

For the Christian Messenger.

DAY OF PRAYER FOR COLLEGES.

Dear Brother,—

Thursday the 29th inst., will be the Day of Prayer for Colleges. I hope it will be devoutly observed by the Churches.

If any of our ministering brethren who were educated at Acadia College will favour me with reports of their labours during the year 1871, I shall be thankful.

Your truly, J. M. CRAMP. Wolfville, Feb. 1, 1872.

For the Christian Messenger.

LUNENBURG MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE.

Dear Brother,—

We have just returned from attending the First Quarterly Meeting of the Lunenburg County Ministerial Conference, which, according to previous arrangement, was convened with the North West Church, now under the pastoral care of our esteemed Brother Zechariah Morton. The services commenced on Monday evening at 7 o'clock, with the usual religious exercises, and a sermon by the writer, from the second petition in the Lord's Prayer—"Thy Kingdom Come"—accompanied by appropriate remarks, and earnest appeals from Brethren I. J. Skinner, W. E. Hall, the pastor of the Church, and other valued brethren. There was a good congregation, and a manifest interest shown by all present, and some tokens of the Divine presence were apparent.

The following morning and afternoon were spent by the ministers in earnest and social intercourse upon matters in connection with the interests of Christ's kingdom in our midst. The conference was organized by the appointment of Rev. I. J. Skinner, President, Rev. S. March, Secretary. Its object is "The mutual edification and improvement of its members" (which comprise all the Ministers and Licentiate residents in and laboring with any of the churches within the County, and any others who may be invited to take part in the exercises;) and also the advancement of the cause of Christ generally in connection with our denominational enterprises. Among other important matters, the following resolution was unanimously adopted.

Resolved, That in view of the Great Commission "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature;" and in view of the destitution of our own County, it is the duty of those churches who have settled pastors, to release them for a portion of their time, to permit them to visit and labor with such churches or in such localities as are not favored with the preached word; and further that it is our duty as ministers to present the matter to the several churches of our charge, so that their co-operation may be obtained.

In the evening there was a public service held, and a deeply interesting sermon was preached by Brother I. J. Skinner, from 1 Cor. iv. 20. "The kingdom of God is not in word, but in power." All the ministers took part in the exercises, and the brethren of the church were quickened and encouraged.

We hope these meetings will be productive of great good, and stimulate both ministers and churches to greater piety, activity and zeal for the glory of our Divine Master.

At the close of this service there was a collection taken for Home Missions amounting to \$10 which will be forwarded to the Treasurer.

The ministers were kindly accommodated with a room at Bro. George Spidle's, the room in which the late venerated Rev. Joseph Dimock often proclaimed the glad tidings of mercy, and where some who still survive first experienced the love of God in their hearts.

The next Quarterly Meeting of this Conference will be convened (D. V.) with the Baptist Church at Bridgewater on the third Monday in April, at 7 o'clock. P. M., sermon by Rev. I. J. Skinner.

STEPHEN MARCH, Secretary. Bridgewater, Jan. 31, 1872.

For the Christian Messenger.

OUR ACADEMIES.

Nearly all that has been written of late on Education, has directed attention to the highest department. While the desire is manifest to accomplish

something that shall impress the public as great, there is general disregard of the means by which greatness can be achieved. Among a people just beginning to feel their strength and develop their resources, it may be wise to give for a time even more consideration to the efficiency of the secondary schools than of the College, as in such conditions of society it will be more for the general advantage to give two or three thousand the benefits of a thorough Academical course, than to raise one or two hundred to the University grade; and while it is evident that the best means for enlarging and improving the University will be to increase the number in attendance in the schools of the next lower rank, every one desiring to advance the interests of Education among the people, will devote a large part of his time and study to the efficiency of our Academies.

We are pleased, therefore, to see that this subject is receiving the attention of the Council of Public Instruction. The last number of the Journal of Education, in an article on the County Academies, clearly sets forth the fact that they are not doing the work for which they were designed, and suggests a modification of the present plan as better adapted to accomplish the contemplated object. We are not prepared to judge of the wisdom of the proposed change, but it is encouraging to learn that the proper authorities are giving attention to the question. The theory of the county Academies is good; but for some reason they do not perform the work expected of them. Let them either be made more efficient and serviceable to the general and higher education of the people, or let them be discontinued.

