

For the Christian Messenger.

ANSWERS TO THE QUESTIONS OF DISCIPULUS ON THE SUBJECT OF RECONCILIATION.

Mr. Editor.—

I see in reading a second time the questions of Discipulus, that they bear upon the subject of reconciliation at the point where man is born again and becomes a new creature in Christ Jesus.

The reconciliation of God to man is so clearly explained by Dr. Hovey, of Newton, that I will give a quotation from an article found in the "New York Chronicle and Examiner":—

"The Apostle Paul declares that by the death of Christ the world was put in such a relation to God, that he could treat it with favor, instead of wrath.

For, after saying that Christ died for the ungodly, for sinners, he proceeds thus (Rom. 5: 9, 10): "Much more then, having now been justified in his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.

"Lift up your voice, Mr. Editor, against this evil in our midst. In the old country it is almost unknown. The Archbishop of Canterbury can give a special license for this purpose, but it is a very expensive business, and it is a remnant of Popery, as he first obtained the power to do it as "Legate."

The cause of Religious Freedom has been much concerned in the liberty there has been given to perform the marriage ceremony in other places than churches, so called. We do not regard marriage as a church sacrament or as essentially a religious observance, and therefore believe that it is as appropriately performed "at the residence of the bride's father" as in a church vestry, or at the altar, or "in the body of the church" by the clergyman or priest.

In saying this we have no wish to interfere with, or shew any disrespect for the practices of any other religious body.

Truly Yours, M.

Christian Messenger.

HALIFAX, MARCH 3, 1869.

AT THE RESIDENCE OF—

Various have been the explanations given of the reasons for making known the place at which parties have been married.

that the parties were desirous of informing friends that the parents had no objection to the match, and were rejoicing over an acquisition to the family. But a writer in the Church Chronicle sees in it a very different signification, and offers a very grave lamentation over it as indicating an "evil in our midst" against which he calls upon the editor to lift up his voice.

As we have no objection to the fact of marriages at places indicated we were a little amused at the concern of this zealous churchman, "M or N," over the sad defect of his brethren. He treats the subject in a somewhat serio-comic style, not likely we think to alter the practice he so much appears to deprecate.

I was surprised to see in a recent number of your paper, under the heading "Marriages," the following announcement, "At the residence of —, by the Rev. Mr. —, Mr. M., to Miss N."

"The persons to be married shall come into the body of the Church." They shall come to God's house to ask His blessing, to ratify their vows in His sight, to be joined together by Him.

The writer then proceeds to exhort the editor in reference to this crying evil:

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We had seen the article in the Church Chronicle and thought it unworthy of any special notice, but observing that it was copied into one of our evening contemporaries, and an endorsement given to it, we were led to consider the relation of the marriage ceremonial to religion and to the church.

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In saying this we have no wish to interfere with, or shew any disrespect for the practices of any other religious body. Each denomination may adopt whatever form they may deem appropriate, and alter or "mutilate," as "M or N" says, their existing office. Regarding the civil contract made between the parties to be united, as the essential binding portion of the ceremonial, and that of which the law takes cognizance, we, as a matter of choice, would not have it performed in a place of worship at all.

HANDEL'S MESSIAH.

Temperance Hall has never, perhaps, presented a more brilliant appearance than it did on Monday evening last, on the occasion of the performance of Handel's grand Oratorio of The Messiah.

The hall was filled in every part by the elite of Halifax. The platform contained the performing members of the Philharmonic Society—about a hundred ladies and gentlemen—rising tier above tier reaching as high as the galleries.

THE MESSIAH.—Last night we had the high privilege of attending at the rendering of Handel's sublime Oratorio of "The Messiah," by the Philharmonic Society. To say that the rendition was admirable may seem to be poor praise, but indeed we cannot say much more. The singing was truly worthy of high admiration. There is a nobility in the composition which would inspire even ordinary singers, and the singers of the evening were far above the average.

And now 'twas like all instruments, And now 'twas like a flute, And now it was an angel's song That makes the heavens be mute."

The difficult solos were finely given by members of the society. One of the most charming features in the Concert was the domestic character presented by the Society—composed as it is of ladies and gentlemen from the various walks and conditions of life, all combining to assist each other in musical cultivation, and to present their fellow citizens, from time to time, with a grand musical festival.

Mr. Doane, the talented leader, has accomplished a great feat in securing the respect and affection of the first musical talent in the city, from all religious denominations without exception, and inspiring them with confidence in him as a gentleman and in his ability as a musician.

The Oratorio will be repeated on Monday evening next.

SEPARATE vs. NON-SECTARIAN SCHOOLS.

