

For the Christian Messenger. Notes on the College Question. No. 4.

MR. EDITOR,—

At the risk of seeming to occupy too much space in the MESSENGER, I wish to express a few thoughts suggested by another charge which the representatives of the Association for promoting University Consolidation make against the existing order of collegiate education, namely, that it prevents the cultivation of a high scholarship. This criticism is expressed in various ways. It is said that "we cannot produce first-class scholarship on the present plan," that "we are turning out a number of half-educated men, unfit for the duties of the country,"—that "a student should be sent to a college where he will have the advantage of the instruction of twenty-five or thirty professors." The venerable President of the Association, with a tone that indicates his estimation of the gravity of the occasion, asks: "Will it consist with sound educational policy and with Christian obligation to prolong the present state of things in relation to the higher education, and to continue to withhold from our youth the greatest practicable potentiality of intellectual training and scientific attainment?"

These criticisms are marked by the same vagueness as the others that we have noticed. Whether the censurers mean, by these expressions, that no thorough scholarship and effective training are possible on the present plan, or that it will not furnish as complete an education as may be obtained in the great universities of the old world, is uncertain. It is impossible to discuss such criticisms, unless we have some clear indication of the scope of their meaning. "The greatest practicable potentiality" of training and acquirement is not easily measured. Possibly it is already open to the students of our colleges. It is quite certain that the existing colleges offer more than the majority of our students can take. In the discussions on this subject there is a constant tendency to forget that there are two related parties, the educator and the educated. It is quite possible that cases may be found in which the teacher has placed limits on the student; but we ought, also, to remember the other large class of cases, in which the student limits the teacher. No Professor can give his class more than they can receive. The candid judge of the value of the educational methods now employed will bear in mind that he is to consider the capacity of the learner as well as the ability of the teacher.

If I might venture, in the presence of so many wise critics, to express an opinion in regard to the point of our special weakness in the cultivation of scholarship, I should direct attention to the stage preceding the college course. Whatever deficiency may exist in that stage, I do not believe that it results from the incompetency of the teachers in that department. It proceeds rather from the impatience of the student under a prolonged and thorough drill. He is eager to accomplish the impossible. It is quite probable that, at this point, the Colleges have not performed their duty. They might have insisted on more thorough training in the preparatory stage. They might have given more distinct and public prominence to the fact that in most cases, the foundation of superior scholarship is laid in the Academy, and the College only promotes a distinction which it found in existence. The great Intermediate Schools of England give character to the scholarship of Oxford and Cambridge. A German University is possible only because the German gymnasium prepares the way for it. In studying the mirage created by this magical term, University, we are forgetting the solid foundation on which alone scholarship can be built up.

The Colleges may not have accomplished all that was possible for them, but they have done much, notwithstanding the difficulties which they have to encounter. The nature of some of these difficulties must be studied by all who wish to express discriminating praise or censure. A great hindrance to the promotion of scholarship is the deluge of "light literature" that for some years has overwhelmed the land. These sentimental and weakening stories are read, there is reason to fear, much more widely than parents suppose. In too many cases, we have seen that their influence is hostile to habits of patient thought and continued labor. The popular idea that education should be the way to wealth, is not consonant with the methods that produce the highest culture. In the opinion of many of the best educationists, the growing

tendency to demand, even in the earliest stages of school-life, the privileges of special and selected studies, is having an injurious effect on the scholarship of the time. Closely related to this, is the excessive multiplication of studies. To such an extent is this frequently carried, that the student who flatters himself that, in consequence of the number of subjects presented to his view and the number of professors to whom he is introduced, he is receiving a first-class education, is really spending his time in what might be properly called first-class dissipation. If these untoward facts and tendencies of the present day are to be modified in any degree, it must be by influences and processes that the Colleges can employ as well in their present condition, as if they were combined together.

Perhaps it would not be presumption for one who has given much thought to the subject, to designate some of the means by which the interests of higher education may be promoted among us.

(1.) The requirements for entering College should be advanced to such an extent that all the work, now done by the student in the ancient classics in the first year of the College course, shall be accomplished in the Academy; and the student shall come to the College better trained in English and more conversant with the elementary principles of Science. (2.) The Colleges, by some concert of action, might unite in requiring the same qualifications for matriculation. The Council of Public Instruction can give valuable assistance in this respect by constructing their High School Course so as to favor preparation for the Colleges. (3.) The Colleges should, in some way, give a satisfactory guarantee to the public that they are fairly carrying out their published courses of study. (4.) The preliminary examination for admission to the Bar should require graduation from College, or what is equivalent to it; but if this should be thought to be too much, there might be required previous study equal to one half of the College course, instead of graduation from a High School, which is all that is now asked. (5.) A similar advance should be made in the requirements for matriculation in the Medical College. (6.) A Technological School should be developed for the benefit of young men who wish to prepare themselves for certain practical pursuits. Such a School is not properly a part of a University, and may be created at once without interfering with the Colleges. (7.) It would seem to be wise to promote the establishment of the Technological School, the Law School and the Medical College on such a basis and in such localities, that they shall receive patronage and derive financial support from the three Maritime Provinces. (8.) Some uniform and sensible method might be adopted by which graduates from the Colleges might receive the degree of Master of Arts. (9.) The Government, or the Council of Public Instruction, or some other responsible body, might create six or nine "travelling scholarships," connected with specified departments of study, of the value of \$500 a year, and tenable for three years, two or three of which should be open annually for competition by the Graduates of the Colleges in this Province, subject to the condition that the holder of a scholarship, after residing abroad for three years at whatever University may be approved by the authority controlling the scholarships, shall return to labor for the same length of time in the Province (or the Dominion), or repay a certain portion of the money received.

