Sparta and Rome were led to virtue. But these institutions perished when manners no longer supported them. The institution of monasteries had its origin in a similar feeling of the necessity of restraint. Historians, especially the historians of Spain, who have related the pious intentions of the founders of these institutions, have related how one order after another grew corrupt, and a severer rule was instituted by some more austere reformer, to give way in its turn to the evil inclinations, jealousies, and weaknesses of human nature. There are rules, however, not artificial, not founded on any prescribed form of society, or in isolation from all society, which are sufficient, if observed, to guide mankind. These are the rules of Christian morality laid down by Christ himself. They give each man liberty, but place on each man a restraint. They do not begin, as human laws and institutions must do, with outward actions, but go to the source of affections and of passions—the human heart. It is then to Christian principles, Christian morals, and a Christian spirit that we must look for a better and higher civilization than any that has been attained. If it is vain to expect, either from the decrees of authority, or from free discussion, conformity of opinion in the interpretation of Scripture between different communities of Christians, it is not too much to hope for conformity in good works, conformity in a spirit of kindness. There have been great signs of this spirit of late years. Numbers of men in all stations of life devote themselves to the diffusion of religion, the promotion of education, and all the operations of charity. For, if temptation takes many shapes, and if the pilgrim's progress is impeded by giants and pitfalls, yet the spirit of charity has on the other side many forms. She places the Bible in the hands of the young child to teach him the way he is to go. She gives a cup of water to the weary traveller, who is faint with the labour he has undergone. She watches by the bed of the wounded soldier, binds his wounds with a gentle hand, and tenders the nourishment he is able to bear. She watches over the decline of age, and finally points to the reward of a faithful pilgrimage on earth. There is another consideration. Before many years are passed, there will be in Great Britain and the United States of America, 60, 70, or 80 millions of free people. May we not hope that these kindred nations—each speaking the English language—each deriving its pedigree of liberty from a common ancestry—each inheriting the English Bible—each reading *Shakspeare* and *Milton*—each divided into many denominations of Christians, but each allowing complete liberty of worship—will unite in the glorious task of peaceful conquest and bloodless victory? Let us hope that there is a period arriving when we may see realized those beautiful and powerful words of a great poet:—

"Dim as the borrow'd beams of moon and stars
To lonely, weary, wandering travellers,
Is reason to the soul; and as on high,
Those rolling fires discover but the sky,
Not light us here; so reason's glimmering ray,
Was lent, not to assure our doubtful way,
But guide us upward to a better day.
And as those nightly tapers disappear
When day's bright lord ascends our hemisphere,
So pale grows reason at religion's sight,
So dies and so dissolves in supernatural light."

Let it not be the reproach of any one of us that, born in a land where the laws acknowledge that thought and speech are free, we have yet ever lent the helping hand of custom, folly, or intolerance to extinguish one spark of that divine flame which we call the soul, or ever turned away from a righteous and peaceable endeavor to loosen the fetters that still bind it throughout the world. Some there are who shut their eyes to one truth lest it should impair another more sacred in their eyes. But one truth can no more quench another truth than one sunbeam can quench another sunbeam. Truth is one as God is one. Go forward to meet her in whatever garb, welcome her from whatever quarter she comes, till at last, beyond the grave, you shall hail her in a blaze of glory which mortal eye can only strain in vain to contemplate. Truth is the gem for which the wise man digs the earth, the pearl for which he dives into the ocean, the star for which he climbs the heavens—the herald and the guardian of moral and political progress. You have many dangers to encounter. Of these I will only mention two. One is the danger of allowing the flowing waters of Christianity to be embittered by the gall of sectarian and polemical controversy. Your chances of achieving good would be destroyed by such an error. Another danger is that which has attended so many noble attempts, so many great institutions, so many pious undertakings. The first ardour of zeal abates; difficulties, which at first were molehills, grow into mountains, enthusiasm subsides into apathy. Avoid these errors; go on improving; faint not in a good and great work; the blessing of God will reward your enterprise. (The noble lord resumed his seat amid loud and enthusiastic applause.)

Christian Messenger.

HALIFAX, JANUARY 2, 1856.

To the Readers of the Christian Messenger.

In entering upon the publication of the "Christian Messenger" I may be expected to introduce myself to its readers by a few brief remarks.

