

made just the prettiest coffin for her that was ever turned out in this town. I took her measure a hundred times, sitting right back of the parson's pew, you know. I didn't say nothing to you beforehand, 'cause my woman had a notion that it would a sort o' cut you up, I don't know why, but when I heard that you'd telegraphed to Boston for one of them new-fangled burying concerns, I must say I felt as if I couldn't set under your preaching any longer."

And "set" he didn't.

For the Christian Messenger.

#### FRENCH MISSION AGENCY.

Mr. Editor,—

Having been appointed by the French Mission Board, as an agent to collect funds, I left home the first of January and performed ten weeks labor. Collected in cash \$378 60. Obtained subscription amounting to \$227. I found money scarce at that season of the year, but it afforded me much pleasure to find the Churches ready to respond to appears for the cause of Christ. It made my work quite pleasant. I cannot speak too highly of the kindness shown by the ministering brethren to myself, also the deep interest they manifested for the Mission.—May God reward them and their churches an hundred-fold. Our dear Brother Normandy has been blessed in his field of labour during the past winter. His little flock has been revived. Four have been added by baptism. The field seems white to the harvest. I hope some of our young men at the Institution will feel willing to come forward and assist brother Normandy in the work. I think if one could be obtained it would create a deeper interest in all our churches. May the Lord crown our efforts with his blessing is my earnest prayer.

A. COGSWELL.

## Christian Messenger.

HALIFAX, MAY 5, 1869.

#### THE FIRST COMMUNION.

If Baptism is the act preliminary to entrance into the Christian Church, the act which is especially expressive of finding a home there, is that of participating in the Lord's Supper. When one appears in that position for the first time and enters into the design of the ordinance, he experiences emotions of a very peculiar description. He is in a new relationship, and that one of the most sacred on earth. He may not be able to take hold of the ordinance in all its associations and significance as he will in subsequent years, but he regards it probably with searchings of heart such as he has not previously experienced.

This is a time in which many, comparatively many, are deciding for Christ, and giving up themselves to God and his people; and we think it not inappropriate that we offer a few reflections on their position and relations, on partaking for the first time of the emblems of their Saviour's body and blood. It may be well also, for christians who have been longer in the way to look back again at the time when they first occupied a place at the Lord's table and partook of the memorials of his suffering and death. This may appear a subject more suited to private meditation than the pages of a newspaper, but it is a part of our life, and a most important part, we therefore feel free to bring it before our readers. We do not hesitate to discuss it when brought into controversy, yet it is far more to our mind to think of the wonderful facts the ordinance embodies, which are "without controversy." Our remarks may nevertheless be made, by many a young, disciple, a subject for his private consideration. Having been recently baptized and received by the followers of Christ, he enjoys a sense of relief from the anxiety he felt, previously to confessing himself a believer in Jesus. He has passed over the line which is intended to separate the church from the world, and is now ready to be taught "all things whatsoever Christ has commanded." Having relinquished other sources of gratification and grounds of hope, he recognizes the higher claims which the Saviour has upon himself and all that he holds in possession.

A great change has taken place in his surroundings, not so much perhaps in what he observes externally, for he may have witnessed the celebration of the Supper many times before, but its significance to himself is very different to what it has been heretofore. There is nothing out-

wardly imposing in the scriptural observance of the ordinance—far less so than in the act of baptism. The very simplicity of the service renders it the more intensely solemn, when regarded as done in remembrance of Christ, and by his direction. He takes the bread and feels that by so doing he comes into closer contact than ever before with Him whose broken body it symbolizes, and in partaking of the wine he is assisted physically to think of the blood actually shed for his salvation. If the thought arises that at the first institution of the supper the Lord had to say "One of you shall betray me," how soon is the application again made "Lord, is it I?" The enquiry too, may pass on from one to another, although unheard, and the possibility of such ingratitude calls forth a new sense of dependence and prayer. What holy aspiration arises to Him who was dead but is alive again, and who is now the Apostle and High Priest of our profession. The time is anticipated which is associated with the institution—"till he come." This was the limit given to the continuation of this observance; and we may conclude that all along through the future ages of the world the disciples of the meek and lowly One will continue to meet together from time to time to have placed before them these tangible aids to their faith in their once crucified Lord. Their necessity of union and fellowship with the Church are here taught by the act of communing together. The youthful believer and the aged saint, who is only waiting to hear the Master's call, are as one at his table; and each feels the bond that unites them together having had its origin in heaven, is drawing them towards that holy state, as it brings them nearer together into one body. There may be various manifestations and degrees of love and sympathy binding heart to heart, but the value of this bond consists in its relation to Him who comes invisibly to the feast and manifests himself to his brethren as he does not to the world. This makes them feel that as their interests and destiny are one, so are their highest blessings derived from the one great Fountain—who is "Head over all things to the Church." Let us never forget our first communion.

