

with the cause of God, with the word of God, with the advance of Christ's kingdom, with the dignity of man. In a world where "no man liveth to himself" the mode in which the act of profession is made cannot be a matter of indifference, and ought not to be a matter of unconcern.

For the Christian Messenger.

"THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER."

Mr. Editor,—

I read my article differently from the usual course, I leave out the prefix for on this occasion as I wish to write about the Messenger, and not especially for it.

I have before me the first issue of this periodical in January 1837—and the last number published in 1870, and on my library shelves are stored the intervening numbers in thirty-four volumes.

A generation has passed away since I and others greeted the first number of this welcome visitor, and doubtless a large portion of its first subscribers are now in the spirit-world.

The present readers of your Journal little know the anxiety, care and responsibility assumed by those who first brought the paper into existence, perhaps I know more about it than almost any one of your present subscribers. I had a good deal to do in assisting its circulation, I was neither proprietor, Editor nor printer; but I was General Agent and this in the outset formed a sort of central pivot on which the whole machinery turned.

I well remember the anxiety with which the Editors and a few of their earnest supporters looked forward to getting the enterprise fairly launched before the denomination. At the present day such an undertaking would not be surrounded by the difficulties which then existed. The launching of the Great Eastern or the successful laying of the Atlantic Cable could hardly have pressed with greater weight on the chief managers, than did the bringing out the first Baptist Paper in the Lower Provinces to those engaged in the enterprise.

Editors do not spring up suddenly nor is every literary person qualified for the office. It was fortunate that in the outset two brethren of rare qualifications combined what was requisite for the work were at hand ready to enter upon the enterprise. The senior Editor with his classic mind and extensive reading—and whose pen whenever employed conveyed a fit mirror of his thoughts—was a guarantee that nothing weak or puerile would soil its pages, whilst the junior Editor with an unusual amount of keen discrimination of men and things, in general; was well calculated to cater for the wants and tastes of the more extensive class of readers belonging to our country churches.

Printers or Publishers were scarce at this period, or rather such as would engage to bring out the paper on reasonable terms. Consequently arrangements had to be made with one who published a weekly paper of his own which occupied so much of his personal supervision that new hands were entrusted with getting out the Messenger and much mismanagement at times was the result.

I was told, to be an agent was only a form, a mere centre of reference where persons could communicate or letters be addressed. Such was the impression of the Editors and such till better informed was my own. It is well that the duties and difficulties were, in

the outset, hid from Editors, Proprietors and Agents or there might have been a failure at the beginning of the work.

The agent soon found out that a list of 700 names had to be arranged and re-arranged from week to week and a correspondence entered into with local agents to find the right directions extending over the three Lower Provinces, which in itself was enough to employ one's time almost fully. The post offices in those days were few and far between. In counties where now fifty offices for delivery of mails are found, then only numbered two or three, so to get the bundles directed so as to reach the proper locality was a serious undertaking, and as the mails at that period only went about once a week in case of a wrong direction papers remained weeks unheard of by anxious subscribers. Those now receiving the paper almost before its sheets are dry little consider the advantages they possess over those of the earlier period referred to. The writer remembers when but one office existed between Windsor and Annapolis and that was at Wolfville.

The agent gave a weekly list to the printer with the quantity required to be struck off. But very soon from letters received from the interior, he found that the whole number of papers had not been put in the bundle, and on investigating the matter it was found that the boy who wet down the sheets made a mistake of a quire or more which led to serious inconvenience, and as it occurred in the commencement quite frequently it led to the consideration of the necessity of getting a press that would be under the control of the Editors and Proprietors. There being no other religious paper published in the Provinces when the Messenger was started, the names of many leading persons in other denominations were put on the list, supposing on seeing it some at least would subscribe. Soon several of the persons referred to were heard from; one would write, "When I want your paper I will order it;" another would say "I am pleased with its appearance" &c., but at present do not wish to subscribe; whilst a third would say "I received your paper without ordering it, but you can continue to send it as I like its contents" &c., and so its reception outside the limits of our own denomination was such as would naturally be expected.

