

includes nearly all Christendom—may be as large-hearted as the men who have made essential to membership many other things quite as small and quite as questionable, and which no one can pretend to find reckoned in Scripture among the prerequisites of membership, largely a conscientious conviction.

(Continued in our next.)

Christian Messenger.

HALIFAX, MAY 31, 1865.

THE WORLD WISER THAN THE CHURCH.

A STRIKING CONTRAST was drawn by our Lord when he stated the melancholy fact that "the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light." No one who has lived to any purpose in the world, and observed the course taken by the two parties here spoken of, but must have seen that the statement is as true now-a-days, as it was when first spoken.

The recommendation which followed immediately after—"make to yourself friends of the mammon of unrighteousness," &c., as well as the whole preceding parable—of the unjust steward—shew, that our Saviour referred to the right appropriation of property, no less than to the diligent and faithful use of all opportunities of service to the Heavenly Master.

When we observe the amount of perseverance and diligent effort employed in prosecuting worldly schemes for acquiring wealth, even in lawful business, we can but admit that there is a vast difference between the operations of such parties and those of christian churches. In these respects christian people may well learn from the world lessons of practical wisdom, in laying their plans for the promotion of Christ's kingdom, and in adhering to them till the end sought for is secured; whether it be by doing good to individuals or by proclaiming the gospel at home and abroad. Business men, to become successful, must possess certain qualifications for their profession, and habits suitable for adapting them to its requirements. A vast amount of preliminary training and careful thought must be passed through before a merchant is able to form a correct judgment as to the best markets and most profitable times at which to buy and sell his goods. Great discretion must be used too in choosing the parties on whom he may safely rely in trading. With all possible discretion and diligence unless he be also an accountant, sufficient to keep his books correctly, he will find that confusion, in these respects, will result in embarrassment and failure.

It might be deemed invidious to apply these considerations to christian ministers and churches, and yet we think it perfectly legitimate to do so. Ought we to be less earnest, prudent, and wise in seeking for the true riches? Ought ministers to be less devoted to their work of saving the souls of men, than the men of this world are in heaping up the glittering dust of earth? Should the account books of the man engaged in "catching men" for eternity be less carefully kept than those which have a debtor and creditor account of the treasures gathered for a few days from the land or sea? No comparison can be drawn between the results of the labor of the two parties. In the matter of book-keeping, we think that ministers might greatly aid themselves in their work by applying a little practical wisdom in this way, in reference to the flock which they are accustomed to supply with the Bread of Life. We venture to affirm that not one in ten of the ministers of our churches have a list of the names of their constant hearers, and perhaps do not look over a list of the members of their churches more than two or three times a year. "The children of this world" must keep more accurate accounts of their business transactions or they will surely pay the penalty, sooner or later. We may suggest that in pastoral visitation the memory might be greatly aided by the pen.

It is not for us, however, to charge upon "the children of light" defectiveness in the adaptation of means to ends, or to suppose that they expect satisfactory results to follow careless and desultory efforts in the church or in the world. We would merely stir up their pure minds by way of remembrance. Their character must be what their name indicates—"children of light." This emblem of purity, knowledge, uprightness, and happiness may indicate the kind of influence which should be exerted by christian professors on the world around them.

Ministers and people may well enquire if these are the results of their labors? Is vice being frowned upon by you? Are you willing to pay the price of parity in the church by exercising wholesome discipline? Are means in operation in your midst to produce mental cultivation and improvement, or is there a growing indifference to educational progress in your neighborhood? We need not ask the minister if he is himself keeping up with the spirit of the times, and seeking to get the best thoughts of good men to impart to his people, and if he is availing himself of all modern aids to render his labours effective. The merchant does not despise the facilities offered by telegraphic, railway and steamship improvements, and the christian merchant who has to do with the Pearl of great price should emulate him in seizing the helps of modern appliances, to commend himself and his message to all men. He may have had limited opportunities of mental culture, but this should be no barrier but rather a stimulus to future efforts at improvement. We are all students-for-life in the school of this world, as well as in the school of Christ. When we cease to be so we soon become fossils, having reference to the past rather than filling our place as members of the great commonwealth of mankind. The faithful minister will be always trying to make his people better and more useful christians, as well as seeking to bring sinners to the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation. We do not apprehend that our Lord designed to teach that the contrast between the children of this world and the children of light must necessarily continue, but in teaching by example he intended gently to shame the latter into more thoughtful diligence in his service.