Having been engaged in the work of education for many years past, first in England and since then, in Nova Scotia; I had not the most remote idea or intention of becoming connected with the press, until after the death of our lamented Brother Ferguson, when, for the interests of the denomination which the C. Messenger represents, and to which I have been united for nearly twenty years, I commenced to render such assistance to the surviving Editor as my professional duties would permit.

I had no thought at that time of undertaking a matter of such responsibility as becoming its proprietor, but seeing the spontaneous and unanimous expression of its best friends in all parts of the province that it should be sustained, and perceiving no way by which it could be continued and the pecuniary liabilities rest wholly on the denomination, and having assurances of co-operation from talented and influential brethren, and especially by the willingness of the surviving Editor, J. W. Nutting, Esq., to continue his valuable aid, I was induced to resign the situation I have held so long, and undertake its publication, feeling persuaded that the ability which would thus be enlisted to enrich its columns could not fail to render it more than ever acceptable to its already numerous readers, as well as gather a considerable addition to its lists of Subscribers.

Although I cannot *ensure* success in the undertaking to which I have committed myself, I shall use my best endeavours to *deserve* it, by obtaining for its pages such matter, both original and selected, as will promote the social and spiritual well-being of all our readers.

In anticipation of the work on which I am entering, such arrangements have been made for communications from other countries as I trust will afford satisfaction to all.

From my personal acquaintance with many of our brethren, especially the local agents, whose services are of so much importance, I am led to place the most entire confidence in their intention to render all the aid in their power and unite with me in my efforts to extend its circulation. I trust the subscribers in the different localities will afford them all the help they can by paying promptly their own subscriptions and that they will encourage them by getting new subscribers amongst their neighbours as frequently as possible.

I might, if space would permit, attempt to classify the readers of the C. Messenger, and address each separately, but shall merely remark.

1. To our Ministering Brethren that by striving to promote the welfare of the churches and to second their efforts in extending the cause of the Redeemer; we shall not be disappointed in expecting from them frequent communications and constant efforts to extend the influence of the Messenger among their people.

2. Sabbath School Teachers form an important part of every Christian community, we shall endeavour to supply them with such matter as may render their labours successful and efficient.

3. The Deacons of Churches and members generally we would request as they value the principles on which we rest and for which our forefathers have suffered and died, they will be zealous in introducing the Messenger where it has not yet appeared, and maintaining it as the representative of those religious truths and principles so dear to us all.

From the experience of all who have been concerned in the publication of papers, I find but one opinion exists with regard to payments, which is, that a vast amount of loss and embarrassment may be expected unless they be made in advance; I trust therefore it will be understood by all, that those are the terms on which it is taken —without which, not only its progress will be retarded, but its very existence endangered.

If however those terms are generally complied with, a considerable saving will be effected to the subscribers and to all concerned.

I should be wanting in gratitude were I to overlook the very flattering encomiums passed on my labours in Halifax by some of the city newspapers. I beg to thank them most sincerely for the good wishes expressed, and hope still to employ every opportunity afforded me, in the advancement of the cause of education and improvement, and in promoting the welfare of the people generally.

S. Sᴇʟᴅ.

Reviewing the history of our Demination in this Province, during the past year, we cannot but rejoice in the goodness of God towards us. In many of the Churches powerful revivals have been enjoyed. In others there has been a steady increase. And nothing has occurred to cause dissension or disturb our harmony.

A new year has opened. Are there any special duties incumbent on us under present circumstances? What can we do, what ought we to do, to consolidate and extend our religious interests?

Many brethren are of opinion that we need a General Home Missionary Society, to take the place of our separate associational efforts. Their arguments deserve very serious consideration. But much time will elapse before such an arrangement can be made, as all the Associations must be separately consulted. Possibly they may not all consent to the change.

Meanwhile, cannot the Churches undertake the work in their respective districts? Is there not a large amount of Christian talent unemployed? Are not many of the deacons well qualified to conduct religious exercises? May there not be found, in almost every part of the Province, young men, whose zeal and energy, under suitable direction, might be profitably engaged? And would it not be practicable for the pastors, generally, to surround themselves with active and useful helpers, by whose aid whole districts might be supplied with the means of grace?

