

CORRESPONDENCE.

For the Christian Messenger.

The Weed.

Dear Sir,—

I confess myself the victim of sorrow and sadness on account of the use of tobacco. The prevalence of the custom should attract the attention of every well wisher of mankind. The use is not universal but is approximating it. Among aged, middle aged, even down to youth, yea, mere childhood, is the custom prevalent. How odious the sight and offensive the smell. The beard an old man's beauty, the teeth a young man's presage of health, and the lips, the sweetness of the child, besmeared stained and polluted with the evidence that cleanliness and health are sacrificed at the shrine of an appetite that never degraded the swine of our farmyards, nor the rats of our sewers.

The health that is sacrificed the money that is worse than wasted, the morals destroyed, by the pernicious habit, are beyond our estimation. The sad effects are not only visible in the offender but are also observable in the offspring of inveterate chewers and smokers. The hereditary effects are feebleness of constitution, and liability to disease, especially those of a pulmonary character.

This evil is remarkably progressive in its prevalence. Once chiefly confined to grown up persons, it now has a large patronage by the youth of our country. It is no unusual thing to see a youngster with a pipe, in length a large percentage of his height, black with long use, puffing immoderately the inhaled smoke of the weed to the great annoyance of those who would fain be saved from the observance of the sad specimen of degraded boyhood. At other times the habit is secretly indulged, with no less physical, but more moral evil because at the expense of disobedience to parents.

Appeals for reform are sometimes met by the assertion of a fact you blush to hear. The Rev. Mr. so and so or deacon so and so, or that very good man that prays so often in meeting chews or smokes, and if it is right for him to do so, there can be no harm for me to do it. The practice of the inconsistent christian, deacon or minister, overrules all the efforts of the philanthropist.

The poor especially suffer from their connection with this evil. The cost is those who indulge in it is no small matter. From five to fifteen dollars a year is not an extravagant calculation of the expense. If three or four of a family use tobacco at an ordinary rate, less than twenty dollars will not pay for it, while, of many of the comforts of life through poverty they are deprived. In some cases clothing and food are in part obtained by begging, while the hard earned dime is spent for tobacco. Many do not count the cost. Two cents a day is seven dollars and thirty cents a year, more than enough to pay the poor man's school tax, and for books and stationery for his children at school.

The moral of this should not be overlooked. That which is injurious to health, wasteful in property and socially debasing is sinful, and therefore heinous in the sight of God. "The grace that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly."

AN OLD MAN.

For the Christian Messenger.

Villagedale, Barrington.

Dear Brother,—

A subscriber called the other day and paid me \$2.00 for the Messenger, with the request that the address be changed from "The Hill," or "Solid Rock," to "Villagedale." As such sudden transformations from "hill" to "dale" are rare, please publish it to the world. But then the world will naturally inquire, "How was this brought about? Has there been an earthquake in Barrington?" No, reader, nothing of the kind. But the inhabitants of the place assembled on the 22nd of January, and came to the conclusion that there was nothing in the natural features of the locality particularly suggestive of either of the old names. If it was anciently a "hill," it has now subsided into a slightly elevated plain; and as to "solid rock," that is abundant, but it is by no means a local

peculiarity of any part of Shelburne County. But why call it a "dale"? I know not, unless it be in anticipation of still further subsidence.

"Villagedale" is situated half way between Barrington Head and Port la Tour, about 4 miles from each. It contains about 20 families, who adhere to different denominations. They have, therefore, erected a union meeting-house, which is nearly completed and paid for. They sustain a school throughout the year, and have recently organized a Division of S. of Temperance. Although they have discarded the old names, "Hill" and "Solid Rock," I trust that this little community will always retain the mental, moral, and spiritual characteristics which these names suggest.

W. H. R.

February 29th, 1876.

For the Christian Messenger.

The Rule of Faith and Practice.