These are all practicable methods. The adoption of them would introduce no violent changes and would lead to immediate advantage. University consolidation could be of but little benefit, except in the direction of the improvements here indicated, and all of them can be effected without consolidation.

Yours truly, A. W. SAWYER. August 1st, 1881.

For the Christian Messenger.

Dear Brother Selden,—

Not expecting to be able to attend the Convention in Yarmouth, I wish to express my hope that arrangements will be made, so that Rev. Mr. Armstrong and his wife may go back to Chicaco, when health shall permit their return. They are best acquainted with the work there, and are probably well adapted to labor among the high caste people of that Station.

I also feel that it is highly desirable that some one should be sent to aid Miss Hammond for the present time, in her crushing responsibilities in that field.

These wishes are shared by all the friends of our Mission, among the people with whom I have labored during the past year, throughout a field of sixty miles in extent. For the Armstrong's not to have the opportunity of returning for us, and to that Station would be a calamity.

Yours fraternally, D. FREEMAN. Canning, N. S., Aug. 3rd, 1881.

For the Christian Messenger. Canada Baptist Foreign Missions.

Unable to be present at the Convention, but taking as deep an interest in the affairs of the Denomination as ever, I trust my brethren will be willing to listen to a word from me through this medium.

Last year I proposed what I regarded as a solution of Foreign Mission difficulties, the possibilities of which I thought I foresaw in the not distant future. Some may remember that I then said I thought we should act in the direction of union with the Upper Provinces before we found ourselves compelled to. Had I then supposed that ere this we would be involved in such complications as we now are, I would have much more earnestly pressed my resolution. I believe that had my brethren known what was before us they would have regarded it with more favor. Whether that resolution, now on the table, is or is not the best form in which the question can come before us this year, it does seem to me that every one ought to see that here is a practicable way out of some of our greatest troubles, and that there is none more so. Beside, I considered Union then, and am disposed to now, on the broad ground of the general interests of our denomination in these provinces.

As to Foreign Missions, the case seems to me so plain that there can be no mistaking it. The missionaries of both Boards, seeing the necessities of the case, some time ago urged upon us Union. Our brethren of the Upper Provinces are disposed to favor it, for it is a necessity with them no less than with us. And it must now be apparent to every one that either Board represents too small a constituency to work an efficient Independent Mission.

Beside, there is no reason for our keeping apart. We are on the same field, belong to the same country, and our interests are in every way one. Our distance apart is the only objection I have known to be offered. But it certainly is no objection unless all the great Foreign Mission Societies are a mistake. The practical difficulties in the way of the denomination of the Dominion appointing and locating the Board, and receiving and acting upon its reports, can all be overcome by men thoroughly in earnest, and determined to sink all personal, party, and Provincial interests, and work self-denyingly and unitedly for the promotion of the greatest cause on earth.

I would not hinder a great movement by unwise advocacy, nor will I undertake to argue a case that needs no argument. I only ask my brethren to kindly believe that I have but one object, and that it is possible there is some reason underlying what I have thus barely suggested.

T. H. PORTER. Fredericton, N. B., Aug. 5th, 1881.

The Christian Messenger.

Halifax, N. S., August 10, 1881.

MINISTERIAL RELIEF AND AID FUND.

Perhaps there is no more difficult task given to any of the Convention Boards, than that committed to the Board of the Ministerial Relief and Aid Fund. The difficulty arises from several causes. 1st The funds at present in the hands of the several Associations, to be passed over to the Board, being so different in amount. They consist of the following, according to the Minutes of the Associations:

Table listing financial contributions from various associations and funds, including N. S. Western Association, N. S. Central, N. S. Eastern, and others, with amounts in dollars and cents.

tation so as to form a permanent Fund from which a certain amount of "Aid and Relief" may be paid over to ministering brethren on the failure of their health and strength, on just and equitable principles.

3rd. The Board is "requested to prepare and submit to the next session of the Convention conditions of membership, and regulations for the expenditure of its funds, and for the management of the affairs of the Board."

