For the Christian Messenger.

Acadia College.

To the Baptists of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island.

DEAR BRETHREN,

At the last meeting of the Convention, held at Portland, St. John, N. B., the following resolution was passed, viz:

"That this Convention authorises the appointment of an Agent for the next year to visit all our churches, to collect the Endowment Fund, and to enlarge that Fund to at least fifteen thousand pounds."

We have been hitherto prevented from carrying that resolution into effect by our inability to find an Agent suitable in all respects for the work, and willing to engage in it. Inquiry is still going on, and the Finance Committee are in correspondence on the subject with several brethren, hoping to be able ere long to announce an appointment.

Our object in the present address is to bespeak your generous sympathy, and thus prepare the way for the operations of the Agent.

When the sum of £10,000 was secured for ths Endowment, it was expected that the interest of that sum, in addition to other sources of revenue, would suffice to meet the College expenditure. That expectation has not been realised. Very little is paid for tuition fees, as most of the students obtain the benefit of scholarships. The fund for Ministerial Education, a part of which was usually appropriated towards the payment of the Theological Professor's salary, has proved comparatively unproductive. Donations have not been received as formerly, owing to the general impression, that a sufficient endowment having been provided there was no need of them. We have thus been left to depend almost entirely on the annual proceeds of the endowment, and those proceeds are now lessened in consequence of the unfortunate investment in West Columbia Stock. The Treasurer's account, published in the Minutes of the Convention, shews that the sum, the annual interest of which is at present available, but little exceeds £7000.

Now, the annual expenditure of the College is about £800. But the interest accruing from the endowment, and the aid derived from other sources, cannot be estimated (necessary expenses, &c., deducted) at more than £400. We have no means of meeting that deficiency. Unless it be met and provided for, the College cannot possibly continue in operation. Such is the plain state of the case.

But this is not all. Two additional Professors are urgently needed; one for Rhetoric, Intellectual and Moral Philosophy, and other branches,—and one for Modern Languages. The existing Professors are too heavily worked to undertake duties not properly belonging to their respective departments. The appointment of a Professor of Modern Languages has been long called for, and cannot be delayed without injury to the Institution.

These statements will shew you that unless the endowment be raised to at least £15,000, irrespective of the sum invested in West Columbia Stock, which is at present unproductive, but may hereafter yield an income, Acadia College cannot be sustained.

Brethren—you came forward nobly in the first instance, and subscribed ten thousand pounds for the endowment. The dark cloud which then hung over the Institution was dispersed, and we all anticipated a prosperous future. We "thanked God and took courage."

Untoward circumstances have again occurred, which have placed your College in jeopardy, and filled the minds of many with gloomy forebodings. But consider, we entreat you, these two facts:

The first is, the efficient state of the College. There are now thirty-one students,—a larger number, we believe, than can be found in attendance at any similar Institution in these Lower Provinces. Their studies are directed by gentlemen in whom we have full confidence, who occupy a high rank as instructors, and whose untiring zeal in the discharge of their duties entitles them to your warmest support.

The second fact is, the manifest blessing of God. How often have the showers of mercy fallen on that favoured spot! What thrilling scenes have been witnessed,—scenes of tender and deep emotion,—scenes of penitential grief and of believing joy,—scenes of holy consecration to the best cause! And how many are there labouring in the gospel, both in these Provinces and in foreign lands, who were brought to a knowledge of themselves and of the Saviour while studying in your Institution, and were there trained for usefulness in the church! Even in far-off Burmah the fruits of the blessing appear. The missionary at Henthadah was converted during a revival in Acadia College. Nor need we recur to former days. Within the last two years these mercies have been renewed. The gracious influences of the Spirit have been vouchsafed, in conversion and reviving power. Nearly all the students are at the present time professors of religion.

With such facts before you, brethren, to what conclusion will you come? Will you suffer Acadia College to wither and die? Or will you arise in your strength to rescue it from peril, and place it, once for all, on a permanent footing?

We will anticipate but one reply. God has blessed the labour of your hands. Your wealth has greatly increased. You are far better able now to raise the Endowment to fifteen or twenty thousand pounds than you were to raise the original sum. You know the vast importance of education to a country, and that the founders of schools and Colleges are the most patriotic of benefactors. Especially, you cannot but be constrained by "the mercies of God," bestowed on yourselves and the Institution. Let a large-hearted liberality indicate your gratitude.

In conclusion, it is proper to remind you that all future investments of the funds of the College will be made in harmony with a resolution passed by the Convention at its annual Session held at Liverpool in September, 1855, and which contained the following clause;—

"The Convention accord their opinion and decision, that in future the funds of the Corporation be not invested except in landed property of ample value in one of these Provinces, unless sanctioned by a two-thirds vote of the Convention."

