

For the Christian Messenger.

The University Question Closed.

It is a good thing to be made to feel the force of a familiar truth. If any one wishes to see what power there is in the broadside of a newspaper well directed, let him study the second page of the Christian Visitor of the 16th inst. Six columns given to an exhaustive treatment of the University question, presenting the subject from a dozen different points of view! We have first an editorial article a column and a half long, the second in a series, which improves upon the Judge's interpretation of the Act, and establishes the fact that the Convention has something to say before our liberties can be legislated away from us. The free control of the Baptist College must never be taken from the Convention by my outside power. Acadia College is the vital bond of union holding the Provinces together in the Convention. If any thing should occur that would weaken the interest of New Brunswick Baptists in the College, its endowment must fail and the Convention must go to pieces. The Editor will not believe that the Baptists of Nova Scotia can be willing to enter into union with Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Methodists and Roman Catholics at the sacrifice of union with the Baptists of New Brunswick. When it comes to that, brother, the Baptists of Nova Scotia can have but one answer: Thy people shall be our people, entreat us not to leave thee. It has been a long time since we have heard anything on the College question, from our sister Province, that was so encouraging. After this every friend of the College must say, the union must and shall be preserved. The third article in the series will follow next week, on the duties of the hour, and we may be sure that it will present those duties in such a way that New Brunswick Baptists will be roused to heroic effort in behalf of the College.

Following this article, we have an exhibit of the revenues of our Province, and its probable ability to support the new University. The prospect is certainly made to appear quite appalling; Then follow other explanations about the Act, which, as is often the case, suggest the question whether the alleged defect is not really a merit. But the whole has a ponderous look, and so will serve a good purpose somewhere.

After this comes a letter from an Ontario correspondent. Though saying a little about the weather and a little about some other matters, his chief purpose evidently was to write something bearing on the question of the hour with us. But he is on the wrong side, the unpopular side, and his calm and judicial utterances will scarcely attract attention in such a time as this. You must change your style, friend W., and write with more point and self-assertion and extravagance, if you would expect to make any impression on the people at a time when they are all up in arms to protect their liberties. As it is, the letter is only enough to make a ripple showing which way the current is flowing. So we pass on to the next article, and the next writer. He has had a look behind the curtain, he has discovered the most astonishing duplicity on the part of somebody. This somebody has been sent for, he has been closeted, he has been tampered with, he has written a letter, he has tried to smother a volcano with a wet blanket. In short there has been a deliberate plan to hand over the entire Baptist denomination to the Government of Nova Scotia to be plagued and dishonored. But the plot has failed, the people are safe, all the plans of the deceivers to bind their victims were as weak as the green withs on Samson. The strong man is up and shaking himself; let us be thankful for that. And now, to be fair with this true Nova Scotia Baptist, we must add that he has solemnly pledged his entire fortune for the support of the principle that Baptists are absolved from all allegiance to the Papal Crown. Of course he has nothing left to give to the College.

A classical writer next adds his contribution. After calling attention to some general truths that are always in place on important occasions, he quietly suggests that it will be well to hold on to the bird now in hand, while we beat the bush for more. Verbum sat sapienti.

This mosaic is set with genuine art. We meet now a complimentary letter to the editor thanking him for pulling the lion's skin off from the Halifax University, and showing conclusively that if Acadia comes down to the average of the Nova Scotia Colleges,

to work with them, she will so humble her self-respect that she will never be ed to rise after that. This from a New Brunswick Baptist must be very flattering to the Professors of Acadia.

