"There, sir," she said, in a shrill, pleased voice, as old Lister sat dolefully by the fire, "there's a fiddle for you. It's not a many things you crave after, and I'm not a woman to deny everything to a man. Oh, no! A man as never drinks, nor smokes, nor swears, is an innocent man, and deserves a fiddle. If you could play, 'Oh, let us be joyful!' maybe I could sing the words; we used to sing it often when I was a girl at school."

Old Lister could not play, "Oh, let us be joyful!" though Mrs. Clack did her best to hum the tune in a high cracked key. But he could remember many of the old pieces of music he had once been wont to play in the orchestra of the theatres, and he seemed quite another man with the violin, poor as it was, in his hands. A flush of color came into the ashy grayness of his face, as his cheek rested fondly against the old instrument. Don beat joyously with his feet, and Dot danced about the small space round the hearth that was clear of furniture, while Mrs. Clack looked on, and listened with a beaming face at the happiness she had created.

"He will make his fortune!" cried Don, rapturously, clapping his hard hands till they tingled again, "I said he would. Him, and little Dot, and Cripple Jack, must try it on to-morrow; hooray! If you only thought you had voice and wind enough, Mrs. Clack, you might go along with them; and you would draw heaps of money, you would. And who knows? You might come across Mrs. Hagar and the baby."

"It would be a sight more likely than going to the Gardens every day," said Mrs. Clack; "you would be going up and down all the streets, you know, and perhaps she would hear you or see you, and come running into your arms. But, bless you, Don, I never could lift up my voice in the streets, not to shriek, if robbers set upon me! Me, too, that's never sung a hymn since I left school! 'See the leaves around us falling,' and 'Hark! from the tombs a doleful sound!' I recollect them best, but I never sang them after I had left school. They would be very nice now, I dare say, but I would have liked something cheerfuller then."

Next morning Don conducted old Lister, Dot in a red cloak found among Mrs. Clack's stores, and the boy on crutches, to the streets which he considered most likely to prove a mine of money to the blind fiddler; and after watching them start at a crawl down the middle of the road, with the twanging of the violin-strings calling folks to their windows and doors, he turned away reluctantly to his own field of work.

But fiddling in the streets did not turn out the high road to fortune which Don expected. Some days old Lister managed to bring home a few pence over and above what he had to pay Cripple Jack for his guidance. But more often he came back, wet through and chilled to the bone, with not enough to buy a small loaf of bread to eke out Mrs. Clack's tea. The little woman never uttered a word of disappointment, though she felt very keenly how great a failure a man is. She knew she could earn something, if not enough for them all, and Don gave up every penny he could scrape together towards keeping his unfortunate foundlings. If the worst came to the worst, she must break into her little hoard of savings, which she had laid by to keep herself out of the workhouse, as soon as that inevitabe day came when she could no longer carry her old clothes-bag up and down the area steps of her usual patrons.

In one of the outlying districts of America, where things were in rather a primitive state, a hat was passed round the congregation for the purpose of taking up a collection. After it had made the circuit it was handed to the minister, who had "exchanged pulpits" with the regular preacher, and he found not a penny in it. He inverted the hat over the pulpit cushion, and shook it, that its emptiness might be known, then looking towards the ceiling, he exclaimed with great fervour, "I thank God that I got back my hat from this congregation!"

"No, marm," said the shoe dealer, "I would like to give you a smaller pair, but to sell you anything less than eights would render me liable under the statute for prevention of cruelty to animals."

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

Acadia College.

THE GOVERNORS' REPORT.

Mr. Editor,—

The Year Book for 1880 has at length appeared. The Secretary and Publisher would deserve credit for the manner in which it is got up, if they had not kept us waiting for it so long.

But late as it is in appearing, it does not seem to be complete. On page 31, under the heading "Finances," I read "Rev. R. D. Porter, our agent, went to Boston, and spent a portion of the winter and spring, confining his efforts chiefly to the Building Fund. In these he met with some degree of success, as will appear from the Treasurer's report."