Two incorporated Academies were in operation for many years before the present School Act came into force. The Article in the Journal of Education, referring to these schools, expresses the opinion that their existence has been an occasion of real hardship to the counties in which they are situated. We cannot say how it may be in Hants, but the hardship for this county is largely if not entirely imaginary. The Directors of Horton Academy certainly do not wish to be in the way of any plan that may be better than the one at present in operation. If the inhabitants of any section in the county are willing to erect suitable Buildings for the accommodation of a first class Academy with all its departments, and will undertake to do work of the same amount and quality as that now done in the Academy at Wolfville, we have no doubt that the Directors of that Academy will be ready to relinquish their work and let other parties take the responsibility of it, so soon as reasonable assurance can be given that the work will be done. But if it should be proposed to withdraw the Provincial grant from the Horton Academy and give it and the county assessment to build up a High-school for the benefit of the village in which it may be located, we should not hesitate to say that the public officer recommending such a change would reveal a very imperfect comprehension of the facts of the case, and show himself destitute of the necessary qualifications for sharing in the direction of our educational affairs.

This county is by no means in a benighted or distressing condition on account of the present arrangement. We venture the assertion that more students matriculate in College year by year from Kings than from any other country in the province, with the possible exception of Pictou and Halifax. This does not look as if the supposed disadvantage pressed very heavily on the county. But there are other facts connected with Horton Academy deserving the attention of the authorities who direct the appropriations for Education. The county Academies were designed to prepare young men for the Colleges. The Greek classes in these schools will be the candidates for the College course. The ten County Academies report in Greek for the past year twenty-three. Horton Academy reports in the same study for the same time forty. Thus we find this single Academy doing nearly twice as much of this specific work as the ten county Academies combined. But, again, in these same schools we find more than five times as many studying Latin as are studying Greek. Whatever may be the explanation of this fact, it clearly shows that the managers of the county Academies have not yet risen to the purpose of making those schools avenues to the Colleges. Furthermore, a comparison of the Reports from the Education Office for successive years

makes evident the fact that there has been for some time a steady decline in the number of students in the Greek classes in the county Academies. We do not wonder that the friends of the Provincial University [as they call it] are studying how it is to be raised above the rank of an institution doing elementary work.

In view of the facts which have now been presented, we submit that the annual grant to Horton Academy must be reckoned among the most economical and useful of all the appropriations made from the Provincial Treasury. KINGS. Jan. 31.

For the Christian Messenger.

MODERN SCEPTICISM.

A COURSE OF LECTURES DELIVERED AT THE REQUEST OF THE CHRISTIAN EVIDENCE SOCIETY, London, 1871, pp. 543.

In the Spring of 1870 a Society was formed in London, called "The Christian Evidence Society." Its object is to furnish clear and satisfactory presentations of the evidences of Christianity, with replies to infidel objections, adapted to the existing state of knowledge, and to modern thought. The volume before us is one of the results. Among the lecturers are an archbishop and two bishops, besides a dean and a canon, and other ministers of the Church of England: there is also one Congregational minister (Rev. Dr. Stoughton). The list of subjects and lecturers is as follows:—

1. Design in Nature.—By the Most Reverend the Lord Archbishop of York.
2. Pantheism.—By the Rev. J. H. Rigg, D. D., principal of Westminster Training College.
3. Positivism.—By the Rev. W. Jackson, M. A., F. S. A., late Fellow of Worcester College, Oxford.
4. Science and Revelation.—By the Very Rev. R. Payne Smith, D. D., Dean of Canterbury.
5. The Nature and value of the miraculous testimony to Christianity.—By the Rev. John Stoughton, D. D.
6. The gradual development of Revelation.—By the Right Rev. the Lord Bishop of Carlisle.
7. The alleged historical difficulties of the Old and New Testaments, and the light thrown on them by modern discoveries.—By the Rev. George Rawlinson, M. A., Camden Professor of Ancient History, Oxford.
8. Mythical Theories of Christianity.—By the Rev. Charles Row, M. A., of Pembroke College, Oxford.
9. The evidential value of St. Paul's Epistles.—By the Rev. Stanley Leathes, M. A., Professor of Hebrew, King's College.
10. Christ's teaching and influence on the world.—By the Right Rev. the Lord Bishop of Ely.
11. The completeness and adequacy of the Evidences of Christianity.—By the Rev. Canon Cook, M. A., Canon of Exeter.