And now, for variety, we are favorable with a letter on the same subject from the Boston correspondent. He is opposed to a Central Examining University. In his view, it makes little difference what diploma a man has, if he is only a man. A Central Board to gauge a student's acquirements is needless. If there is anything in a man, the world will find it out. This is all very good, with some limitations. If we had heard a little more like it some years ago, in some parts of New Brunswick, it would have prevented some of our troubles. This correspondent's opinion is that every cherishing mother, when she sends forth her sons to meet the hard realities of life, amidst strangers, should lay her own blessed hands in benediction on their heads. The picture is so affecting, that it almost seems impious to suggest that the boys will escape many a rebuff, if they take in their pockets letters of recommendation from well known and competent parties. But we must pass on. The new departure in the discussion is next presented. It seems to this writer, according to the latest interpretation of the University Act, that the Nova Scotia Legislature, with the knowledge and consent of the College authorities, have actually put the College into the University, beyond the control of the Baptists. As he thinks of this, the shade of Roger Williams stalks sorrowfully across the scene and his own heart is filled with sorrow. We can sympathize with him, but we must advise him to study his duty long before he proposes to imitate the people under Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, and secede.

A new voice is heard now, blaming the Government because they filled the appointments to the Senate, before the Convention had an opportunity to reject the invitation to share in nominations. And yet perhaps the Government were not so much to blame in this after all. They knew that the students of the College had declared themselves against their University. The knew that the Western Association had risen up as one man in opposition to it, and that the Central and Eastern Associations were kept back from uttering an indignant No, to the whole scheme, only to give a few plodders a little more time to make up their minds; nothing could be more natural than for the Government to say, It is not wise for us to wait till this opposition culminates at Sackville, it is best for us to make our own nominations and get out of the way. And so they did. As they now see reinforcements to the opposition pouring in from New Brunswick, late but strong, they must commend the wisdom of their previous decision. The writer, whose article is now before us, brings clearly to view one important fact,—the extreme solicitude felt by our brethren in New Brunswick lest this University scheme should prepare the way for a Central Teaching University. This apprehension on their part should be carefully noted.

The subject seems now to be exhausted, but here some one comes in to rescue his friend from the painful position in which he was placed, because he was concerned with those "Doses." But this kind Samaritan conscientiously leaves the other doctors to learn wisdom from a punishment which even he is obliged to pronounce just.

Here in the midst of our suspicions and jealousies, our charges and counter-charges, our forgivenesses and our hatreds, we are made to pause and listen to a word of just tribute to a good man who has passed to his rest, and to ask ourselves what word will be spoken when we have fallen.

But we can pause for such meditations only a moment. The great question of the day comes before us again in the shape of a short lecture from the Morning Chronicle on the moral duties of journalists. As it was given for the special benefit of the Editor of Christian Messenger in connection with the University, it is to be hoped that he will read and inwardly digest it.

Thus we reach the end of this remarkable contribution on the University scheme. If we may judge by it, and when we consider the number of the articles, the variety of the points of view, the standing of many of the writers, it seems as if we might safely judge by it, then we must conclude that the assembled denomination are prepared to vote. Let the Moderator put the question;—though, in order that

we may all vote intelligently, it might be well for him to state precisely, what the question now before the body is.

For the Christian Messenger.

The University Question.

Mr. Editor,—

Having very briefly reviewed "Halliburton's" first three articles, it was my intention to treat the others in a similar way. But other writers have since brought out most of the points that would have been made in carrying out my plan, so that it seems needless to occupy more of your space with replies to "Halliburton."

His statements respecting the work performed by Examining Committees at Acadia College are open to some corrections, but this is not material at present.

A few words upon some of the statements made in your columns recently.

At every turn new ground is taken by the friends of the University of Halifax. We are now told that the University is not for the examination of all the students of the Colleges connected therewith, but for "graduates of those Colleges and "aspiring students" whose ambition leads them to seek for more valuable degrees than their College can give them. This is something new. Is it for this that all this machinery is provided? for this that the courses of instruction in the several Colleges are to be as Dr. Sawyer affirmed, practically such as the Senate of the University may prescribe? If so, it should be distinctly understood.

