

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

OUR YOUNG PEOPLE,

OUR SABBATH SCHOOLS AND OUR CHURCHES

Dear Editor,—

When the report of the Committee on Sabbath Schools was presented at our Eastern Association, there were several persons present who felt that the most important subject of the meetings was then laid before them. It was thought that some renewed effort should at once be made, to impart religious instruction to the rising generation, especially in connection with the Sabbath School.

This letter is sent to the Messenger with the prayer that every one of your readers may be impressed with the importance of sowing the seed of Gospel truth in the minds of the young, and of training them for the service of Christ. Cardinal Wolsey once said, "Give me the children of England, and I will soon bring the country back to the Church of Rome." So we may say, Give us the children of England, or any other country, and by the help of God we will make good Protestants of them.

The question arises here, are we doing all we can to get those children, and to implant in their minds those truths which alone will secure their present and eternal welfare? A considerable experience, in this branch of gospel labour, enables us to say, that wherever a Sabbath School is commenced and carried on with vigor there is no lack of scholars; though many Christians are so blind to the interests of their denomination, and to the honour that encircles the faithful teacher's brow, that they stand aside from this important work.

Secular education is advancing so rapidly, that we need the most talented as well as the most pious members of our churches, for the Sabbath School. If we impart soul-saving truth to the youth of the land, then the secular instruction, which our day school teachers are imparting, will be consecrated to the service of God, and to the building up of Churches which will be proof against the evils, by which the prince of darkness so often troubles us.

We do not forget that the regenerating influences of the Holy Spirit are needed to make the young people of our neighborhoods children of God, and members of our Churches; but then, the Holy Spirit never saves a soul until the truth is imparted; and he never sanctifies without the word. The sacred Spirit never makes loving Christians, peaceful Christians, courageous Christians, benevolent Christians, zealous Christians, or happy Christians, without the inspired word of Scripture truth. The alternate showers and sunshine, falling on the richest piece of land, could produce nothing but weeds, unless it had been sown with good seed. In like manner, we can expect nothing good from the human heart unless the Word of God has been imparted, either directly or indirectly, by preaching, teaching, reading or otherwise.

We rejoice, yea, and we will rejoice, in the large additions which have lately been made to our Churches; but we rejoice with trembling when we think of the temptations to which every one of them is exposed, and the little opportunity many of them have for Christian instruction; together with the arduous work of pastors, deacons, and teachers to train these persons to run the heavenly race. Pastoral experience, in every country, goes to show that the consequences will be fearful if those who are added to our Churches are not instructed in bible truths, either before they join us or afterwards. Upon careful observation, it will be found that much of what causes "the ministers of the Lord to weep between the porch and the altar," arises from want of knowledge on the part of Church members, of those matters which concern them as Christians and as members of Churches.

Now what shall we do to promote the present and future welfare of our people? What is the remedy? Somebody says, the pastor. Many cry, the pastor, the pastor, until the pastor, like Isachar, crouches down between two burdens—his own burden, and the burden which the Church ought to bear with him. Doubtless the pulpit is the principal of God's appointed means of instructing the people; but those of us who have had the privilege, for many years, of listening to some of the best preachers in the world, know that the public sermon alone is not sufficient. Another person says, the pastor should

converse with his people during the week. Ministers will be little disposed to acknowledge that they neglect to visit their people. We love our people, and nothing pleases us more than to visit their homes, as often as possible, and interest ourselves in their welfare; but it is to be feared that both pastors and people often fail to make the best use of pastoral visitation. Persons who have the greatest regard of Christian instruction are most reluctant to open their minds to a minister, and the minister is apt to give credit for more knowledge than the facts of the case will allow.

Our people would scarcely tolerate the practice of the old Scotch pastors who turned both the children and their parents into a catechumen class, and drilled them in the questions and answers of the Assembly's Catechism; but there should be a free and easy conversation with the view of implanting the same truths in their minds. It is only after long intervals of time that a minister can get round such large fields of labour.

