RELIGIOUS AND GENERAL FAMILY NEWSPAPER.

NEW SERIES. Vol. XXIX., No. 52.

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Halifax, Nova Scotia, Wednesday, December 24, 1884.

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The Christian Messenger, A RELIGIOUS AND GENERAL

FAMILY NEWSPAPER. EVERY WEDNESDAY MORNING

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Christmas Snow-flakes

BY FANNY PERCIVAL One Christmas eve, as Deacon Brown

Was homeward going from the town, A snow-flake fell upon his nose. Said he: "Well, I declare! it snows! If it will only snow all night, Twill give the children such delight. Ah! yes, they'll think its jolly fun : But there is many a shivering one Will not be glad the snow to see, How many poor there are ! Ah, me ! Now, there is poor old Widow Burr: I ought to have remembered her, And tried to manage in some way To make her happy Christmas day. I'll do it yet! I'll send some coal To-morning morning-yes, indeed-And other things that she may need." And onward, cheerily, he went, His heart aglow with kind intent. Just at that time another flake, As big and cold and wide awake, Fell plump on Farmer Dutton's eye, As he was looking at the sky, To find what might the prospect be Of a clear Christmas day. Cried he: 4 As sure as I live, it's going to snow! Don't know that it's much matte

The fowls are comfortable, I guess. They're all penned in, and I confess, There hain't nobody round here got A bigger nor a finer lot Of fowls than I. And Neighbor Glenn-Don't b'lieve be's even got a hen For Christmas dinner, they're so poor, Now 'twouldn't hurt me, to be sure, To take a turkey over there, And chicken, too, or p'r'aps a pair. I reckon more'n likely 'twould Do all of 'em a power of good. I'll do it, sure's I live," said he; "One merry Christmas they shall see." And off he went with eager will, His kindly purpose to fulfil. Another frosty snow-flake fell Upon the hand of bright-eyed Nell, As she was passing out the doors Of one of the bright, crowded stores. "Ah! snow!" said she. 'Well, let it | was now born into this world to be its

I've not much farther for to go." Into her muff her hand she slipped, And, as she onward gaily tripped, She thought: " How nice a muff to hold And keep one's hands from snow and

There's cousin Minnie -she has none, Uncle's too poor to get her one. I wish she had nice things, like me. Why, I declare! Just let me see! Why could not I buy her a muff? I think I've money left enough. I'll buy it now, this very night, And send it round at morning light, Before she's fairly out of bed." And on her errand kind she sped. While Bootblack Jimmie stopped to

Some Christmas carols, on his ear A snow-flake fell. Cried be : " Helloa ! "Hurrah I hurrah ! it's goin' to snow! I tell yer that'll be just gay. But there's poor little sister May A lyin' there so sick in bed She can't so much as lift her head; She couldn't see if't did snow. Too bad ! she allers loved it so. Look here! I know just what I'll do, As soon as that there singin's through, I'll take that bit of ev'green tree Here in the street right home with me, An' fix it up somewhere real straight; An' don't I hope 'twill snow fust-rate All night, an' cover it with snow! An' won't it please her mighty, though, To see me fetchin' of itini?

'Twill make her chirper than she's been

Since she was took. An' I declare, I guess I've got some cash to spare, To buy somethin' uncommon sweet An' temptin' like, for her to eat. An' she shall have a Christmas too, The same as other people do." So, when he'd heard the singing out, His loving plans he went about. But oh ! 'twould take a week to tell The good the snow-flakes as they fell Did all unconsciously achieve Upon that merry Christmas eve-What suffering one's they brought to

What chains of selfishness they broke, What Christ-like charity they woke, What tender thoughts they multiplied, What close shut purses opened wide; And hearts there were that never knew How much the snow-flakes had to do With their unwonted happiness. Such power have little things to do.

> The Sign from Heaven. REV. S. VINCENT.

When the shepherds who were keeping watch over their flock by night saw an angel of the Lord standing by them, and the glory of the Lord shining round The good tidings of great joy, that their fears, for they were the words of something homely and earthly. So, angel into heaven, these shepherds set was told them concerning this child.' out to see the sign. It was plain to them as they went that God had visited His people, and was now ready to turn again the Captivity of Zion, and they were like men in a glad dream, thoug they knew, as they held on their way over the bills and under the stars, that they did not dream; but their mouth was filled with langhter and their tongue with singing; God had already done great things for them whereof they were glad; so much as this was sure from