Turning to the Treasurer's report I can find nothing whatever about the Building Fund. Now, the question is, how came the Governors to say this would appear from the Treasurer's report? Did they not examine the Treasurer's report, which is a part of their own report, or did they take it for granted that it would be there? Or, if it was once there, by whom has it been kept back?

That there was no statement of moneys collected for the Building Fund presented at the Convention I remember very well, and that a promise was given that a statement should be published in the Year Book I also remember very well. Why have not these promises been kept? I shall be glad indeed if a reason other than *neglect* can be given.

Some of us have been making a little exertion to gather up the subscriptions for the Building Fund, and we would like to know how much has been raised through the year, and how much is still needed to pay the debt. That there is a big debt somewhere is apparent, for we see in general account a charge for interest of $1,348.67, though it does not appear whether this is on money borrowed for building or for something else. It would be satisfactory to know that the money collected for building was drawing even a small interest as a partial offset to the above, if it cannot be paid on mortgage. I should like to know if the College is paying its way, but I cannot make out from the reports.

I notice that $1,000 as legacies have been received during the year. It would be satisfactory to know from whom this was received. All the other Boards give the names of the legators, a proper mark of respect for those who so kindly remember the interests under their charge.

I have been wondering if Bro. Porter performed his agency work gratis, for if I account for the absence of charge for his work in the present report, by the absence of that part of the report that refers to it, I am unable to account for the absence of any charge for work done by him as reported in the Year Books of 1877 and 1878. The amounts paid other agents appear, why should this be an exception?

Regretting the necessity of these remarks, I am,

Very truly yours,

A. COHOON.

Hebron, Jan. 27th, 1881.

For the Christian Messenger.

Letter from Uncle Ned.

This letter will not be about farming. It is a great favor and kindness in the editor of this paper to let "*just a common farmer*" like Uncle Ned talk about farming from the CHRISTIAN MESSENGER platform,—a platform from which his words can reach not only all over this Province, but wherever land is tilled, and wherever seed is sown in faith and hope of a bountiful resurrection. While there is room for farmers on this platform, and there is so much to be said that might lead to things being done, that for the good of farmers, which is the good of the whole world, should be done, it seems as though farmers, when they mount this platform, should talk about nothing else but these things.

