

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger. Acadia College.

Dear Editor,—

Among many things marking the wisdom of the founders of Acadia College, its location should not be forgotten. On an eminence gradually sloping to the water's edge; commanding one of the finest views of landscape and offing that is seen in the Province, the eye is never weary in beholding nor the mind in contemplating. A little further up "the Hill" and there bursts upon the vision of the stranger, one of nature's panoramic displays, such as would animate the classic or poet;—The pretty little village of Gaspereaux;—coquetting with hills, dales and rivulets.

Its location has not been destitute of other considerations. Its influence on the community, if not all that it might have been, is marked in many ways. Some of the youth have received an upward impetus and are now reaping and enjoying the advantages of knowledge gained there. There is also a very decided improvement in matters in general, as witnessed in the style of building; dwellings, school-houses, and places of worship, and also in the qualification of teachers and preachers. If this improvement has been slow and sectional it has commenced and will increase.

But we must not forget another item connected with its location. It supplies a large market for the vicinity. Over twenty thousand dollars annually are expended in living, by parties, whose residence in the place depends upon their connection with these Institutions of Learning. A very large share of this large sum goes direct to the farmers of the surrounding country, for potatoes, meat, butter, fuel, &c., &c., and has done much to stimulate industry, and reward toil. How much of the growth and wealth of the place has been derived from this source we may not be able to state, but when that growth is compared with what it once was, or with the growth of similar places, without the advantages arising from these Institutions, it is very great.

This last consideration leads us to our closing remark;—the corresponding obligation to sustain these Institutions by very generous contributions.

While this bears upon all, it bears especially on those who reap more than others, by reason of their proximity. It is so felt by the surrounding communities. Nor is it otherwise than just. Here is a section of country very largely benefitted not only by finding a market at their doors, without the cost of transmission, for the surplus production of their gardens and farms, but by the privilege of educating their families, without the additional expense and anxiety of sending them abroad. If distant places from ordinary obligation to sustain a Denominational Institution respond in the liberal manner that some have done, and are again doing, how shall those excuse themselves that receive special benefit therefrom? Not a mechanic, trader, or day laborer in the place but is benefitted, directly or indirectly by them. But while we thus write, a recollection of the past, causes us to hope for increased liberality for the future.

We are deeply moved by the fact, that never before has there been awakened so general and generous a feeling in favor of placing Acadia with her Collegiate Academy in a position of comparative security, as at present. Let the feeling rise until all shall give as they have been prospered of God, and the situation of Acadia shall become more beautiful, and a greater joy to her patrons.

AN AGENT OF 1850. Wolfville, March 20th.

For the Christian Messenger. The Consequences of neglecting the Pastor.

Dear Editor,—

I feel called upon to state, clearly and faithfully the disadvantages and consequences arising from irregularity in remunerating pastors of Churches. It is presumed that no apology is needed here, for if, as we believe, the Bible contains a revelation of the mercy of God intended for human salvation, it must be the duty of every one to preach such a gospel, or, to the full extent of his ability, support others in doing the same.

The teaching of the word of God and the whole history of the Church, show that some men are divinely called and qualified to proclaim the truths of Christianity and to become pastors of churches. To this may be added the fact that there is a general inclination in the minds of all who attend the means of grace to contribute to the support of the cause. This inclination, in the order of providence, subserves the extension of Christ's Kingdom; and so evident is the hand of God in it, that its practical manifestation invariably brings pleasure and satisfaction; and when it is subverted by meanness or selfishness, unhappiness is the consequence.

Although the above assertions may be true, yet there are great difficulties in the way of remunerating the pastor, systematically and regularly, even when there are ample means; and such is the craft and power of the great enemy of Christ and his cause, that many of our churches need to be urged to great effort and great watchfulness, lest there should be increased laxity in the matter; and it may be shown that such laxity is destructive alike to the welfare of both pastor and people.

I. First, THE GLORY OF OUR DENOMINATION WILL BE TARNISHED by irregularity in fulfilling our obligations to our ministers. The eyes of the unbelieving world are upon the whole Church of God; and there is nothing hidden that shall not be revealed. Anything that looks like meanness in professors, of any denomination, is denounced in no measured terms. The attention of Christians, of other bodies, turns to the Baptists with the greatest interest and anxiety. Distinguished by the ordinance of believers baptism, which we consider necessary to the other ordinance of the Lord's Supper we claim a degree of spirituality, in our churches, which implies a greater depth of piety, and a more faithful discharge of our obligations in every particular.

