

CORRESPONDENCE.

For the Christian Messenger.

The Baptists of Prince Edward Island.

No. 1.

EARLY BAPTIST PREACHING.

The preparation of the present Historical Sketch has been undertaken at the urgent request of the Prince Edward Island Baptist Association. Whilst the intentions of our brethren on the Island are deserving of much appreciation, the wisdom evinced in the selection of their historian may be very justly questioned.

The history of our denominational progress in all communities is one of deep and abiding interest to every Baptist reader. We peruse with delight the records of the faithful labors of self-denying pioneers who, amid many and peculiar disadvantages, have been instrumental in introducing and establishing in new communities the glorious principles of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

The recent history of our churches on P. E. Island has been placed before us in our Associational Minutes and other similar records. Their future progress will be duly chronicled in the same manner. But in reference to that period which intervened between the rise of Baptist principles and the formation of the Baptist Association on P. E. Island, there is much need of more general and correct information than exists among us at the present time.

The inception of Baptist effort on Prince Edward Island dates back but a few years. Many of the Senior members of our churches remember well the visits of the first Baptist missionaries who landed on the shores of that Province and proclaimed the good news of salvation among the people.

It was not till the year 1811 that Baptist preaching was heard by the people of that Province. In 1809 Alexander Crawford, a native of the Isle of Arran, on the coast of Scotland, emigrated to Nova Scotia. He was one of the Haldane missionaries, and was a much-respected and zealous minister. He proceeded to Yarmouth where he remained nearly two years, teaching school and preaching as opportunity offered.

In the month of October, 1811, Elder Crawford visited P. E. Island. There he met a number of acquaintances who had recently come from Scotland. He began to preach among his friends, and his ministrations were much appreciated and very successful.

the new Baptist preacher and against those whom he baptized. A few days after the baptism took place there was a heavy and tremendous storm which laid acres of the standing wood flat on the ground here and there all over the Island. Many cattle were killed by the falling of trees and houses.

For some time Mr. Crawford taught school in Charlottetown, spending each Sabbath in laboring among the people in Lot 48. He subsequently accepted the pastorate of the church in the latter place, "the members promising to do what they could for his support and to purchase a farm for that purpose, the only stipulation on his part being that he should be at liberty to visit other parts of the Island occasionally in order to preach the gospel and establish churches."

As has been already indicated, he was not in full sympathy with the Baptists of Nova Scotia. The result was that between the churches established by him and those subsequently founded by Nova Scotian missionaries there was never a very strong fraternal feeling.

The events thus briefly reviewed extended over a period of more than fourteen years, during which time no minister of what are called the Associated Baptists visited P. E. Island. Churches had been organized at Lot 48, at New Glasgow, at Bedeque, and at other places; but the churches at present composing the Island Baptist Association were not at this time in existence.

W. H. W. Yarmouth, May 9th, 1876.

For the Christian Messenger.

The College Question.

So much has been written during the past winter on the above subject, that perhaps nothing more can be said with profit. But as a Baptist, and viewing the subject from a denominational standpoint, allow me to make a few observations—even though they may be superfluous upon this perplexing question.

In a few weeks the Governors of the College will meet at Wolfville, and at that time will commit themselves to some policy that will be fraught with important consequences in respect to the higher education of the denomination and the Province.

1st. If the Baptists take that stand, they can maintain it.

Their resources are vastly greater today than when their College was founded. They stood alone when they were weak in influence and in numbers; they can stand alone now that they are strong. They were more unequally matched with the foe in the past, than at present.

2ndly. To fall in with the Examining

University, is for the Baptists to compromise principle.

Baptists, as a body are opposed to the state control of the higher education. Their position is firm, as will be shown below.

Last winter, the government openly and positively affirmed that the Examining University was but the first step towards a Provincial Teaching University. Take the first step and it will be difficult to recede.

3rdly. The Baptists can derive no possible advantage from a union.

It is not who examined the student, but who taught him, that is inquired after: Not where he got the diploma, but where he received his training. Acadia College is not fossilized. There is vigorous life manifest in it.

4thly. The Examining University will not confer any substantial benefit upon the Province.

It presupposes a want that the existing Colleges are not meeting; and under the present regime, are not likely to meet. The assumption is false. Acadia College to-day, fairly meets the wants of those who patronize it, and its patrons fairly represent the educational wants of the Province.

The Examining University is plainly superfluous; and hence will injure rather than benefit the Province, by diverting a portion of the revenue to a useless enterprise. The scheme does not propose to bring scholars from abroad into the Province. The examiners will be taken from the number of educators already here. The degrees will have about the same names on them as those already conferred.

A degree from Acadia College represents six years of study,—the Academic course being two, and the College four. Suppose the standard for admission should be raised so as to make the Academic course three years; what would be the result? Why, many who under the present arrangement go through the Academy and College would not even go through the Academy, but would go into business or go to some College where they could get their degree in a shorter time.

