

For the Christian Messenger.

Educational Progress.

DEAR BROTHER,—

I attended a very interesting meeting the other day. It was the distribution of prizes at the High School of McGill College, Montreal. The large hall in which the meeting was held was quite filled, the pupils occupying the centre, while parents and friends sat at the sides. The Rector announced the names of the most meritorious boys in each class, and stated the number of good marks each had received. Thus:—

- Sixth Form—18 Pupils. Sydney Arthur Fisher, Montreal, Dux of the School, and Davidson Medallist. 1—Fisher, 4760 marks. 2—Robertson, 2951 " 3—Major, 2017 " Latin—1, Robertson; 2, Fisher; 3, Major; 4, Whitney. Greek—1, Fisher; 2, Robertson; 3, Major. English—1, Porteous, maj; 2, Fisher; 3, Robertson; 4, Major. French—1, Fisher; 2, Robertson; 3, Hart, maj; 4, Major. German—Patterson. History—1, Fisher; 2, Porteous, maj; 3, Walkem; 4, Whitney. Geography—1, Fisher; 2, Robertson; 3, Porteous, maj; 4, Major. Arithmetic—1, Hart, min.; 2, Fisher; 3, David; 4, Major. Algebra—1, Fisher; 2, Hart, min.; 3, David; 4, Stewart. Geometry and Trigonometry—1, Fisher; 2, Porteous, min.; 3, Stewart; 4, Hart, min. Natural Philosophy—1, Porteous, min.; 2, David; 3, Fisher; 4, Major. Religious Studies—1, Fisher; 2, Porteous, maj; 3, Robertson; 4, Whitney. Writing—1, Stewart; 2, Major. Punctuality—Torrance, max. Good Conduct—Robertson.

It was delightful to witness the hearty applause with which the whole school greeted the announcement of each "Dux," showing the entire absence of envy or discontent, and the confidence reposed in the impartiality of the school administration.

The reading of the lists was interspersed with recitations, which were delivered in a very effective manner. The performers had evidently received good drilling in elocution.

The prizes consisted of valuable books, each containing an inscription specifying the reason for which the prize was given.

I could not help wishing that we had a similar arrangement in connection with our Academy.

The Christian Messenger for June 19, has just been placed in my hands. The second resolution passed by our Western Association on the subject of education strikes me as singularly appropriate. I rejoice to learn that the Association recognized the "duty of giving to our denominational Seminaries a degree of efficiency commensurate with the progress of the times."

This is a subject which demands immediate and earnest attention. I ask permission to occupy a small portion of your space with some remarks upon it.

A new era is dawning upon us. Not only is the number of schools increasing in our province, but the quality of the instruction given is rising in value every day. First-class Teachers are in great demand. A higher rate of qualification is required. Parents and pupils are growingly desirous of continual advance and improvement. The jog-trot mode of educational travelling which distinguished the last generation will be no longer tolerated.

The influence of this movement will be felt in our Colleges. Candidates for matriculation will be better prepared. Many young men, it is hoped, who intend to devote themselves to teaching, will see the importance of acquiring the most thorough training possible, and will endeavour to obtain collegiate education. Many others, it may be expected, will adopt the same course, under the conviction that whatever position in society men may be called to occupy, its duties will be best discharged by those who have most sedulously sought mental enlightenment.

The Colleges, too, must advance with the times. There must be an enlarged curriculum of study, and a corresponding increase in the number of Professors. The plans of 1840 will not suit 1866. This is admitted by the Governors of other Colleges, and they are exerting themselves accordingly. Acadia must not lag behind.

We cannot compete successfully with other Institutions unless we secure a larger staff of Professors. And that want cannot be supplied unless the Endowment is considerably augmented.

We must set about it at once. There is no time to be lost. Acadia College requires an endowment of £20,000. This would give us

four Professors at £250 per annum each, and one at £200:—or, £300 for the President, £250 each for three Professors, and £150 for a Tutor or Lecturer.

The Baptist Denomination should not be satisfied with anything less than this. Nor should we allow ourselves to think that we are unable to accomplish it. God has given us ample means, and will one day "reckon with his servants." He said to Israel, "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, 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."

We shall soon meet in Convention at St. John's. I trust that brethren will be prepared to inaugurate a new and liberal educational policy; and that many of "the children of Issachar" will be there—men who have "understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do."

Yours truly, J. M. CRAMP.

Montreal.

For the Christian Messenger.

Acadia College.

Mr. Editor,—

I would, through you, inform our Churches that the Convention is near at hand, and that on the first of August the Annual accounts will be closed. Any monies, therefore, to be forwarded cannot be reported unless received previously to that date. Up to this time but a very few churches have responded to the College appeal. We hope no time will be lost in forwarding the sums asked for. Extensive repairs are being made on the buildings, and funds are very much needed to settle the accounts previous to the meeting of the Convention.

J. W. BARRS, Treasurer A. College. Wolfville, July 10, 1866.

Christian Messenger.

HALIFAX, JULY 11, 1866.

