

For the Christian Messenger.

Immersion by the Church of England Rector at Amherst.

It is remarkable that so strong a prejudice exists against the Baptists, on account of their mode of baptism, by members of churches, whose Rubric teaches or whose clergy occasionally administer, the rite in the same manner.

Inconsistencies are expected in politicians, and sometimes great men have inconsistencies which receive the cognomen of eccentricities,—but clergymen of very moderate abilities—incompetent to control the public sentiment or exert a healthy religious influence should at least be consistent.

The Methodists are probably the least scrupulous about the mode of receiving church members. Presbyterians cling tenaciously to the form of baptism derived from the Romish Church. Very rarely do the Episcopal Clergy baptize as they sometimes honestly tell us was the primitive mode,—but many of them with the custom of sprinkling for baptism, retain the doctrine of baptismal regeneration instead of Justification by Faith, and other popish dogmas and practices.

Considerable interest and anxiety has of late been manifested here to see a candidate for baptism immersed by the Episcopal Rector of this place. Sometime previously, however, he reprimanded some of his congregation for attending a baptismal service in connexion with the Baptist church, and expressed surprise "that they would witness so disgusting a scene." Yet at the earnest solicitation of this candidate, and agreement with the command of the Rubric of the Prayer Book,* he consented to perform the ordinance of baptism, and appointed yesterday for the administration. A large audience assembled beside a sheet of water to witness the expected impressive scene, when the Candidate should be buried with Christ by baptism into death, and like Him rise again to newness of life.

The endeavour was a marked acknowledgement of belief in the validity of immersion,—but the manner in which the ordinance was attempted to be performed, was sufficient to disgust any observer.

From the sermon delivered immediately afterwards one might infer that the administrator desired to deter others from making similar applications; but in charity, I will attribute the failure to his ignorance and awkwardness.

They, the candidate and the rector, both went down into the water a short distance—the candidate knelt, and leaning back his head, succeeded in getting it under the water. After rising to his feet, the Priest—so called in the prayer-book—repeated the baptismal formula, made the sign of the cross on the forehead of the person baptized, and pronounced him regenerate.

Notice was then given that a sermon would be preached on the mode of baptism, and all were requested to attend. If this performance was a burlesque on baptism, the discourse was a burlesque on a gospel sermon—the mode was treated much the same as the candidate.

Great sympathy was expressed by the Parson for the Baptists, who were represented as a prejudiced, misguided, and an exclusive sect—their Ministers out of the line of Apostolic Succession—consequently, like Presbyterian, Methodist, and all other denominations, unordained and unauthorized to administer the ordinances of the Gospel. Their sick and infirm were said to be denied salvation because unable to be immersed,—no hope for them, as they have not received baptismal regeneration.

He laboured hard to prove that sprinkling and pouring were the primitive modes of baptism, and that immersion in the Apostolic ages was impossible, and fearlessly said that there was no authority in the Scriptures for immersion. Even if immersion was practiced in that rude age, he said it is not suited to the refined taste of the present time.

Those present who could not appreciate the sermon, can, nevertheless, admire consistency.

The Parson charged the Baptists with holding doctrines they never believed; and shewed himself unacquainted with their "Articles of Faith and Practice."

I must say that in writing his sermon, he presumed largely upon the ignorance and credulity of his congregation.

A LAYMAN.

Amherst, April 25th, 1859.

* The Rubric gives the following directions for the "Baptism of such as are of Riper Years":—"Then shall the Priest take each person to be baptized by the right hand, and placing him conveniently by the font, according to his discretion, shall ask the Godfathers and Godmothers the Names; and then shall dip him in the water, or pour water on him, saying, 'N. I baptize thee,' &c."

Christian Messenger.

HALIFAX, MAY 4, 1859.

Political Newspapers and Electioneering.

Great temptations are offered in these exciting times, to those having control of the public press, to enlist under the banner of a political party and seek their patronage. The time of a general Election may be made of great service for the purpose of seeking additions to the number of their supporters. By making the political canvass an occasion of canvassing also for their papers, they can at such times call in the aid of the political agents and by that means replenish their own pockets while they are promoting the interests of their party. Politicians seeking the good of those they wish to represent make use of their party press to reach the electors. As the editors of those papers show special attention to their friends at such times and give articles for electioneering purposes, they have the favours returned by large numbers of their sheets being purchased and scattered broadcast over the land. These the candidates expect will be as seeds which will produce a plentiful harvest to themselves, whilst the publishers thus hope to secure additional permanent patronage. Large editions of these partizan papers are struck off and are sent, by the hundred, to the various constituencies through the province. These serve, in many instances no doubt, to catch the unwary and undecided who are supposed thus to become honest, intelligent electors!