There is also an "Explanatory Paper" by the Right Rev. the Lord Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol. We should have preferred a Lecture from his learned pen.

It will be acknowledged that the subjects are well chosen, and it is very desirable that on such themes correct views should be entertained. The readers of this volume will not be disappointed. Their faith will be confirmed, and many of their difficulties removed. The book may be safely recommended to our young men. Our ministers will do well to procure it.

The Lectures are by no means equal. The first, though delivered by an archbishop, is in our opinion the least satisfactory. Mr. Rawlinson's is admirable. Mr. Row's deserves to be spoken of in the highest terms. The Bishop of Ely has supplied an instructive and powerful discourse.

We will give an extract from Mr. Rawlinson's Lecture:—

"It has been said that St. Luke, in connecting the name of Cyrenius with the 'taxing' which caused Joseph and Mary to go from Nazareth to Bethlehem, undeniably contradicts history. Cyrenius (or Quirinus) was appointed governor of Syria about ten years after the death of Herod the Great, and made a census of his province shortly afterwards. This census St. Luke is accused of placing ten years too early. The answer to this charge is, that the words of St. Luke (chap. ii. 2) cannot possibly mean that Cyrenius was governor at the time of the taxing: had it been St. Luke's intention to express this, the verse would

have been thus; 'This taxing was made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria,' and not 'this taxing was first made.' 'First,' that is, which is manifestly the emphatic word of the sentence, would then have been absent from it. Evidently, therefore, St. Luke's words must bear some other meaning. They may signify, 'this taxing was made before Cyrenius was governor, and so before that better known taxing which he ordered. This is an allowable translation of the passage. Or they may mean, and I think they do mean, 'this taxing was first completed—first took full effect—when Cyrenius was governor;' that is to say, the taxing ordered by Augustus, and commenced under Herod the Great, was interrupted (as it may easily have been, since the Jews were very bitter against it,) and the business was first accomplished under Cyrenius. This is a sense which the Greek verb translated in our version 'was made,' sometimes has." p. 300.

Dean Alford, too, observes that the word "first" is "the key to the sentence." Tyndale (A. D. 1526) anticipated Mr. Rawlinson. He translates it "was first executed." In his revised edition, A. D. 1534, he has "was the first, and was executed." Dr. George Campbell's version is, "this first register took effect."

On the whole, this volume is a very valuable addition to the library of Christian Evidences. It is republished in New York.

We are glad to observe that the Christian Knowledge Society is issuing a number of publications on this subject, in a cheap form, and prepared by some of the best writers of the age. The Religious Tract Society displays similar activity. If infidelity is on the alert, the friends of the gospel are watchfully observant of the signs of the times, and prompt to supply antidotes to the moral poison which is so assiduously distributed in every quarter. C.

The Christian Messenger.

Halifax, N. S., February 7, 1872.

"GOD WITH US."

Imperfect views respecting the person and work of Christ must exercise a baneful influence on the development of christian character. The difficulties which follow a departure from the plain statements of the Sacred oracles, or from misunderstanding what is revealed respecting the Son of God, have led to a variety of belief on the nature and extent of the atonement. Some persons in the hope of having all the difficulties removed, have taken only the man-ward side of Christ, and have rejected the God-ward side, and have consequently come to a state of doubt in which they have lost sight of Him as a Redeemer and Saviour. Others have failed to properly estimate those parts of the Word of God which shew that Jesus was a man, capable of the fullest sympathy with men. These too are unable to realize the relationship the believer holds to Christ and the benefits to be derived from properly apprehending him as the perfect Immanuel, "God with us."

Under this title Dr. Hovey has written a volume of 271 pages, just published by Gould and Lincoln, Boston. The character of the work may be more fully understood by a glance at the subjects of the several chapters: Under Part 1. The person of Christ; they are: the Deity of Christ; the humanity of Christ; the unity of Christ. Under Part 2. The work of Christ, they are: the atonement as related to God; the atonement as related to Man. Part 3 is a criticism of "The Vicarious Sacrifice," of Dr. Bushnell, which Dr. Hovey regards as "extremely defective, and at the same time attractive," and therefore believes that it requires criticism.

"CHRIST TO LEAN UPON."

The departure of Rev. George H. Hepworth from the Unitarian Church in New York, and his adoption of evangelical truth has caused some sensation in religious circles of that city and other places. The experience through which he has passed, and his clear straightforward expression of views regarding Christ and his work, are full of interests to all christian people.

