

For the Christian Messenger.

DEATH OF DR. DE SANCTIS.

Mr. Editor,—

Permit me to advert, in your weekly journal, to the fall of another noble veteran in the army of Immanuel. The papers on this side of the Atlantic, have not yet, I think, noticed it. I refer to the death of Dr. De Sanctis, of Florence, Italy. This laborer in the gospel field, occupied an important place, in the renowned city of Dante, Savoranola and Galileo. He was an able theologian and a powerful logician. In his removal, the Waldensian College of the Italian capital has sustained a loss not readily repaired.

When great revolutionary hurricanes were sweeping over Europe, in 1848, this man was officiating in the priest's office, yet a benighted Romanist.

An English gentleman handed him a tract. He read Didoti's translation of the Bible. "The entrance of thy words giveth light." De Sanctis saw and renounced the errors of the Papal System, abandoned the priesthood, embraced the truth as it is in Jesus, and entered on the work of evangelization. Earnest efforts were put forth to induce him to return to the Church. Cardinal Ferretti, Sec. general of the Roman State, in a letter, pressed him with earnest entreaty to renew his allegiance to Pio Nono. A few words of his reply I will here present. Says the worthy confessor; "I most solemnly aver before God, and before Jesus Christ our judge, that I have left Rome solely to save my soul. I am thoroughly convinced that Rome does not conform its teachings to the Holy Word of God, but has substituted its own traditions in place thereof. If I were to continue in Rome, and hold those views, I should be a hypocrite and an imposter. But I now serve the Lord Jesus Christ, according to the word of God, and enjoy that peace which I never felt whilst in the Church of Rome. I cannot return to you."

The Vandois Theological College, of which the Dr. was a Professor, was established in the year 1860. The young men of this institution, fitting themselves to become torch-bearers to their benighted countrymen, receive their literary and classical preparation, in the Secular College at Turin, and come down to Florence, to pursue the Divinity course.

Over Lombardy, Tuscany, Naples, over all Italy, the morning light is breaking. The Pope, Cardinals, Bishops and Priests "take counsel against the Lord and against his anointed. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Almighty shall have them in derision."

The death of Dr. De Sanctis was somewhat sudden. Heaven removes its favorites from the deceitful shores of time. "Sudden death is sudden glory."

"The voice at Midnight came,
"He started up to hear;
"A mortal arrow pierced his frame,
"He fell, but felt no fear.

Stewiacke, April 28.

O. C.

For the Christian Messenger

DENOMINATIONAL UNITY, NO. 1.

Dear Brother,—

The time of our Denominational meetings is drawing near. It has occurred to me that a few observations on unity may be reasonable.

Our Churches are independent of each other. Each takes its own course, and is amenable neither to a Presbytery, nor a Bishop, nor a Conference. Yet there are certain principles in which all agree, and modes of action to which they voluntarily and uniformly adhere. And they respect each other's discipline, not deeming it right for one Church to receive those whom another Church has severed from its fellowship. There is independence without anarchy, and union without interference.

For there is a union. The Churches are associated. As the Churches in Galatia acted together, under apostolic direction in the matter of contributions for the poor saints at Jerusalem, and the Churches in Macedonia and in Achaia pursued the same course, so the Churches in this province have united for specific purposes, which are clearly expressed.

It is unnecessary to argue in favour of union, because it is a fact, and its advantages have been enjoyed for many years. Nor is it needful to attempt to show that the independence and the union are compatible with each other. That is fully admitted.

At first, there was one Association. The whole Denomination met together once

a year, and experienced hallowed "times of refreshing." Often did they exclaim, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"

Increase of numbers seemed to necessitate the division of the body. There are now three Associations. It is questionable whether there is the same amount of union in spirit and in action, as before the division. If not, the causes should be searched out, with a view to a remedy and a restoration. The danger is, that the separate Associations should become separate interests.

Our Home Mission arrangements appear to be unfortunate. There are two societies whereas one would be sufficient. It would be far better, too, as it strikes me, if the Infirm Minister's Fund were consolidated, and managed by one representation of the body.

Whether it arises from the division of the Association or not, I do not pretend to decide; but I think it is evident that our educational enterprise is not so generally cared for as it used to be. There are one hundred and forty-nine Churches in Nova Scotia. Sixty-two of them failed to contribute last year to the current expenses of the College. Fourteen of that number are among the largest of our Churches, nine of them having more than two hundred members, each, and five of them having three hundred members, and upwards, each. The non-contributing Churches contain 6964 members, our whole number being 17,295.