The Sabbath School and bible class, afford the best opportunity for engraving the truth, as it is in Jesus, upon the minds of the people. The old members of our churches are steadily going home to glory. We look to the children and young people around us for the material by which to build up our Churches. We expect them to be converted. Let us see to it that the seed of divine truth has been sown in their minds before the heavenly showers descend. What a breaking forth of beauty there is in the young convert's heart and life, almost the first week of his spiritual life, when he has had a careful religious training from his infancy! What lovely plants of Christian graces are seen to bud, blossom, and bear fruit in his life! What devotion, what courage, what constancy, what solid joys, what bright hopes, arise from a full knowledge of the word of God!

The difficulty is great, in some parts of the Province, of getting the young people together, especially in the winter; and in many places it may be necessary to close the school altogether during the winter months; but could not the School be opened sooner in the Spring and continued later in the autumn in some places; could not the School be continued through the winter in the form of a bible class to commence an hour before the public service? Would it not be well if the teachers would open their houses and invite the young people living near them, to spend an hour on Sabbath in singing, reading scriptures, and teaching!

We should not give up the Sabbath School because we have not persons of ten talents to take part in it; for persons of one talent will be owned and blessed by God; and Christians of ten talents will find full scope for their powers of mind.

Church discussion takes place on the best method of conducting a Sabbath School. Without entering upon such a discussion here, we would say that any method is the best which distinctly conveys bible truth to the minds of the scholars. Get every one of them to repeat from memory three verses of scripture and a hymn from the Psalmist, every Sabbath, and give an explanation. If nothing but this was done, a great work would be accomplished in the mind of the child. From this rise in the scale, according to the capacity of the scholars and the capability of the teacher. We do not attach importance enough to hymns, in teaching scripture truths to the young. Hymns are soonest learned, and they usually remain when other things are forgotten. Our hymns are full of Scripture truth, doctrinal, experimental and practical. We would engage to give an outline of a complete body of Divinity, without the book, in the hymns learned at the Sabbath School.

Let us have our Sabbath Schools and bible classes everywhere; and make it a point every Sabbath day to sow some of the seed of Gospel truth; and let us not be weary in well doing, for in due season we shall reap if we faint not.

Yours very truly,
AN ANXIOUS PASTOR.

For the Christian Messenger.

"REMOVED" & "CANCELLED" MEMBERS.

If "D's" interpretation of the action of the Western Association is generally adopted, "E." will have little fault to find with that action, so far as it concerns the discipline of non-resident members. According to that interpretation, such members are liable to regular church discipline, that discipline must be Scriptural, and each

church is free to interpret for itself the law of Christ respecting it.

But to the introduction of the column "cancelled," which is a little more than merely "the question of a name for those so excluded," E. thinks there is serious objection.

According to "D." the column is not intended for the removed merely, but is, if I mistake not, to include all excluded "for disorderly walk in the matter of neglecting church ordinances and christian duty,"—and therefore, undoubtedly for disorderly walk generally. Removed members, he rightly assumes, are like disorderly walkers, at home—their conduct "may be considered as indicating alienation of heart and life," "they fall into the ranks of the world, and hidden there, grievously backslide."

Such persons, when excluded, are then, by the action of the Western Association, henceforth to be reported, "Cancelled" only. Let us see how this is likely to work.

In the first place, such action is based upon the principle that because the neglect of discipline for disorderly walk "has fostered the false impression that exclusions are only for gross immorality or herodoxy," therefore some other term than excluded should be used, lest "it might appear that the denomination had suddenly become loose in morals or lax in principle." That is to say, because faithful discipline has been neglected because misunderstood, therefore such misunderstanding is to be deliberately perpetuated. That, it seems to me, is hardly worthy of "D." or of a Baptist Association.

But further, the records and statistics of the churches and the Associations must of course correspond. Who then, generally, are to be regarded and reported excluded, and who only cancelled? Will not this action afford a fine opportunity for wranglings, jealousies and endless difficulties? A. has merely become worldly minded. The church has been obliged to deal with him either because he would not contribute for the support of the gospel, or for mingling too much in the gaieties and frivolities of worldliness. Is he to be classed with the immoral and abandoned? B. has disturbed the peace of the church only, by the advocacy of Campbellism or open communionism. Shall he be put in the same category with the Deist or Universalist? Besides A. and B. are respectively and widely connected. To offend them is to offend prominent members of the church and community. If, then, those who withdraw from the fellowship of the church by neglect are only "cancelled," why not those who withdraw in such ways and circumstances as these?