We shall be glad if our subscribers in Cape Breton who are in arrears, will embrace the opportunity afforded by the assembling of the Eastern Association at North Sydney, to forward the amount of their indebtedness, on that occasion. It would also be very pleasant whilst there, to receive a large addition to our number of subscribers in that part of the Province. If our friends will try and induce some of their neighbours to add their names to our list, we shall esteem it a special favor. Where the population and wealth are so rapidly increasing, as they are in Cape Breton generally, and greater mail accommodation is afforded, we should seek to spread information and to raise the character and intelligence of the people. This may be done perhaps more easily and effectually by the introduction of a christian family newspaper, than by any other means.

Reader, will you not try? Do what you can. If you can obtain but one new name it will be thankfully received.

There are many considerations which render the Eastern portion of this province a more interesting field of christian labor than the Western or the Central. It is less thickly settled, and for some time to come there will probably be fewer opportunities of gathering together large congregations for christian instruction and worship. It is also more extensive and less known, and has greater diversity in its scenery and people. Labor performed here is more like laying the foundation of society, or cultivating the virgin soil; and as impressions made on the youthful mind may be expected to become more permanent, so whatever is now done will probably give tone and character to the future, more than in older places.

We are glad to know that during the past few years there has been a considerable increase in the number of ordained Baptist ministers in this part of the Province. Heretofore, there have been but few of the Baptist churches capable of accommodating the Association, and we are glad that a new feature is given to that body by meeting this year at North Sydney, Cape Breton. We are pleased to hear of several ministers from the other Associations proposing to attend this gathering. It will doubtless be somewhat smaller than those held amidst the larger and older churches, but we anticipate much good from this convocation. We trust the Master will be present to direct and bless his servants.

The ORGAN QUESTION occupied two days of the Presbyterian Synod at St. John, N. B. It appears by the Witness to have arisen from an organ having been introduced by the Session of the St. John's Church, (Catham), of which Dr. McCurdy is the minister. The Synod of last year ordered the Pious Presbytery, to which this congregation belongs, "to deal with it according to the laws of the church." The Presbytery enjoined the removal of the organ or its disuse in the public worship of God, but the congregation had refused to obey the injunction of the Presbytery.

The first day's discussion resulted in the Synod "as mildly as possible" censuring Dr. McCurdy's 'disrespectful conduct.'

The report of the debate given by our contemporary, although brief, yet shows the principal points of the arguments. The remarks made by Professor King and Dr. McCurdy give briefly the pros and cons of the question:

Rev. THOMAS SEDGEWICK maintain that there being no express prohibition of instrumental music either in the Scriptures or the subordinate standards of the Church, we should decide the question simply on the ground of usage and uniformity, and the necessities of the case. He gave no ice of a motion to that effect.

Professor KING briefly explained the principle on which the Reformed Churches regulate the worship of God. The Lutheran and Roman Catholic principle is that we may use in God's worship any ceremony, form or means not forbidden in His word. The principle of Calvin and the Presbyterian Churches, adopted and acted upon by the Westminster Divines, is that we must have nothing, use nothing, tolerate nothing in the worship of God but what positively is appointed in His word. In the Old Testament economy instrumental music was used in worship by Divine appointment. This was superseded in the New Testament. In the synagogue service instruments were not used. In the early christian church none were used. The organ crept in with other corruptions. Its use was retained in the Church of England, and we see the consequence this day. He dwelt on the importance of praising with the heart, and expressed his cordial concurrence in the motion proposed by Mr. Sedgewick, senr.

Dr. McCURDY then offered his views to the house at great length, and with much skill, force and clearness. He was heard throughout with the closest attention by all the members. He started with the principle that in our church nothing is censurable but what is forbidden by the word of God. He quoted and expounded 2 Chron. xxix. 25 as an instance of a Divine command to use instruments in worship; and he did not think the command had ever been abrogated. As regards the New Testament he would appeal to the original. The word used for praise (psallo) means literally to touch the lyre or harp—to touch lightly. He expressed his opinion that since we quote the Old Testament in support of Infant Baptism and the Sabbath, we by parity of reasoning may quote it in support of instrumental music.

He then referred to the usage in other churches. The Church of England, the Wesleyans, Baptists, Congregationalists, and the largest Presbyterian churches all use the organ.—As to the law of the church on the subject he would not acknowledge the authority of the dusty records of centuries ago. He had yet to learn that acted by Reformers 200 or 300 years ago bound him. As to usage there were other things against usage allowed in many of our congregations—as for example the raising of money by bazaars, tea meetings &c. Instruments for sounding the first note of tunes have been in use for fifty years among us. If pitch pipes and forks are allowed, why not organs? The latter like the former are used not to supersede but to assist and sustain the voice. He concluded by arguing that the case should be left entirely in the hands of the kirk sessions of the church.

The result of the discussion was that a resolution was adopted by the Synod, declaring that the use of instrumental music in public worship is not warranted by the Supreme or subordinate standards of this church or by usage.

