

For the Christian Messenger.

Poor John Wesley!

What is all this pother about, Mr. Editor? Is not poor John Wesley hardly used? The Provincial Wesleyan drags him one way, and the Christian Messenger another. The poor man seems to me to get no rest, even in his grave.

What if he did baptize Mary Welch, "according to the practice of the first church, and the rule of the Church of England, by immersion?" And what if it did the child a great deal of good, since she "was ill then, but recovered from that hour"?

What if he baptized, on the 21st of March, 1759, "Seven adults, two of them by immersion," and the others by pouring or sprinkling?

What if he expressed afterwards his opinion that the Apostles "baptized great numbers, not by dipping; but by washing, sprinkling, or pouring water"?

What if he prepared, in 1784, when he was 81 years old, "Sunday services for the Methodists," in which, instructing the minister how to baptize the child, he gave this direction—"He shall dip it in the water, or pour water upon it, or sprinkle it therewith?" And what if the evident meaning of this direction is—"Dip, if you can—if they won't let you dip, pour—let sprinkling be your last resort"?

What if he said, in 1788, that the Apostle Paul alluded, in Rom. vi. 3, 4, to the "ancient manner of baptizing by immersion," which "ancient manner" he had decided, so long ago as 1736, to be "the practice of the first church"?

What if he manifestly retained his conviction that immersion was "the practice of the first church," when he might have easily shewn his change of sentiment, if it had taken place, by omitting the passage in his Journal?

What if he declared that the Apostles did not baptize by dipping? And what if he himself sometimes dipped, sometimes poured, sometimes sprinkled?

What if he was known throughout his life as the strenuous advocate of the doctrine of the new birth, and of personal religion?

What if, notwithstanding this, his published works contain such startling announcements as these—

- 1. That "the merits of Christ's life and death are applied to us in baptism."
2. That baptism is "the ordinary instrument of our justification."
3. That "by water, as a means, the water of baptism, we are regenerated or born again;" and that this "is more than barely being admitted into the church, though commonly connected therewith."
5. That infants are guilty of original sin, and in the ordinary way, they cannot be saved unless this be washed away by baptism."

What of all this, Mr. Editor?

Why, nothing more nor less than that, though John Wesley was a good man, and in some respects a great man, he was very far from being a perfect man, and was not always consistent with himself. Nor is that at all wonderful, since he wrote so much, and in such a hurry. Let him rest,

ALETHIA.

Christian Messenger.

HALIFAX, MARCH 14, 1866.

RELIGIOUS REVIVAL.

We mentioned a week or two since that there were indications of a religious revival in the churches of the United States. The last issue of the Boston Watchman & Reflector states that:

"After a long period of spiritual drought there is a sound of abundance of rain. The clouds are gathering in every part of the heavens, and the showers of grace begin to descend on the thirsty earth. Our exchanges were never filled with more cheering accounts of revivals, of churches quickened to prayer and labor, of sinners converted by scores and hundreds. From nearly every State in the Union come the delightful tidings that the Lord is visiting His people with salvation."

At such a time every Christian should be stirred to prayer, to humiliation, to earnest effort. All stumbling blocks should be removed out of the way, and all should combine to secure the greatest blessing which a God of infinite grace is willing to bestow. A universal revival, pervading the entire land, is greatly needed, and will bring with it blessings to the nation and the churches, whose value no one can estimate."

We might fill our columns with accounts of these revivals in different places, and it would be refreshing to many of our readers. However, they all very much resemble each other. Meetings are held, earnest united prayer is offered, the Word is preached, large numbers attend, deep solemnity prevails, sin-

ners make a personal matter of the great truths presented, they come to Jesus for salvation, and then they confess Him before their fellow-men, and obey his precepts, seeking to follow in his footsteps. All this we recognize as the operation of the Divine Spirit in answer to importunate, persevering prayer. The numbers who profess faith in Christ are sometimes few, and at others many, even up to twenty, thirty, and forty in a church. But it should be borne in mind that, in every instance the conversion of souls to God which constitutes a religious revival, is made up of individual cases. Every revival is by a repetition of individual conversions, and by renewed applications of the Spirit's power in turning the heart of the wanderer into the way of God's testimonies. Let there then be no discouragement amongst the disciples of Christ in any place where such influences are sought.

Genuine revivals of religion are not always by marvellous displays of extraordinary grace in bringing numbers to the obedience of faith, but if we see one at a time coming into the kingdom, we should be thankful, and regard it as a proof of the readiness of God to appear in our behalf and bestow like blessings on larger numbers. Let the enquiry of the Psalmist be continued: Wilt thou not revive us again, that thy people may rejoice in thee? and let the prayer of the prophet be offered:—O Lord revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known, in wrath remember mercy.