what the angel had said. And then he had spoken to them a one who had already seen the babe. He talked to them as an eye-witness of swaddling clothes and manger; and how could be and his tellows who had seen that their Lord, the Heir of all things, Saviour, leave the earth for heaven without saying a word to anybody of their great joy? We may easily bewere too full for silence, for nobody knows how much they had learned of their God that very night, and so there where David fed his sheep and sang 'The Lord is my Shepherd,' they told these shepherds-probably the only men abroad in all the country side, and the fittest men to hear, that the Saviour the Good Shepherd, was come at last. Perhaps, too, this angel had, beyond others, an interest in the new-born babe, We know that children have their angels, and this great angel of the Lord may have had assigned to him the charge the Lord of angels, now, for a season, made a little lower than they-a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying

that the shepherds set out with haste to see. And first, as they sought entrance at the stable, they would see Joseph and tell him, to his surprise, how and why they came; but, good man as he was, and as he doubtless looked, they would not observe him much; no, nor even Mary, the young mother, as Joseph led them in, though, perhaps, her face was as pure and weet as that which looks out from Raffaelle's canvas, at Dresden, upon a rapt world-they seek the sign from heaven that angels had told them of, a Saviour Christ the Lord, and Joseph and Mary show them the babe in the manger.

They are quite satisfied. All here seems perfectly natural and homely to So that the idea of development from

that their little children had better rest- Lord in Mary's infant child. Indeed. ing places provided for them than a everywhere the natural breaks out or manger—that was all that seemed in deepens back into the supernatural; any wise strange to them there. These for the supernatural to us is just what shepherds were not worldly wise enough is natural to God, and will be natural they might feel-though 'twas too things better-it is a higher naturalness obvious to say it out to one another- than we yet know. To the shepherds that all human greatness begins in much nothing could be more perfectly natural this way. Poets, prophets, kings, were than the sign they saw: to us it is the all once as this babe. It would not be highest expression of the supernatura strange if these shepherds thought of Joseph and Moses and David. who were What hearts they moved with impulse saviours in a degree; and now nobody at their birth knew how much God was giving, and what manner of child each Father gives His Son, just as any other just been telling them, would arise to over Him and over all. All babes are do greater things for Israel than all dependent even in comparison with those great ones, and work out some other young things, and this babe is no grand deliverance, as the sad times exception to the rule. See, demanded, in keeping with the glorious wrapped in swaddling clothes. visions and voices of that night. It is mother sees that there is not a out even from his humble home, and our human lot. God loveth a cheerful True Baptists all along their history yet he became a prince and a ruler. What could the texture of the swadd- His best, ling clothes or the manger-cradle matter about them, they were sore afraid. to the future of this babe? They knew language of lowliness and alds the idea that it is not what a child is wrapped of rejection. All is in harmony of there was born that day to them, in the in, but what lies folded up in the child, amazing humiliation. The first resting city of David, a Saviour, Christ the not where he lies, but what he is, that place of the Christ on earth after His Lord, could hardly be sufficient to quiet rules his future. And Gol, by His mother's arms is a manger. Men first angels, had declared this babe to be saw their Saviour lying there. Why an angel who stood near them in great Christ the Lord. And so, far from not? When God condescends there is glory, and they were naturally dazzled being a disappointment to them after no resting place for Him till the lowest and bewildered by such strange sight the angel faces and voices, it was a place be reached. His work is perfect, our union will not be worth having when and sound; so then the wise angel told great relief to them to see the lowly There is glory to God in the highest we get it, but will be a source of weakthem of a sign that they might then and sign, and they felt that God Himself places, there shall be glory to God there set out to see, and that sight could do no kinder thing than to send a from the lowest places too for His would reassure them perfectly; 'And child to grow up to be a Saviour. And Son shall rest and walk and die in this shall be a sign unto you, ye shall they knew that they had found the very these. So the manger reminds us that find a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes | child the angels meant, for probably no | the Saviour of the world was fed and and lying in a manger.' Standing there other babe was born that night in Beththey would seem to themselves to have lebem, and certainly no other was so worse, that He received not more, passed from the supernatural to the cradled; and, being satisfied, they renatural, from the glory of heaven to turned to their duty on the hills, glorifying and praising God for all the after the chorus of angels had appeared things that they had heard and seen as and sung of glory to God and peace on it was told unto them. And they on earth, and had gone away with the made known abroad the saying which

And the sign to the shepherds is a sign from beaven to all men for ever,

It seems at least to say, God Himself is lowly-hearted. He stoops to this. He is incarnate. This little babe is truly called Immanuel. The desire of all nations is come at last, and come in this way! The whole creation has been groaning and travailing in pain together until now, waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God. and now God's Son is come to be the first-born among many brethren, to give them grace and glory, and to the whole creation, rest. God does not come in wrath and majesty after so many servants have been slain and ambassadors rejected, but He comes Himself to win the world by atter love and lowliness and sacrifice. lieve that the hearts of these angels apart from this sign from Heaven, who could think that these virtues were more divine than human, and that we must be loving, lowly-hearted, and self-sacrificing to be like God. The sign represents in a visible and affecting way the mind that was in Christ Jesus : though He was rich you see here how poor He is become. He has emptied Himself and taken the form of a servant, and is found in fashion as a man. God's Son stoops so low as to know by experience the mystery human birth and growth and death, and unites in one person two natures : Ye shall find a babe . . . which is Christ the Lord.'