One of our contemporaries, who does not indulge in the scruples of some of the other professedly religious papers, appears to have fallen into the vortex and now makes his political articles the prime attraction. He, of course, therefore becomes more notorious than he otherwise would, and receives a share of the price paid for such services. As we do none of this work we do not get any of its wages, nor have we reason to expect any. Although we do not enter into the party warfare, yet we nevertheless feel ourselves perfectly free to discuss any measure which is brought forward, proposing to benefit the people. We use our own discretion as to how we shall treat all such subjects however they may be viewed by either of the two contending parties.

As, this week, politics seem to be the order of the day we might be allowed perhaps just to step aside from our ordinary practice and give our readers some idea of what are our political sentiments. If we determined on doing so we should not be expected to say whether we think the Hon. Mr. Johnston or the Hon. Mr. Young the more honest and consistent legislator; whether the Hon. Mr. McNab or the Hon. Mr. Howe are best qualified to be chairman of the Railway Board; or whether the present or the former Commissioners of Railways are the more efficient; whether Messrs. Johnston, Tupper and Marshall or Messrs. Young, Howe and Archibald would be the more likely to make concessions to Roman Catholics, Presbyterians, Methodists, or any other denomination. These and many other kindred subjects are quite sufficiently discussed and appear to be the staple commodities of some members of the fourth estate. Those who make them the principal topics of what they call political articles seek the good of their party, we believe, rather than the welfare of the people. Comparisons are odious and we leave such work for those who can satisfy their readers with it. Properly speaking, political principles are but very few, and admit of a consistent stand being taken, on one side or the other, well defined and free from all personalities. Where abuse and condemnation of any class, as such, are resorted to, instead of sound argument, it shews weakness in the cause the parties would by such means support.

We may just remark with regard to our own political views, that we shall always deem it our duty to oppose class legislation. State endowments of any religious denomination we must ever denounce. Economy in the public expenditure so far as is consistent with efficiency must ever meet with our support as it must that of all patriotic men. We rejoice in the possession of religious liberty, such as is enjoyed by but few countries in the world; more perfect even than it is in several other parts of free British America. Whatever would tarnish this, or interfere with the free expression of opinion and liberty of action, must ever have our condemnation and opposition.

We, in common with our contemporaries

also set a high value on the esteem of our friends. But if it were necessary for us to descend and revile some of our brethren, for the purpose of procuring the favour of others we suppose to be the larger party, we should think it would be but little creditable to the religious feelings of our readers, or to the character of the churches with which they are connected.

We make no appeal to the political feelings of our patrons and do not ask their aid to extend our circulation for the purpose of increasing a political party. We are fully assured, however, that every addition made to our list is calculated to benefit the electors and eventually will make them more capable of distinguishing the right from the wrong on any public question.

We trust we have the sympathy of wise and good men on both sides, and we care little what others think of us who do not bear that character. We often receive more tangible evidence of their confidence than would be given by the purchase of any number of copies of the Messenger for electioneering purposes. We only desire that our friends may be aware of the means used by some other papers, and we are sure they will not allow us to suffer because we do not devote our attention to the mere question,—What men shall administer the affairs of government and occupy its offices.

The only means by which we expect to maintain our present respectable position, and make still further progress, as far as our readers are concerned, is by a continuance of such efforts as many of them now make to introduce the Messenger on all suitable occasions, to their neighbours and friends. Their recommendation secures for us honourable responsible subscribers, who prefer a good Family Newspaper to the bickerings and personalities of party strife.

A friend in the country writes:—"Politics are deeply agitating the community just now, and the devil is at work. What a pity it is that politicians do not act like men instead of like demons."

What a glorious change will take place when the same amount of interest is felt about the progress of the gospel and the salvation of men's souls, as is now evinced in the election of Members of Parliament. Of course it would be characterized as fanaticism to see men generally so absorbed in ascertaining if their own and their friends' election of God was sure. When the interests of Christ's Kingdom take precedence of all other engagements, we may hope to see it making more rapid progress than now. With all the excitement of the late Revivals, we presume there was far less said about them, even by those most engaged with them, than there is now by political partisans concerning the prospects of their respective parties; yet how much more rational to give supreme attention to those eternal realities than to these occasions of strife and contention. It may be said of this the same as of covetousness,—"What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul, or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

THE Editor of the *Provincial Wesleyan* in an article on the two opposing Methodist Candidates for Western Halifax, Messrs. Shannon and Bell, endeavours to make it appear that they both share his favour. After naming John H. Anderson, John Thomas, Mr. Frost and Judge Marshall on the side of the latter, he gives them credit for acting from "the purest motives," and says:—

"They, at least, are conscientious in believing that Rome needs to be checked, whilst their brethren Shannon and Dewolfe,—whom none we think esteem more than they do,—are persuaded that she has not attained, nor can attain, to any dangerous influence in the legislature of our country."