EDUCATIONAL.

We much regret our inability to give a fuller report of the debate on the introduction into the House of Assembly of the new Educational measure. In our last we noticed very briefly two or three of the principal suggestions contained in the Superintendent's report respecting the mode of support, &c. We did not illustrate them so fully as we desired. The Bill proposes to raise the Grant for Common Schools to about \$100,000 and a similar sum to be provided by the several counties of the province, equal to 80 cents a year per head, which together would ordinarily be sufficient without any further tax. But in cases where a majority of the rate-payers in a Section wish to have a larger sum appropriated to School purposes, they may by the provisions of this bill, assess the Section for such an amount as may be thought desirable. There has been heretofore great difficulty in Trustees ascertaining what portion of the Provincial Grant would come to their Section, it not being known how many Schools there would be to share it, and they have been thereby embarrassed in making engagements with Teachers. The sum paid to Teachers in one county, too, has differed greatly from that paid in another. In some counties first class teachers receiving \$200 from that source, whilst those having the same qualifications in another county have only received \$71.80. It is proposed to remedy both of these difficulties by the amount from the Provincial Grant being paid to Teachers, according to a certain scale, and making it according to their qualifications,—the payment of this sum being made direct from the Treasury, on the order of the Commissioners and the Superintendent of Education.

The following is the scale proposed:

Table with 2 columns: Teacher Category and Amount. 1st class male Teachers, \$120; 1st female, 90; 2nd male, 60; 2nd female, 45; 3rd male, 45; 3rd female, 45.

By this plan a more equitable remuneration will be given to teachers than heretofore, and the amount to be assessed will be more equalized and more definite.

This plan will also have a better chance of permanency, seeing that, by this means, the grant for this part of the public service will be gradually increased according to the number of schools and the increase of the population of the province.

There was much truth in the remarks of Mr. A. Archibald. He said he was willing to take a large share of the responsibility of introducing voluntary subscription instead of assessment, and thought that that feature in the Act of last year, had been one of the best means of bringing the people to see the need of assessment for the support of public free schools. The step thus taken, had, he thought, soothed the then existing excitement, and created a more general interest in the subject of education. We fully believe, as we have before said in substance, that the several steps taken have been all tending to bring about necessary and proper legislation in this matter. In this, as in mechanical invention and scientific discovery, it is by slow stages that perfection is attained, and it is well if every step is onward, and one in preparation for one more in accordance with the more enlightened judgment of the people.

One great difficulty in legislating on educational matters is to avoid such an outlay in any one year as will not probably be sustained through a series of years. Gradual progress and growth is better than such a degree of activity as would result from an unnatural stimulus, to be succeeded by lethargy or retrogression. That was the mistake made in England, by the introduction of the old code of the Committee of Privy Council. It was found to produce such demands on the Public Revenues, that a New Code was introduced, lowering the position of Teachers, and causing them great disappointment, and dissatisfaction.

We do not apprehend that any serious thought will be given to the proposal to take the whole sum for schools out of the Provincial Revenue. The insurmountable difficulties of carrying out such an arrangement, as well as the addition it would require to be made to our tariff, would forbid such a step. The experience of Prince Edward Island, we believe, is quite sufficient to shut out its consideration as a practical measure.

We would like to notice a number of other particulars in connection with this subject, but shall at present content ourselves with merely adding, for the information of our readers, two Tables as given in Mr. Rand's Report. The first of these is of the Academies, and the second of the Colleges.

ACADEMIES, OTHER THAN COUNTY ACADEMIES.

Table with 4 columns: Academy, Where Situate, No. Teachers, No. Pupils. Lists academies like Pictou, Mount Allison, Kings Collegiate, etc.

Totals..... 36,680
†Three of these are also engaged in the College and included in the number of Professors given.

COLLEGES.

Table with 4 columns: College, Where Situate, No. Professors, No. Students. Lists colleges like St. Francis Xavier, St. Mary's, Dalhousie, etc.

REGISTRATION.

Amongst the Reports presented to Parliament is one from Mr. John Costly of the Registration of Births, Marriages and Deaths. This is the first one of this character that has made any approach to correctness in this department. From the circumstance of the present Secretary of the Board of Statistics having so recently been appointed, his report is only an approximation to what we might wish such a document to be. Still there are many facts exhibited and tabulated from which much may be learned.

It appears that there have been 1822 marriage licenses issued during the year. These according to Religious Denominations have been as follows:—

Table with 2 columns: Denomination and Number. Church of England, 428; Roman Catholic, 6; Presbyterian, 458; Reformed Presbyterian, 23; Church of Scotland, 172; Baptist, 477; Methodist, 210; Lutheran, 28; Congregationalist, 28; Universalist, 6.