Mr. Editor,—

I have read with no little interest the articles that have appeared in your columns and in those of the Wesleyan, respecting the question whether the Old Testament is held as a rule of faith and practice. And I have wondered that some one of your correspondents has not given a plain answer, and a decided answer in the negative, so far at least as the latter part of the proposition is concerned. Does not every one know that whatever be said in the heat of controversy, neither Baptists, nor Presbyterians, nor Methodists, nor Congregationalists, nor Episcopalians—to stop there—consider the Old Testament a rule of "practice" for the Christian Church? And though all these denominations were to do so, the 15th chapter of Acts, and the epistle to the Galatians, to say nothing of Hebrews, would convict them of deadly heresy.

The books of Genesis, Exodus and Leviticus, are essential and fundamental portions of the Old Testament. Let us see a few of the practical injunctions these commanded: "Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law?" Read Leviticus chapters 1. 2. 3. and 4. Do the denominations referred to offer all those sacrifices? Read also Lev. 23. Are all these festivals enjoined upon all the christian church? Do the Baptists keep them? Do the Presbyterians? Do the Methodists? Do the Episcopalians? Read from verse 10. "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying. Also in the tenth day of the second month there shall be a day of atonement: it shall be a holy convocation unto you, and ye shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord. And ye shall do no work in that same day, for it is a day of atonement, to make an atonement for you before the Lord your God. For whatsoever soul it be that shall not be afflicted in that same day he shall be cut off from among his people. And whatsoever soul it be that doeth any work in that same day, the same soul will I destroy from among his people. Ye shall do no manner of work: it shall be a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings. "See also chap. 16. for the sacrifices that were to be offered on that solemn day of atonement. Now would it not be idle to ask if the Presbyterians, Baptists, Congregationalists, Methodists, &c., keep that feast, and at the exact time, and in the exact way in which the Old Testament Code of Laws enjoins it.

Again, take the rite of circumcision. No law, commandment, precept, rites or ceremony, is enjoined in the old Testament, with more rigid severity than this rite. Here is the law on that subject: See Gen. 17. 9—14. Now read in Acts 15. what the decision of the Holy Ghost and the Apostles and elders of the Christian church, at Jerusalem, was, when this subject was then and there agitated and settled as also the whole question whether the Old Testament is to be a rule of practice, that is, whether the Gentiles should be circumcised and keep the Law of Moses. See also Acts 21. 25. "As teaching the Gentiles that believe, we have written and concluded that they observe no such thing" [as circumcision and the ceremonial law of the Old Testament] see verses, 21, 22, 23 and 24] "SAVE ONLY that they keep themselves from things offered to idols, and from blood and from fornication."

Now another word from Galatians 5. 1—4, "Stand fast therefore in the liberty

wherewith Christ hath made you free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. Behold I Paul say unto you THAT IF YE BE CIRCUMCISED CHRIST SHALL PROFIT YOU NOTHING. For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law YE ARE FALLEN FROM GRACE.

Now I put the question in all candor to any man, or every man who claims that the Old Testament is "a rule of faith and practice" for the Christian Church, since the death of Christ in whom all the types and shadows had their fulfilment, and who is "the end of the law for righteousness to every one believeth," Rom. 9. 4.—and I ask him What can you mean by these terms? and especially I would ask, In what sense can the Old Testament be considered a rule of practice? If the rite of circumcision has been set aside, and the sacrifices and festival days are no longer to be practised; and if even the law of the Sabbath is in a measure abolished, so that the SEVENTH DAY is no longer to be kept, nor the death penalty to be inflicted for its violation, as Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, and I may say all others hold, and practice, and believe, and teach—I say again, since these things are so, in what sense—I am tempted to say, with what face, can any man of sense and knowledge of Scripture, and the practices and creeds of the aforesaid denominations, say that the Old Testament either is or should be held as a rule of "practice" for the christian church. Is there then no difference between the "ministration of death," and the "ministration of the Spirit"—that is between the law and the gospel. See 2. Corinthians iii. 7, 8. Was Paul wrong there? Are the Jewish and Christian dispensations identical? and so Paul wrong again in Heb. x. 1. Nay verily. "Let God be true, but every man a liar."

Certainly there is no question as to the inspiration of the Old Testament. What is here denied, may be summed up thus. 1. The Old Testament taken as a whole is not the Christian's Rule of Practice, for many of its precepts and doctrines have been abrogated by the same authority that enjoined them. 2. Neither Baptists, nor Presbyterians, nor Congregationalists, nor Methodists, nor Episcopalians, believe the Old Testament to be for them as professed Churches of Jesus Christ, a rule of practice in any sense that requires them to adhere to the letter of all the Jewish rites and ceremonies. And my question is this, Since you manifestly set all these aside in what sense do you consider the Old Testament A Rule of Practice?