The Editors had no small difficulty in selecting matter for the earlier numbers. They had invited contributions, and they came, fully equal in quantity to that of quality. Before them lay a long prozy article too long and too dry for such a paper, but it came from a friendly hand and how to prune it was the difficulty; which end to cut off, or how at all abstract the middle without spoiling it altogether was a puzzle, but the job had to be done. Then a letter with matter enough to make a moderate sized volume on some abstruse doctrinal subject which would have suited the age of the Puritans, had to be laid aside and a soothing note dispatched to the writer. Then a sensible article, badly written, badly spelt and ungrammatical had to be re-written and shaped for the press. These difficulties may not be peculiar to that period only; but then the Editors were new hands at such work and what seemed to them a task, the present Editor with his experience might smile at.

The difficulty of transmitting the papers into the country from the city was not small. The mails to most parts of the interior left once a week, and of course would, to some parts, leave the day before publishing—as at that period it was the utmost difficulty to get the paper ready on the day announced—consequently the paper remained a week in the city Post Office before being forwarded, and frequently as before remarked from the paucity of Post Offices, subscribers were frequently three weeks before receiving their Messenger. In connection with this matter there was another which was not a small tax as the mail charge was fifty-cents on each paper. Let no complaining reader who now pays twenty-cents a year, think for a moment that his case is a hard one, this fifty-cents had to be added to three dollars, the price of the paper, so if the present readers of the Messenger will consider the size of the paper in comparison with it at that early date, they will find that it costs now not more than one-half it did then.

I might go on enumerating other difficulties that the Editors experienced in the early history of the paper—particularly pecuniary liabilities arising from want of punctuality of subscribers which caused them often to have to borrow money to meet their engagements with printers, postmasters, &c.,

but I cease, as probably I have written now more than will interest your readers.

But the paper amidst all its difficulties and frequent oppositions amidst the fears of its friends and the ill will of its foes, still exists and has steadily gained in the estimation of its increased and increasing list of subscribers, and its paying subscribers which in the first year of its existence did not amount to five hundred, I may, I think, at a guess, say, have multiplied five fold, and this too with a sister sheet in New Brunswick, whose weekly visits supply the place with many, who formerly were your subscribers. May your list steadily increase till every family in our growing denomination, shall become a subscriber, and derive as much pleasure and profit from its perusal, from week to week, as has the subscriber for the last thirty-four years.

AN OLD AGENT.

For the Christian Messenger.

ACADIA COLLEGE AGENCY.

Dear Brother,—

The friends of our Institutions of learning are probably anxious to hear from the College Agent again. A portion of the time which has elapsed since my last report has been spent in looking after old Notes—formerly given towards the "Endowment Fund"—the remainder in securing new donations. Although the sum I am now able to report is not as large as I wished for, yet it is enough to indicate progress, and encourage hope.

Table listing names and amounts: James Carnarvon \$16 00, George Creed 5 00, Mrs. Parker 0 25, A Friend 0 50, George Knowles 4 00, S. J. Dimock 3 00, Mrs. Mary Smith 1 00, Amos Davison 1 00, J. G. McNally 1 00, Wm. Cooper 5 00, Rev. R. D. Porter 2 00, David Vaughan 1 00, J. S. May 20 00, Henry Vaughan 5 00, Torry Bent 5 00, W. F. Catten 5 00, Nelson Forrest 4 00, A. S. Blenkhorn 0 50, A. W. Marsters 50 00, Wm. Steep 100 00, Rev. J. E. Hopper to complete a Scholarship \$ 300 00

Several persons who have not contributed now—on account of having other liabilities to meet—have expressed their intention to do so, as soon as circumstances will permit,—we shall have them as a part of our reserve corps. I find, pretty generally, a healthy state of feeling existing towards our Institutions, and received much kindness from the people everywhere. It is a work of toil and anxiety, but, in the confidence that it is a good work, I am encouraged to go forward. I shall now commence at Lower Granville, and work through this Valley as fast as possible to Windsor,—thence to Halifax.

Hoping my success will be in proportion to the wealth and intelligence of the Baptists through this section.

I am, Yours very truly, J. E. BALCOM.