The sign, too, shows how God's gifts, that seem small at first, may un-This, then, was the sign from heaven lold till they reveal Himself. His gifts and revelations, like the starry heavens that seem so near to children and untaught men, break into receding depths as men explore them; and even the heavens, in this respect, are but a poor image of the heights and depths that men have seen revealed in Jesus Christ, for since that day when the shepherds saw only a child, uncounted millions have seen in Him the Father Himself, and have been satisfied; and still they look for endless revelations in other worlds of His infinite and uncreated glories through that Son, who once appeared so small and frail to men. And other gifts of God have,

in their degree, such growths in glory.

them. They had seen such a sight be- lowliest form to fullest life need not fore in their own homes, except indeed offend any who have seen Christ the to be offended in Him. As simple folk to us when we know Him and all

seen God's own nature. Then the sign signifies that God gives to the uttermost. The everlasting would be; and how, in due time, this child is given, into the care of a unite, and again and again I have asked child, of whom the very Heavens had woman and an angel, God watching myself the question, What does it all men; but if this Child's lowliness had so much danger from the chill night offended them or made His future glory air as her new-born child. And the ture nor early church history for our less credible they would have been fool- covering he needs a mother's hand practices in the past? or have we ish men. Moses was the child of slaves supplies. Truly God gives what He ceased to demand a "thus saith the in Egypt, and lay in his little ark cast gives' and has perfect fellowship in Lord" for all that we believe and do? giver, and here we see how God gives have recognized the Bible as their only

And the manager speaks the same clothed and housed like ourselves, or perhaps less, earthly bounties from the great storehouse of His Father's fulness; in childhood subject to Joseph and Mary, in youth laborious, in early manhood obscure, amidst the maraculous splenours of the three years' labours. sometimes not having where to lay His head, often hungry and athirst, for teachings of ineffable wisdom scorned, for but what it signifies who can altogether perfect goodness crucified; and He who as yet unborn found no room in the inn shall have His cold limbs wrapped by woman's hands in the swaddling bands of death, and shall be laid at last in rocky cave, as at first in the manger hollowed in the hills of Bethlehem. God gave men His Son. Men gave their Saviour a manger, a cross,

> their salvation. Let worldly wisdom tell us, if it can, what sign the Mighty God shall give from heaven to win the world to Himself like this; a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, and lying in

grave; and through these He became

manger, a Saviour, Christ the Lord? Alas! that there should still be hearts like the inn, where he knocks and would enter but finds no room; and us be glad that He comes to rent and stay in hearts meaner the manger as He finds them, but in the end happy and pure and glorious as Heaven itself, through His salvation. -Freeman.

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger. The new Church edifice at Lunen-

Dear Brother,-

The New Baptist Meeting-house in Lunenburg town, will be dedicated to the worship of God, on the first day of January, 1885, and as many of the ministers of the province as can make it convenient to come are cordially invited to attend. We hope that the Missionary Board will have arranged to station a man here at once. There seems to be a good opportunity to commence work. We intend also to have a Tea-meeting the same day, with the view of raising sufficient funds with the collections at the opening, and what we can realize by sale of pews, to clear off all debts. Brethren we mean work, and intend by the help of God, to build up a strong Baptist Church in this long neglected

We want the spirit of the Master, and a man of the right stamp, and the work will be accomplished.

CALEB SPIDLE.

For the Christian Messenger. "Basis of Union."

Dear Dr. Saunders .-

I feel as though I wish personally to thank you for the noble stand you are taking as editor of the Christian Messenger in favor of our time honored and God honored principles. I must say the term "basis of union" as used by Baptists in regard to a proposed union with another denomination has been not a little confusing to my min, and J have thought how strange at this day that Baptists should be found searching out a "basis of union" upon which another denomination may be willing to mean? Have we become wiser than our Fathers who settled this question as they thought and as we have thought so many years ago. Or have we become more liberal than our fathers? and if so, impression of many besides discovered that we have neither scriprule of faith and practice, and will it not be time to violate that principle when the Head of the Church, gives us a new revelation.

A union with another Christian de nomination might appear to us to be very good thing but if we have got to go outside of the teaching of the New Testament to find a "basis, of union" ness and not of strength.