But there is still another objection.—The Western Nova Scotia Association by this action introduces an important and disturbing innovation into our denomination, here, at least.—Among the six Associations of the Convention, it is the only one that admits of more ways out of the church than dismission, death and exclusion. How are our statistics to be harmonized? Does the Western Association expect its example to be universally followed? Do the delegates of its churches expect that what they have so evidently done hastily, and without due deliberation or any known authority, will be generally accepted and acted upon? If not, on an important practical point we are to be at variance. And if this change is accepted, what is the next one to be?

Church discipline is confessedly difficult enough when conducted impartially and Scripturally. But the moment we introduce into it a principle or precedent for which we cannot pretend to have "a thus saith the Lord," we only prepare the way for trouble and disturbance.

In a matter so momentous may the Lord direct in His way.

For the Christian Messenger.

MACCABEE'S ENGLISH GRAMMAR.

SECOND EDITION.

Mr. Editor,—

Nothing in this work is out of date, or ahead of the age. There are no changes without advantage; and, if there are any innovations, they are improvements. It is not marred by errors or absurdities. Nothing omitted is better than the light grain which is blown out with the chaff, while the omissions generally are like rubbish removed from a buried treasure. Here, with the best wheat from all other granaries, we have much from the author's own; the original, however, better than the borrowed; and the borrowed greatly improved. With conciseness, this work has

simplicity, and no obscurity. The Definitions are numerous, and, unlike those of most grammars, they give a correct idea of the thing defined. Teachers will appreciate this feature. If I were to speak of the Rules of Syntax, it would be to praise them, and then I should also make honorable mention of the very useful Notes and Explanations following them. The Exercises for Parsing! for Analysing! for Correcting "False Syntax!" The Examples of Analysis in tabular form! The Examples of Parsing in tabular form! A glance at these will be a glance of admiration, and will satisfy you that my "notes of admiration" are correct.

MacCabe's Grammar is an excellent guide to correct Punctuation; and, from it a far more satisfactory idea of Prosody and Composition can be obtained than from any other.

MacCabe's Grammar is the only one adapted to our Syllabus of Examination; and applicants for License to teach will find in it just what they need, and all they need, on the subject.

MacCabe's Grammar will be a favorite with children: it is small, interesting, and easily learned. It contains many excellent models; and will serve as a reliable and comprehensive standard for teachers, who have long felt the need of such a work.

Here are roses, for the plucking—without thorns: here is cream, for the drinking—and no dross.

Yours truly,
J. J. PARKER.

Lunenburg, N. S., Aug. '74.

For the Christian Messenger.

THE HOME MISSIONARY UNION'S AGENT AND REV. MR. BROWN'S DIARY.

MR. EDITOR,—

Perusing a graphic and interesting article in the Messenger of the 22nd July purporting to be from the pen of the Rev. Mr. Brown, now at Cow Bay, I find among other things the following paragraph.

"On Sunday, April 12th, the sun-shining down in all his glory. I went at 10 o'clock to the river to witness the baptism. Some hundreds of people had assembled, and there were about 30 conveyances.

Mr. Wallace, the agent of the Home Missionary Union—read several portions, bearing on baptism, and after praying and singing, he led the candidates into the river. Having baptized them, he announced that if there were any amongst the spectators, who believed in Jesus, and wished to be baptized, he should be happy to wait upon them—and there being no response, he spoke for a short time and closed with prayer."

The candidates who were baptized, had according to Mr. Brown, been received by the Berwick Church the previous day—Mr. Wallace being present, and this of course was all regular and right. But what strikes me with surprise, and will probably have the same effect upon others is, that Rev. Mr. Wallace as above (the italics being mine) should in a place like Berwick, where there is a Baptist Church duly organized, (2nd Cornwallis,) exercising its functions the very evening before—that he should assume the responsibility of baptizing any one who might accept his personal invitation in the terms stated.

If that can be done by our good brother Wallace, why not by any and every ordained minister in the denomination?

It is true indeed that the bystanders at Berwick did not any of them accept his offer, but in another locality—in Kempt for instance—such an offer was accepted by one or more—and Kempt too has its Baptist Church, with some 250 members.

It is something new I apprehend, in Nova Scotia at least, to find a Baptist Minister practising this. Where there is no visible church organization, the case may be different, but after perusing Rev. E. O. Read's letter, in a late issue of the Messenger, Berwick as part of the 2nd Cornwallis Church had hardly got into that condition.