#### INFANT BAPTISM IN HEATHEN COUNTRIES.

Sir James Emerson Tennent in his work on Christianity in Ceylon, gives the following melancholy picture of the administration of what professes to be the sacred rite of introduction to the Christian Church:

##### EFFECTS OF INFANT BAPTISM.

The administration of baptism was the most prominent, as it appears to have been the most laborious portion of their duties; and the Singhalese, accustomed for upwards of a century, under the Portuguese and Dutch, to regard baptism as the test and qualification for the enjoyment of numerous civil advantages, still retained the idea that the inheritance of property by their children, as well as other personal privileges, would be contingent on the insertion of their names in the *thombo* or baptismal register of the district. On the periodical visits of the proponent, the *tom-toms* were sounded throughout the villages, the children were brought in crowds to be baptized, and the ceremony performed in many instances by arranging them in rows, the proponent, as he passed along, sprinkling their faces with water, and repeating the formula of the rite. The Singhalese term for this operation was *Christiani-karanewa*, or "Christian making"; but it was far from being regarded as anything solemn or religious. It had been declared honourable by the Portuguese to undergo such a ceremony; it had been rendered profitable by the Dutch; and after three hundred years' familiarity with the process, the natives were unable to divest themselves of the belief that submission to the ceremony was enjoined by orders from the Civil Government.—Of baptism itself they had no other conception than some civil distinction which it was supposed to confer, and to the present day the Singhalese term for the ceremony bears the literal interpretation of admission to rank. It two Buddhists quarrel, it is no unusual term of reproach to apply the epithet "unbaptized wretch"; and when a parent upbraids his child in anger, he sometimes threatens to disinherit him, by saying he will blot out his baptism from the *thombo*.

Even to the present day a native child cannot be legally registered without previous baptism by a Christian minister, and the practice of the missionaries (with the exception of the Baptists) serves to perpetuate the evil, as they refuse to solemnize the marriages of individuals unbaptized.

Prodigious numbers of nominal Christians who have been thus enrolled designate themselves "Christian Buddhists," or "Government Christians," and with scarcely an exception they are either heathens or sceptics. There are large districts in which it would be difficult to discover an unbaptized Singhalese, and yet in the midst of these the religion of Buddha flourishes, and priests and temples abound. The majority ostensibly profess Christianity, but support all the ceremonies of their own national idolatry, and

more or less openly frequent the temples, and make votive offerings to the idol. The rest are alternately Christians or infidels, as occasion may render it expedient to appear; and in point of character and conduct they are notoriously the most abandoned and reckless class of the community. But in speaking of these classes under the designation of Christians, a wide line of distinction is to be drawn between them and the missionary converts, whose adhesion to Christianity, however imperfect may be their inward convictions, is at least an act of premeditation, and ensures a certain degree of circumspection of demeanour; whilst no similar obligation is felt to be incumbent upon those whose nominal adhesion to Christianity is merely the result of an accident.

#### DALHOUSIE COLLEGE.

The Annual Convocation of this Institution took place on Wednesday last, in the House of Assembly, by permission. Principal Ross presided on the occasion. After the opening exercises Dr. Ross stated that there were 33 Undergraduates and 26 general students. The degree of B. A. was conferred upon five of the students who had completed the Course; Messrs. Joseph Annand, Herbert A. Bayne, Ebenezer D. Miller, John J. McKenzie, and John M. Sutherland; and that of Master of Arts on Mr. Joseph H. Chase, B. A.

Speeches were made by His Honor the Chief Justice, Rev. G. M. Grant, and T. H. Rand, Esq. Prizes were distributed as follows: to Herbert A. Bayne, \$20 for the best essay on Chemistry; to Mr. J. J. McKenzie \$25, and to Mr. H. Logan \$15.—Prizes were also given to Albert R. Quin and Wm. H. Doull.

The Chief Justice expressed regret at the recent death of the Rev. Dr. Forrester, Principal of the Normal School, and the retirement of Rev. Dr. Cramp from the Presidency of Acadia College.

A School Bill is now pending in the Legislature of New York, similar to the one introduced by the Hon. Mr. Flynn into our House of Assembly last session. It provides that where any denomination enrolls two hundred scholars, the "Chamberlain, County Treasurer, or other officer who may have charge of the school monies to pay over eight dollars a head for any number of scholars the said Manager, Head or Superintendent may make it appear he has taught."—The people of the United States are beginning to lose faith in their boasted Godless school system.

We copy the above from the Halifax Express. After the light thrown by Rev. Dr. Cameron, on the term "godless" as used by the Express, it ceases to be a bugbear to frighten sensible christian people. We think it but little creditable to any respectable journal to be applying such a term to Schools approved by all denomination of Protestants, and not a few Roman Catholics. If the absence of instruction such as that taught in the Quebec Schools, from the *New Treatise on the Duties of the Christian towards God*: viz. Establishment of the Church; Characteristics of the Church; Out of the Church no Salvation; Of Purgatory; Of Confession; Of Indulgences; Transubstantiation; Of the Sacrifice of the Mass; Of Extreme Unction; Prayer to the Holy Virgin, &c., &c., renders our Public Schools "godless," we hope they may long continue so. Let every denomination teach its own peculiar views to its youth if they think proper, but not under the patronage and support of the State.