A CHRISTIAN.

The following appeared in the Chronicle of Wednesday last. It is a good epitome of what appeared in the Messenger in the year 1843 on the subject. We copy it by special request:

"The College Question."

ONSLow DECIDED THE COLLEGE QUESTION IN 1843.

Mr. Editor,—

This took place before this fast age set in upon us. Telegraphs and railroads had not then invaded Nova Scotia. Word went out from Sheriff Blanchard to the four points of the compass and to all the intermediate points that, on the tenth day of October, 1843, there would be a meeting of the people of Onslow and its surroundings in the Baptisto-Presbyterio-church-partnership meeting house, to hear the great statesman, the people's favorite, Joseph Howe, on the College question. The ministers talked about it, the deacons discussed it, and the women and children had something to say in the matter.

On the morning of the great day, the farmers of Earlton, Londonderry and other distant points might have been seen harnessing or saddling their horses in the grey of the morning so as to be at Onslow at an early hour, and to have a long time to talk over the great matter before 11 o'clock, the hour of meeting. That day the denominational college people took half of the house, and the university people the other half. But then, as now, the denominational college people were ahead of their opponents. When the old clock in Onslow told off 11, one half of the house was packed on gallery and floor. Just then Hon. Joseph Howe and Sheriff Blanchard stepped out of Deacon McCurdy's house arm in arm, followed by Hon. George R. Young, Hon. James Grey, Wm. Annand

and eleven Presbyterian ministers linked together in like fashion. After them came the university following. Leisurely this procession moved on up the hill to the church. "No one here," exclaimed the man in front of the procession. "A few inside," responded Mr. Lorrain, who held in his hands the secrets of the other side. When the Sheriff and Mr. Howe opened the door—what a sight! Half the house packed, the other half empty, to receive the procession. The elaborately extemporized platform had been quietly slipped out of the back-window. This looked like business. But what was the business? What was the purpose? Profound secret! The procession entered, and the other side of the house was filled—a gathering in all of about one thousand people.

Deacon Logan rose and moved that the Sheriff take the chair, which was seconded. John Ross, M. P. P., rose and moved that John King, Esq., be chairman, which was seconded. Now began "the tug of war." Mr. King, after half an hour or more was spent over the matter, had a majority of votes. This the University-men would not endure Mr. Howe solved the difficulty by requesting both the Sheriff and Mr. King to occupy the chair together. Calmness reigned again.

Now the clergymen and lesser speakers on the University side came forward one after the other and had their little speeches, merely to prepare the way for the great Howe. Everything went smoothly, and all things were propitious for the University. All the small luminaries, and the great luminary, Howe, would concentrate their light upon the great University side of the question. But what gave such patience to the side of the house holding to the denominational college principles? Were they such believers in their cause as to feel assured that, with what could be said in its defence by a John Ross and Mr. Munroe, it would stand against the eloquence of the rising statesman, surrounded by a solid phalanx of Presbyterian ministers and patronized by the Sheriff? Surely they were not so infatuated. Even Howe himself was puzzled. A few minutes before Howe rose to speak—about 4 p. m.—the mystery was unsealed—the secret came out. The door opened, and in walked a tall man of commanding appearance—the most kingly appearing man then in Nova Scotia. The steady fixedness of his penetrating eye; the compression of his lips increasing slightly the curvature of his aquiline nose, and the reserved power evident under his calm but determined countenance revealed even to strangers the power and purpose of the man. Slowly he walked up the aisle followed by a boy carrying a writing table. The great Howe understood the whole matter now. He knew that he had a foeman worthy of his steel. From lip to lip in a rapid whisper then passed all over the house this word, "Rev. Mr. Crawley," "Rev. Mr. Crawley," "Rev. Mr. Crawley."