But Uncle Ned has got something on his mind which has been for a good while troubling him very greatly, and as telling one's troubles often is the means of relieving them, he hopes for a hearing. Thinking so much about that man who is condemned to die for a crime of which he says he is not guilty, must have led to the dream which I want to tell about. I was walking along—in my dream—the old road, that, like most old roads, is a short though hilly way to the village. It is a very quiet and lonesome road. The old ruts are in summer green with moss and grass. In winter I have often walked both ways without seeing a track on the pure white snow but my own, or those of rabbits or other wild animals. The saucy chattering of squirrels, the drumming of partridges, the melancholy hooting of owls, only serve to make things more gloomy and dismal-like. The trees are none of your second growth, but fine old fellows, hoary giants, old when the oldest crows that caw among their tall tops were callow fledglings. No sunbeams get through the thick roof of leaves, but in winter, patches of dazzling light and shadows of boughs make a pretty pattern on the snow. I was on my way home just on top of the big hill where I could see our buildings, and neighbor Brown's, and the squire's, and the meeting house, and the school house, and I could not help, though I was in a hurry to get home to do the chores, standing to admire the beautiful colours of the clouds, when I heard a quiet step on the snow and before I had time to turn, was struck down. Like a flash the thought came into my mind—that's the meaning of the track I was wondering about as I came along, a queer looking track—very long and toes pointing out. Then I felt a sharp pang, and I could see myself lying on the snow, still and dead. Blood stained the snow where my head rested, and the handle of a butcher's knife stood like a tombstone over the still heart. I saw too the murderer bending down over me, rifling my pockets, and when he had found the money I had got for my oxen, I saw him skulk off through the woods towards the new road at the foot of the hill. Then I saw ——— ——— come along the road going towards the village. I saw the look of horror on his face when he suddenly came upon me, lying there murdered. I saw him kneel down by me, and I saw him draw the knife from the ghastly wound. I saw two boys, sons of a farmer who lived handy, and who had come to set rabbit snares,—they staid only long enough to see me and ——— ———, and then ran away, horror and terror struggling on their white faces. I could read the thoughts that passed through ——— ———'s mind. "Who had done it?" "What should he do?" He had been seen with the bloody knife in his hand; he had been heard to vow vengeance upon my head; he would be charged with the murder; the law would shut his mouth in his own defence; he would be tried; found guilty; sentenced; hung. If the boys had not seen him, he might have gone on to the village and given his testimony before the squire, or perhaps it would have been safe to have returned home, no one had seen him leave home, no one would have known that he had been near me. The only thing to be done now was to go to the village as fast as possible, and tell the coroner and the squire, and make the best of it, trusting to the legal fiction that a man is innocent until proved guilty. I saw him start off on a run; I saw the boys reach their home and tell the awful story; I saw men hasten with guns to where I lay, and, pausing only to find that I was stiff and cold, they ran after ——— ———; when he heard the hue and cry he looked around, ran on faster than ever, then stopped. I could see that he was wondering what he had best do, and while he wondered his pursuers overtook him. There was an old quarrel between them unluckily. In vain ——— ——— told his story, The coroner's jury found a verdict of wilful murder, and he was committed for trial. What could I do? Could I do nothing to save an innocent man from an awful doom? What could a murdered man do to save one unjustly suspected, or to bring a guilty one to justice? In my agony of mind it seemed that I *must* try to do something. I could see everything, every one's thoughts even. I could go anywhere at will, and as quick as thought. I saw myself laid out in our parlor. I saw my mother's grief and the sorrow of all to whom I had been Uncle Ned. I saw my own funeral, and the sad faces that returned to sad homes. The day of trial came. It seemed very plain to judge and jury, and every one, that the prisoner at the bar was guilty. His lawyer did the very best he could. He tried to show that the prisoner's story *might* be true. There was as good reason, he said, to believe it true as not true, and if true the judicial murder of an innocent man could not atone for that with which he was wrongly charged. Why could I not have put it into that lawyer's stupid head to see that if his client was innocent there *must have been another track on the snow*, and to go and examine and, if possible, follow those big foot-prints. The jury brought in a verdict of wilful murder, and the prisoner at the bar was sentenced to be hung, and still I could do nothing. Then the fatal, dreadful day came. I saw the awful gallows, and that innocent man standing there, rope around his neck, protesting his innocence, calling God to witness that his hands were unstained with my blood. The black cap was drawn over his eyes, everything ready waiting for the dread moment. Why had I not a tongue, a voice, a hand? Why could I not tell what I knew? A stir among the crowd outside. Some one is shouting to the sheriff and clamoring for admission. I am in terrible agony. I try to shout. Oh, that I could hold the drop! I wake bathed in perspiration, struggling wildly, and my good mother asks, "What is the matter with you, Ned?"

Well, the upshot of the whole matter in my mind is about this. British law and British justice, and trial by jury, and all these fine things, don't prevent a great deal of carelessness and injustice and murder by jury. As long as a man can give a pretty straightforward account of himself, and no one has seen him do the deed, or so long as there is no positive proof, life should not be taken. Is it not even better that ten murderers should get clear than that one innocent man should be hung? I ask myself, or anybody else, why should not a man on trial for murder be let tell his own story upon oath before judge and jury? I am very sorry that I didn't finish out that dream though. That man will always be standing on the drop. It is just like an unfinished story. There is another unfinished story, a *real* story, and I hope that those who have the writing of the last chapter will make it come out on the *safe* side.

"A man is innocent until he is proved to be guilty" is humbly submitted by

UNCLE NED.

["Uncle Ned" in his dream has given us a very strong case to illustrate his position, yet he has not given quite a parallel to "that man condemned to die." Whilst "a man is innocent until he is proved to be guilty," it is also often the case that circumstantial evidence is stronger and more powerful proof of guilt than even direct testimony.—ED. C. M.]

For the Christian Messenger.

Our Foreign Missions.

No. 4.

