

should have heard it. It conveys a broad principle, deeply laid in the depravity of the human heart. It bringing the evil to light in any measure be the means of removing its influence, the object of the writer will be accomplished.

Yours respectfully,  
REVELA.  
Wolfville, Feb. 27th, 1865.

For the Christian Messenger.

Our School Law.

Mr. Editor.

The great question, "Shall we have free Schools in Nova Scotia?" is shortly to be decided by our Legislature, I believe, as I understand the Act is to be amended. The subject is of very great importance and will test the patriotism and moral courage of our Legislators. The present Act needs amendment, but the principle "free Schools to all" is sound, and should not be meddled with, or in any way abridged.

I hope our wise men will so amend the Act that disappointed politicians of all parties, aided by vacillating imbeciles, will not be able to keep any section out of a School—a School free to all. That portion of the Act which relates to the building of School houses might be so amended as to extend the payment of the sum over a term of years. The Act could be framed so that when a majority in a School Section were in favor of borrowing a sum of money—say, from the Government or private individuals, they could do so and pay in yearly instalments with interest, or provide for a sinking fund, &c.

The machinery of the Bill needs to be simple and easily understood. If some such arrangement could be made, I believe nine-tenths of the opposition to the present Act would be overcome. As the present Act stands I believe a very large majority of the people in the Province are in favor, or rather would prefer it to going back to the old Act.

For the Christian Messenger.

Advertising Trickery.

DEAR BROTHER,

An English Reviewer sometimes begins his article thus:—"This is an extraordinary book." He then proceeds to shew that the work in question is "extraordinary," but not in a favourable sense. It may be extraordinary for its bad taste—its recklessness of assertion—its disregard of truth—its jesuitism—its impudence, &c., &c. All this, however, is overlooked by the publishers. The work is forthwith advertised in all the periodicals, and among the opinions respecting it appears the reviewer's opening sentence, and the Quarterly or Edinburgh is quoted as saying of the veriest, vilest trash, "This is an extraordinary book."

I had supposed that such rascality was confined to the publishers of sensation novels, and books of that class. But the last number of the Provincial Wesleyan shows me that I was mistaken. It contains an advertisement of Currie's Catechism of Baptism, signed by himself, and underneath appears the following:—

CONTEMPORARY OPINIONS.

"I never met with its equal. An exposure of its fifty pages would require a volume."—REV. J. M. CRAMP, D. D., President of Acadia (Baptist) College, Nova Scotia.

It is very true that I did write, "I never met with its equal." But what goes before? "This production contains many more misrepresentations than pages. For unscrupulous assertions—mis-statements, suppressions, &c., &c., it unquestionably bears the palm. I never met with its equal." The evident meaning of the sentence, therefore, was, that I had never met with its equal in those respects. Mr. Currie disingenuously wrenches the sentence from its connection, and represents me as using language in a sense entirely foreign to my obvious intention. I am sorry to find that a Methodist minister can stoop so low.

In one respect Mr. Currie is consistent. His advertisement is like his book.

Yours, &c.,  
J. M. CRAMP,  
Acadia College,  
March 4th, 1865.

For the Christian Messenger.

WOLFVILLE.

The following gratifying statements from a member of the Theological Class at Acadia College, respecting the Revival in progress at Wolfville, will be read with deep interest:

"We are experiencing a precious outpouring of the Spirit here, in which the institutions are sharing largely. As before stated in the Mes-

senger three persons were baptized on the 5th ult. At the meeting of the Church on the 19th ult. twenty-five were received, of whom ten were from the two departments of the Institution on the Hill, and on Saturday last eighteen in addition, six of whom were from the College and Academy, and four from the Seminary.

The ordinance of Baptism was administered at the Valley yesterday, when eighteen happy converts were buried in the likeness of the Saviour's death, and arose, we trust, to newness of life. The loveliness of the day added much to the interest of the occasion, and a great number assembled to witness the administration of the sacred rite. The work appears to be deep and genuine. Social and secret prayer seem to be the distinguishing characteristics of the revival, and of many a one who has been most bitterly opposed to religion it may now be said, "Behold he prayeth!" But few in the Institution remain unimpressed, and we look hopefully for the conversion of those few. God's arm is not shortened that it cannot save.

There are still a number of interesting cases of inquiry in each department of the Institution. May they be all led by the Spirit to give themselves unreservedly to Christ and rejoice with joy unspeakable.

Christians here feel strengthened by the assurance that unceasing prayer is going up from every corner of the Provinces for Acadia, and would place now before those who have power with God another subject of petition,—that from the number of those who have consecrated their talents to the Lord, some may be raised up to preach the glad tidings of the Gospel to the perishing around them, and some to carry the bread of life far hence to the Gentiles.

Wolfville, March 6th, 1865.

We also learn that among those baptized on Lord's Day last four were sons of ministers, one of whom was from Prince Edward Island. A grandson of Father T. H. Harding and a grandson of Father Edward Manning are among the converts.

Christian Messenger.

HALIFAX, MARCH 8, 1865.