As regards the management and support of our Institutions, then, we are not in a state of unity. There are other considerations, which must be reserved for another letter.

Yours truly,
J. M. CRAMP.

Wolfville, May, 5, 1870.

Christian Messenger.

HALIFAX, MAY 11, 1870.

A CONVERTED CHURCH MEMBERSHIP.

One of the great first principles of Christianity is that Churches formed under its direction shall be composed of converted persons; who, by their own free act and choice, have decided to follow Christ, and submit to his laws and ordinances.

Baptists have no occasion to make any compromise with this principle. This it is perhaps more than any other that distinguishes them in all their church arrangements. On this—a converted membership—rest the ordinances and all the privileges of church fellowship; and from this spring the duties and obligations of the christian life. The experience of such persons is in perfect harmony with those obligations, duties and privileges.

With the Word of God as their guide, church members should seek after those who are without, and endeavour to bring them into the household. They have also themselves a voice in determining on their suitability for, and their reception into, the fellowship of the saints. This being the case, it must evidently be a matter of vast moment that they, and all who worship with them, have a clear apprehension of what constitutes genuine conversion.

In receiving members to a christian church it is not to be expected that all the converts will be well established and mature christians; but there should be sufficient indications of piety in candidates for fellowship to lead to the conclusion, in the judgment of charity and hope, that they are children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

The change which gives these characteristics is variously designated in God's word. Its two most prominent features are Regeneration and Conversion. The former, being the inward work of the Holy Spirit, changes the relation of the person with God; whilst the latter is that which is more manifest in the life.

Regeneration is wholly of God, the Word being applied becomes a living principle in the heart, and produces a new nature, from which spring forth the fruits of righteousness to the praise of God. It is not essential for us to comprehend fully how this is effected, but, if there be evidence of the change, we may believe the fact, although we may not be able to understand all about it. We know but little of the operations of Nature, and it need not be a matter of wonder if we know far less of the works of Divine grace. We see that plants grow and thrive and blossom, and we are delighted with the changes of form, and color, and odor, without knowing how the water, and air and earth have been

brought into contact with vitality and they have thus become living organisms. Our joy is not diminished because of the narrow limits of our knowledge. So with the seed of the kingdom, it takes root in the heart, and the Spirit imparts to it life, and changes the whole course of its nature, making the soul derive food and pleasure from what before had no value or beauty in its estimation; and rejoicing in certain facts which previously were not thought of or cared for. Shall we not also recognize these more glorious facts, and also rejoice in them as the fruits of the Spirit, and the preparation for heavenly blessedness?

Conversion, as we have said, is more manifest in the life, and has in it more relation to human instrumentalities. When the attention of a person is arrested and he is brought to reflect on his condition in the sight of God, thought is awakened on his state of alienation from God. Conviction follows, and his opposition to holiness is made evident. Repentance and a change of course must follow. Confession of sin will be no strange work, although possibly no one may be able to bring forward a charge, or an accusation of wrong doing. The person so brought to a state of consciousness regards himself as a sinner by taking a view of himself from a higher standpoint than ever before. He sees that his thoughts and motives of action are sinful, and perhaps more condemning even than his acts, and so the most moral, as well as the most flagrantly wicked, are brought to the same level; all needing the full merits of the Saviour's righteousness life and his vicarious death to atone for and remove sin.

These changes having taken place within, a new law henceforth reigns; and the enquiry arises, "What wilt thou have me to do?" The new relationship being established and recognized, the convert rejoices in being able to call God his Father. Where the Father is honored, there the child takes pleasure in being; and those who love Him he regards as friends. Not only does he say, "I love God because he first loved me," but adds, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren."

These thoughts have been awakened by reflecting on the information received from a number of places, that additions to the churches by baptism, have lately been made. Some suppose that we attach a degree of importance to baptism which does not belong to it, because this only is ordinarily mentioned in such cases, forgetting perhaps that it was so in apostolic days. When it is remembered that conversion is required as the prerequisite to baptism, it will be seen that the term so used is but the sign of conversion and the regeneration of so many souls, over which there is joy in heaven. Should not redeemed sinners also rejoice?

EDUCATIONAL CONVENTION AT NEW YORK.