This it would seem must have the form either of Life Assurance or a Mutual Benefit Society, or both, as the case may be. The augmentation of the General Fund provided by the churches could be only by bequests, legacies &c. &c., and the appropriations from that Fund must be according to the necessities of the case.

But in making provision on the principle of Life Assurance for a sum of money to be paid to the surviving relatives of the minister, it would be necessary to form a distinct Society. It would be somewhat difficult to do this if that were required of the Board except under an able actuary. The Mutual Benefit principle is adopted by some religious bodies in their relief funds, but it is doubtful whether this can be fairly done in connection with the funds, to be in the hands of this Board, seeing that they are from only certain portions of the body whose ministers are expected to participate in the benefits. We offer these suggestions to our brethren who may be able to give more attention to the subject, and shew further what is possible to be done in this direction under the circumstances.

THE CENSUS OF 1881.

The following is given as the population of the several provinces of the Dominion, by the Census of 1881, and as compared with that of 1871:

Table comparing population of Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, P. E. Island, Manitoba, B. Columbia, and North West in 1871 and 1881, along with percentage increase.

The total increase of population in the Dominion, being 681,498 or nearly 19 per cent. In the previous ten years the increase in the five Eastern Provinces was 408,429 or less than 13 per cent.

The following is the population of the several Counties of Nova Scotia, with a similar comparison between the present and former census, together with the per centage of each:

Table showing population and percentage increase for various counties in Nova Scotia, including Annapolis, Antigonish, Cape Breton, etc.

It is curious to notice the great difference of increase in the several counties. This may be accounted for in some instances by local causes, some being more favorable to development of industrial occupations, whilst in others there have been more or less of an exodus.

Table showing population of the Dominion by city, including Halifax, St. John, Quebec, Montreal, Ottawa, Kingston, Toronto, London, and Hamilton.

The following is the per centage of increase in the several cities of the Dominion since last Census:

Table showing percentage increase for Toronto, Montreal, Quebec, Halifax, Hamilton, Ottawa, London, and Kingston.

There is a decrease of population in the city and county of St. John, N. B., which has arisen, doubtless, from the great fire.

Ontario appears to be the only province entitled to an increase of representation in the House of Commons. The St. John Sun says in reference to this:

"Quebec's quota is the standard of measurement for the other Provinces, as regards possible increase of representation. She has 65 members for a present population of 1,358,469, or one for every 20,899 people. The population of Ontario, 1,913,460, divided by 20,899, gives that Province 92 representatives, or an increase of four over her present allotment, the details of the computation being regulated by sub-section 3 of section 51 of the Union Act, as follows:—

"In the computation of the number of members for a Province, a fractional part not exceeding one half of the whole number requisite for entitling the Province to a member, shall be disregarded; but a fractional part exceeding one half of that number shall be equivalent to the whole number."

Fortunately for Ontario, the "fractional part" is on the right side for her interests. The readjustment does not go into effect until the termination of the present Parliament. The percentage of increase in Manitoba is of course, very great; but Manitoba was allowed to enter the Union with special representation, far beyond what she was entitled to according to population, so that her present representation will be unchanged by the census. The same remark applies to P. E. Island."

The following comparative statement will thus show the number of members representing the several Provinces now, and the number which each will have in the future:

Table comparing present and future representation for Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, P. E. Island, Manitoba, and British Columbia.

We shall have to wait some time for the Census with regard to Religious Denominations, &c. We hope it may prove more reliable when it comes than our former Census.

The Baptist Union of Canada has not yet succeeded in superceding the Conventions of Ontario and Quebec as it was supposed it would. Several of the Ontario leading men have stood aloof from any active co-operation with the Union, and maintain that even the Western Convention cannot be merged in the Union, but must maintain an independent existence and autonomy."

One of the principal difficulties urged is the distance required for brethren in Quebec to travel to any of the great Western towns, and vice versa, so that no fair representation of the two provinces can be got to attend the meetings of the Union. Another difficulty arises from the Ontario Convention having been incorporated by the Provincial Parliament of Ontario. That being the case with the two Upper Provinces, it would seem folly for the Maritime Provinces to talk about a combination of our Convention with the Union formed in Toronto.

The cost of getting to its meetings and the time it would require to do so, would necessarily limit the number of delegates able to attend, and prevent more than one or two from going, if even that number could be induced to do so, except it were probably as excursionists, whose utterances, as heretofore, could not be regarded as having any representative character.

Baptists must do their own work in their own way; they cannot assume any power, as in the Synodical courts of other denominations. They have no means of bringing together their men and disposing of them as in a Methodist Conference, but we shall find that there is abundant scope for all our powers in the combinations already formed, and more than enough to employ all our combined resources in the fields of labour open and opening before us.

Hon. Dr. Parker left Halifax on Wednesday last for British Columbia, in company with Sir Charles Tupper and Lady Tupper, who were to leave Montreal on Monday last.