Paradise, Feb. 8th 1871. (Christian Visitor please copy.)

The Christian Messenger.

Halifax, N. S., February 15th., 1871.

Dear Editor,—

Allow me to ask through your columns, if it is in strict accordance with Baptist principles, to receive persons to membership, who have been baptized by Campbellite Ministers, while in an unregenerate state of mind, but who subsequently, being convinced of sin, and the necessity of a change of heart did seek and find peace in believing.

The question which I would ask is, Are such Baptisms valid, as Baptists understand the commands of our Lord? A word on the subject would enlighten.

AN ENQUIRER.

Baptism is a public profession of faith in Christ, in obedience to his command, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, and following his example.—Our reply to "Enquirer" therefore is, If the baptism to which he refers had in it these characteristics, we believe, it should be regarded as valid; the same also whether administered by a Methodist, or a Congregationalist, or a Presbyterian or Episcopalian. Defective piety in the subject, or inconsistency in the administration, may render the baptism disorderly and irregular without destroying its validity.

It is not an uncommon thing for believers to call in question the genuineness of their own experience, and to be troubled by doubts as to the time

of their conversion; and after having had some further acquaintance with their own hearts to suppose that what they felt at a former period was not such a change as made them "new creatures in Christ Jesus." It is possible that, in some cases, they may be correct in their judgment, and that they were baptized without having experienced the regenerating influences of the Holy Spirit.

In such a case the baptism may have been, in itself, all that it should be, although the subject was at the time imperfectly acquainted with gospel requirements.

It may be however that the person entertaining such doubts is mistaken, that the change was wrought previously, and that his doubts arise from a morbid state of mind, which if yielded to would lead to another and another recurrence of the wish for rebaptism. It may be easily perceived that this would be trifling with the ordinance and destroying its real value as an 'outward and visible sign' of christian discipleship, whilst a claim might be set up on its behalf for its possessing some sacramental efficacy.

A brief paragraph in one of our exchanges in reply to a remark often made that Baptism is only a formal ceremony for the purpose of depreciating the importance and necessity of baptism may not inappropriately be here copied. The analogy drawn between it and some other ceremonies is at once striking and convincing:

"BAPTISM is only a formal ceremony, it is sometimes said, and therefore it cannot be required that we should be so very particular about it. Naturalization, we may answer, is only a ceremony, and yet without it the immigrant continues an alien, whatever his desires and purposes may be; it requires the form to make him a citizen. Marriage is only a ceremony, but there can be no lawful wedlock without it. The form is needful, in order to make Scriptural and legal what would otherwise be adulterous, and in order to preserve the offspring from becoming outcasts. A form may be very important and significant, especially if it has been defined and prescribed by divine authority."

SCHOOL MATTERS.

The Christian Messenger stands before the public pledged to promote a sound and efficient system of Education. In the past our columns have spoken clearly and strongly on this question—a question which overshadows in importance all others under the control of our Local Parliament. Untrammelled by the doings or wishes of political journals or parties, we shall continue to advocate what we regard as essential to the well-being of the people at large in this matter, irrespective of class or creed. Everything goes to show that there is great need of the Legislature giving prompt attention to the manner in which our educational system is being administered. Our readers know that a year ago while the late Superintendent was investigating the condition of the schools at Arichat he was dismissed from office. The Legislature failed to demand a thorough investigation of the Arichat School affairs. A grand principle affecting the entire system of Education was clearly involved. The members of the Legislature accepted the assurances of the Government, that the new Superintendent whom they had appointed would be directed by the Council of Public Instruction to thoroughly investigate the whole case respecting the alleged violation of the school law in Arichat. We have not heard that any report of the Rev. Mr. Hunt's investigation has yet been presented to the Legislature, or asked for by a member of either branch. We hope the Council of Public Instruction will submit the results of that investigation without delay, that the public may know the facts in the case. We learn from reliable authority that matters at Arichat have not been set right during the year. The Protestants have been debarred, by the sectarian character of the schools sustained by public moneys, from sending their children to them, and are under the necessity of supporting a school for themselves; such school cannot of course, receive any of the money raised by taxation or granted by the Province; nor should the other schools in the town, mis-called public schools, if they are conducted in violation of the law.