Dear Brother,—

In my last letter I called special attention to the interest which the *churches* of these Maritime Provinces have in the recent action of our Foreign Mission Board respecting our brother and sister Armstrong, and to the importance of having the fullest co-operation of these divinely constituted bodies in all matters affecting the interests of our Foreign Mission enterprise.

I now wish to refer to another important element in our Foreign Missions, and to consider what claims it has to a voice in all that concerns these missionaries.

The importance of the Women's Missionary Aid Societies in building up and strengthening this Foreign Mission enterprise cannot well be over estimated. The raising of funds is of no small importance, and yet that is perhaps the least of the labours performed by these Christian women. They have much to do in kindling and keeping alive apostolic zeal for mission work among the heathen. Their labours among the churches, homes, and communities in which they live must not be overlooked. We do well to emphasize their influence in implanting the missionary spirit in the minds and hearts of the young in our Christian homes, for the family, too, is a divine institution, and it is in these Christian homes that the men and women are to be trained and educated who are to be our missionaries in the future,—the men and women who are to support and extend our missionary efforts in the East, if it is destined, under God, to grow and become a great power for the salvation of the perishing heathen.

Let me refer briefly to sister Armstrong's connection with these Missionary Aid Societies. She was the instrument under God in founding and perfecting their organization in these Provinces, and she has ever since been their friend and counsellor.

Eleven years ago our sister, then Miss H. M. Norris, was in Halifax on her way to offer herself to our American brethren to go out to the East as their missionary, when it was, as we believe, divinely suggested to some brethren here that an effort should be made to induce her to remain with us and become our missionary. She was found on board the steamer *en route* to the United States, but she was led to delay going for one week. That same evening a few friends were called together, I am informed, in your parlor, Mr. Editor, to meet with her, and deliberate upon the matter. At that meeting the late Judge McCully, Dr. T. H. Rand, Revds. J. E. Goucher, E. M. Saunders, and other brethren were present. Miss Norris had with her papers referring to the formation of Aid Societies, then a new movement among Christian women in the United States. The idea of organizing such societies among us was then first suggested. That same week a special session of our Foreign Mission Board was called at Aylesford, and our sister, accompanied by Rev. E. M. Saunders and Mrs. W. Smith, attended that meeting. The Board were induced, with misgivings on the part of some brethren, to support the movement. Our sister was advised to spend the time intervening before the next meeting of Convention in visiting the churches and forming W. M. A. Societies. The movement was from the first successful. The Christian women in our churches responded to the call with great enthusiasm, so that when the Convention met at Fredericton, and Miss Norris was formally designated to the Foreign Mission work, they were ready to supply the funds requisite to send her out to the East and support her there,—and thus literally she became their missionary.

Subsequently, her letters and reports to the Central Boards published in the MESSENGER have been interesting to us all. The co-operation existing between our sister and these societies has been uninterrupted and intimate, and the ties which have bound her to the hearts of the Christian women in our churches have year by year become more firmly cemented. Ever since the time that she, by her marriage to Bro. Armstrong, became officially disconnected with these societies, we have seen from time to time monies voted by their Central Boards to be expended by her in her school and other mission work in Chicacole. Only recently, when it became necessary for her to return home on account of her shattered health, the funds requisite for the journey were generously voted from the same source. And, upon her arrival in this country these Christian women have joyfully welcomed her again to their hearts and homes.

Need I emphasize the fact that Mrs. Armstrong has a strong hold upon the sympathies of the W. M. A. Societies, and that these societies have a strong hold upon Mrs. Armstrong? Can we be surprised if our sisters, whose hearts are thus wedded to the heart of their beloved missionary and friend, make emphatic protest against this apparently hasty divorce which the action of our Board, if not reconsidered, will effect? Unless, indeed, good and adequate reasons are given to convince them that God has willed it to be so. An unceremonious separation at this time, unless for good and sufficient reasons, would do violence to their origin and whole history; it would outrage their Christian character and sympathies; it is inconceivable.

It is to our Christian *churches* and our Christian *homes* that we must look, under God, for a solution of this mission problem. These divine institutions are the power behind the Convention and the Convention's Board. They carry the mission and the missionaries upon their hearts, and sustain them with their prayers and their money. Therefore, I say again, let a special meeting of