Some of our readers, living at a distance from Halifax, may desire to know who the writer of the communication on our first page—the Rev. Geo. E. W. Morris—is. We take the liberty of informing them that he is a retired clergyman of the Church of England, living in Halifax, much respected by all acquainted with him. He was for several years Rector at Radwon and subsequently at Dartmouth.

It may seem somewhat late for Mr. M. to take up this controversy, seeing that the Sermon, to which he refers, was preached by Mr. Spurgeon early last year, and reprinted by us in August last. We nevertheless readily comply with his request, although we differ most materially from several of his statements. When writing on "Christian Baptism" last week, we little thought we should so soon see a verification of several of our remarks. It is not necessary that we should make any lengthened reference to the said communication. The discussion upon it by members of the Episcopal and other denominations has been pretty extensive in the mother country, where the Church of England is established by law. Letters and pamphlets by tens of thousands were published on both sides after the appearance of the said Sermon. It was not a little curious to observe the different sentiments that appeared from Episcopal clergymen themselves, some taking the same ground as Mr. Morris—giving two meanings to the word regeneration and the act of baptism, whilst others sustained Mr. Spurgeon's view and denounced the evangelicals even more strongly than Mr. Spurgeon did, for what they deemed their inconsistency. The view taken by Mr. Morris, as we understand it, is the very ground of Mr. Spurgeon's objection—that the Prayer-book and Church Catechism are calculated to, and do teach error, by what is there said meaning one thing at one time, under certain circumstances, and under other circumstances and at another time quite another thing.

We stated, when we re-published the Sermon, that we had been induced to do so not for the purpose of endorsing all its statements, or because the question had the same significance here, where the Church of England has no more claim than other churches to special consideration or support; but because the Church Record had published some severe strictures upon it and upon evangelical clergyman for fraternizing with schismatics. We thought it due to our readers that they should know what Mr. Spurgeon had really said in the said sermon. We are glad that, under the circumstances, we did so. It has awakened intelligent attention to the question of erroneous teaching on the subject of baptism, in the minds of others besides Baptists. There is nothing really new in this controversy. Many of our readers were deeply interested in it more than a quarter of a century ago. Mr. Morris, too, was then, we

believe, but little less concerned than the individuals to whom we refer, in the subject. We reserve comment on the closing paragraph of Mr. Morris's letter for another occasion.

EDUCATION.

THE SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT, &c.

The Report of the Superintendent of Education for 1864 is before us. This document has been anxiously looked for by many of the people of this province, as likely to afford some indications as to the truth or falsehood of the numerous statements which have been made in various parts of the country, respecting the working of our present law on the subject. By the acts of our legislators our political relations may be changed, and other alterations effected in the external position of the Province; these may indirectly operate on our social arrangements: but the question of Education comes into immediate contact with every family, and operates directly on the well-being of every individual, so that while the representatives, chosen by the electors, hold in their hands important trusts as regards the material interests of the country, they have far more weighty obligations to watch over in the enactments concerning the education of the rising race.

Mr. Rand has here given in a very succinct form, the information he has obtained concerning the operation of the law. On some of these matters the facts he has given tell a very different story from those which have been industriously circulated by the opponents of the Act. There has doubtless been great disappointment in many places in regard to the Schools under the new law. The alterations made in Sections in many cases operated against the Schools, and broke up the former arrangements of support. Whether it will be better to return again to the old boundaries or to retain those given by the revisors, will be for the several localities to determine. On this subject the Superintendent remarks:

"This, the laying off anew the School Sections, has been in some Counties a most difficult and laborious task, and, as was to have been anticipated, it has not been performed to the entire satisfaction of all interested. I have satisfactory evidence, however, that in the vast majority of cases, the duties of the Commission were judiciously discharged; and as the law makes ample provision for such changes as experience may prove to be necessary, there is nothing to prevent a proper adjustment of boundaries where improper divisions may have been made. Inspectors have been instructed to carefully re-examine the boundaries of Sections where dissatisfaction exists, and to bring to the notice of the Boards of Commissioners any cases of unjust or injudicious division."

With regard to the extent to which the provisions of the law have been accepted, Mr. Rand says:

"In order to place before the Legislature as reliable data as possible, by which to judge of the present condition of schools, I have solicited reports from all the Districts. The following is a summary of the results of the Annual Meetings held in sixteen Counties, Victoria and Guysboro' not having yet reported:

Table with 2 columns: Description and Number. Rows include: Whole number of Sections in the Province, exclusive of Halifax City (1419); Whole number of Sections heard from in 16 Counties (1009); Of this number, there were: That held no meetings (213); That refused to organize under the law (142); That organized under the law (654).

Of the last named, twenty-nine have graded schools in operation, embracing upwards of seventy-five departments.