While Judge McCully and others declare that there is no question to be decided by the Convention,—because Acadia College is already in,—the Messenger editorially, and some of the correspondents, continue to speak of "choosing to act with the University," "holding aloof from the University," etc. But plainly there is a question to be decided. Shall the Faculty of Acadia shape the course of instruction so as to meet the requirements of the new University? Shall students be encouraged to go up for University examinations? Shall graduates be urged to enroll themselves and pay their fees as members of Convocation. (They are not now members, as you inadvertently assert)? Shall the Baptist Fellows be supported in the step they have taken? Or shall Acadia College, with the renewed support and sympathy of the denomination, go on her own way,—maintain an independent course,—keep up with the wants of the country,—and continue to do the work for which she was founded? Time fails me to write more.

For the Christian Messenger.

Catechism Concerning the University of Halifax.

1. What is the chief end and object of the University of Halifax?

To raise the standard of higher education by affording one uniform, impartial, thorough, extra-collegiate examination for all the students of all the Colleges, and by other means set forth in the Act establishing the University.

2. Did the standard need elevating?

I well believe it did. Never called to account for the proper expenditure of public money, left almost wholly to themselves like private institutions, some of our Colleges have done little more than punctually draw the government grants and cheaply bestow unmerited degrees. The standard of Acadia, however, was high already; so much so that her degrees were quoted (even boastingly) at fifty per cent of the value of those obtained at Harvard!

3. Is the University Act of 1876 perfect?

Why, no. On which account some object to it, but is such objection reasonable? Let us strive to attain unto perfection.

4. Is this kind of University a new thing?

No, there is the London University, the University of Toronto, and how many more I know not which are simply Examining Universities, having no teaching powers.

5. When and among whom did the idea of this University first manifest itself in this Province?

Among Baptists, of course, who many years ago suggested it and adopted it as far as practicable in connection with their own College. A distinguished Alumnus of Acadia claims to be the first promulgator of this idea in Nova Scotia. At a later

period the Wesleyans, and still later the Presbyterians, subscribed to this principle.

6. Was not the denominational collegiate system complete without this University?

Certainly not. The diversity of courses of study, the diversity of degrees, the lack of means of ascertaining the efficiency or deficiency of each College, have always been regarded as such grave imperfections as to lead many to desire the overthrow of the denominational plan and the upbuilding of one University for all.

7. Does the new University give completeness to the denominational plan?

It doth. It is the cope-stone of the system. Each denomination going on as heretofore (only more efficiently) training its young men in its own College, and the University affording to all one impartial test of scholarship. Such a system is complete needing no further change and leaving no apology for further hankering after a central teaching University.

8. Can Baptists co-operate with this government-constructed University?

They can. They asked the government for a College charter and got it, and would not give it up for any consideration. They have always accepted the bounty of the legislature when it was offered. At their last Convention (at Hillsburg) they unanimously (that includes all of our "wisest and best men") demanded a fair distribution of public money, and followed up that demand with numerous petitions and got their annual grant raised to \$2400.00. If they can consistently do these things what hinders them co-operating with the new University?

9. But will the Baptists take the \$2400.00?

What a question! They have taken \$400 of it for several years, and now the legislature, at their instance, has granted \$2000.00 more. I should say it is quite a possible contingency that they will take it.

10. What must Baptists do to sever their connection with the State as regards Acadia?

Give up their College charter and forty thousand dollars of their endowment (that being the amount represented by the government grant of \$2400.00 per annum). Are they heroic enough to do this? Do their principles require them to do this? Both which I answer in the negative.

11. As the matter now stands, (government having formed the Senate of the University to which the President and two of the Professors of Acadia have been appointed) what action is open to and should be taken by the Convention?

If the Convention approve of, or resolve to try the University Act of 1876 they should express themselves accordingly, and give appropriate instructions to the governors of the College. If they disapprove they should say so boldly, and instruct their governors accordingly, or entrusting the whole matter to the governors they may leave them to take such course as regards the University as may seem to them to be most wise and judicious, and for the best interests of Acadia.