We should be sorry to see such an enactment on our Statute Book as that referred to by our contemporary. It is strange that he should point us to New York for an example. We believe the majority of the Schools in Nova Scotia are taught by devoted christian men and women, a school becomes generally pretty much a reflection of what the teacher is. We deny that our Schools are godless.

Although the Lieutenant Governor's Speech at the opening of our Local Parliament said nothing about our Educational affairs, it will be seen by our Parliamentary Intelligence that a member of the government, the Hon. Mr. Troop, on his own responsibility, has introduced a resolution,—we suppose as a sort of feeler; perhaps also it is brought forward for the purpose of giving an opportunity to members to ventilate their views on other subjects connected with education, without being in danger of coming into collision with their constituencies. Like many other subjects, that of Mr. Troop's resolution is one on which much may be said on both sides, and perhaps it is hardly necessary or desirable for us to venture a definition of "what is commonly known as a Common School Education."

It is possible that some saving may be effected in sustaining the superior schools,

but we should be sorry to see any curtailment of the educational advantages offered to the youth of our land. Whatever is done that would have such an effect would operate powerfully on the whole system, and bring down the character of the lower schools as well as the higher, and act injuriously on the Teachers, as well as the Scholars. Much caution is required in dealing with the subject. We trust that wisdom may be given to our Legislators; and that their deliberations may result in what is beneficial to all the interests concerned.

N. B.—We congratulate our brethren of Brussel Street, St. John, in having paid off the debt on their church; the *Visitor* says:

"At one time this debt was large, not far short of \$4,000; but their late pastor, Rev. Samuel Robinson, took hold of it with his usual energy, and raised money enough from his people to reduce it one half of its original dimensions; but the balance which remained was allowed to accumulate by the non-payment of interest, until it became troublesome. Their present pastor, Rev. T. Harley, on taking charge, determined that this incubus should be removed; and he has steadily persevered in his applications to the people for the *needful*, until he has the satisfaction of knowing that his purpose is accomplished."

We are informed that the two Baptist Churches in Fredericton N. B., are about uniting themselves again into one church. Committees from each church have been appointed to draw up a "basis of union." We trust that it may be a combination for good to all concerned.

REMARKABLE CONCESSION.—Father Hyacinthe, who is the most popular French preacher in Paris, visited Lyons a short time since, and preached to admiring thousands there. In one of his sermons he said—"Do you know why Prussia triumphed on the field of battle? It is because the nation is more enlightened, more religious, and because every Prussian soldier had the Bible in his knapsack. I will add, that what produces the power and the superiority of Protestant peoples is that they possess and read the Bible at their own firesides. I have been twice in England, and have learned that the Bible is the strength of that nation."

This is the testimony of a distinguished Roman Catholic Priest.

N. S. CENTRAL ASSOCIATION.—Our brethren belonging to the Central Association will observe the Notice in another column, from the pastor of the Church at New Germany. The suggestions offered are important and valuable; and all the more so because given in good time.

Asa Coy, Esq., will accept our thanks for a copy of the Report of the Commissioner of Public Works of the Province of New Brunswick. The Report shews the expenditure for the roads of the province with much minuteness and perspicuity.

## Notices, &c.

#### Association at New Germany.

DEAR BROTHER,—A low me in the first place to correct an error which I find prevailing in these parts as to the time of the meeting of the Central Association. Belcher in his Almanac says it is to meet on the 2nd Tuesday in June, and I find that idea is entertained by many.

The time of its meeting, however, is the SECOND SATURDAY IN JUNE. In the second place permit me, in behalf of this church, to request the churches composing this Association to send us the names of their Delegates by the 1st week in June.

Our reasons for this request are these: this church is scattered over a large extent of thinly settled country, so that convening the delegates as near to the Meeting House as we can, still some of them will probably have to travel a distance of four or five miles. If then the places handy to the Meeting House are occupied by those who are not delegates, the distances which the delegates will have to travel will be too great for them to attend all the Sessions of the Association. If the names of the delegates are sent, we will make such arrangements that persons coming via New Ross will please inquire for Deacon David Lantz; those coming via Mahone Bay will drive to the Meeting House; those coming through Northfield inquire for Deacon Rhodes; those coming via Nictaux will inquire for Brother James Moor, whom they will probably find at or near Mr. Nelson Chesley's, and at any of the above places they will be able to learn where to make their home during the Association.

All ministers, whether ordained or licensed, who expect to attend this Association, but are not delegates from churches in the Central, will please send us their names, and the same provisions will be made for them as above.

All communications to be addressed either to the Clerk of our Church, A. E. Durland, Esq., or to the writer,

WM. E. HALL.

#### Letters Received.

S. Armstrong, Rev. J. L. Read, \$21. H. K. Eaton, Esq., \$6. Rev. A. Cogswell, Rev. E. O. Read, Geo. Crossby, Esq., \$4. Rev. D. Freeman, 1 sub. Rev. W. E. Hall, R. H. Phillips, Thos. Goodeck, \$4. J. F. Masters, Esq. Rev. Jas. Reed, Rev. W. B. Boggs.