

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger

THE STORM, AND SPECIAL PROVIDENCES.

Mr. Editor,—

The late great storm has been the subject of much comment. It has suggested various trains of thought. Pre-eminent among these, we think, stands the subject of the Philosophy of special Providences. What mind, in view of this wide war of the elements, has not asked itself the question—Is this a special interposition of Divine power? or is it a necessary result of the unchangeable laws of Nature, happening irrespectively of the merits or demerits of those afflicted? It will not surely be thought that such spontaneous promptings of the wisdom-loving element in man should be hushed to silence. On the contrary it is elevating and expanding to the soul to study Nature. Thereby we learn to grasp those great leading principles by which Deity controls and actuates the Universe. Upon the subject of special Providences much pronouncement of opinion has no doubt prevailed.

This may be attributed to a want of true scientific knowledge, and to a sort of credulousness sometimes obtaining among men, not directed by reason. The multitudinous systems of heavenly bodies floating throughout immensity, all beautifully and harmoniously perform their revolutions in accordance with fixed law. These bodies themselves have advanced to their several progressive stages of formation and development through the potent energies of instrumentalities no more arbitrary and interventional. Vegetation springs forth from the bosom of mother earth, the seasons come and go, the leaves of the forest fade and fall, men live and die, and everything performs its allotted functions in accordance with—special direction? If the various operations of Nature are controlled and caused by immediate creatorial interferences and influence, how happens it that that Divine power never fails to work in accordance with fixed principles already established, and that everywhere around us certain causes always produce certain effects? Unchanging and eternal law governs all these things, even the plant can by no means flourish except when and where the appropriate conditions are supplied. Now if this recent storm and the unusually high tides in various parts of this Province, which occasioned so much destruction of property were the result of Special Providence in order to punish the sins of men, how was it that the British astronomer was able to predict the occurrence? Was he by some rare gift enabled to read the mind of the Almighty and reveal His purpose to man? No. He interpreted Nature as governed by law. He read the storm about to be, as the necessary and natural result of certain great physical causes and conditions inseparable from the universal constitution of things. Were those physical causes and conditions directly instituted to accomplish the desired end. We think not, but that they themselves sprang into being necessarily because of the grand, general regulations dominant throughout the universe of worlds, and consistent with them. Here it may be said that the phenomenon was evidently a part of the course of nature, but that natural laws and physical causes were so ordered and regulated from the beginning as to speak to men at this particular time in tones of unmistakable displeasure. This I believe to be the idea of the most enlightened advocates of the theory of special Providences of this day. The conditions, circumstances and states of finite man, must be, according to the friends of this theory dependent in great degree upon themselves, else man would be unpunishable. Now, did Deity, in establishing the great eternal laws of Creation, looking down the centuries of time, and contemplating the numberless, incidental and variously conflicting states and circumstances of the inhabitants of this little earth, which is absorbed as a drop in the grandeur of the ocean of Infinity—make those all-pervading laws dependent upon them, or was the higher end kept in view, viz., the greatest good of the whole. Rather does it not seem the more reasonable to suppose that, in order to the successful accomplishment of this last named purpose, the storm of which we have been speaking had to take place, that it was a link in the great chain of endless causes, existing independently of man and his relations, which themselves were the natural outflowings and developments of these same anterior principles fused as it were into Nature from the grand Central Fountain of Life. There was a connection, 'tis true, between the occurrence and the sinfulness of man inasmuch as they were co-existent—as indeed there would have been had it happened at any other time, for man always errs—but the question is, had the two circumstances any connection as regards the latter causing the former. The thoughtful mind emphatically answers, No. Indeed it must be evident, that had the laws of our Solar System been so otherwise arranged as that this occurrence should not have been, then in all probability, the conditions of this world and the circumstances of its inhabitants would have been widely different from what they were at that particular time or previous; inasmuch as it may