The great Apostle of the Gentiles left it as a record of his labours, that he had not reaped where others had sowed, "lest he should build on another man's foundation," but if itinerating ministers of our denomination will give out, that they will attend at suitable places for baptism on fine Sunday mornings, and then invite any, and all, who believe in Christ to come forward and they will baptise them, the probability is, that the Society whose agent thus practises, will soon have a flattering report as regards numbers to publish.

Is this precedent to be condemned, or commended—that is the QUESTION.

For the Christian Messenger. CENTRAL SABBATH SCHOOL CONVENTION.

Dear Brother,—

The Sabbath School Convention of the Central Baptist Association of Nova Scotia will be held in Hantsport, on Thursday, September 17th, commencing at 10 o'clock, A. M. It is to be hoped that there will be a full report from all the Sabbath Schools in the Association. The rule is that all the Schools take a collection on the second Sabbath before the Convention to send in for Minutes. Schools not heretofore reported, and not receiving Circulars, will please report themselves by letter, statistics, money, and delegates—all of these if possible. We need at least \$20.00 to pay for reports of the Convention. To secure this it will be necessary for each school to send one dollar for every ten teachers, so that each teacher may have a copy of the minutes. And for 5 teachers 50 cents. This will be necessary to ensure the amount required. Brother Charles Bacon, Falmouth, is the Treasurer. There will be three sessions of the Convention, forenoon, afternoon and evening. The varied and interesting exercises are to include a Sermon and an Essay.

The Committee of arrangements including provision for half fare on the railroads for those attending, are Brothens Andrew Shaw, Charles Bacon, James Craig, and Revs Joseph Murray and J. L. Read. Let us go up praying the Lord to meet with us, greatly increasing our zeal and success in Sabbath School work.

Yours, &c.,
D. FREEMAN.

Canning, August 10th, 1874.

IN MEMORIAM.

MRS. ISAIAH DODGE.

Mrs. Isaiah Dodge slept in Jesus on the 22d day of August, in the 46th year of her age. Her illness which was disease of the throat, was lingering and distressing, yet her patient submission was exemplary.—Early in life she gave herself to God; she grew in grace and knowledge. All said, "She is a christian." She believed that religion was something certain, God's law sweet, and to love Him now everlasting life. She was a steadfast follower of the Lamb, ever near Him; when she finished her course she said, "Precious name, I will take the name of Jesus with me."—She is missed by her sorrowing husband and son. Another must now fill her place in the Prayer Meeting, the Sabbath School, and in the church. A large circle of relatives mourn, but "not as those who have no hope."

Dearest sister thou hast left us,
Here thy loss we deeply feel;
But 'tis God that has bereft us,
He can all our sorrows heal."

"Yet again we hope to meet thee,
When the day of life is fled;
There in heaven with joy to greet thee,
Where no farewell tear is shed."
Brooklin East, Annapolis Co., N. S.

ALIDA S. DODGE.

Alida S., daughter of E. G. Dodge, fell asleep in Jesus on the 24th day of May, 1874, at the age of 23 years. When about 10 years of age she was led to seek salvation. After seeking earnestly she thought about her request, and said, "why will I ask God again." "He has heard me."—She believed as a little child can; her newborn faith brought peace from Heaven. Her life was lovely, her end was a victory. A moment before she died she said, "I see Jesus on the other side." "He is with me here." Many of her last utterances could be written. Yet nothing could be added to her last testimony. "Jesus is with me here." This was an expression of strong faith in the promise of her Redeemer—faith risen to the calm majesty of assurance. Her triumphant death was a striking witness to the divinity of Jesus.

"Thus star by star declines,
Till all are passed away,
As morning high and higher shines
To purg and perfect day;
Nor sink those stars in empty night,
But hide themselves in heaven's own light."
Salem, Wilmut, Annapolis Co., N. S.

Many a nickname bestowed in contempt has really been a compliment. The latest illustration comes from Germany, where, we are told, the name of "Prayists" is given by the Romanists to the Baptists, because the latter are so abundant in prayer. We might do worse as a denomination than earn such a designation.

A slave who has escaped from Ashantee to Cape Coast Castle reports that King Koffe offers human sacrifices as frequently as before the war.