We have very little to give our readers this week in the shape of foreign news. Somewhat later telegraphic accounts have reached us. As regards European matters, we are sorry to say that the probabilities of war seem rather to be gaining strength. Our own English Mail now hourly expected will bring our news up to the 23rd ult., and will perhaps enable us to speculate with more certainty upon the chances of War.

The fever heat through which the Country is now passing in the matter of the choice of Representatives for a new House of Assembly precludes our entering much into the subject. We shall be glad when the contest is over and the people permitted to return to the important avocations which await them at this season of the year. The season thus far may be pronounced

cold and backward, no doubt caused by the large accumulation of ice in the gulf and on the coast. While such is the case, the continuance of cold north-easterly winds may be always expected.

Latest from Europe.

The *Circassian* arrived at St. John's, N. F., on the 26th inst. with European intelligence to the 18th ult.

The complexion of affairs on the Continent is still very warlike.

Letters from Paris regard peace as hopeless. The Austrian propositions for the Peace Congress are unacceptable to the French government.

The French squadron had sailed for the Mediterranean.

The British Parliament have unanimously passed a vote of thanks to the army of India.

Parliament was to be dissolved on or about the 21st ult.

Warlike preparations continue.

Judge Haliburton has been knighted.

General Intelligence.**Domestic and Foreign.**

ELECTION MATTERS.—We were sorry to find some errors in our list of candidates when it was too late to correct them.

Under ANNAPOLIS.—W. H. Chipman should have been W. H. Whitman.

Under PICOU—East Riding—Martin T. Wilkins was omitted from the Conservative side.

Under DIGBY.—Mr. Budd we learn should have appeared on the Conservative side instead of the Opposition and Mr. Bourneuf should have been omitted.

The *Western News* intimates that for Digby county:—"It is possible that three government candidates may be returned by show of hands."

To-morrow is NOMINATION DAY when it will be officially announced who are the candidates for Legislative honors and it will be decided whether or no any further action than merely a show of hands is required from the electors. Where rival claims exist a poll will be demanded.

POLLING DAY the 12th inst. will decide who are to be the Legislators for the next four years. It remains for the Electors to say by their votes to whom they will entrust this grave responsibility. Christian men should discharge this as all other duties in the fear of God and for His glory.

The *Sun* of Friday last concludes a political editorial by saying:—"We have never seen proscription in Nova Scotia yet, nor do we expect to!"

No. 1 of *The Liverpool Times* the Conservative organ of Queens is received.

We have had some fine specimens of fat beef in Halifax during the last week or two. It is said there has been none for the last twenty years in this market to compare with a pair of oxen fed by Mr. Shubael Masters of Cornwallis, and purchased for Mr. Woodill by John O. Pineo, Esq.

The Flagship *Indus* with Sir Houston Stewart is expected to leave Bermuda for Halifax the first week in June.

THE THEATRE.—We perceive by the flaming bills posted in the city that the summer campaign is begun in the above establishment. The first piece to be performed is a correct indication of what we consider the tendencies of the stage, "The Road to Ruin."

CITY LAWSUIT.—We learn that a suit-at-law may be expected between the Corporation and the Military authorities in Halifax respecting their claim to a portion of the Halifax Common. Some action of trespass, to be committed on Saturday next, we understand is agreed upon to raise the question, so as to carry it before a jury. The present liabilities of the City we think should deter the Council from incurring law expenses, except such as are absolutely necessary for the protection of city property.

FLORAL AND POULTRY SHOW.—It is expected that there will be two or three of these exhibitions in Halifax during the summer. The first we learn will be held on the third Wednesday in July.

The Annual meeting of the Horticultural Society was held at the gardens on the 19th ult. when the following gentlemen were elected to office for the year 1859.

Hon. W. A. Black, President.
John Williamson, Esq., Vice President.
Archibald Scott, Esq., Secretary.
William Murdoch, Esq.,
George McKenzie, Esq.,
Dr. Charles Cogswell,
William J. Coleman, Esq.,
James W. Nutting, Esq., } Directors.

SONS OF TEMPERANCE.—The Abstinence contains a report of the session of the Grand Division held last week at Pugwash. From this the order appears to be in quite a flourishing condition.

Nearly 900 have been admitted to the Divisions during the past 3 months. The net increase is about 700 members. Five new Divisions have been instituted: one reconstituted; and one has surrendered its charter. There are now 91 Divisions on the Roll, 88 in good working order—a larger number than has been in any quarter since the organization of the Grand Division.

The Abstinence also gives a large amount of other valuable and interesting matter respecting the progress of Temperance principles in England, Canada and the United States.