment of the City for school purposes, the whole sum required were to be named to the City Assessor, at the proper time, it might be all collected with the poor and county rates, and the whole expense of collection would be saved.

This will be found, in practice, a grave matter, demanding the attention of the government and the citizens.

Having so far briefly stated our views respecting the mode of raising School funds in the city, we may give a few thoughts on the probabilities of expenditure. Wherever Free Schools have been established the common experience has been, we believe, that a very much larger proportion of the population have found their way to the School house than when fees are exacted of the pupils. In some parts of Nova Scotia, since the adoption of the plan of Free Schools, the increase of

pupils has been one hundred per cent, and in some places even greater. In consequence of the imperfect Returns from the Schools in Halifax we are without full data for ascertaining correctly what number of children are actually at School, but, we may make some approximation by a rough estimate of the number attending private Schools. Taking these at 500, and adding that number to the 2033 children reported in the schools receiving aid from the Provincial Grant, we have 2533. The actual attendance is we believe much less. This shows but one in ten of the population at school, whereas, in a properly educated community, there should be one in four, or at least one in six. Taking the latter number then there would be about two thousand more children at school in the City of Halifax than are now found there. Provision should be made for that number, by the Commissioners, at once,—before the first of November. The Commissioners—who are gentlemen probably as well suited to the work committed to them as could have been appointed—have a task before them of no small magnitude. We find by referring to the statistics of 1850 that there were at that date 2500 children in the City Schools, where there are now only 2033. Education then, it would appear, has not advanced in the metropolis in quantity; and, we doubt whether an enquiring into the question of quality, would not shew a like result. It will be for the Board to rescue our Schools from their retrograde motion and bring them up to a higher standard, or, Halifax will have a fair chance of becoming, what we fear it nearly approaches—one of the worst educated cities in British America.

If the same results follow the making of the city schools free as has been the case in other places, there will be an immediate demand for a number of additional teachers. If it should be asked, Who are these to be? we would reply, They ought to be the best the country can afford; and, if possible, not strangers imported from other places, who would probably step into other more desirable situations, as soon as they find them, but they should be men belonging to this province, who, making Education their profession, have prepared themselves fully to discharge its duties.

The Halifax Grammar School is, by the School Law, excepted from the property committed to the Board of School Commissioners. We have not space at present to notice this venerable institution, but shall embrace an early opportunity of doing so.

A FEW WORDS ABOUT OUR FUTURE.

We have scarcely treated our brethren and friends with proper respect, seeing that we have said nothing to them lately respecting the obtaining of New Subscribers. We believe that many of them are desirous of enlarging our list, as well for the benefit of their neighbors, as for the dissemination of truth and knowledge around them. To keep up our numbers it is necessary to have constant additions, seeing that the older people, we regret to say,—and sometimes the younger—are continually being removed by death; and unless new names are added, a diminution must ensue.

As the possession of the gospel demands efforts to make it known to others, so the benefits derived from superior information and knowledge involve the obligation to seek its diffusion amongst those without such advantages. Our agents, who render us essential aid, are, in this respect, great blessings to their neighborhoods.

The evenings are now lengthening, and there is more time for reading than in the long busy days of summer. It is well to commence early in making use of them. The beginning of Winter is the most favorable time for getting families to subscribe for a weekly newspaper. We shall be glad if our friends will be on the look out for opportunities of saying a good word for the Christian Messenger, where they find it is not taken.

We take the liberty of offering a few suggestions to aid them in doing this: The following are some of the benefits to be derived from a good christian family newspaper.

- 1st. It gives valuable information of passing events in the church and the world.
2nd. It contains much useful knowledge of which it would be disreputable and perhaps dangerous to old and young to be without.
3rd. A family newspaper is the cheapest educator. Young persons who read the Christian Messenger, either to themselves or aloud to others, cannot be considered ignorant, or, far behind the age.
4th. Readers of a religious newspaper are not so likely as others to be guilty of crime, and so bring trouble on their families and friends.

5th. The Christian Messenger is the recognized medium of the churches and every member ought to know all their official or other announcements.

6th. It contains truths which, with the blessing of God, may be the means of saving the soul.

7th. Those who have no newspaper of their own, often wish to borrow one from their neighbors. When the family of its owner wants it and it is not at home, they wish the borrower would become a subscriber.

8th. The value of real estate is increased by the intelligence of a community. The number of letters and papers passing through the post office is one of the best tests of this intelligence.

We are desirous of adding ONE THOUSAND

new names to our list before the end of the present year. This may be easily done, we believe by our friends beginning their efforts in time.

How few of our readers there are who could not get one new subscriber. If all would try, the thing would be done in a month.

By way of offering some inducement to those who have not subscribed, we propose to send the paper 13 1/2 months for the price of 12 to those who forward their subscription,—\$2.00,—in advance for the year 1866 before the 15th of November. At which date we will commence to send the paper to them. We wish to hear, however, as early as possible, that we may know what number of extra copies to print.

This will absorb the profits for the first year, which we trust succeeding years, when those subscribers have learned to appreciate the paper, will pay for.

By way of encouragement to friends to try and get as many as they can, we hereby offer a premium:

BUNYAN'S COMPLETE WORKS, IN 11 VOLS., published at \$12.00 to the person who sends us the largest list of new subscribers, (over 12) with the advance payments.

And, further, that none may be deterred by thinking they will be unable to get the largest list of subscribers, we will send AN EXTRA COPY FOR A YEAR to any person who forwards the amount for six, viz., Seven copies for the price of six.

To those who can get four new subscribers we will send either,

- A large size PSALMIST, or
A SMALL SIZE PSALMIST, bound in roan, or
A POCKET BIBLE of equal value.