In Great Britain, the Baptists are foremost in advocating the voluntary principle in the support of religion, in opposition to state aid. On the other hand, the advocates of state patronage and control, refer to anything like a failure of our system with the bitterest sarcasm. They like to fetch their evidences from this side of the Atlantic, where the various denominations exist, uninfluenced by the state, either directly or indirectly. Questions are often crossing the ocean regarding the condition of our churches. We have no reason to doubt either the truth or the practicability of our principles for all the purposes of religion, in any part of the world. Let us seek to carry out these principles in a spirit of christian love, and the honour of our cause will be maintained throughout the world.

II. Neglect of the minister will HINDER THE PROSPERITY OF THE CAUSE OF CHRIST. In the minds of all who attend the means of grace, there is a strong feeling that, with regard to their contributions, the pastor's salary is the first consideration. It matters not whether contributions be sought for home or foreign purposes, collectors are met by the objection, that the pastor's salary is not paid, and that it is necessary that they should be first honest, afterward benevolent. Thus, the neglect of the pastor, is the point of departure from all contributions to religion.

We may have the most devoted minister, and though he may sometimes preach like a seraph, yet it is impossible to enjoy his services if we have not fulfilled our obligations to him. Some feel this until they entirely absent themselves from the house of God. And it cannot be expected, under the circumstances, that their places will be filled by new attendants. The success of the church will depend, more than is thought, upon the minister and the manner in which he is generally received and treated.

(1.) It is necessary that he should hold an honourable position. Most of our pastors spend what money they have, at the commencement of their career, to secure education to fit themselves for their life work; and if they are able as pastors to interest and instruct the same congregation, year after year, they prove that they possess abilities that would secure a high position in the lucrative pursuits of life. It does not seem possible that such persons, in their love for the gospel and the souls of their fellow men, should be so

trifled with as to be kept from the enjoyment of the remuneration they have been led to expect. And yet this will be the consequence of irregularity, in this matter, until the contempt of the community falls upon both people and pastor, and especially upon those most in fault. A minister may think it more honourable to struggle in difficulties, than to fly from them. He may preach the gospel, for the gospel's sake, even in places where it is least received at the time being, looking for his reward in heaven; but he will be misunderstood even by persons of cultivation and intelligence, outside the church, and little success will attend his labors till the hindrance be removed.

(2.) The minister's position should be tolerable and free. I presume there is not much fear about the pastor's freedom. He may sometimes be reminded of the words of Pilate addressed to Christ, John xix. 10; but a Baptist minister is the last man in the world to be turned into a slave, or to wish to see others enslaved. Our glorious forefathers taught us how to bear the cross, but never to be slaves. Now while it must be the first consideration of a church to know that the pastor is free to all the members of his congregation, it should be a second matter to see that he is comfortable in his freedom. Let the two things go together—why should they not?

The minister's home should be a place of ease and comfort; subject only to the arduous labors of study for his public engagements. He should be in a position to pay others to do the drudgery of his house. He should not be oppressed by the thought that his death would immediately plunge his wife and family into abject poverty, or that a season of sickness would be a time of pecuniary distress. Especially, he should never be burdened by debt, for the common necessities of life. When he visits his people, it is painful and discouraging to be met with the apology that, the subscription has not been paid, when his sole purpose in being there is to seek the people's spiritual welfare. Promises should never be made and broken, even if it only refers to the contribution of a pumpkin. It perplexes the good man to find, that his lessons on the christian virtue of honesty, have been given in vain. The state of the finances must not be in such a condition as to lead him to suppose that any persons concerned in the matter have anything but thoughts of kindness toward him. The burden of souls, and anxiety for the spiritual welfare of his people, is as much as a mortal man can bear; and the labor of seeking, in all possible ways to do good, is work enough, even if the pastor had the strength of a Hercules.