safely be said that the very circumstances—to meet which it has been thought there is no reason why this storm was not instituted—were intimately dependent upon the laws themselves, instead of the laws being arranged to meet them. The same may be said of many other instances of so-called special Providences. Let us take an illustration. Suppose prayer to be immediately answered by direct interference of the Almighty. One pious man living away up on the mountain side whose lands are parched for want of rain, prays long and earnestly for copious showers. Another good man living down in the valley, whose lands from the peculiarities of his situation, are abundantly watered, prays for a cessation of rain, ere his beautiful crops of grain are ruined through excess of moisture. Now, shall Deity answer the prayer of the man of the mountain? then surely he deals unjustly with the man of the valley; and vice versa. The question then is, Shall the Creator be influenced at all in this matter by the numerous selfish, conflicting and individual desires of mortals? or shall he institute a system of cause and effect governing this department of Nature, which shall best subserve the general good and do injustice to none? But again, if this occurrence formed from the beginning part of the Divine plan in order that it might exert a beneficial influence on the worldly mortals who suffered in consequence of it, how did it happen that it only affected those residing near the shores of bays and basins, etc.? Were they the worst persons in the world? But still again, is it not plain that the result must have taken place even if the people had all been very righteous. The course of Nature never turns for man. The phenomenon under consideration must have been and could not have been otherwise, else the harmony of the Solar System would have been deranged and God's immutable laws would have been violated. It is very easy in taking a hasty glance at this matter to reconcile with it the idea of a special and local interposition, but when we attempt to trace the principle out in all its bearings we find a clash of arms resulting, a conflict of belief with reason. Furthermore, if God had designed to speak to us by the express institution of a great storm, how was it that He should accomplish that design by the destruction of the lives of so many poor seamen, many of whom were hurled into eternity without a moment's notice. Why address men through instrumentalities involving the destruction of so many innocent cattle, horses and sheep, who perished in numbers by the slow and horrible agencies of cold and strangulation. Let us hasten and turn away from such a view of this question, from such a conception of the grandeur of our Creator's government. Let us rather consider that the stupendous systems of cause and effect in Nature will ever in conscious majesty move on, developing their grand, natural and universal results and working out the problem of eternal progress untrammelled and unchained. If God governs the world by the special and local exercise of His almightiness, and has power to effect all things other than through the course of natural law, why does He not displace Sin with Good, Slavery with Justice, Poverty with Plenty? Why does the Deity permit famine, disease, sin, war? Why are we created with attributes of justice and capabilities of happiness, and our instincts of benevolence violated and our conceptions of the principles of Distributive Goodness and Equity wounded by the manifestations of God's so-called Special Providences? By a belief in immutable law we know and feel the sublime assurance that impartial and everlasting justice will ever be dispensed; and we learn to love, not fear the Author of our being.

These principles we believe to be in perfect accordance with the highest Christianity. Although we speak of prayer as not being immediately answered to the violation of Nature's Laws, yet is there not abundance of room for its beneficial and marked influence within these limits? "The fire that warms us is just as much a blessing, produced in accordance with the principles of combustion, as though given us by a miracle." Although there may be no particular and local intervention of Divinity to punish or reward, yet generally considered, we believe that the principles of Cause and Effect in Nature are highly beneficial, in fact the best for man. Happiness being the result of obedience to law; and suffering and death, of violation, man is thus led to respect and obey his Creator's institutions.

THINKER.

Acadia College, Oct. 27th, 1869.

For the Christian Messenger.

GRAND PRE SEMINARY.

No. 4.

Mr. Editor,—

Perhaps many of your readers have already anticipated the second class of persons to whom I purpose to appeal in this matter of erecting a New Female Seminary. I mean

TO THE YOUNG WOMEN OF NOVA SCOTIA.

Indeed, an address to these appears to be the natural culmination of my efforts in this direction. If any class of individuals ought reasonably to feel an interest in this undertaking it surely must be our young women. It is for their instruction and especial benefit, it is expressly designed, and in the end the general enlightenment and progress of the country. I felt it but just that the men of property, acting from philanthropic motives, should generously contribute to this benevolent object. I also think that our

young women should likewise come forward with alacrity, and engage in this work with interest and activity.

