

RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE.

There is still work for the Evangelical Alliance to do. The principles of religious toleration are not yet universally accepted and practised.

One mission of the Evangelical Alliance is to maintain the right of men everywhere to their private religious beliefs.

There seems, however, to be a revival of the intolerant spirit, which, it was hoped, was becoming a relic of the past.

The Protestant as well as the Mohammedan community of Syria have been deeply stirred by the recent cases of three converts to Christianity.

It is hard for American Christians, trained under institutions that have guaranteed them liberty of thought and action, to realize the situation of their fellow-believers, who, to follow Christ, expose themselves to suffering, violence, and even death.

and impressing upon all the truth that every man has a right to his own belief, as every one must give an account of himself unto God.—Christian Weekly.

For the Christian Messenger.

SABBATH SCHOOL WORK.

Dear Editor,— It might be profitable to those readers of the Christian Messenger, who will not see the minutes of the late Sabbath School Convention held in Gaspereaux, to make a few statements further with reference thereto.

The key-note was struck by Rev. J. F. Kempton, in his sermon, with reference to "the conversion of children." It was well stated by another speaker, that the grand design of the Sabbath School is to train children for heaven.

Some of the speakers also urged that while these points are admitted, certain circumstances conspired greatly to this end. Such as the Adult Bible school embracing the whole church, the continuance of the Schools throughout the whole year, and the training of the children in the missionary spirit.

Our Sabbath School has been very interesting during the past year. We attribute it in a great measure to the missionary effort put forth.

"Good order is indispensable.— Brief and appropriate addresses at the opening and close useful. Live Superintendants and Teachers are required to give life to the school.

"We have a pledge in our school, viz.: against the use of profane language, intoxicating liquors, tobacco, Sabbath breaking, and in favour of exerting our influence in favour of the Sabbath School, and to always speak the truth.

"All the teachers and scholars repeat a verse, containing a given word, as, Faith, Hope, Love, Heaven, Hell, Father, Jesus, Kingdom, Prayer, Praise, &c. Then brief explanations of the meaning of such word by the Superintendent. Sometimes to vary, a general question is given requiring a full explanation.

"An occasional Sabbath School Concert. The Sabbath School and the Superintendent at opening, reading in concert verse and verse about. Short prayer at opening and closing. All exercises brief. Annual picnic properly conducted. A Christmas tree with presents of books, &c. by the parents help to keep up a winter interest. The old must remember that they were once young themselves.

"Our Juvenile Missionary Society has become an institution permanent we trust. Fifty cents constitutes membership. Twenty dollars at one time a life member. Five dollars annually a life member. Have note paper printed with suitable heading, enclosed with an envelope headed "Open" "Read" "Subscribe." Lay off the districts to collectors. Then give cards to be presented only to visitors at the collector's residence.

"We most earnestly recommend every school to attempt some great thing, either Home or Foreign Mission work for the Master, and expect great things. We cannot over estimate the vast amount of good which the children themselves will do in this way, and better than all the mission spirit which will be diffused.

"Let our Sabbath Schools be properly trained in such a course, and our narrow-minded, mean, stingy, rich christians, will be few and far between in the next generation."

When we remember that this school, with an average attendance of only 38, raised for missions the sum of \$100 last year, we must admit that it not only has a live Superintendent and live teachers, but that it is a live school.

Yours truly, D. FREEMAN.

Canning, Sept. 18, 1871.

The Christian Messenger

Halifax, N. S., Oct. 4th, 1871.

THE ORIGIN OF LIFE.

THE BACONIAN PHILOSOPHY IGNORED.

CERTAIN brilliant scientists of the day and their pale-hued satellites, seem to have been badly bitten of infidelity, and to have gone "theory" mad. The origin of both vegetable and animal life on the earth, is a subject over which they display a surprising amount of folly.

Sir William Thompson who at the recent annual session of the "British Association for the advancement of Science" at Edinburgh, was elected President of that organization, to succeed Professor Huxley, told the Association in his (Sir William Thompson's) Inaugural Address that meteoric stones covered with lichens and seeds must have fallen to the earth, and in this way started vegetable life on this globe. Read what he says:—