Now the solid work of the day began. For hours Joseph Howe discoursed to that house packed with eager hearers—for hours Edmund A. Crawley took notes. Late in the afternoon Mr. Howe closed. Then the question was, would the people hear Dr. Crawley? He rose to the cheers of at least one side of the house. It was evident he was prepared. That one of the chairmen knew right well. One week before this Dr. Crawley chanced that way and was informed of this meeting, and requested to remain and have something to say on his side of the question. Under an hospitable Onslow roof he had given one week to the preparation for the occasion. Stung by the rejection from Dalhousie and familiarized with the subject by years of writing and discussion, all needful preparation had been made. It was a great occasion. How the hours passed! The sun went down, the candles were lighted and the untired audience continued to cheer—the soft voices of the housewives and the mellow voices of the country maids mingled with the coarser hurrahs of the sons and the fathers.—The beavers of the men performed circles around their heads and the handkerchiefs of the ladies fluttered and snapped at the bursts of eloquence from the great Demosthenes of the occasion. Night was upon them, and the speaker was interrupted with the plea that the people could stand it no longer. With a tact that was only equalled by

its grace the speaker said "I submit to the audience." A burst of "go on" broke forth from the unwearied people and on the speaker went. "Now," said the doctor, "I will give you a chapter in politics." Then it was not the College question simply, but the lines were drawn between Liberals and Conservatives, and Presbyterian elders and Baptist deacons echoed in concert the frequent refrain from the lips of the orator, "Gentlemen, look out for your rights."

The battle at last ended. The vote was called. Doubt of the result was expressed. The audience poured out into the open air. The denominational college people and the University people each in single file in parallel columns stretched away off from the church door, and the tellers passed down between them, counting the heads. Up went a shout "Majority for the University." Stop, cried Mr. King, an interested teller on the other side, and he cried "forty-one majority for denominational colleges." This being correct was received, and from that line of over five hundred men in a majority of forty-one for denominational colleges, stretching away from the church door across the green, there went up shout upon shout loud enough for the ear of the silvery moon which looked down in astonishment upon a people who had "sat it out" from eleven o'clock in the day to ten o'clock in the night to decide the great college question. And it was decided by a majority of forty-one. Why not now accept that decision?

ONSLow.

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

HILLSBURG.—Dear Editor,—As I ever believe the numerous readers of your much esteemed and highly prized Messenger are always delighted to hear, and read with deep interest and glowing heart of thankfulness to God for his blessings made manifest to his people in the reviving influence that have been enjoyed in so many of the churches during the past few weeks. More especially for the convicting and converting influences that have been made manifest upon the hearts and minds of so many of the inhabitants of these highly favored Provinces who a few weeks ago were pursuing the broad road that leads down to darkness but are now enjoying the light of the glory of God with their faces set Zionward, and are rejoicing in the hope of eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ.

No doubt it will gladden the hearts of many of our brethren and sisters who had the privilege of attending the late pleasing and profitable Convention held with us at Hillsburg in August last, and had the opportunity of forming an acquaintance with the people of this highly favoured village to hear of the divine favour being so graciously bestowed upon this church and congregation. We observed the week of prayer, at the close of which it was manifest that the Lord was with us, and that to bless. Our esteemed Pastor, Rev. G. D. Cox, was greatly encouraged in seeing the fruits of his labours in quickening influence upon the church, in the returning of wanderers, and the deep conviction of sin on the minds of many, and the evidence of conversion manifested by some, especially the young and members of the Sabbath School. The meetings were continued with deep interest and good results. The church has enjoyed a special blessing and many have found peace in believing and obeying their Saviour in his ordinances. On Sabbath, Jan. 30th., twenty followed their Saviour in baptism in the flowing tide of our beautiful river. Feb. 6th, twelve more were baptized, on the 13th fifteen more, and last Sabbath, the 20th, six more followed their Saviour in baptism, making fifty-three in all, added to the church by baptism and several by letter. And still the work of grace is going on, and meetings are largely attended with deep interest. Children of ten or twelve years have professed to have found Christ, and many young and middle aged persons are exulting in the riches of Divine Grace, as also aged men are rejoicing in hope of eternal life. To God be all the praise.

Yours as ever,

H. H. C.

Feb. 24th, 1876.

Rich men have commonly more need to be taught contentment than the poor.