The fact mentioned in the passage above referred to, may well lead to the enquiry, How is it that with the deficiency of practical wisdom exhibited by the church there is any progress at all, made in the world by the gospel of Christ? How is it that the world and the great enemy do not triumph over the Cross? The only reply we can furnish to such inquiry is, that Christ himself is king in Zion, and by his own power and wisdom he makes the feeble instrumentality employed effectual, in accomplishing the purposes of his grace. So that even the wrath of man is made to praise Him, and out of evil is brought good. "God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty."

POPULAR IGNORANCE is one of the greatest evils which can afflict any community. It affects more than anything else their material progress, and by that means has much to do with the value of property. What is the most effectual method of accomplishing its removal, is a question which must be determined somewhat by the circumstances of the people. We have a law which proposes to answer the enquiry and to open the portals of the temple of knowledge to every individual in the land, so that he may receive at least the minimum amount of education, free from all restriction. Notwithstanding that this is the case, it may not be amiss to examine the foundation on which the law rests, and thus to assist our readers to take an intelligent view of it in its principles as well as its details. We propose to notice not so much the Act itself as the common ground on which General Education rests. Difficulties may be raised against the carrying into effect of measures for the promotion of education, but in a community where there is one prevailing desire to secure the best possible instruction for all the youth, and everything else is held in subordination to it, the difficulties will soon diminish, and ultimately they will altogether disappear.

An enactment may be made by the legislature, and when made it may be submitted to, but unless the prevailing sentiment is that the law is framed on principles of equity, and its provisions are calculated to secure the object of all good government,—the benefit of the governed,—it will produce uneasiness, vexation, and irritation, which will be ultimately damaging and disastrous to the cause, and will retard instead of promoting the general advancement.

Let the people be fully convinced that they receive an equivalent for the expenditure demanded, and they will not long object to the appropriation of any amount required for this purpose, as well as for the more material improvements of their locality.

Ignorance we regard as the fruitful source of vice and crime. Laws are but the embodiment of the wisdom of the people as derived from history and experi-

ence. Property is held by men only as they are able to substantiate their right to it for the general good. Their possessions are not theirs independent of the government of the country, but they are liable to taxation and such general arrangements as may be made from time to time for the benefit of the whole.

It is sometimes asked, What right have others to come and take money from any man's pocket against his will? and again, Why should I pay for the education of another man's children when I do not myself participate in the expenditure? The argument of such enquiries would set all law at defiance, as much as that of assessment for the support of Schools. It may therefore soon be answered by the principles laid down above. But with respect to the question of a school law, and the propriety of enactments for the support of schools, we hold that the fact of laws being placed on the printed page, every man, woman and child should have the opportunity of becoming acquainted with them, at least sufficiently so to enable them to respect and obey them. However poor a child happens to be, this—under every enlightened government—we think, is a privilege to which he is entitled, from those who make and execute the laws by which he is to be governed. The poorest man is bound to contribute his quota to the defence of his country, and surely he has some rights in common with his more wealthy and less dependent fellow-countrymen. Whatever may be said against our educational arrangements by mischief-makers, and those who would sacrifice the most sacred relationships to serve their own purposes, we hold that a legislature and government would be chargeable with serious dereliction of duty who failed to provide for at least the minimum amount of education for the whole people. Further, we deny the right of any parent to deprive his child of educational advantages. No man is justified in making such use of his offspring as shall prevent their obtaining the rudiments of knowledge, and allow them to grow up in a state of ignorance. Books are now a necessary of life—of civilized life,—and he who keeps them from his family is behind the age, an enemy of his country, and a drag on the progress which distinguishes us from the savage. Let us then hear no more of a man being at liberty to "do what he likes with his own." This is but another form of the expression uttered by Cain the murderer, "Am I my brother's keeper?"

Whatever may be found to be oppressive and unjust in our educational as well as other laws is matter for future legislation. It could not be long tolerated in any well-regulated community; but to evade the requirements of wise and just legislation, is both impolitic and criminal. We might add vast weight to these arguments by considering the subject in the light of christianity. The christian knows that laws far above all human legislation are given to us in the Book of inspiration, and that education is demanded by all to enable them to obey our Saviour's injunction, "Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me." Individuals, churches, and communities, may find in that Book the principles by which their conduct should be regulated. On this account, then, more than any other, there should be efforts made to give early cultivation to the minds of the young, and thus place that book within the reach of all, and render them capable of making an intelligent use of it.