Although these statistics are by no means exhaustive, they yet furnish a pretty correct exponent of the successes and failures of the Annual Meetings. In some Counties the law has been very generally acted upon, while in others, as Yarmouth and Shelburne, its refusal has been almost as general. Many sections which eagerly received the provisions of the law are yet without schools. This arises, in many instances, from the difficulty of securing properly qualified teachers; but in more, from the delay consequent upon providing necessary school accommodations for the anticipated increase of pupils. When it is borne in mind that two hundred sections were without any school houses; that of the number of houses reported, hundreds were in a bad condition; that nearly all the school houses in the Province were too small to meet the demands of Free Schools, and that there is ever a considerable reluctance on the part of the people to adopt new modes of action, the results of the Annual Meetings cannot but be regarded as highly encouraging, and as warranting the friends of public Education in cherishing an increased conviction that the great body of intelligent citizens is in favor of the reform now being effected in the mode of support and management of our Public Schools.

"The success of the law must, however, be gathered largely from the results attendant upon its operation in sections which have adopted and are faithfully carrying out its provisions. Were it in my power to present a complete statement of those results to the Legislature, I cannot doubt that they would surpass the expectations of all. In the absence of such, I may be allowed to state that the attendance on

individual schools has increased by 50 per cent., in some cases, and in others by 300 and even 400 per cent.

"Nor is this increase confined to any one county: on the contrary, it seems to be almost as general as the acceptance of the law. From knowledge in my possession I think I am warranted in saying, that, although there is a much less number of schools now in operation than at the corresponding period of last year, the number of children receiving instruction in the Province is but little if any less, probably greater. In one District, embracing sixteen sections, there are nearly as many children at school in five sections as were reported for the entire District on the 30th of April last."

"The activity manifested by Boards of Trustees in providing suitable school accommodation, furniture, maps, and apparatus, is altogether in advance of anything before known in the Province. In short, so far as I have yet learned, wherever the system of free schools has been adopted and is in operation, there are to be found in a greater or less degree, its beneficial and necessary results."

Mr. Rand makes a number of suggestions for amending the present Act, and rendering it better adapted to the necessities of the Province. Some of these are matters of detail. Others are such as would affect the whole working of the measure, and so become leading features in the law. Of the latter, under the head "Leading features of a new Act," he says:

"Assessment.—As before stated I would recommend that the Legislature pass a new Act, to come into operation next autumn. And the first requisite in such an Act is Assessment for the support of Public Schools. The present modes of support must fail to secure, as speedily as is desirable, both the establishment of a sufficient number of schools, and their harmonious and satisfactory operation. In fact, its provisions are to some extent calculated to defeat their own object. That assessment would vastly accelerate the general diffusion of education amongst us, can admit of no doubt. The results already flowing from the adoption of the present law are conclusive on this point. It is, however, unnecessary for me to rehearse the arguments in favor of supporting a system of Free Schools by assessment. These have been ably presented to the Legislature repeatedly, both by Dr. Dawson and the Rev. Dr. Forrester. The principle is already recognized in the law; it lacks only one thing—universality of application. Free Schools and Assessment are counterparts the one of the other. Until this indissoluble connection is frankly recognized upon the Statute Book, the foundation stones on which to rear an enduring superstructure will have never been securely laid."

"Poll-Tax.—The application of the principle of Assessment should be as equitable as possible. It would tend much to secure this if a poll-tax of one dollar should be required of all males twenty-one years of age, who may not be rated for real or personal property. This assessment should contribute to the yearly support of the schools, and not to the erection of school houses or the purchase of lands. These are permanent and tangible benefits to the section, and such tax-payers would, for the most part, be merely temporary contributors under this mode."

"A Three-fold Mode of Support.—The mode of levying the assessment should be such as to secure a provision for schools, even in the poorest sections. I believe that no better plan, in its leading features, need be devised than that which, for over twenty years, has been in successful operation in Upper Canada. In that Province each county is required to provide, in its general assessment, an amount for educational purposes equal to the Provincial grant. These two sums form a portion of the Teachers' salaries, and the remainder is raised in the several sections by local assessment, subscription or rate-bills, as may be determined by a meeting of the inhabitants."

In applying these provisions to Nova Scotia, I would urgently press one change, whereby the whole will become admirably adapted to our Province. The mode of raising the sectional amount should be determined by law, and that mode should be assessment. This will perpetuate, on sound principles, the system of Free Schools.

This combined mode of support commends itself on the following grounds:—

- 1. The Province contributes, because the benefits are Provincial.
2. The County contributes, because the more wealthy portions are interested in, and benefited by, the prosperity of the poorer.
3. The Section contributes, because (1) it has a special interest in the character and efficiency of its own school.
(2) It is left free to raise as much as it may desire for the support of Education.
(3) Facilities are afforded the poorer sections to pay, when necessary, part of the salaries of Teachers in produce.
4. This method will greatly obviate the difficulties attendant on the location of the boundaries of School Sections, inasmuch as a portion only of the support is raised by a sectional tax.
5. In its main features, it has been applied to a sister Province, with abundant success.
6. It will, in a short time, without burdening any, relieve parents in poor Sections, secure to the teaching profession much of the best talent of the Province, and place the blessings of Education within easy reach of all.

Under "Schools in the City of Halifax," Mr. R. remarks:

"The present law is not adapted to the City of Halifax, either in its provisions for school