This gives a ratio according to the numbers of adherents of the several denominations as follows:—

Table with 2 columns: Denomination and Ratio. Church of England, 1 to 112; Presbyterians, 1 to 154; Church of Scotland, 1 to 112; Baptists, 1 to 132; Wesleyans, 1 to 162; Congregationalists, 1 to 80.

The marriage rate for the whole population, as near as can be ascertained, is about 1 in 140. This is found to vary in different countries. There are several reasons why we may regard the above as only an approximation to correctness. Mr. C. states that the percentage of marriages is,

Table with 2 columns: Country and Percentage. In Scotland, 1.424; In England, 1.688; In France, 1.600; In Austria, 1.734; In Massachusetts, 1.716; And in Nova Scotia, 1.7.

We find that the average in Scotland last year was much less, only .667.

The returns made of marriages by publication of banns are very imperfect, only 499 are reported. There must of course have been a much larger number than this of marriages by banns. A more vigorous application of the law, made and provided, will doubtless in future secure more reliable returns.

When it is remembered that the prosperity of a country is determined in a great measure by the marriage rate, it will be seen that this is an important department of Statistics, and that the facts should be obtained as accurately as possible.

Mr. Costly gives in his report the numbers of Episcopal marriages 428, and Non-Episcopal 1,394. This distinction we conceive to be one altogether unnecessary, and really incorrect, for the Catholic Church is as much Episcopal as the Church of England, and yet they must use the Non-Episcopal. We hope to see a uniformity of license adopted by the government. Were this the case there would probably be less objection on the part of Catholics to marrying by license.

The Registration of Births and Deaths is very imperfect, only 1,590 deaths are registered and 2,377 births. Mr. Costly shews that from the returns there is an excess of about 40 per cent of births over deaths, and believes that the whole number if given in one year would amount to 6,000 births more than deaths, which would represent the natural increase of population in the province, and which agrees with the facts brought to light by the last census.

There are some defects in the law which we understand are shortly to be brought before the Legislature so as to make it more effectual for the accomplishment of the objects of the enactment.

The remuneration of the deputy registrars should be such as to induce them to fulfil the duties of the office, instead of their being compelled to hold it or resign their situation of Post-master, or Way-office keeper, as the case may be.

How difficult it is to get some people to "toe the mark." They have to be dragged up, time after time, and on each occasion, pretending to accept the terms proposed, they make a feint, as if the question had been fully settled by them, whereas the great point itself has not been touched. Our neighbour of the Witness two or three weeks since attacked one of our correspondents, and made use of the opportunity to trifle with sacred things—applying opprobrious epithets for the purpose of casting odium on the order observed in Baptist churches.

Our position was sustained and defended in his own pages by a Presbyterian minister, and yet our contemporary seemed unconscious of the effect of the said letter.

We will not decide whether his slow appreciation of the real question at issue, arises from a disinclination to abide by the consequences, or from his not fully comprehending it. His asseverations would certainly lead to the supposition that he intended to conduct the argument fairly, but there is an evident failure. In his last issue he says:—

We did not intend to avoid any of the Messenger's questions about communion, in our last; but it seems we were not sufficiently explicit. Says our contemporary:—

Our enquiry was, Do Presbyterians offer unrestricted communion to all, without regard to Baptism or church relationship? That is to say: If a person has not been baptized and is yet deemed a pious man, and wishes to participate at the Lord's table, would he then be "welcomed"?

We believe that if a man were to come to any of our churches and say "I am not baptized, I will not be baptized," he would be excluded from communion; but if a pious man were to come and say "I am a Baptist," or "I am a Methodist," or "I am an Episcopalian," but I wish to celebrate my Saviour's dying love with you?" he would be cordially welcomed. We would not ask, Was water applied to you, or were you applied to the water? Was the water sprinkled on you, or poured on you? The principles on which our church acts, as enunciated in the Confession would admit all the eminent Christians of all ages and countries. The principle of the Messenger would exclude more than nine-tenths of such. To say that "close communion" was the apostolical practice is simply begging the question. The apostles would be very much astonished to find how many odd things are done under their authority.

We copy the whole lot we might be charged with quoting unfairly. It will be readily seen that our friend gives up the point.—The unbaptized would be excluded. And yet he does not give our question its full force,—he omits the word "pious" in his admission. But we will not complain, the truth is apparent!

We quite agree with his last assertion; "The apostles would be very much astonished to find how many odd things are done under their authority." One of the most "odd