The aim of the College is to assist the young men of average means and ability. The genius can take care of himself. Those who have the means and are disposed after graduating from a Nova Scotian College can go to Europe or the United States, where they will enjoy advantages such as Nova Scotia cannot afford for a century yet to come.

5thly. The social condition of Nova Scotia is not adapted to the system proposed.

In countries of advanced culture, the associations of the College, the presence of educated men and the contact with trained minds is not so indispensable: since the students' social surroundings have been an equivalent; and residence at College is a mere matter of preference,—expense having nothing to do with it.

The majority of students in Nova Scotia need the associations of the College, and will need it for years to come. The present system requires them to attend lectures and discourages non-residence. The proposed system is really a bounty on non-residence at College. A student may spend four years or more in a log cabin plodding, and then go up and pass his examinations and get his degree.

Let the Baptists accept the proposed scheme, and their students will not feel obliged to pass examinations in Acadia College. The result will not be beneficial to sound learning.

6thly. To join the Examining University would be detrimental to the College.

It would tend directly to alienate the affections of the Baptists from their own College; and Acadia needs, and will need for years to come, the love and watch care of the Baptist people. Alienate the affections of the people, and you diminish her energy and power; and her absorption into the Provincial Teaching University is made more easy and speedy.

7thly. By adopting the proposed plan Acadia will soon cease to have an Alumni, which would be a calamity indeed. Or if any took degrees from her, they would be the sickly and weak.

Where offspring fails families become extinct. A college can perish in the same way.

Nature has planted in the hearts of men instincts that incline them to care for the parents who gave them being. Kindred is the feeling of an alumnus to his alma mater. Let Acadia College have no alumni whose hearts ever beat in sympathy with her, and who guard her honor as they would their own, and who are ready to contribute to her support, and her days of usefulness will be numbered.

8thly. Union even with the "Paper University," will be injurious to denominational unity.

The strength of every organization consists in its unity. That the Christian world should be divided into sects is no infraction of this principle but furnishes an illustration in each of them. It is in exact accord with the wonderful unity in diversity seen in nature on every hand.

To the few the temple was the source of inspiration; to the Mohammedan it is the Caaba at Mecca; to the Christian it is the Incarnate Son of God; to the Protestant it is the Bible and soul liberty, to each Christian denomination, it is some peculiar tenet or scriptural doctrine. Therefore the denomination should guard well the seat or source of its power.

Baptists should beware how they throw open their gates, or break down their walls. The Paper University will be to them what the wooden horse was

to ancient Troy. It will prepare the way for, and beckon on the Teaching University, as the wooden horse did the Grecian fleet that was concealed behind Tenedos. The result will be disaster, ruin.

9th. The whole theory of state control of the highest education rests on an unsound base. Therefore as a denomination—the Baptists should oppose it.

Public revenue is raised by taxes impartially levied on all citizens. What is contributed by all, should be expended for the benefit of all.

Every citizen passes through the common school and gets the rudiments of an education, a smaller number receive a High School training, and a few go into or through College.

Now the Common School should be entirely supported by government, since the benefit is direct to all, and education there should be made compulsory. The High School should be partially supported by public funds, as an equivalent for the indirect benefit that accrues to all through the few who avail themselves of its advantages. The College, on the other hand, to which only the few aspire should be supported by private benefactions, and by fees paid by those who receive the direct personal benefit from studying within its walls.

If the Baptists, in an hour, should accept the proposed University, they would make a retrograde movement. They will go back farther than the shadow on the sun dial of Ahaz,—not a few degrees merely but a semi-circle—from the zenith of prosperity, to the nadir of obscurity.

ALIQUI.

For the Christian Messenger.

Letter from Italy.

Rome, April 8th, 1876.

An institution bearing the pompous title of the "Vatican or Pontifical University," had been for several years established in this city in four or five rooms of the Altemps Palace. Professors of the old University of Rome who had refused to teach in the new one, in consequence of the oath required by the Italian Government, and other persons, all paid by the Pope, held evening classes for "right minded students, to neutralize the poison of the official instruction" they had been forced to absorb during the day.

Thus another nest of Jesuitism is broken up. The late Roman Archbishop of Malines, has well said: "Jesuitism is the leaven which incessantly foment and embitters everything. Jesuitism prescribes general instruction as too favourable for the expansion of light among the people. It assigns tuition for males, to priests only, and for females, to nuns. It condemns the liberty of the press as Pandora's box, the source of every species of evil. It is the natural enemy of progressive knowledge and freedom. Human society is fearfully menaced by the Jesuits, for the dissemination of their principles engenders and promotes private profligacy, and public collisions and disorders."

The Romish hierarchy are ruthless