New Brunswick Western Baptist Association.

The Rev. W. V. Garner in a letter to the Visitor on the late session of this body, states:

"The annual meeting of this body has just been held at Jackstown, and its influence 'for weal or woe' is now at work.—There was apparently, 'one heart and one mind.' Decisions were arrived at with such pleasing unanimity that we could readily appreciate the force of those words of the Psalmist: 'Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!' We regard this as the result of the introductory services, which were prayer and conference. Most of the brethren expressed in glowing and pathetic terms, the desire that nothing might be said or done to wound the feelings, and alienate the affections of any of God's children, and earnest, importunate petitions were offered for the aid of the Holy Spirit to this end; which aid was graciously given.

We were much pleased with the election of Bro. Hickson as MODERATOR for the ensuing year. This was a step in the right direction. With all due respect for the age and standing of the brethren who have generally filled this appointment, we must say that there are younger men perhaps, quite as well qualified to discharge its duties, who ought (occasionally at least) to be made the recipients of this honor. We do not write this in an uncharitable or fault-finding mood, but simply record it as our sense of what is proper and just. In this sense then, we would report that the choice of the Association this year gave us pleasure.

The letters from the churches, which were read on Friday morning, were, as a general thing, full of interest. The Lord has been pleased graciously to visit many of the branches of the "True Vine" during the past associational year. The tone of the letters savoured more of gratitude and joy this year, than for some years past. Many of the churches have been blessed with large, and, we trust, healthy increase of membership. Where clouds and darkness prevailed twelve months ago, the blue sky of hope is visible now; and the harps which were then on the willows, are now tuned to the praise of Zion's King. Why should it not always be thus? Why should it not be our privilege every year to record that Zion's cords have been lengthened and her stakes strengthened? The answer is in fact that while we have some kind of a desire for the prosperity of the Redeemer's Kingdom, we are not earnest in doing what we can for its realization. We forget that Christianity individualizes christian obligation, and the christian power, and that the church

will be prospered when its members overcome in their private warfare, and are inwardly at one with God. If our churches keep these solemn truths in mind during the ensuing year, and act accordingly, their delegates to Newcastle next September, will be permitted to report an unenvied degree of prosperity. Brethren, shall it be so?"

"On Friday morning, the Association sermon was preached by your correspondent from 1 Cor. xiii. 10. 'But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.' Theme—The progressive nature of christianity."

We learn further by the official report that the following brethren were officers of the Association: E. C. Cady, Clerk; B. F. Rattray, Ass't Clerk; Deacon Samuel Burt, Treasurer; Rev. B. N. Hughes, Ass't. Treas.

The Association is to meet next year at Newcastle, Miramichi, on Thursday, Sept. 20.

Steps were taken at the Educational meeting to put the Fredericton Seminary in thorough repair. The managing committee were authorized to arrange the tuition fees that they may agree more fully with those in Horton Academy &c." Mr. J. E. Hopper was authorized to collect funds for new-desks &c., a subscription was there opened which produced forty Dollars.

We learn from the Report on Home Missions that "little more than one fourth of the proposed \$4000 has been paid into the Union Fund." A strong appeal is made to the churches to endeavour during the remaining three months to raise the balance.

The Sabbath School Report gives the following statistics:

"No. of schools 34; No. of teachers 229; No. of scholars 1955; volumes 5643, and 3592-43 expended for Sabbath School purposes. Of the churches who reported to the Association this year, seventeen churches have returned no Sabbath School statistics."

On Saturday evening a deeply interesting social religious meeting was held; after which the Association adjourned.

A PROFITLESS SUBSCRIBER AND AN INCONSIDERATE POSTMASTER.—A few days since we received the following letter from Prince Edward Island, charged double postage by the writer! We omit the name and place, hoping yet to obtain something more satisfactory:

Prince Edward Island.
SIR,—Mr. A—K— has left this part some time we do not know where he is gone there is some papers laying at this office if you wish they can be returned you had better discontinuey then
I remain yours,
postmaster.

We give the letter verbatim et literatim. The writer's orthography might be considerably improved.

We do not know what instructions are given to Postmasters in Prince Edward Island, but in this province they are required to return to the publisher; apers for parties who have removed, if not taken away after fifteen days. Any postmasters, therefore, who neglect their duty in this respect, are very likely to be reported at head quarters, and we have confidence in the Postmaster-general that such would not be without effect. Our Postmasters here, are we believe, generally, amongst the most intelligent and reliable men in the community, and do their work very efficiently. Were there are exceptions, we hope the inhabitants will see that a change is soon made.

"TWENTY CENTS PER MEMBER."—The Minutes of Convention, which will be in the hands of the Denomination in a day or two, contain a resolution which has not yet been reported; but, which, we think worthy of early consideration. The income of Acadia College from the partial Endowment Fund, leaves but a comparatively small amount—say £350 a year—to be raised. On considering this subject at Berwick, it was moved by W. Faulkner Esq., and seconded by Rev. D. W. C. Dimock, and unanimously resolved:

"That it is the opinion of this Convention that the Ministers and Delegates, on their return to their several Churches, should bring the claims of Acadia College prominently before their congregations, and urge the necessity of raising annually a sum of not less than twenty-five cents per member, until the Endowment Fund is completed."

If this resolution were taken in hand, in time, and about the sum named by the Governors to the several churches, made up and sent on to the Treasurer, it would encourage those having this matter in charge, and shew them that the College has friends in many directions. We commend the matter to the brethren, thus early, that suitable steps may be taken forthwith, to have these collections made. If properly entered upon, we believe it may induce some to take up scholarships, and so hasten the time when the Endowment Fund shall be nearly or quite equal to the whole sustaining of the College.