Do our young women ever become aroused to a sense of the necessity of advancement in intellectual culture and refinement? Are they fully conscious of the tendency of the times, and of the rapid progress which the world around them is making in knowledge and education? Are they sufficiently alive to the responsibility which inevitably rests upon them to administer to the growth and development of their mental powers? Do they possess a just appreciation of the overwhelming advantages derived from the proper cultivation of their various and diversified faculties of mind? The consideration of these enquiries suggests some deeply interesting and gravely important ideas. Would I be justly chargeable with entertaining uncharitable views, if I ventured to hint, that the young women of Nova Scotia, (and the remark has a wider application), indicate an unwarrantable apathy in the respects just named? Do not the vanities and foibles incident to social life and social pleasures, possess a stronger charm and a livelier interest in the minds of a large proportion, than study, reflection, and intellectual pursuits generally? If these ideas are entitled to any weight at all, they clearly point to the necessity of increased awakening in the matter of liberal female education, and to this end the founding of an efficient institution for its wider dissemination. It is a glorious fact that we have noble instances of young women who have manifested an ardent thirst for knowledge, and a strong desire to investigate truth. But it is equally true, that there are many more to whom the opportunity is afforded, who evince no disposition to avail themselves of the privilege of enjoying this priceless boon. Important principles are involved. Indeed, a careful investigation of the state of society will reveal the fact, that the present circumstances are such as warrant—nay, imperatively demand prompt and energetic action, else serious consequences must of necessity ensue. I ask every thoughtful mind to calmly and deliberately measure the value of these statements.

I ask the young women of Nova Scotia and of the Baptist denomination in particular to enlist in the cause of female education. In my last article I asked the wealthy men to contribute something towards the erection of a New Seminary. I expect of course when more directly solicited, they will respond handsomely. As an auxiliary to the fund thus raised, I ask the young women of our denomination to raise a certain reasonable sum, by Tea-meetings, Bazaars, and by any other legitimate means which their never-failing ingenuity may invent. Do they require any inducement or stimulus to enlist their sympathies and provoke their efforts in this undertaking? Let them study the character and contemplate the labors of the gifted and worthy young women who now manage the affairs of Grand Pre Seminary. They labor with unwavering purpose and unremitting zeal for the furtherance of the cause which they have voluntarily espoused. Will our young women, scattered far and wide throughout Nova Scotia, suffer these disinterested ladies to sustain unassisted the entire burden of this undertaking? Will they not rather cheerfully come forward and cordially second their magnanimous efforts? By every consideration that is just and virtuous—by every principle that is lofty and noble—by every sentiment that is elevated and pure, I invoke them to sacrifice a few personal gratifications, and lend their aid to an undertaking worthy of their highest sympathies and heartiest endeavors. The most important interests of their sex are involved, in their intimate relationship to the well being of society, and the general welfare of the state.

I shall pursue this matter no farther, leaving it in the hands of our young women themselves, urging them, with all sincerity and earnestness, to act in accordance with the dictates of reason and common justice—not to say self-interest. Let them not forget, too, that Grand Pre Seminary invites their assistance and solicits their patronage.

I have thus, Mr. Editor, in a few imperfect articles stated the case in reference to the condition and circumstances of Grand Pre Seminary, as also to our reasonable expectations in the matter of increased facilities for the dissemination of the higher branches of female education. I think at least I have put the case fairly. My work is now completed. When a new and efficient Seminary for female education has been established, then, and then only, shall my aim be accomplished. I know not what success may attend the publication of these articles. I anticipate the results, will be but small—perhaps imperceptibly so. But I have discharged a con-

scientious duty which I could not consistently have avoided.

I close by expressing a hope that the few ideas here suggested may excite an interest in some mind whose influence will be more potent in furthering this magnificent project. I leave the matter to the enlightened judgment and public spirit of the BAPTISTS OF NOVA SCOTIA.