We gather from the reports given of the recent Anniversaries in London that the Baptist Churches of Great Britain are coming to a more wholesome and consistent view of the Communion Question. The attempts made some time since by Pædobaptists to induce Baptists to stultify themselves, seem to have shewn the importance of greater union between the two great bodies—the "General Baptists" and the "Calvinistic Baptists." As the former practise restricted communion, they are likely to affect the latter, and weaken the sentiment in favor of open communion, which prevails amongst them. If we may judge from the chairman's address at the Baptist Union—a portion of which is given on our first page—close communion has not much hold on that body. The visit of Mr. Chow to the United States is likely to throw some light on the prejudice existing in England against close communion principles and practices.

Mr. N.P. Kemp will please accept our thanks for a copy of the Proceedings of the ninth and tenth Annual State Conventions of the Sabbath School Teachers of Massachusetts.

OUR SCHOOL LAW.—Anxious enquiries are being made for copies of the new Education Act. It should be in circulation without delay. A law such as this which the people have so much interest in, and which they have to carry into effect, should be published for general information.

DENTAL NOTICE.—We are requested to give notice that Dr. MACKAY will remain in Canning at the Village House, until June 15th, and will be in Kentville, at Mrs. Maloney's, from June 16th to 30th, positively no longer.—Firm of MACALASTER & MACKAY, 111 Hollis st., Halifax. pd.

NEWS SUMMARY.

THE principle item of interest received by the English Mail on Wednesday last, was the account of the opening of the INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION at Dublin. Our thanks are due to Dr. Honeyman for Dublin papers, giving a full description of the gorgeous ceremonies. The Prince of Wales was accompanied by a brilliant suite. It is computed that 30,000 persons was present on the occasion. Addresses were presented from the Exhibition Committee and the corporation of Dublin. The expressions of loyalty were full of enthusiasm, and sufficient to silence all the Fenians of the United States and Canada. A grand ball was of course given in the evening, and the city was magnificently illuminated.

In looking over the descriptions of what each country had sent, in the Dublin Freeman's Journal, we were a little disappointed to find only the following respecting this province. "The articles exhibited by the colonies will be found very interesting and instructive, and will amply repay a close examination. Nova Scotia exhibits a large quantity of stuffed birds of exquisite workmanship for which Halifax is so famous; also fibres, liqueurs, a section of the Pictou Coal bed, and a miscellaneous collection of the specimens illustrative of the peculiar industrial resources of the country."

This Province, however, is the one first mentioned. In Saunders' News' Letter of May 11th, a Dublin paper, the appropriations of the Colonies towards the Exhibition are given. Nova Scotia, in proportion to its size and population, has given more than most of the other provinces. It then states that "Nova Scotia has sent stuffed birds, a quantity of maple sugar, articles made of grass, and a stuffed head of that immense animal the moose deer, the size of which may be judged from the fact that this head belonged to one of only a year's growth;" and gives a brief description of the mode of hunting the moose.

In a general view such as that taken by these papers, the objects which catch the eye first are most thought of. The gold and other mineral resources do not appear to have been noticed as yet.

A slight accident occurred on the Holyhead railway, on which the Prince of Wales was travelling, en route for Dublin, and which was sufficiently near His Royal Highness to create some alarm. The two carriages in front of the royal carriage were smashed by the breaking of an axletree, but fortunately a coupling snapped in two, and thus the royal carriage escaped damage. The train was delayed for some time, and considerable alarm prevailed among the occupants of the carriages.

We perceive by the United States religious journals that the different religious bodies are preparing for a reconstruction of their different denominational organizations. It will doubtless be difficult for them to combine the portions North and South of the bodies, and bring them into harmonious cooperation. The religious men commonly entertain stronger views than others with reference to the differences between the two sections of the country. The Episcopal bishops in the South have published addresses enjoining obedience to the powers that be, and prayer for their rulers.

Beverly Tucker, one of the proscribed Confederate agents in Canada has published a long letter in the Montreal Gazette, asserting his innocence, and endeavours to shew that President Andrew Johnson was in all probability the instigator of President Lincoln's assassination. Booth's calling at Mr. Johnson's office eight hours before the murder took place, is quoted as evidence of his complicity. He (Tucker) denounces the whole trial as a mockery and foregone conclusion.

The charges against Dr. Blackburn of seeking to infect the northern ports with yellow fever, and the evidence of the principal witness is being published. However, two persons mentioned by him—Capt. O'Brien and J. C. Hill—of the barque Halifax, have published emphatic and indignant denials of certain parts of his testimony. We hope, for the credit of humanity, that the charges against Dr. B. will prove to be untrue.