12. Amid the multitude of conflicting opinions how shall we decide intelligently and wisely?

Let us be guided both by reason and authority. Take the University Act itself, study it in connection with our denominational collegiate system, let each delegate reason the whole matter out for himself on common sense principles, let him cast aside all and singular, the suspicions, the insinuations, the evil prophecies which have been set afloat, let him read the act alone, without the aid of commentators and let him come by these ways to the best judgment of which he is capable. Then let him look at examples and precedents. There is the great weight of authority attaching to the London University with which so many Colleges have become affiliated. There is the Toronto University to which our Baptist brethren of Ontario gladly send up their students for examination, not themselves having, or asking or desiring the power of conferring degrees. Let him look also at the Wesleyans, and Episcopalians, and Roman Catholics, all heartily uniting in this new university, though each is as tenacious of its own peculiar institutions as Baptists are. If he were inclined to decide adversely, let him reason the matter over again in the light of so much authority and wisdom and experience. By reason and authority I say, but chiefly the former.

Make up your judgment as independently as possible and be able to give solid reason in support thereof.

13. Is there any special reason why our New Brunswick brethren should disapprove of the University Act of 1876?

Quite the contrary. They get the benefit of the University equally with ourselves. We together pay the money necessary to operate it. Nova Scotia grants \$2400 a year to Acadia. Our brethren participate equally with us in this grant, while New Brunswick contributes nothing. We are kind to our neighbor—I cannot understand why our New Brunswick brethren should be specially inclined to disapprove. Our Wesleyan friends to whose college, situated in New Brunswick, Nova Scotia grants \$2400, yearly, (N. B. granting nothing) have set an example worthy of imitation by heartily uniting with other denominations to make the University of Halifax a success.

14. May not the Legislature by and bye take away our college charters and make our colleges simply High schools and turn the examining into a Teaching University?

First I answer they cannot take away a college charter, nor even amend it without our consent. The legislature of New Hampshire once amended the charter of Dartmouth College by simply adding to the number of trustees without consent of the college authorities. The State Courts upheld the Legislature but the Supreme Court of the United States overruled it and held it to be null and void. So it is in British countries, a charter is a bargain struck between individuals and the government upon mutual considerations. To amend or annul such a bargain without consent of both parties would not be legislation, it would be violence and tyranny. No Sir, our college charter is safe and beyond the power of the legislature to rob us of it if they wished. This is our safeguard if we co-operate with the new University, and if it should prove to be a failure, which however is not anticipated, if the new university for any cause should become extinct, we live on still in full possession of all our ancient privileges and immunities. Then as to some sudden change turning the examining into a Teaching University; can this be effected? I say it is just impossible, unless we all (all the different denominations) choose to give up our independent institutions and, voluntarily combine them into one. That day is not likely soon to arrive.

HALLIBURTON.

For the Christian Messenger.

The "Visitor" and the University.

The Editor of the Christian Visitor, in an article of the 26th ult., says that "this grave matter has been thrust upon us by unwise agitation and coveting Provincial grants to denominational Colleges from the Legislature." This is a very remarkable statement. The Editor of the Visitor is one of the Governors of Acadia College. He now says that the action of the Governors in seeking the adoption of the Government of some just principle for the distribution of the public grants to Colleges was unwise. He leaves us to infer that he would have been willing that the Government should bestow all its gifts on one College, and leave the others to take care of themselves. He was present at the meeting of Governors in June. Why did he not make known this view then and advise that we have nothing to do with this state grant? Has he received additional light since that time? The Convention, at its session in 1875, expressed its opinion that the Governors of the College "should take measures to secure a fair and equitable distribution of public money of Nova Scotia before higher education." The Convention also passed a vote of thanks to certain gentlemen, "for their able and efficient advocacy, in the Legislature of Nova Scotia, of the equal rights of all denominations in the matter of public support of education." Does the Editor of the Visitor mean to say that these acts were unwise and proceeded from a wicked coveting of Provincial grants?

If the Baptists had kept still, a College in Halifax would have been quietly endowed by instalments of public money, there would have been no agitation; but all would have been as placid as a summer's sunset.

Is that the course our brother wished us to take? The public have a right to call on the Editor of the Visitor "to rise and explain" in regard to that remarkable statement.

A BAPTIST.

Nothing is ever done beautifully which is done in rivalry; nor nobly, which is done in pride.