PROGRESS.

Wolfville, Nov. 1st.

For the Christian Messenger.

IN MEMORIAM.

DEACON BOLIN H. MARSHALL,

of Springfield, Annapolis Co., died September the 22nd, 1869, in the 41st year of his age.

He united with the Baptist Church about 10 years ago, was baptized by the Rev. O. Parker, and has lived in harmony and fellowship with the church ever since. He was appointed deacon of the church 2 years ago under the pastoral care of Rev. P. F. Murray, which office he faithfully filled.

Bro. Marshall came to his end by that fatal disease, consumption. He suffered much, yet was borne up by the grace of God, whilst he looked forward to the better inheritance. He leaves a bereaved widow and 7 children to mourn the loss of an affectionate husband and father. May the Lord sustain and comfort them under their deep affliction.

The occasion was improved by the writer from Rev. xiv. 13.—Com. by Rev. H. Achilles.

MRS ELIZA GRIFFEN,

second daughter of the late Oldham Gates, died at her residence, near Berwick, Kings Co., on the 19th ult., at the age of 49 years. In early life she became connected with the Baptist Church of Lower Aylesford and Upper Wilmot, and continued a worthy member till death.

A year ago deceased paid a visit to her brothers and sisters in the United States, and was even then suffering under Dyspepsia, &c. During the winter the disease assumed the form of consumption, which finally terminated her life.

She entertained no fears of her approaching dissolution, though suffering severely; having a well grounded hope of entering upon the rest remaining for the people of God. She expressed the hope of meeting all her brothers and sisters in heaven, and in conversation with a brother from Bridgewater, alluded to the circumstance of her mother, (now many years dead) making the conversion of her children an object of special prayer. And on rising one night from her knees by the bedside of her three youngest children, during the absence of the elder members of the family to a young pupil's prayer meeting, she beheld a bright ring with eleven spots or stars, of different sizes, strung on it, which seemed to her an answer to her oft repeated prayer. One of the eleven has now passed to the regions of endless day, being the first death of any of the children for 27 years; and though not yet all converted, 'tis hoped they all may finally obtain the rest of the righteous.

By request the Rev. Obed Parker preached the funeral sermon.—Com.

MARY BARTLET,

a young Indian Squaw, departed this life at Bridgewater, on Monday, Nov. 8th, of Consumption. Her end was peace.

The writer was never before so fully convinced of the importance of the Mic Mac Mission, as when visiting this sick and dying woman of the forest. Finding both her and her father and brothers rather more than ordinarily intelligent, expressing, as they did, some clear views of Christianity, I was led, though in a casual manner, to allude to Mr. Rand.

The sick ones eyes sparkled and her whole countenance brightened up, as she heard the name. "Ah yes, h'm good man, I love to hear him read and sing; if my throat was well I could sing some hymns I learned from him; I like white people so much, they so kind to me. Me feel I soon go home so nigh him, (placing her hand on her heart.)

These things may tend to encourage our indefatigable Bro. Rand in his good work, and may induce some of our large hearted Christian brethren and sisters to "lend unto the Lord" by giving spiritual blessings to these our "poor red brethren."

Yours, &c.,
W. J. G.

Religious Intelligence.

LIGHT AMONG THE HINDOOS.

The signs of the times are indicative of radical changes in the religions of earth. In no land are these changes becoming apparent with more distinctness than in Hindostan. Among the educated Hindoos there exists a sect known by the name of Brahma-Somaj. A handsome new place of worship was opened by them in the city of Calcutta to be called henceforth the Brahma Mandir of Calcutta. After some formalities, Keshub Chunder Sen read aloud the deed, which has been since buried in the centre of the temple, and of which the following is a translation:—

"To-day, by the mercy of God, the public worship of God is instituted in this place for the use of the Brahu community. Every day, or at least every week, the one only God, the Perfect and Infinite, without a second, the