THE GOVERNORS OF ACADIA COLLEGE.
May 13, 1857.

Christian Messenger.

HALIFAX, MAY 20, 1857.

THE *Church Times* of the 9th inst., contained a letter signed "INQUIRER," addressed "to the Editor of the Christian Messenger." It commenced with the following extract from an article in the Christian Messenger of the 29th ult.

"The difficulties of infant sprinkling are continually leading its advocates into strange positions. They make baptism essential to church membership, just the same as Baptists: but the question is not yet settled with them whether a wicked man or woman who was sprinkled in infancy is a member of the Church or not."

The writer very respectfully requested us to inform him what we thought, first, of the case of Simon Magus? whether he was a member of the Church or not?

Secondly, Were the Corinthian Christians, whom the Apostle Paul reproved as carnal, contentious, &c., to be considered members of the Church?

Thirdly, In the case of the prodigal, whether he did not continue to be the son of his father, even when spending his substance among harlots in riotous living? and if his case did not illustrate that of a wicked man who had been sprinkled in infancy?

We concluded, as a matter of course, that "Inquirer" expected our reply to these questions to appear in the *Church Times*, and prepared the following communication, supposing no hesitation would be made to its insertion in the same paper, so that Inquirer might see at once our views on the questions he submitted with so much apparent sincerity. We think every candid mind will agree with us that we were entitled to this, as the letter was specially addressed to us.

On calling at the office of the *Church Times*, however, we were much surprised to find that Mr. Gossip *refused to publish it*, or any other reply to "Inquirer," and 'thought it unnecessary to give *both* sides of the controversy to his readers.' Rather than refuse "Inquirer" an answer we therefore insert it in our own pages, and shall be glad if our subscribers will let their Episcopalian friends see it; so that they may not suppose its non-appearance in their organ arises from any unwillingness on our part to meet "Inquirer" fairly on his own ground, but in consequence of its being thought by the *Times* unsafe for them to see more than one side of the controversy. This violation of common courtesy, and refusal to admit a reply when questions are published addressed to another, personally, will not, we presume, have the effect of increasing the confidence of Inquirer, or of the public, in the Episcopal Press of Nova Scotia.

For the Church Times.

The Editor of the Christian Messenger to "Inquirer," in the Church Times of Saturday, May 9th.

DEAR SIR:

It is unusual for the Editor of one newspaper to address the readers of another, except in the pages of his own paper, yet as your enquiries are expressed in so commendable a spirit, and you make your appeal to our great text-book—the Word of God,—we cannot refuse a reply, in the same spirit of candour, and with a desire to meet your enquiries with all Christian courtesy.

In the first place, then, we may remark, that neither of the three cases you refer to resembles the one we supposed in the paragraph you quote. We see no analogy between either of them, and the case of 'a wicked man who has simply been sprinkled in infancy,' and has made no further acknowledgement of faith in Christ.

The case we alluded to was of one who having never made a personal profession of religion, is living regardless of the laws of God, perhaps an infidel in sentiment, and careless even about human laws or moral character; but still, who has been sprinkled in infancy, in the Episcopal, Methodist, or Presbyterian Church. Now, taking it for granted that Baptism is the door of the Christian Church, as we all hold, In what state should such a man be considered? He has not been excluded from church-fellowship, and according as we understand the laws and ordinances of a Church of Christ, he is, by virtue of his baptism, a member of the church, and entitled to all its privileges and blessings.

We are quite aware that Confirmation has been invented, and is retained by the Episcopalian Denomination, as a sort of remedy to meet the difficulty. In other churches, too, we understand, personal application is necessary before a person is admitted to full membership. We, however, find nothing of this confirmation in the Scriptures. We may be told that the Apostle Paul "came to Lystra and Iconium confirming *the souls of the disciples*,"—Acts xiv. 21, 22, but in the 1st verse these persons are said to have "believed," and in the 2nd verse are called "brethren." We may be also directed to chap. xv. 41, where the Apostle went through Syria and Cilicia confirming *the churches*. It is evident that these were as much churches before this visit of Paul as they were afterwards; so that the difficulty is not at all removed by this modern ceremonial of Confirmation, if such were referred to by the Apostle, but which we wholly deny.

Our question applies to those who are believed to have been baptized while in a state of helpless infancy, but who have made no profession of religion for themselves. Have they by that means become members of the Church or not? They are considered as having entered the door of the Church. Are they not then in it, and members of it? If they are, why not administer to them the bread and wine at the Lord's Table, as was formerly done by the Roman Catholic Church? If they are not, What does baptism mean?