Dear Sir,—The controversy relative to Separate Schools in this Province, should awaken attention to the attempts lately made to change our present system of free schools.

This question has from time to time been agitated in the United States by the Romish priesthood in one form or another, a late issue of the New York Examiner and Chronicle has an Article on the Romish view of Education which shews that the views and opinions of the opponents of Separate Schools in that country, harmonizes with the views held by the advocates of free Schools in this Province.

Yours truly, SAMUEL BROWN.

Yarmouth, Feo. 24th, 1869.

The writer above referred to takes up an article written by "an eminent Romish Catholic divine," in the New York Teacher, who assumes exactly the same ground as that of Dr. Cameron, and demands that

"Our public schools must teach religion, and each denomination of Christians must have the privilege of appropriating its ratable portion of the school funds for the support of schools in which their scheme of religion shall be taught."

The article in the Examiner then proceeds: "We have endeavoured to consider this question, without reference to the proportionate amounts of truth and error which we suppose to be mingled in the Romish Catholic theology.—Except the Quakers and Unitarians, the Baptists occupy among Protestants the attitude of outmost opposition to that Church. But we have endeavoured to look at the proposal as we would at a similar suggestion from some of our Old School and Scotch Presbyterian brethren, who in this matter sympathize with the Romish clergy.

The argument before us is lame, because it looks to the excellence of the end without equal regard to the means proposed for its attainment. Religion is infinitely more important than science. But it does not follow that civil government, or a system of education directed by government, is a fit agency for teaching religion. European governments assume the responsibility of seeing that their subjects are taught religion, and wretched work most of them have made of it.

of Caesar and the things of God shall not be confused in our political arrangements.

But it is urged that we cannot safely separate religious and secular instruction. In the words of Guizot, "Religion is not a study or an exercise, to be restricted to a certain place and a certain hour; it is a faith and a law, which ought to be felt everywhere, and which after this manner alone can exercise all its beneficial influence upon our minds and our lives."

The State opens its schools so many hours of the week. It offers to teach as many useful things as the State can consistently undertake to teach, and the children can be expected to profit by. No parent is hindered from providing other instruction. If he thinks a set religious lesson necessary for every day, he is at liberty to teach it or hire it taught.

Another argument is drawn from the rights of parents, which the system of public education is charged with invading:

The family is primary; the father the head; the mother the helpmate; the children in subordination, and for whom the parents shall give an account to the Father in Heaven. The Christian State has no authority, by virtue of human appointment, to invade the trust. It has therefore no mission, either to coerce conscience or to dictate the education of it.

Well, the State does not attempt to control the moral education of the people's children. It provides a certain measure of training, one condition of which is that it shall be unsectarian. No State of this Union, we believe, compels attendance upon the public schools. In some States compulsion may be used whenever the parent neglects altogether to send his children to school.

We doubt seriously whether, in point of fact, "the Catholic parent," generally speaking, feels a very profound interest in this question. The priests have long been agitating it in one form or another, but with a slender popular support. But in either case the demand which is put forth in the name of the Roman Catholic people is inadmissible, tending to undermine a fundamental principle of our republican system.

The proposed alienation of public funds to sustain denominational schools is objectionable further, because it must tend inevitably to divide the civil community by the lines of religious distinction. Educate the children of each faith separately, and they will grow up to be socially separate, and become on slight provocations hostile. We cannot afford to sow the seeds of religious parties, and create the conditions of religious feuds, by the recognition of a sectarian school system.

EVIDENCE FROM THE ADVERSARY.

ON BAPTISM.—The Dean of Durham in his "Greek Church" says:—

"Baptism is still administered in the East by triple immersion. The Greeks set great value on the strict observance of that ceremony, and warmly maintain their orthodoxy against the innovations of the Latin Church by pleading the example of our Saviour himself, the very meaning of the word baptism, which implies immersion, and the consent of that original and genuine Catholic Church which they assert to be perpetuated in their own."

ON COMMUNION.—The Western Presbyterian: "says:—

"Baptists maintain that they are not inconsistent in holding to close communion: and they put the argument thus: All agree that only those who are members of the visible Kingdom of Christ have a right to come to the communion board. All agree that only those are members of the visible kingdom who have been baptized. Thus far, they say, Presbyterians, Methodists, and Episcopalians agree with Baptists. But Baptists conscientiously believe that only those have received Christian baptism who have been immersed. Hence, none others are members of the visible kingdom. Those who are baptized by sprinkling or pouring, they do not believe have received Christian baptism; are consequently not members of the visible kingdom; and hence they cannot admit them to the Lord's table. Thus as they assert, they are consistent; and act upon the same principle that other denominations admit and act upon."