In consequence of this action Dr. McCurdy withheld his adhesion to the Union formed of the New Brunswick Synod and the Synod of the Lower Provinces (N. S.) until he had consulted his congregation.

The Synod of New Brunswick transacted their business in the church of St. David's, before being "merged in the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of the Lower Provinces." The members of that Synod "retain the right of meeting as a 'body corporate and politic' for civil purposes."

PRESBYTERIAN BENEVOLENT FUNDS.—The following is an abstract of the Treasurer's report presented at the recent session of the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of the Lower Provinces:

Receipts of Foreign Mission Funds £1849; Expenditures during the year £1443; balance in hand including old balance, £ 787. Home Mission: Receipts, £ 1149; Expenditure, £ 628; balance in hand \$ 493. Education Fund. Receipts, including interest of all the invested Funds of the Church, £ 1724. Expenditure, £ 1303.

It is to be noted that a Bequest of £ 500 from the late Mr. Yoxton is included in each of the above totals of receipts."

The St. John Morning Journal, in a late number, refers to the gathering of ministers, —Presbyterian and Methodist—in that city. The editor indulges in some highly laudatory remarks respecting that celebrated city.—Hear him:

"The visitors will, no doubt, feel interested in examining our mercantile emporium, public institutions, manufactories, foundries, ship-yards; the strangers ought to make a trip to Fredericton, and see for themselves, as they pass along, the noble St. John, and after they reach the Celestial City, a Parliament, composed of a Legislative Council and House of Assembly, which, for their numbers, can hardly be surpassed or equaled in British North America. Our friends in Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island, in particular, would feel interested in such a trip if their time permitted. They will feel interested in comparing St. John with Halifax and Charlottetown. They must see our Cotton Factory; and numerous Boot and Shoe Factories; our Sewing Machine Factory—it turns out a nice article for ministers' wives; our numerous manufactories in iron, brass, etc.; our dry-goods palaces, under Confederation, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island buyers will not be troubled with intercolonial duties and drawbacks—they will not have to pay duties on profits and costs of importation. The ministers will, of course, examine our book stores. They will find in our largest book store, * * * a far larger and better collection of books than are to be found in any store in Halifax. They will learn that there are now being built in St. John ship-yards, even in the present depressed state of affairs, more tonnage than in all the ship-yards of New England. Our visitors must not pass over our Lunatic Asylum, which will bear an inspection.—Dr. Waddell is very willing to show it; in going to or from it, they must see the Suspension Bridge, and they ought to see the Falls at low water. Our Public Hospital will also be deemed creditable to us, and some other institutions may be an object of interest to strangers. Our new Town Hall is not yet built; possibly, by the time the Synod has met in Halifax and Charlottetown, and come back to see its friends in St. John, that long talked of public necessity may become a reality."

The editor also gives some statistics of the several religious denominations in the Lower Provinces:

Table with 4 columns: Denomination, Presby, Ep'sco, Baptists, Metho. Rows include Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, P. E. Island, Newfoundland, and Totals.

These figures are copied by the Ch. Visitor and Ch. Intelligencer the two Baptist papers of St. John, with an error of 10 000 in the number of Baptists in Nova Scotia! It should have said Nova Scotia 62 941. The error is evidently a typographical one, as appears by the total. Will our brethren please attend to this matter.

Presbyterian Confederation.

The St. John Journal gives a graphic sketch of the proceedings of the two Synods, in consummating the Union recently formed between the Free Church Synod of New Brunswick, we believe, and the united body in this province.

On Monday the union between the Presbyterian Synod of the Lower Provinces and that of New Brunswick was consummated in the most auspicious manner in St. David's Church in this city. The New Brunswick Synod held its last touching meeting in Calvin Church—the Nova Scotia Synod in the St. John Presbyterian Church. From these two points the members of the respective Synods, meeting by the way, like a greater and lesser river commingling their waters, walked together to St. David's Church. The procession extended almost from Kings Square to the church door. The platform erected in the church occupied nearly one third of the entire area. Behind and above the platform were emblems of Church and State. On a blue ground, in large gilt letters, were written the motto, Nec tamen consumebatur (in allusion to the motto of the Church of Scotland, the bush burning but not consumed), along with a display of the time honored flag of England gracefully festooned.

The basis of Union, inscribed on parchment, was then read, subscribed by the two moderators and assented to by each of the members of the Synod. The moderators then joined hands, and while the choir—a most noble choir—and the congregation sang the 133rd psalm, there were many congratulations and greetings passing on the platform. The scene was one in which even a stranger could not but feel a deep interest. It must have touched the hearts of those more immediately interested in it. On motion of the Rev. Dr. Bayne, seconded by the Rev. James Gray, A. M. the Rev. James Burnett of this city was chosen first moderator of the United Synod. This was the greatest honor which, in accordance with the simple usages of the Presbyterian Church, could be bestowed on any of its members. After having constituted the Synod by prayer, which was followed by the reading of the Scriptures by the Rev. William Alves, and prayer by the Rev. Dr. Smith, the Moderator delivered a short Address. He described the circumstances under which the union was formed