A PASTOR.

For the Christian Messenger. A Correction.

In notes of a Patron's trip to Pictou County published in the Messenger of the 10th inst., the writer is made to say " I have had reason to believe that our Normal School was at least as worthy to be called a teaching school." In as much as a Normal School should teach teachers how to teach, the sentence quoted is meaningless. A Patron wrote or intended to write "cramming school." Not an elegant expression certainlynor complimentary—as certainly not intended to be offensive, but merely to express distinctly the writer's convic-

Inasmuch too as any editors and publishers do not hold themselves responsi ble for the opinions of their correspondents a Patron fails to see why the word "teachings" should have been substituted for the word "cramming," if such substitution were made.

This is not merely a matter of words Whether a humble individual chooses to express a conviction concerning a presumed perversion of the Normal School by applying to it the epithet "cramming" school or not, is of little Pastor, and the acceptable riches of moment. It is however a matter of Christ be preached with the voice of vital importance that those who are to mould the nation in its school rooms should be adapted, instructed and trained for this great work.

Harmonious development, industry, economy, morality, habits of correct thought and observation, loyalty-these should characterize the nation and should be " put into" its schools with so much of the facts and theory o the ordinary curriculum as are essential to those developments.

No one in this day presumes to say that a young man or young woman is fitted to undertake this great work of moulding the future nation merely because he or she "passes an examination and secures the coveted licence. Will not everyone who gives the subject careful consideration say that a knowledge of the theory of education and training in the best methods of conveying instruction are at least quite as essential to the teacher as an acquaint ance with the branches comprised in the curriculum of the common schools and academies, and that the sole function of the Normal School should be wanted us here, that we may carry to that expressed in its designation as completion his plans, and thereby serve applied to education?

From conversation with a number of Normal School graduates a Patron has formed the opinion that "cramming," Grammar, Geography, History, Langu | the past year.

ages, dead or living-and the other "branches" that are supposed to be included in an education is practiced and presumably encouraged at our Normal School. If this is so it is a perversion, and at the expense of the Normal functions of the school, and a gross violation of one of the fundamental principles of Didactics which prohibits the cramming process?

Just here a Patron must stop lest he get into the deep waters of that science of sciences Didactics where he would inevitably be lost. It was a Patron's original intention on taking up the pen to substitute the word "cramming" for "teaching." If he has received an erroneous impression, and has been guilty of misrepresenting an institution that, whatever its defects, is under the care of earnest teachers, and is doing a great and good work-an opportunity is offered for correcting an erroneous

A PATRON. Newport, Dec. 15th, 1884.

News from the Churches.

GRANVILLE ST. BAPTIST CHURCH held a Special Meeting on Monday evening to consider the matter of a call to the pastorate. After a very harmonious and general expression had been given of a desire that Mr. Cline, who had been supplying the pulpit for about two months-might remain a unanimous resolution was adopted, extending a hearty invitation to Mr. Cline to become the pastor of the church.

DARTMOUTH.-Rev. Maynard P. Freeman is expected to supply the pulpit of the Dartmouth Baptist Church for a few months from the 1st of Junuary. We doubt not his ministrations will be highly appreciated and we trust may be greatly blessed.

PARRSBORO N. S. Dec. 16, 1884,-Dear Messenger, -Our brother the Rev. J. A. McLean, having accepted a call from the church at Hantsport, preached his farewell sermon here on Sunday evening the 30th November, all of us regretting that he had found it necessary to sever a connection, that for nearly two years, has been blessed by God to

Our church is now vacant and we invite some labourer in God's vineyard to come and help us, there is a large field of work here, and although we are not a wealthy people we offer loving hearts, and helping hands, to some dear brother who is ready to spend and be spent in the service of " the Master."

We earnestly pray Gcd that we may soon again be blessed with such a Prayer and thankgiving going up from out of our midst. I. G. A.

CHESTER, Dec. 15, 1884 .- Yesterday was to us, a solemn and busy day. We laid in the grave the bodies of two of our people, Mr. George Freda and Mrs. Oliver Millett. These were both young and promising persons-and will be greatly mouroed and missed.

Beside attending these funerals two sermons were preached—the Lord's supper administered and about twelve miles travelled. Work enough to weary But "There's resting by-and-by."

J. F. KEMPTON.

ISAAC'S HARBOR .-- Rev Trueman Bishop writes: " Aiter a long and tiresome trip we reached our home, and have now entered upon the work of the pastorate of this Church. We felt it was the hand of the Lord leading us, and we determined to ascertain if possible, why he our Master.

The Yarmouth Insurance Companies have made large sums of money during