(3.) Thus, in the third place, the work of the ministry claims all the pastor's time. I honour the men who, rather than leave a field destitute of the gospel, will take to farming or something else to assist in supporting their families. But a minister should never be driven to this necessity, when a salary can be raised. More than his whole time is needed for reading, study, and preparation for the pulpit, for visitation, meetings for preaching, bible classes, moral and intellectual improvement with the young people of his charge; and a dozen other necessary enterprizes demanding his attention. He must forego much of the pleasure of these services if his salary is not paid, for, without a farm, the most of his time will be occupied in keeping his house comfortable, and its surroundings respectable; and doing many things which the duties of a Christian minister delegate to others.

III. If we have not fulfilled our obligation to the pastor, WE CANNOT EXPECT THE DIVINE BLESSING. There is more divinity about the relationship of pastors and their people than we are apt to think. Nothing in this world is more thoroughly subject (as the case may be) to all the consequences of the favor or the displeasure of God. This is true, to such an extent, that the prosperity, or adversity of a Church often turns on this very point. It is impossible to pray for prosperity, if we have not fulfilled our obligation; and yet we profess to acknowledge our dependence upon God, for both temporal and spiritual mercies. I shall not enumerate the consequences, either of the divine favor or displeasure, but should this meet the eye of any who have withholden the rights of the ser-

vants of Christ, I ask him to look around and, within his heart for the evidences of the truth of what I affirm.

There may be some unworthy ministers; God save us from the consequences of such a condition, they may be even more terrible than those in which churches or church members are involved; but it is impossible to find, in the whole world, one church, one officer of a church, or one church member who has persisted in ill-using godly earnest ministers and prospered. "Touch not mine anointed and do my prophets no harm," is an admonition, the divinity of which has been proved many times by those who have defied it. We have read of those who have suffered a remorse far more terrible than the censure of the whole Christian Church—I forbear to add all that may be said here, praying that our hearts may be pervaded by that filial fear of God, so needful to keep us faithful to our obligations, each to each; and all together true to our noble principles and to our Saviour. So shall we secure the blessing of the Lord which maketh rich and addeth no sorrow with it.

In conclusion, my chief object in writing this letter is to express my anxiety to maintain the honour of our cause. A quarter of a century's experience and observation, the greater part of which has been spent as a church member, and as a minister, labouring in different parts of the world, convinces me that the mutual obligation of minister and people is an all important matter in the working of our church organizations. This is also the opinion of our people, generally; and the cold neglecting of a pastor, will be as painful to nine tenths of his flock, as it is to himself; and it must be humiliating to all.

I am aware that the collecting the pastor's salary in a systematical style, is some of the hardest work of the church. But perhaps we should all be better and happier if we came to the conclusion that Christianity has some hard work for each of us. There is a kind of religion which enervates—saps and undermines our manhood. It consists in heat and feeling, without light and labor. God requires work—constant effort in various directions, according to our several abilities; and without this there can be no union, no happiness, nor prosperity.

Generally speaking, a sermon which costs no labor in prayer and preparation is worth very little in deliverance and influence; and it is impossible for a minister to continue, year after year, in the same place, without hard work. Every revival worth having is the fruit of hard labor in the past; and that which may sometimes be called a revival, will be no more than a calamity, if those brought into our midst be not educated in our principles and established in the cardinal truths of our religion. This implies protracted labors, in both pastor and his people. The resources of our denomination are immense; its advantages, especially on this side of the Atlantic, are second to none; and its prospects brighten in proportion as our principles are carried out.

H. BOOL.

River Hebert, March 16th, 1877.

In Memoriam.

MRS. THOMAS L. DE WOLF.

Died at Mount Amelia, Dartmouth, on the evening of the 18th inst., Amelia, wife of Thomas L. DeWolf Esq., aged 64 years. The deceased was born in Horton, and some forty-two or forty-three years ago, experienced the renewing power of Divine Grace; was baptized by Dr. Pryor, and united with the Wolfville Baptist Church, then under the pastoral care of the late Rev. Theodore S. Harding. In the faith and love then experienced, our sister continued till the end. In 1842 she married her now bereaved husband, and in the course of life resided several years in New York, and in Cambridge near Boston. In these cities, and wherever Divine Providence directed her way, she forgot not her youthful consecration to God, and that she might grow therein, united herself with the Church, wherever she resided. Four years ago, Mr. DeWolf removed to Mount Amelia, when our sister, connected herself with the Baptist Church in Dartmouth, of which she continued an esteemed and beloved member till her death. The decided christian character of Sister DeWolf was observed by all in her society,