

its jubilee. A joyful season is then anticipated. For this preparations have been amply made. About 700 yet live who have received its advantages, many of whom hope to be at the reunion. All the classes may not be represented. The names and deeds of the departed will be repeated. Their memories are among the most sacred on earth. With them the riches of grace and glory are blended. They connect the past with the triumphant future. Many of them were pioneer missionaries at home and abroad. A moral influence will be felt from a review of their work that will advance the cause of the Redeemer.

The funds of the Institution are in a prosperous condition. To the \$300,000 already invested, an effort will be made to add \$200,000 more as an expression of gratitude for a jubilee offering. This sum can be raised if the Alumni discharge the duty assigned. This would place Madison on a footing with the most distinguished Institutions of the land. Thus it should be placed for the sake of the Church. At its present commencement, Rev. G. W. Eaton, D. D., its venerable President, resigned his honors and authority into younger hands. He still retains his chair of Theology, and remains president of the Theological Seminary. He has won the confidence and love of the denomination as but few men will ever possess them. For thirty-five years he has been connected with the Institution. His successor, Rev. E. Dodge, D. D., has long been regarded a superior scholar and able Professor. Other Institutions of celebrity have invited him to chairs of honor and great responsibility, but he has steadily refused to leave his position at Madison, and now he has received from its friends the reward. Great hopes are cherished from his administration, and no reason appears why they should not be realized.

For the Christian Messenger

Councils.

Dear Brother,—

Nothing can be plainer than that in apostolic times every Christian Church managed its own affairs, independently of all other churches, in accordance with the instructions received from the apostles themselves. It now and then serious difficulties arose, as in Corinth, Ephesus, and other places, suitable directions, admonitions or reproofs were given, and so the case was provided for. Whether at any time advice was sought from another church, we are not informed; but if Councils had been held we should have heard of it. There is not the slightest allusion to such meetings in the New Testament.

Some have imagined that there is one seeming exception. The perplexity at Antioch led to an application to the church at Jerusalem for advice. A special church-meeting was convened for the consideration of the question, and the decision afforded much "consolation." That meeting, however, was not a council.

The first Councils were held in the latter half of the second century. Episcopacy and Councils grew up together and strengthened each other. As the Councils were composed of bishops, the whole power of the church gradually fell into their hands, and the people lost their rights. The testimony of ecclesiastical history is clear on this point.

Upwards of fifty councils were held previous to the great Council of Nice, A. D. 325. They were much more numerous afterwards. Gregory of Nazianzum (died A. D. 389) does not give a very flattering account of them. He says,—“I am, if the truth must be told, in such a tone of mind that I shun every assemblage of bishops, because I have never yet seen that any synod had a good ending, or that the evils complained of were removed by them, but were rather multiplied; since the spirit of dispute and the love of power (and do not think that I am here using too strong language) are exhibited there beyond all powers of description. And any one who dares to speak against the baseness of others would be more sure to bring down censure and complaints upon himself than succeed in subduing that baseness. For that reason I have retired into myself, and have found rest for my soul only in this withdrawal from the world.” In another place he remarks,—“As to the assemblies and synods, I keep myself at a distance from them, since I have found by experience that most of them (that I may express myself in moderation) are not worth much.” (Ullman's Gregory of Nazianzum, p. 268.)

The Congregationalists of New England have been accustomed to Councils or Synods from the beginning. In the "Cambridge platform of discipline" (A. D. 1648.) the following passages are found:—

"It belongeth unto Synods and Councils to debate and determine controversies of faith and cases of conscience; (Acts xv. 1, 2, 6, 7; 1 Chron. xv. 13; 2 Chron. xxix. 6, 7; Acts xv. 24, 28, 29;) to clear from the word

holy directions for the holy worship of God and good government of the church; to bear witness against mal-administration and corruption in doctrine or manners, in any particular church; and to give directions for the reformation thereof; not to exercise church censures in way of discipline, nor any other act of church authority or jurisdiction which that presidential Synod [referring to the supposed Council at Jerusalem] did forbear.

"The Synod's directions and determination, so far as consonant to the word of God, are to be received with reverence and submission; not only for their agreement therewith (Acts xv.), (which is the principal ground thereof, and without which they bind not at all,) but also, secondarily, for the power whereby they are made, as being an ordinance of God appointed thereunto in his word." (Magna Charta Americana, Book v. Part 2, Ch. 16.)

You observe an important proviso—"so far as consonant to the word of God." The necessary inference is, that whenever the decision of the Synod is regarded as not "consonant to the word of God," it is not to be received.

Surely, it is only in extreme cases that the aid of councils should be sought. The good sense of christian men, sanctified by prayer, will ordinarily find a way out of a difficulty. But if the complication should be so serious as to prevent solution, the assistance of discreet brethren may be obtained, perhaps, however, an advisory Committee, would generally be preferable to a Council, which is an ecclesiastical body, and carries, in its very name and constitution, the semblance of authority. Our "fathers," I observe, sometimes adopted that course, and even when they met in council held that they were called to "give advice." The liberties of the churches must be carefully preserved. A church cannot abdicate its functions, nor delegate to any other body the power to exercise discipline.