Having thus far opened this "difficulty," which appears to us in connexion with the baptism of infants, and which has been a source of trouble, ever since its introduction, to those who were desirous of being guided by the Word of God and yet have held to this doctrine,—which we consider a fundamental error,—we may proceed to examine briefly the cases to which you have referred.

First, you ask "What we think of the case of Simon Magus, in relation to the Christian Church? Was he a member or not?" &c.

We presume you mean Simon mentioned in Acts viii. 9–24, (Please bear in mind that he is not called "Magus" in the Scriptures.) He appears to have been baptized *on a profession of faith* by the Evangelist Philip, who, it seems, was liable, as ministers are now, to be deceived. His subsequent conduct shewed that he was not truly converted. We may learn from this, the very important truth, that baptism, even in the Apostles' days, was not sufficient to make a person "a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven," for Peter denounces him and tells him his "heart was not right in the sight of God," and that he was "in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity." Even after Peter shewed him his true condition in the sight of God, he appears to have had no desire for spiritual blessings, and only asks Peter to pray that the consequences of such sin might not come upon him. He expresses no penitence, and thus proves that Peter's judgment concerning him, was correct. We may conclude then that he was a false professor, and by the denunciation of Peter was no longer "a member of the Church."

Secondly. In the case of the Corinthian Christians whom the apostle Paul addresses as "carnal, contentious, full of envy and strife," &c. We see nothing but what might be affirmed of any body of baptized believers, who, forgeting the spirit of their Master, and instead of loving one another, and walking in all the commands of the Saviour, become worldly and careless. They were certainly members of the Church, for the apostle calls them in 1 Cor. i. 2.—"the Church of God which is at Corinth," and says he baptized some of them himself, ver. 14 and 16. He thanks God however, that he did not baptize many of them, as they were making use of his name and of others to form parties and divisions in the Church.

The third of your inquiries does not, as we conceive, bear on the subject. Your reference to it, however, shows that the great error,—baptismal regeneration, which is working such mischief in some places,—has had some influence on your mind. The relation existing between the child and parent, as for instance, the prodigal and his father is the same, whether he be obedient or otherwise. We do not however find that persons who have been baptized in infancy, give evidence of having been by that means made "children of God" more than others who have not been baptized. All alike show that they are "the children of wrath," and "not subject to the law of God" until they receive "the engrafted word which is able to save their souls."

We find by a fair and intelligent interpretation of all the passages of scripture which refer to baptism, that it was administered to those who "believed" and to them only. Baptism then becomes, "an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace, given unto us, ordained by Christ himself."

Hoping that you may now be able "to reconcile our statements with scripture," and that you may still pursue your enquiries and be enabled to know all our Lord's commands, and have grace and courage to walk in them blameless, we remain,

Yours very sincerely,
THE EDITOR OF THE
CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

Halifax, May, 13th, 1857.

Since the above was written, we have observed some further remarks in the *Church Times* of Saturday last. In allusion to our short notice of "Inquirer's" letter, last week, and in reference to the supposition, that our reply would appear in that paper, the Editor remarks:—"How he could imagine that we would accord him such a privilege, we are at a loss to conceive." We beg to inform our contemporary that we did not ask the insertion of our communication as a "privilege," but, as a matter of right to which we were entitled by the superscription of "Inquirer's" letter. It is however not of the slightest importance to us, as we believe the readers of the "Church Times" can easily obtain the "Christian Messenger" amongst their neighbours, in almost every district in the Province. Our contemporary assures us he is not yet convinced that we are not dissenters.

"He that's convinced against his will
Is of the same opinion still."

He thinks we ought to be thankful that we are here free from the burdens of Church-rates, &c. We assure our friend that he has no claim to our thanks on this score. As to its being "impertinence on our part," to ask if Episcopalians are not *dissenters* in Scotland and Canada, our title to that characteristic bears no comparison to his own, in assuming for himself a position to which he has no claim. His remarks about our being a *heretic* have no point in them; as we should consider it a great misfortune to be considered in any other light by some members of both the Roman Catholic and the Episcopal denominations.

[Remainder of Editorial on page 150.]

General Intelligence.

Foreign and Domestic.

REAL ESTATE.—On Wednesday last, the corner lot formerly occupied by St Matthew's church being 81 feet by 56 feet, sold at auction for £3450, Messrs. Doull & Miller being the purchasers.—*Rec.*

CITY ASSESSOR.—William Roche, Esq., has been elected City Assessor, by the City Council. It remains for the City Fathers to give effect to the new Assessment Act, passed by the Legislature last Session.—*Chronicle.*