"I HAVE SOMETHING NOW TO LEAN UPON," he says, in the sermon preached by him on the 7th of January, on relinquishing his charge, where he was so popular a minister. Here is a short extract from that sermon, which will do good to any christian heart:

I believe with all my heart, with all my soul, and with an increasing faith, in Jesus Christ. I believe—make no mistakes—Him to have been literally and in the technical or theological sense the incarnation of the Godhead. I believe that Jesus Christ is the love of God put into human shape for the redemption of the world, and I have come to believe this out of my own personal experience. I know my weaknesses. I am so made that there are a thousand temptations in life that allure me; I knew that I was holding wrong views, but I yielded to them. I have been ashamed of my own weakness a thousand times, but now I say, and I find great peace in saying it, I feel that God has given to me Jesus Christ, who will lead me up to the Father, and I can stand by the side of the Lord and he will stand by my side and will put his hand around my waist and walk with me, and will put his arm through mine, and I shall feel the genial touch of God himself.

I have something now to lean upon, and as I look around upon you and upon this bright world, I tell you, my dear friends, that I am not unlike you, and you are not unlike me. We all of us need the same Saviour, the same God, and the same redemption. Human nature is one and the same thing, and what fits me fits you. You can call it by some other name, but the thing is the same.

You ask me what I propose to do. I cannot work any longer with the Unitarian party. If I do not believe its tenets or accept its interpretations of Scripture, simple honesty demands of me that I should leave it. I say to you now that I shall leave the body, because I believe it to be radical in theology, and I think radicalism for the average mind about as bad and destructive an element as can be introduced.

Mr. Hepworth had been born and bred in the Unitarian faith, and was a prominent leader in that body till a very short time since. He is now frowned upon and denounced by their organs. What he will become is as yet uncertain. As a popular speaker he has but few rivals in New York.

The Secretary of the N. S. Central Board of the Women's Mission Aid Societies has handed us some extracts of a letter she has just received from Miss Norris. It was not written for publication, but we are assured that many of the friends of the mission will feel deeply interested in its contents:—

BASSEIN, Nov. 24th, 1871.

My dear Mrs. Selden,—

I cannot do more than write you a hurried note this morning. My boxes arrived a few weeks ago from America, that is, a large box of clothing which I left behind in Boston, and the Organ. Both boxes had been long soaked in water on the voyage, and were utterly destroyed. The clothing and books, covered with mould, fell to pieces as I took them out, and the organ is hopelessly dumb. I tell you, because it will be necessary to supply myself to some extent. As to the Organ, I shall not venture on that again. The box contained chiefly sheets, towels, pillow-slips, comfortables, bed-spreads, dresses, &c., &c. \* \* \* My poor books, they can never be replaced. But there is doubtless wisdom in it somewhere. \* \* \* I will request you to purchase these things again for me, and deduct it from my salary. \* \* \* I am very busy with my school duties, and very happy in them, happier than the loss of any amount of goods and chattels has power materially to overcome. Our school has over a hundred pupils. My work is with the young girls in the Karen Department. With much love to the dear friends with you, and earnest prayer for the progress at home, which will make sure progress out here.

Yours lovingly, H. M. NORRIS.

In common with a large number of Miss Norris' friends we feel sad to think of the loss of these articles of so much value to her.

The London Freeman acknowledges receiving a copy of the Minutes of the Baptist Convention of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and P. E. Island, and remarks respecting their contents:

Acadia College, and other educational works, the foreign missionary operations of the churches, and whatever is fitted to advance the general interest of the denomination, are under the care of the Convention. Herein they have an advantage over our Union. In the three provinces there are 311 churches. The additions by baptism amount to 1,214 for the year, and the entire membership to 28,316. The general average increase is four and a half to each church; the net increase is 411, being about one and a half per cent. Two things it is said are needed throughout the churches,—more general and systematic giving, and a larger number of men for the ministry. Among the active members of the Convention is our old friend Dr. Cramp. Among the visitors we notice the names of Dr. Hovey, and Dr. Steans, of Newton, and of Rev. Thos. Burditt, late of Tenby.

The Northern Baptist Education Society makes a strong appeal through its Secretary for funds to assist 49 ministerial students at Newton Theological Institute, and 13 at Colleges in other places.