I was sixty years old before I saw a council, and that was a failure! We ought to be very unwilling to shirk responsibility. The tendency to throw it on other men's shoulders indicates low views and lack of courage. The proposal contained in a resolution lately before the public, whereby churches were recommended, in certain cases, to submit a difficulty to a Council before attempting to remove it by their own efforts was an extraordinary interference with freedom and right. Have we no bible? Do we not "believe in the Holy Ghost?"

Yours truly,
J. M. CRAMP.

Aug. 11, 1868.

Christian Messenger.

HALIFAX, AUGUST 19, 1868.

Religion and Art.

Some writers try to make it appear that Ritualism is merely one of the effects of a higher cultivation of art—that a taste for the beautiful demands something in its religious exercises more than the simplicity of christian worship in its more scriptural manifestations. A gorgeous ceremonial and more elaborate display in the use of a ritual is supposed by such persons to indicate greater intensity of devotion. The ornate in church architecture is preferred to the plain and substantial. The employment of a profusion of symbolism is argued betokens a greater degree of respect for religion. A meaning more or less hidden is given to every article of church furniture, and to each garment of the officiating minister, and even to his every motion and gesture. Sound and display thus become the ruling influences in determining what is most becoming or acceptable in worship, whilst the spirit of the act and the motives of the worshipper are left to sink almost below recognition.

There is doubtless some truth in all this, but it is mixed with much error. It would be but a poor compliment to spiritual Christianity to suppose that it could not endure the cultivation of art without suffering damage; or without its simplicity being thereby destroyed in its highest acts of devotion.

If Christianity were a system addressed to the passions, and man were not regarded as an intellectual and moral as well as a spiritual being, the sensuous might be expected to prevail over the spiritual, and so render an elaborate symbolism necessary. But we do not regard Art and Christianity as antagonistic. We hold that they are mutual aids to each other, and to make the latter dependent on the former or to allow the former to intrude into the realms of the latter is to degrade both. Where formalism prevails over spiritual worship it may call in the aid of artistic appliances, but

where submission to Christ is the ruling principle, and a full adherence is given to the dictates of his word there is a renunciation of all that tends to obscure the spiritual perceptions, and to interpose a barrier between the sinner and his Saviour.

The Baptist Convention of N. S.; N. B., and P. E. I.,

will commence its twenty-third Annual Session on Saturday next, in the Germain Street Baptist Church, St. John, N. B. The subjects entrusted to that body—"Acadia College and Foreign Missions" are vitally connected with the best interests of the Baptist community in these provinces. We hope, therefore, that a large representation from the churches will be in attendance.

COLLEGIATE EDUCATION, especially of those who are anticipating the work of the Christian Ministry is a matter of the deepest concern to every Christian body. Whatever, at the fountain gives a tinge to the waters flowing from it, will be very likely to affect the whole stream and all who partake of it.

The appropriation of the benevolence of the churches on behalf of FOREIGN MISSIONS, and the irrigation of desert heathen lands by streams of the water of life, is also a matter of deep concern to all who love our Lord Jesus Christ.

If the brethren come together impressed with one desire, the promotion of these great objects to the utmost of their ability, there may be some slight differences of opinion as to the means; but nothing will be allowed to come in the way of prosecuting the work with pious zeal.

A wise provision was made at the Session of 1866, "that the time of the Convention should not be occupied with, nor its members called upon to take part in the discussion of matters foreign from the legitimate objects for which the Convention was founded." There are so many projects for ameliorating the condition of mankind that there is danger of some one or more of these coming in and absorbing the time of the Convention and interfering with the necessary business. The above resolution was adopted for the purpose of avoiding this danger.

We are glad that our Brother Cady has, in another column, given his views on the proceedings of the E. N. B. Baptist Association. We regret, however, that his letter did not come to hand earlier. It had been written eleven days before we received it. The republication of "that resolution" will not now be necessary. Our correspondent "C." we are assured, did not intend his remark to apply to the N. B. Western Association.

The misunderstandings and difficulties appear to have arisen in a great measure from the peculiarities of the Constitution of the N. B. Associations—their recognizing ministers as distinct from the churches of which they are members. We doubt not that when the Committee having in charge a revision of the same, bring in their reports, such changes will be made as to place its constituent members in a position more in harmony with other Associations and with the constitution of Baptist Churches. We accept with much pleasure, the assurance Bro. Cady gives when he says, "when our constitutions shall be so altered as to make them (the brethren from Nova Scotia) a part of the body by virtue of that appointment, be assured the Constitution will not be trampled upon and your rights denied you."