We submit these inquiries with much solicitude. Our churches will not maintain their present standing, much less will they increase their numbers, unless they become *working churches*. Some of them are, and their success is manifest. But we fear that in the majority of instances there is too little regard to the Apostle Peter's exhortation—"as every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another." As a consequence, stores are overworked, and assistance is looked for from abroad, which might be obtained among the churches themselves, if there were a due sense of personal obligation and responsibility.

There is so much pleasure in laboring for Christ, and the reward is so glorious, that it can hardly be necessary to adduce arguments in support of these views. We take it for granted that thoughtful Christians will admit their soundness. What more proper, then, at the commencement of a year, than that every member of our churches should prayerfully inquire, "Lord, what wilt thou have *me* to do

We shall take an early opportunity of resuming this subject. May the year 1856 be a year of unwonted prayer, and diligence, and blessing!

Our Presbyterian friends are remarkably zealous just now in the cause of education. A little while ago they were anxious to get Dalhousie College into their hands. Their present object is the establishment of a "Provincial University," at the public expense. The *Presbyrian Witness* hopes that Government will bring forward a measure for this purpose early in the ensuing Session—hints at the propriety of raising the educational grant from £16,000 to £30,000—and advises "Presbyterian Constituencies" to "fully instruct *their* representatives, so that they may be prepared to take no dubious part in the struggle." Should such a project be introduced to the Legislature, we shall be prepared to give our opinion on it. All we have to say at present is, that it will be well for its advocates to avoid misrepresenting existing Institutions. The *Witness* says, that "all our colleges at present are merely theological Halls, or a combination of the theological Hall and the Academy." Acadia College, we beg to inform our contemporary, is something more than a "theological Hall and an Academy." It is a College, in the strict and proper sense of the term, in which the students are conducted through a regular course of collegiate instruction, and degrees are conferred, after rigid and extensive examination. It is an Institution, to quote the words of the *Witness*, "not for drilling boys and inculcating elements, but for stimulating, elevating, enlightening young men who are about to enter upon the serious business of life." And it is "open to every one." No religious test is required of any of its Professors or any of its students. If we are to have a "struggle" again on this subject, all we ask is fair play.

"The memory of the just is blessed," may well be applied to that of the excellent woman, a memoir of whose closing days appears in another column, and has been furnished by a near friend of like spirit with the departed. We believe none could be more lamented or more missed in any society than our dear sister, Mrs. Leonard, in the little community which she so long adorned and benefitted. Sanctified in her affections by an earnest belief of the great truths of the gospel, and zealous in their promotion, we have seldom witnessed so bright an example of Christian excellence. Naturally of an ardent and affectionate disposition, the unconstrained benevolence of her heart flowed out to all around her, irrespective of any other consideration than their own necessities and her ability to do them good. Altho' a near connection of our own, we do not fear that any who knew Mrs. L. will withhold their willing assent to all that is said of her deserts.

Our namesake and contemporary, the Canada *Christian Messenger*, in a late number, contains a brief account of the Baptists of Nova Scotia, the state of their Churches, Institutions, &c. We are always gratified by the recognition of our brethren from whatever quarter, but from none more so than from our sister colonies, and we have always felt that a more intimate intercommunion among all the Baptist Churches of British North America, might be made an abundant means, not only of stirring each other up to love and good works generally, but, at no long time hence, of their becoming still more nearly connected in the great Missionary objects which are now engrossing every truly Christian community in all parts of the world. We have long earnestly desired the advantage of a Railroad from hence to Canada [illegible] political and commercial point of view, but still more for the far closer intercourse that it would produce among our respective churches, in their efforts to promote the interests of Christian truth.

In looking at the Political state of the world at large at the present moment, one is naturally led to reflect on the various changes that have transpired, and the different events that have engrossed the public thoughts and feelings, since the same period of the past year.—Events have occurred of such importance as to exert an influence over the great family of nations that inhabit our globe, to an extent scarcely surpassed in the annals of past history. As regards the future hopes and destiny of Europe, and consequently in a large measure the advancement of civil and religious progress throughout the world, the prospect has materially improved. The present position and influence of the Western Powers at war with Russia, is incalculably better than in the beginning of the past year, and whether a speedy peace shall terminate the momentous struggle, or it shall be permitted for a while longer to desolate the nations, we have good grounds of hope for the future. The destruction of the great Russian stronghold in the Euxine, and the injuries she has received in the conflict have so crippled her resources and abridged her means of aggression, that even if peace were now concluded, it would take