"An ancient speculation, still clung to by many, supposes that, under meteorological conditions different from the present, dead matter may have run together or crystallized or fermented into "germs of life," or "organic cells," or "protoplasmia." But science brings a vast mass of inductive evidence against this hypothesis of spontaneous generation, as you have heard from my predecessor in the presidential chair. Careful enough scrutiny has, in every case up to the present day, discovered life as antecedent to life. I am prepared to hear that "our code of biological law is an expression of our ignorance as well as of our knowledge." And I say, let any one who is not satisfied with the purely negative testimony of which we have now so much, throw himself into the inquiry. Such investigations as those of Pasteur, Pouchet, and Bastian are among the most interesting and momentous in the whole range of natural history; and their results, whether positive or negative, must richly reward the most careful and laborious experimenting. I confess to being deeply impressed by the evidence put before us by Professor Huxley, and I am ready to adopt, as an article of scientific faith, true through all space and through all time, that life proceeds from life, and from nothing but life. How, then, did life originate upon the earth? Did grass and trees and flowers spring into existence, in all the fulness of ripe beauty, by a fiat of Creative Power? or did vegetation, growing up from seed sown, spread and multiply over the whole surface? Every year thousands, probably millions, of fragments of solid matter fall upon the earth; and it is often assumed that all, and it is certain that some, meteoric stones are fragments which have been broken off from larger masses and launched free into space. It is as sure that collisions must occur between great masses moving through space as it is that ships, steered without intelligence directed to prevent collisions, could not cross and recross the Atlantic for thousands of years without them. Should the time when this earth comes into collision with another body, comparable in dimensions to itself, be when it is still clothed as at present with vegetation, many great and small fragments carrying seed and living plants and animals would undoubtedly be scattered through space. Hence, we must regard it as probable in the highest degree that there are countless seed-bearing meteoric stones moving about through space. If at the present moment no life existed upon this earth, one such stone falling upon it might, by what we blindly call natural causes, lead to its becoming covered with vegetation. The hypothesis that life originated on this earth through moss-grown fragments from the ruins of another world may seem wild and visionary; all I maintain is that it is not unscientific. From the earth stocked with such vegetation as it could receive meteorically to the earth teeming with the plants and animals which now inhabit it the step is prodigious, and I have always felt that the hypothesis of "the origin of species by natural selection" does not contain the true theory of evolution, if evolution there has been, in biology.—Sir John Herschel, in expressing a favourable judgment on the hypothesis of zoological evolution, with,

however, some reservation in respect to the origin of man, objected to the doctrine of natural selection that it was too like the Laputan method of making books, and that it did not sufficiently take into account a continually guiding and controlling intelligence. This seems to me a most valuable and instructive criticism. I feel convinced that the argument of design has been greatly too much lost sight of in recent zoological speculations. Reaction against the frivolities of teleology, such as are found, not rarely, in the notes of the learned commentators on Paley's Natural Theology, has, I believe, had a temporary effect in turning attention from the solid and irrefragable argument so well put forward in that excellent old book. But overpowering strong proofs of intelligent and benevolent design lie all round us, and if ever perplexities, whether metaphysical or scientific, turn us away from them for a time, they come back upon us with irresistible force, showing to us through nature the influence of a free will, and teaching us that all living beings depend on one ever-acting Creator and Ruler.

Whilst Sir William contents himself with pronouncing his theory "not unscientific," he makes admissions concerning the evidences of design in creation, and of the presence of the Creator in his works which contrast pleasingly with the ignoring of these facts by his learned predecessor. Still we fail to see what these men are after, unless it is to persuade themselves and others that the Bible is not God's revelation to man. They surely labor in vain, for the declarations of the Word of God are a thousand times easier reconciled with known facts than are (falsely so called) scientific theories they offer in stead. It can be demonstrated, for example, that a meteor falling through our atmosphere to the earth, would become so intensely heated that any form of life upon it would be effectually destroyed. But nobody yet knows whether meteors ever fell from other worlds, or are mere atmospheric accretions of our own world.

The London Punch, taking Sir Wm. Thompson on his own ground, however, disposes of his theory in a very scientific way, and in few words. They are too good to withhold from our readers:—

NO CONJURER'S CONJECTURE.

Could a meteoric stone, Pray, Sir William Thompson, Fall, with lichen overgrown? Say, Sir William Thompson.

From its orbit having shot, Would it, coming down red hot, Have all life burnt off it not? Eh, Sir William Thompson?

Not? Then showers of fish and frogs Too, Sir William Thompson Fall; it might rain cats and dogs, Pooch, Sir William Thompson!

That they do come down we're told; As for aerolite with mould, That's at least too hot to hold True, Sir William Thompson!

WESLEYAN METHODIST.

We learn from the Provincial Wesleyan that the Sackville College "has received an addition of twelve duly matriculated Students in the full A. B. course, and several special ones of quite an advanced educational standing. Others of both classes are expected to enter within a few weeks." This is highly encouraging.