Much importance has been attached, by the Baptists of the United States, to the recent Educational Convention at Brooklyn, New York. Its object was to consider the present state of collegiate education, and the necessity for any modification and enlargement of present arrangements to meet the demands of the times. We learn from our various denominational exchanges that it was a gathering together of the first men of the body from all parts of the Union—from Maine on the North to Texas on the South, and California on the West. All the colleges and Theological seminaries with scarcely an exception were represented. It appears to have been a highly successful and satisfactory assemblage of leading minds. The National Baptist says

Close attention was given to the business in hand, and there, was little sign of a lack of interest at any point during three days. We do not recall any meeting, in our own denomination or out of it where there was so small an amount of irrelevant talk and irrelevant action. The papers read were for the most part admirable examples of careful preparation and thorough statement. They will be of permanent value as testimonials to the work already done by Baptists in the cause of education, and of the work they purpose yet to do. In the discussions which followed the papers, and in the reports of committees to whom special documents were assigned, the same earnest purpose was manifest,—to gain a comprehensive and honest view of all the facts, and undertake whatever the providence of God seemed at present to demand.

The Educational Commission, which called the Convention, had made judicious preparations for the meetings. Topics

had been selected, writers and speakers chosen, and the general order of business arranged. The Brooklyn Social Union deserves unqualified praise for the thoughtful and generous provision they made for the entertainment and comfort of delegates. They also had stenographic reporters in attendance, at all the sessions, and will furnish a verbatim report of all that was said and done.

On Tuesday, April 19, at the morning session, the officers were chosen and committees appointed. The first paper presented was by Prof. S. S. Greene, of Brown University, on "The place of Academics in a system of higher education, the standards to which they should aspire, and the conditions of their efficiency." Animated discussion followed.

In the afternoon session, three papers were read. The first by Rev. Dr. G. W. Bosworth, of Maine (the Corresponding Secretary of the Northern Baptist Education Society), on "The sphere and duties of Education Societies." The second by President J. R. Loomis, of the University at Lewisburg, Pa., on "The duty of the Church to provide the most advanced investigators and teachers in the departments of science, and, at the same time, to conserve the discipline and culture of classical and literary studies." The third by President Alvah Hovey, of the Newton Theological Institution, Mass., on "The question of fellowships as a reward for eminent scholarship, and with a view to the rearing of a specially learned class from which Professors may be taken for our universities and schools of theology."

In the evening session a paper was read on "The University of the Nineteenth Century,—what it is and what it will cost," by Pres. M. B. Anderson, of the University of Rochester, N. Y.

On Wednesday morning April 20th, three papers were presented. The first was from Rev. Dr. J. W. Olmstead, editor of the Watchman and Reflector, on "the relation of our denominational papers to the educational interests of the denomination." The second was by the editor of The National Baptist, on "The methods by which education may be made a specialty and a paramount organized interest in our denominational activities." The third by President G. W. Samson, of Columbian College, Washington, D. C., on "Jesuit collegiate instruction, as affecting present questions of education and society."

In the afternoon Rev. Dr. J. L. M. Curry, of Richmond College, Virginia, addressed the Convention at considerable length, on "The condition and prospects of education in the Southern States, as affecting both races, and the duties of Baptists as thence arising." President Robinson, of the Rochester Theological Seminary, New York, read a paper on "The kind and extent of ministerial culture demanded in our time, and especially in our denomination."

In the evening a paper was read by President Dodge, of Madison University, New York, on "The most advanced ministerial culture, as illustrated and vindicated in the actual work of preacher and pastor."

On Thursday morning, April 21st President G. W. Northup, of the Chicago Theological Seminary, Illinois, read a paper on "The duty of educators to lead the cause of education." President Kendall Brooks, of Kalamazoo College, Michigan, read the report of the Committee on Denominational Work in Education, showing what has been done in this field of effort, and submitted a plan for an American Baptist Educational Commission.

In the afternoon session Rev. Dr. Edward Bright, editor of the Examiner and Chronicle, New York, made an address on "The question of endowments for our literary and theological institutions."

President Raymond, of Vassar College read a paper on "The demand of the age for the higher education of women, and how it should be answered."

In the evening various committees reported, there was some general discussion on topics of interest, and the Convention adjourned sine die at about 9 o'clock. The Social Union had prepared a generous collation in parlors of the church, and two or three hours were spent in agreeable intercourse. It was a fitting close to the pleasant sessions of the preceding three days.

The above is the merest outline of what was said and done, and yet it will show the friends of educational progress in Nova Scotia, that the deepest interest is taken in these matters by our brethren in the United States. The Visitor very properly makes this Convention the occasion of calling our New Brunswick brethren to awake on be-