After all that has appeared in the Visitor—and we are sorry to still find manifestations of a similar spirit—it is not surprising that brethren from Nova Scotia and some in New Brunswick also, should feel a little anxious to ascertain if those things were sanctioned by the N. B. brethren generally. As the visiting brethren were not participants in the "votes" of the Association, we presume they did not feel bound by a vote that was not put on record. We most cordially accept our brother's proposal and are always glad to think, act, pray, and labor for peace, unity, truth.

In reference to the mistake the editor of the Visitor made in guessing who writes for the Messenger, he remarks in his last: "We accept the Messenger's correction."

Our aged brother here had a fine opportunity of setting us a good example, and of making some kind of apology and reparation for the wrong done, but he has allowed it to pass unimproved. We shall not, however, be over-exacting but hope that the lesson—though late in being learned—may not be forgotten by him, and that he will exercise more caution in future.

He still clings to his fragment of the Baptist Churches "in this country" being something different from Baptist Churches in other places. He says:

"Constituted as our churches are in this country any departure from denominational usage by a given church acts injuriously upon the whole body."

We have always regarded the Churches of this country very much like New Testament Churches in all other places—at liberty to adopt "denominational usage," if in accordance with the Word of God, or to depart from it if otherwise. Where there is a difference of opinion as to what is "denominational usage" the New Testament is an excellent guide.

We copy on another page a long letter from Rev. George Armstrong, addressed to the Ch. Visitor. We might well excuse ourselves from publishing it, from its great length and verbosity, and from its inaccuracy of statement, as shown in a letter from Rev. T. H. Porter, Jr., in the same paper, as follows:

"It may not be fully understood that 'the brethren above referred to'—Brethren Armstrong and Vidito—though opposed to the appointment of a Committee on the Messenger, allowed themselves to be put upon that Committee. The time for them to meet was publicly announced, and the Chairman (Dr. Tupper) having read the list, requested the members to retire for consultation. Having delayed some half-hour beyond the time appointed, the "commendatory report" was heartily adopted by all present. Afterwards, however, and before it was submitted to the Association, these brethren expressed to the Chairman their disapproval. But to his inquiry, 'What shall we do? shall we sit again? made no reply whatever. It seems to me then hardly fair that one of them should now complain that they 'were not asked to agree' to the report."

We might have expected the courtesy of a request direct from Brother Armstrong, instead of its appearing in the postscript of a letter to the Visitor. The request made in that form might have been overlooked by us and the omission misconstrued to our disadvantage. Our readers will please excuse our occupying so much space with this matter. We are desirous of doing full justice to Bro. A. We are sorry that the reply does not more effectually sustain the object the writer appears to have had in view by its publication. Its statements with the slight correction given by Bro. Porter are rather confirmatory than otherwise of the account given by ourselves and Brother Wallace.

Since receiving the last No. of the Visitor the following brief letter from H. E. Payson, Esq., has unexpectedly come to hand:

WESTPORT, August, 1868.

Mr. Editor,—

I notice in your paper of 5th inst., a letter from the Moderator of the "N. S. Western Baptist Association," in justification of his movements. As a delegate and member of the Committee of Arrangements, I must say in justice to all interested, that the explanation of Rev. I. Wallace is correct. As to any fears from discussion resulting unfavourably to the Christian Messenger in this section, I for one entertained none. As Agent for the paper, I had from personal knowledge the assurance that the Messenger had the sympathy of its readers here. But as the churches of these Islands had recently enjoyed a precious revival, and the deliberations of the Association had been most christian-like and harmonious, I was glad that nothing occurred to mar the general interests of the cause of Christ.

Yours in the best of bonds,
H. E. PAYSON.

New Publications.

THE CORNHILL MONTHLY and LITERARY RECORDER published by Lethrop and Kemp, Boston, is a new and excellent religious and literary magazine for sale by A. McBean, George Street, and M. A. Buckley, Granville Street.

THE SABBATH SCHOOL INDEX, by R. G. Pardee, is one of the latest published, and best books of instruction for Sabbath School Teachers. It answers the enquiry How to teach? in a more practical manner than we have seen it answered before. For sale by A. McBean, Halifax.

Discourses on Sacramental Occasions, by I. S. Spencer, D. D., for sale by A. McBean, Halifax.

The author's work "A Pastor's Sketches" will commend this book to popular favor.

THE MAN OF BUSINESS. Six Essays by as many able and popular preachers on the position, responsibilities, perplexities, home duties, and intellectual culture of men of business, for sale by A. McBean.

Sermons by Newman Hall, also for sale by A. McBean.

New York Sunday School Institute held at the Reformed Dutch Church, Feb. 2nd to 7th, 1868. Full of good thoughts about teaching. For sale by A. McBean.

We have received, but omitted to notice before, the BAPTIST QUARTERLY for July. It is, as usual, full of first-class original matter. A list of the articles is all we can give now: