

CORRESPONDENCE.

For the Christian Messenger.

The Nursery in connection with Education.

Dear Editor,— In the opinion of the writer, and in that of some others, whose judgment is of far more value, the great difficulty of education for the masses, lies not with the Civil Government, nor with the question of Universities, Colleges, Academies, High or Common Schools; but back of all these, in the Nurseries of our Children. For the period of a few years the solemn trust of juvenile instruction is committed to parents, or guardians when parents are removed. The wisdom of this is apparent to all. Here begins the active, overt life of all who bless or curse the world. From this they go forth with the proclivities that usually form their designs, shape their course, and lead them to their destiny. How important then that the first years of instruction be such as to secure the great end of life and preparation for its interminable destiny.

The Moral, Mental, and Physical development of the faculties now in embryo, should be the first positive effort of parents. No delegated agent in this work, however wise and efficient, can be supposed to feel the deep interest that parents should feel. Nor should the earliest possible opportunity be neglected. As the light gives color and beauty to the opening flower, so should healthy sound instruction be shed upon the opening intellect of the child. A day lost in this, from whatever cause, is a day lost forever.

As the passions and appetites are more readily accessible than the reason, it often becomes necessary to restrain these by authority, to the neglect of which some of the most serious failures in life are to be attributed. The headstrong and reckless are for the most part so, from injudicious indulgence in the nursery.

Imperfect training in the Nursery is too often supplemented by that which is familiarly called "Street Education." At a very early age children are allowed to find, and associate in the street, with those whose morals are of a most disreputable character; graduates of street education. The stories that are told, the language that is used, the tricks that are played have a powerful influence in forming the morals of those who are now for the first time making their entrance into a new circle of acquaintances. At the corners of the street, the entrance to public buildings, are gathered the idle, the profane, and the lewd. Their mirth, glee and boisterous demonstrations are sure to gather many from the children that are attracted by, they know not what, but go to learn. The lesson is such, that thereby innocence and purity are insulted, perhaps overthrown, and the child retires with a virus in his bosom, whose fruitage is the presage of grapes of gall. From these come the disturbers of the peace, the pests of our villages, and often the denizens of our lockups and penitentiaries.

In the present day one cannot but fear that attention to the early education of children is designedly committed in too great a degree to the schools, Sabbath and common, and their morals to the guardianship of the Civil Law.

Public teachers, when zealously endeavoring to do their duty, find, too frequently, their efforts vain through parental neglect. When lessons are imperfectly prepared, rules and regulations are disregarded, truant is played, if discipline is enforced, a hue and cry is raised, the parents resent the discipline of their child, and the teacher is condemned. Under such circumstances what avail the best teacher and trustees. The boy rules the parent, the parent rules the school teacher, trustee and all.

The experience of fifty years has taught the writer a few things; one of which is that a child ungoverned at home is ungovernable at school. If reckless at home, reckless at school. If interests at home are disregarded interests at school will be disregarded. If doors, windows and furniture are wantonly destroyed at home they will be no less so at school.

The evil ceases not here, from the youth come the men and women that perpetuate human society. The evil habits fostered, or not corrected in the

nursery have passed the schools. Their influence is now sure, in the estimation in which moral evil is held, and hence the almost impossibility of bringing offenders to justice.

Am I asked what is the remedy for this evil? I reply first, cut off the source. In the nursery train the children for God and heaven. Second—Bring the Press, and the Pulpit to bear honest and full testimony against "all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men." And last, not least, let all who have the honour of God or the welfare of his creatures at heart, search themselves and correct their lives, and faithfully discharge their duty in striving to bring their fellow men to "know God and Jesus Christ." This is the true knowledge, toward which every nursery and school of every description should direct their efforts.

RE VERA.

We have received a corrected copy of the letter from Rev. T. H. Porter, the reply to which by Rev. Dr. Fyfe we copied from the Christian Visitor, a week or two since, and as its insertion is requested, not by Rev. T. H. Porter, but by a mutual friend, we gladly place it before our readers. We thought the allusions to its statements by Dr. Fyfe would render its publication unnecessary—especially as we had not a copy at hand. It is a little awkward to have read the reply first, and to read the letter replied to afterwards. However, Dr. Fyfe's reply may be re-read by any person who has the Messenger of a week or two since.—Ed. C. M.

DEAR EDITOR,—The following letter, duly forwarded to the Canadian Baptist, has been respectfully declined. I ask that it be inserted in your columns. Whatever may be said of our Baptist methods in these Provinces by the Sea, it cannot be urged that they have deprived us of a free Press.

Fredericton, Dec. 30, 1875. T. H. P.

For the Canadian Baptist.

FREDERICTON, N. B., Sept. 27, 1875.

DEAR EDITOR.—I regret that I am not now, as formerly privileged to enjoy the reading of your valuable paper. I notice in the last number of the Christian Messenger an extract from the letter of Dr. Fyfe's recently published in your columns, giving some of his impressions of the way in which the business of the Convention of the Maritime Provinces is conducted. For Dr. Fyfe and his opinions I have always entertained feelings of profound respect, yet I think there is another side to the matters he discusses, and that some one ought to present it.

It will probably seem strange to the Doctor and perhaps to many of your readers, that it was just at the points he presents, I felt disposed when attending the Convention of Ontario two years ago, to criticise your methods and contrast favorably our own. What struck me as indicating a defect in your system, was the fact that some three or four men appeared to be doing all the work and bearing all the responsibility. They seemed foremost on every Committee and Board, and equally so in everything transacted in the Convention. A very large proportion of ministers and delegates, I thought, took no part whatever in the business, or the discussions. I do not remember hearing a layman's voice at all and, as a result of such a method I thought, very few of them were present. I found it is impossible to get from those who, it seemed to me ought to know, explanations of your modes of working—to me mysterious; and comparatively few appeared either to understand, or be interested in what was going on.

Now, our system promotes a state of things widely different. And while yours doubtless has its advantages, I hope it will not be deemed presumptuous in me to say that I think it has serious defects, and that ours has merits that far more than counterbalance the drawbacks there may be connected with it.

Dr. Fyfe says with reference to our Educational and Missionary business, that we "have so many Committees, Governors and Boards which do the work, and then have much of it done over again in the open meeting; so that many fail to get a very clear view of what is done." Now the facts are these. We have a Board of Governors for our

Educational Institutions, and a Board of Foreign Missions. Some hope the time is not distant when our Home Missions will be similarly worked. Besides these Boards there are no committees whatever on these, at present, the two great objects of our Convention. They both hold their regular meetings throughout the year, but their annual meetings, when the reports and accounts of the Secretaries and Treasurers are submitted, and the work of the following year mapped out, it is thought best to hold in connection with the Convention. This is done for two reasons: it is easier for all to get together, and there is opportunity to confer with those who, though not members of the Boards, are just as deeply interested and as well acquainted with much that needs to be known. These are at perfect liberty to request explanations, express doubts and offer suggestions. The result is that many hear the facts and discussions twice, but I never before heard of it being said that these matters were not understood.

The Doctor also "prefers business done by a few heads, and then only the results of that business should be submitted to the constituents." Now, I do not think that among us "the many undertake to manage all the details," or even "to review" them. That the Convention cheerfully commits to the Boards and their officers. But when the accounts and reports for the year are made up, the whole body carefully consider them that they may be put in possession of all the facts, and thoroughly understand just how these interests stand. And this we hold to be the privilege and duty of every member, and we aim to encourage and aid it just as far as is possible. Our system is intentionally adapted to that end, and this we regard as one of its chief beauties and advantages. Indeed, I can see but little use at all in a Convention, if "a few heads" are sufficient to devise and execute all that needs to be done, and "the constituents" only need to be informed of the results. These "can be so presented as to be both intelligible and interesting to the masses," without thus calling them together. And if it should ever transpire that "the few heads cannot be trusted," then, let those who can, call a meeting and "turn them out." This, it seems to me, would meet all the requirements of the Doctor's theory, and save a great deal of toil and trouble. But where the heads are thus trusted, it certainly is essential that they be trustworthy, and, not less so, that they be "few." I can easily see how in some places and among some denominations this system would necessarily be successful, and even acceptable. But we recognize only one Head, and all we are brethren.

As to the question of "the few" or "the many," the "heads," or "the masses," either "doing," or "reviewing" the business of the body, I may say that our Constitution aims to open the door of membership as widely as possible, and encourages the largest representation from Associations, churches and individual members. And when the brethren assemble, on them devolve the appointment of the Boards, which are large and frequently changed, and every subject is expected to be carefully discussed and understandingly acted upon. Every one who wishes, whether minister or layman, is encouraged to express his opinions; and the weakest and least influential, are expected to give an intelligent vote upon every question, for or against.

Now the advantages of such a system, are, it seems to me, of no small importance. Chief among them is this—that in our annual gatherings, as in our individual churches, upon each member is thrown the responsibility of what is done, and he is made to feel it, and to shoulder that responsibility. Boards are not left to become corrupt with undiscovered mismanagement, and then turned out amid confusion and division; but their proceedings are carefully watched and controlled; and, instead of ruling the denomination, the denomination rules them. This method we have adopted understandingly, and we cling to it in preference to others of which we are not ignorant, because we love it and believe it best for us.

Rejoicing in the union that is taking place among the Baptists of our Dominion, and hoping it will extend to every interest dear to us, and that can

be promoted thereby, and until the remotest parts of our field of operations shall feel and rejoice in its influence,

I am,

Yours very truly,

T. H. PORTER.

For the Christian Messenger.

Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God. Phil. iv. 6.

Many are the evils which sin has brought into our world. "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin." But not only is death the fruit of sin, but the whole life of man is subject to various miseries. When our first parents had sinned, man was doomed to hard labour and much trouble; and woman was doomed to peculiar sorrows. In both cases, care, much care, became unavoidable. The reason of man obliges him to look forward, and prepare for future events; and, in a certain degree, it is both necessary and lawful; but he is too apt to look forward with distressing anxiety, and to dread those evils which may never occur. But in the religion of the Bible, we are furnished with an admirable remedy, and may joyfully say—

Salvation! O, the joyful sound, 'Tis pleasure to our ears; A sovereign balm for every wound, A cordial for our fears.

This cordial the apostle Paul is here recommending to the Christians at Philippi; he wishes them to be free from painful anxiety—to be "careful for nothing," but to be constant and fervent in prayer; that is, to turn their cares into prayers, and so to promote, in their minds, the peace of God which passeth all understanding. It cannot be supposed that every kind and degree of care is wrong. If a man is obliged to labor for his bread, whatever be the nature of his employment, some degree of care and attention is necessary, or he would spoil his work, and lay the foundation of painful care and grief. To be "diligent in business" is as much our duty as to be "fervent in spirit," for "we serve the Lord" in both. The husbandman, the mechanic, the tradesman, the merchant, the scholar, must all employ care and discretion in their several affairs, and exercise prudent caution in guarding against threatening evils; for "the prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself," while the simple pass on, without care or foresight, and are justly punished. Suffer the word of exhortation. Turn your cares into prayers. Try the remedy proposed. It will succeed; it has succeeded. Thousands have tried and succeeded. Why should not you? Hannah went to the house of God, full of care and fear; but she prayed; she "continued praying, was dismissed in peace, and her countenance was no more sad." (1 Sam. i. 18.) David, when pursued by a rebellious army, laid down and slept, for he had cried to the Lord for help, and then was not afraid of the enemy. Peter slept soundly in the prison, though he expected to be slain by Herod next morning. And the companions of Daniel, threatened with the destructive furnace, unless they would worship the golden image, said to the tyrant, "We are not careful to answer thee in this matter. Thus they all cast their care on the Lord; he heard their prayer and proved that he cared for them." Say now, is not this a great privilege? Must it not conduce to true happiness, in this world of cares and troubles, thus to obtain rest and peace? Yes, "and the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." May we all meet in heaven at last; but to meet in heaven we must all be renewed, for inside yonder gates of pearl none can enter but those who are here made new creatures in Christ Jesus our Lord.