The matter of support for ministers' children is causing some anxiety to our friends of that connexion. It appears that in 1855 there were 195 children in the Conference whereas there are now 312. There were in 1855, 13,136 in attendance on Circuits, whereas now there are 15,374. Allowing \$40 for each child in 1855, they required 597 cents from each member, now 82 cents are required: There were then 68 members to pay for each child, now there are but 49.

The remarks made upon these facts are—

"That the increase of claimants on the Fund is beyond all proportion to the increase of individuals supposed to be interested in the payments of the amounts required each year. The claimants have increased over 50 per cent in 16 years; while our membership has increased only about 18 per cent. This principle continued for ten years longer, with the same ratio of increase, must inevitably entail ruin on some Circuits.

It is seriously thought that the principle creates some of its own evils. By contemplating the consequences of an increase in return of membership, poor circuits may be restrained from going to the full limit of their actual members: that they prefer, in the event of a sudden increase of Society, to retain members on trial for a longer time than necessary, and thus avoid the essential demands of the Children's Fund."

The effort to make the support of

the minister's family equivalent to its necessities is a very proper and commendable one, and an essential part of the arrangements of the Methodist body, yet it appears not entirely free from difficulties.

An addition of six candidates for ministerial work are expected to arrive in Halifax from England about the middle of October, and one for the Bermuda Mission.

THE "CHURCH CHRONICLE" ON CHURCH ESTABLISHMENTS.

It is refreshing to read in a Church of England paper such remarks on a State Church, as are contained in the editorial of the Church Chronicle of last week:—

"What has a Disestablished Church to do with acts of Parliament? It is hampered by them, it is hindered by them; we talk of the Synod of Jerusalem as our pattern. What acts of Parliament could have hindered them from receiving 'Paul and Barnabas and certain others with them' who came as a delegation from the outside Gentiles. We have long been persuaded that the less the Church in these Colonies has to do with the legislature the better. Once the Church in Nova Scotia tried to get a Synod Act passed. It is well known what strenuous efforts were made to prevent its becoming law, by those who opposed the Synod movement. At that time we thought it necessary to follow the Church in Canada. Synod acts were passed there, so we thought such an act necessary for us, and we very fairly presumed that we should get it. But the development of Synodical action here, and elsewhere, has taught us that Synod acts are a mistake. We infinitely prefer our present position with the simple act of Incorporation, to that of any Synod in Canada. We thought at the time, the failure of the act, would be ruinous to our Synod's influence and power; we have lived long enough to see in it the greatest blessing that could have been given to us. We know that there are yet some links in that chain which bind us to the State, (albeit those chains were not golden) existing.— We are told that a clergyman cannot be inducted into a Rectory without some secular authority; but as far as our Synod is concerned Acts of Parliament never can trouble us."

"We are told that here the Church has no pre-eminence, that Baptists, Presbyterians, Churchmen and Roman Catholics must all be treated alike. We gladly accept the position, and say to our Legislators, 'we want nothing more; we simply want that freedom to manage our own affairs which other bodies have.'"

If such things were said by all Church of England clergymen in Great Britain, the Dissenters would think the Millennium was near at hand.

We are informed that the Rev. George Armstrong has notified the Baptist Church at Bridgetown, N. S., of which he has been pastor seventeen years, that he intends retiring from the pastoral charge of that church at the close of this year, and advises the brethren to make arrangements to provide a successor. Bro. Armstrong, we learn, preaches in four meeting-houses, and three times one Lord's day and twice on the following, and would prefer a field of less extent where his ministry would be more concentrated, and he, as he hopes, rendered more effective by the grace of God. Repeated revivals have crowned the ministerial work of our esteemed brother during his prolonged pastorate in Bridgetown, and he is among our most able, judicious and successful pastors in Nova Scotia. The fact that he has continued so long in one place clearly indicates the esteem and affection of the people for him. There are five districts now in New Brunswick calling loudly for Baptist ministers, and it is just possible that one of these may be successful in securing the ministry of Bro. Armstrong. Bridgetown will require a strong man to fill his place.—Christian Visitor.

This is a world of change. Changes are however usually attended by loss and in themselves are undesirable. Like removing a tree from one locality to another, there is a loss at least of time in its productiveness until it has taken hold of the soil, and a combination is effected whereby its powers of fruit-bearing are tested in its new habitat. So with the change of pastorate, there is necessarily a loss at least for time to both pastor and people which renders such changes in themselves undesirable. The above notice being so positive we presume the change is now inevitable. We will therefore venture to say that we hope it may ultimately be for the benefit of both the pastor and the Church at Bridgetown. We fully endorse the above estimate of Bro. Armstrong and his labors, and it will not be an easy thing for him and his people to separate.