Last spring the Hon. Mr. Flynn in the House of Assembly read a Report signed by himself and his co-trustees, which stated that they had "Investigated the matter by visiting the Convent Schools—consulting the Teachers and others likely to be best informed," "That during the 14 years this in-

stitution had been in operation, and where all denominations have been educated—during that period—not one child has been a convert to the Catholic faith in that institution."

In referring to this matter the Witness remarks:—

"We are now informed on indubitable authority that such is not the case. A daughter of one of the leading Protestants of Arichat, a pupil of the Nuns, was secretly admitted into the church of Rome in the private chapel of the Convent, eighteen months ago. The girl was taught to keep her change of faith a profound secret. Even her mother was not made aware of it. The whole process was strictly clandestine. The mother is deeply distressed by what she regards as the perversion of her daughter.

Another person was clandestinely admitted to the church of Rome, at the same private chapel, on the 8th December. He is 19 years of age. His most intimate Protestant friends knew nothing of his perversion for weeks afterwards. Several female pupils, additional to the pupil above referred to, have secretly joined the Church of Rome, with out the knowledge or consent of their parents or guardians.

The Morning Chronicle of Monday endeavours to turn this matter into ridicule, and, after a considerable amount of trifling, concludes by saying:

"A truce however to triflings. The truth is that so far as the Government are concerned the schools of Arichat are not a source of blame to them. The conversions have as little to do with the Educational Law as they have with the laws regarding insanity. A statement, however, of the names of the converts, the real causes of their conversion or perversion, might perhaps help the cause of the opponents of the Government. Out with them then. We have no fear that a new investigation in the Arichat schools will fail to confirm that formerly made. If the religion of the majority of our people should fail to withstand the damages done to it by one boy and one girl's defection, then we mistake its character."

The Protestant readers of the Chronicle will be able to put the proper estimate on this mode of dealing with our important principle in the administration of our School Laws. Let us have the report of Mr. Hunt's investigation.

GRANVILLE STREET BAPTIST CHURCH.

The Rev. W. B. Boggs has been laboring in connection with this church during the past six or seven months—at first, during the absence of the pastor, Rev. E. M. Saunders, in Great Britain, and since his return, as occasion offered in the church, and other parts of the city, as well as at some other places—Bedford, Brookfield, &c.—Last week Mr. Boggs received a pressing invitation from Portland, New Brunswick, to visit and labor in the Gospel ministry with the church there. After mature consideration, although he had not completed the period for which he had been engaged, he felt constrained to accept the invitation, and accordingly sought a release from his engagement with the brethren in Halifax.

On Sunday evening last Mr. Boggs preached an appropriate Sermon on taking leave of the G. S. congregation. At the close of the service an intimation was given by the pastor that it was desired to offer to Mr. B. some expression of the appreciation in which his services were held. The congregation remained after the close of the regular service, when the Rev. Mr. Saunders made some introductory remarks and read the following letter, but stated he believed the expressions it contained were rather below than above the reality of the feeling entertained by himself and the friends generally:—

TO THE REV. W. B. BOGGS,—

Dear Brother,—

We, the members of Granville Street Church and Congregation having enjoyed your labors in the ministry of the Word and in our houses for several months past, during the absence of our pastor, on a visit to England, and for some time since, desire to express to you on leaving Halifax for Portland N. B., our high appreciation of your services and our respect and esteem for you as an able minister of our Lord and Saviour.

It affords us much pleasure to bear testimony to your talents and adaptation for usefulness, in commending the gospel of Christ to old and young. We are thankful that your labors in several instances during the short period of your stay with us, have been attended by the Divine blessing, and we hope that the fruits may eventually still further appear.

The affliction and bereavement you have been called to suffer during your residence in Halifax, have awakened our tenderest sympathies, and we trust that the many prayers offered on your behalf in that time of trial were heard and answered.

Be assured dear brother that our prayers will still be offered, that God may abundantly bless you in whatever part of his vineyard he may require you to labor.