O. W. WHITE, Southville, Digby Co.

January 24th, 1876.

Robbery Extraordinary.

HEADS OF A SERMON BY A PLAIN PREACHER.

Text:—"Will a man rob God?"

I. Wherein does a man rob God?

II. What is the penalty of such robbery?

III. How may the lost property be restored?

IV. What are the fruits of honest dealings with God?

Read Malachi iii. 8-12.

In Memoriam.

DEACON JAMES GOURLEY.

Deacon James Gourley departed this life at his residence, Great Village, Feb. 5th, aged 53 years.

The Christian is the gift of God to the world. His life is the reflection of the life of Him who was full of grace and truth. True, it is not so unselfish and pure; not so productive of good. How can it be? Yet it bears the impress of the divine original; it reveals the source of its inspiration and power.

Bro. Gourley was a Christian. The grace of God did much for him, and made him a blessing to others. He was not perfect,—none are. Righteousness comes only through Christ Jesus. The cynical and the dishonest judge harshly, and from their own heart, when the men of charity approve or palliate. Few business men escape the tongue of detraction; but few, however, had a reputation so unsullied as the brother of whom I write, and but few are more regretted when they pass away, or more greatly missed. He was baptized by the late Dr. Colver, and united with the Baptist Church of Tremont Temple, Boston, in 1849. Shortly after this he returned to his native land. The Providence of God directed him to Great Village. Having learned that the few Baptists in the place were wont to meet together for prayer, he sought them out and made himself known to them as a disciple of Jesus. At this time he was undecided as to his future course, but the path of duty soon became apparent, and he resolved to remain at the Village. He gave his energies to the upbuilding of the church whose interests were so dear to his heart. The church was organized in Feb., 1856, and in '58 he was elected deacon, which office he worthily filled to the last.

He gave cheerfully to the Church, to Acadia College, and to Missions. He did not understand how a stingy man could be a Christian. His pastor ever found him a sympathizing friend and counsellor.

During the last few years he suffered frequently through impaired digestion, and more especially during the last twelve months. He bore all his sufferings with Christian resignation; and when he realized that the end was near, he was raised above every doubt, and in the enjoyment of the full assurance of faith he entered into rest.

M. P. F.

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

SUMMERSIDE, P. E. I.—Dear Editor,— We are quite well and happy, even though there be an icy coldness between us and the mainland. But we do assure you that we are sorry for it, and hope soon to see it removed. There is sufficient here, however, to make life very enjoyable. Our broad fertile acres and beautiful sheets of water, abundantly supply our tables. The neighbors over the way furnish coals for our grates, and a loving church—letters from friends, and the weekly visits of the Messenger, all combine to make us contented with our lot.

A CHRISTMAS BOX.

Our friends put their kindness into a very tangible form lately, by presenting us with a Christmas box containing one hundred and ten dollars. The occasion was one of great social enjoyment. Several ministers of the town assisted us in the labor of love.

QUARTERLY MEETING.

On the 21st ult., a number of the Island ministers met in Summerside, and resuscitated the P. E. Island Quarterly Meeting. It was soon evident that the Spirit of God was at work in our midst. The word came with power to the hearts of the people. Rev. D. McDonald—who is the agent for the Home Mission Union on the Island—being present, together with J. R. Calhoun, Esq., and George McNeil, Esq., members of the Board of Directors for the Island, we discussed the state of our Home Mission field and Treasury. Especially that portion of the field occupied by our faithful missionary, Bro. J. A. Gordon. He is doing a noble hard work, the fruits of which shall appear. In view of the inadequate contributions to the funds of the Union it was decided to introduce the card system of weekly offerings.

We also held a Public Missionary meeting, and took up a collection for