

himself from flowers? "I am the Rose of Sharon and the Lily of the Valley."—H. W. Beecher.

For the Christian Messenger.

"The Normal School and Presbyterianism."

DEAR SIR,—

I am glad to observe that Dr. Forrester's Circular of the History and present condition of the Provincial Normal School, is exciting a spirit of careful enquiry into our proceedings here. I have reason to believe that this was one prominent object contemplated by Dr. Forrester in its publication, and, for one, hail the communications of such correspondents as "Quis."

Whether Dr. Forrester may see it to be his duty to say anything in reply to that communication, I know not. I believe it is a fixed resolution with him never to take any notice of what may be said, whether laudatory or condemnatory, regarding the discharge of his official duties, except when such observations deal in plain matter of fact; and it is very likely he may act out his resolution in this instance also. As is well known, or ought to be, he courts every possible enquiry as to his work, permits all to visit the Institution over which he presides, and refers any charge of sectarianism to the pupils that have been in attendance. Will you, therefore, allow me, a Teacher in this Institution, and I trust as decided a Baptist as your correspondent "Quis," to say a few words in reference to the communication referred to.

Now, the whole drift and scope of that letter may be mapped-out in one sentence:—"The Normal School is calculated to foster Presbyterianism through the medium of Presbyterian teachers, and, therefore the other denominations, instead of availing themselves of the advantages presented by the Normal School, should rally round their own Academical Institutions."

This proposition "Quis" attempts to support by the statistics of the "Circular." I think he has fallen into error in his calculations. He says, "that the whole number of pupils" has been 795, while 453 * * have been Presbyterians. Now as the Presbyterians number about one fifth of the population of the Province, it follows that the benefit derived by them from the institution is just nine times as great as that of each of the remaining four-fifths taken at an average. From a hasty computation I obtain in round numbers the following:—

453 pupils give the Presby's 6 in a thousand.
342 " " all other denominations, taken at an average, 1 in a thousand.

Deducting from the latter the Catholic population who have never yet patronized the Institution, and we have nearly 2 in a thousand. Hence it follows that instead of the Presbyterians having "nine times" greater per centage, they have by the first comparison but six times, and by the second, only a little over three times. Comparing the number of Baptists who have been in attendance with that of the other Protestant denominations, minus the Presbyterians, and we find that the Baptists are deriving three times the benefit of the Institution, over the others, estimated at an average. Now, if we compare the relative numbers of the Presbyterians and Baptists, we have as to the result that the Presbyterians are receiving only a fraction over one half more of the benefits of the Normal School, than the Baptists.

In addition to this mode of handling the statistics, "Quis" throws into his version of them the insinuation that a system of Presbyterian inoculation is covertly carried on in connection with the school. Since this implies a high impeachment of Dr. Forrester, and a bitter compliment to his coadjutors, even "Quis" will doubtless gladly accept any hints tending to a fair interpretation of these statistics, that will avoid so painful a conclusion. To me it seems quite plain that if any one will bear in mind as he reads the "Circular," that the Institution was planted in a Presbyterian district, that two-thirds of the Teachers of the Province, at the founding of the School, were Presbyterians, and that the "enthusiasm and qualifications" of Dr. Forrester have necessarily enlisted the sympathies of a large part of the denomination to which he belongs, he will feel no need of betaking himself to the cry of "sectarianism!" to understand the rationale of the statistics.

Under all the circumstances of the case, is it not surprising that so many of other denominations have presented themselves for admission into this Institution? I can attribute this to nothing but the Catholic spirit upon which Dr. Forrester has striven to conduct the school. The staff of teachers is a standing proof of that

Catholicism. Besides the Principal, there are 2 Baptists, 1 Episcopalian, and 1 Methodist. I have been informed that when Mr. Randall left the Institution, the Government strenuously urged the appointment of a Presbyterian Minister to the vacant chair. Dr. Forrester stoutly withstood such an appointment, and the Government consented to ratify his own nomination.

Do these facts, and numberless more that are well known and could be adduced if necessary, look like sectarianism? Is "Quis," unmindful of the fact that because the Hon. J. W. Johnston has been identified with Acadia College from its inception, and because "much more than half the number" of students who have availed themselves of the advantages of that institution have been "conservatives" in politics, "the complaint is made by many" that Acadia College "is being made a means of promoting" Conservatism, "at the expense" of Liberalism? And no one knows better than "Quis" how utterly unjust and groundless such a conclusion must be. He knows that party politics have no place either in the written or unwritten curriculum of that institution. Tell him Acadia College fosters Conservatism, and he will triumphantly refer you to the verdict of "Liberal" students for a refutation of the charge. I as triumphantly ask him to elicit the verdict of Baptist Teachers, who have attended the Normal School, and thus satisfy himself of the truth or falsity of his insinuations. He knows that the preponderance of "Conservative" students at Horton can be easily explained without casting even the shadow of a suspicion upon the good faith of those who control the College. Is it too much to ask that he do equal justice to the Normal School?

"Quis," however, concludes that, on account of the location of the Normal School "in an intensely Presbyterian part of the country," and on account of the Principal being "a man whose rare abilities are exactly suited to draw around him a disproportionate number of Presbyterian pupils," this Institution must of necessity give an undue advantage to the Presbyterian denomination; and therefore Baptists and all others have a just ground of complaint, and ought to withhold their support.

Let us examine these facts and the validity of the conclusion deduced therefrom. I will not give occasion for offence by attempting to prove the necessity of having a Normal School. All countries of any Educational pretensions, hold such a school to be indispensable. Well, where shall we locate it? In Windsor? in Horton? or in Cornwallis? If in either of the latter, will not the Presbyterians, Methodists, Episcopalians and Catholics be, "to say the least, dissatisfied?" If in the former, will all denominations be, in equal strength, equally contiguous? It is an impossibility to remove this objection against a Normal School in a country enjoying religious liberty, locate it where you will. But should there be a ground of complaint when provision is made for defraying travelling expenses?

As to the Principal, He must be a man of enthusiasm and ability. Whom shall we procure? A Baptist? or an Episcopalian? or a Methodist? or a Catholic? A Baptist of course! Do you think he will not by his enthusiasm and "rare qualifications," draw around him a disproportionate number of Baptist pupils? Secure whom you may, this objection cannot in a free country be removed, and therefore, like the former, is not valid.

These things being so, ought the Baptists and other denominations to withhold their support from the Normal School? I think not. The effect of such a course must be to make the School "intensely Presbyterian." Withhold their support when as ample provision is made, as unmitigated exertion put forth, as great advantages secured for them as for Presbyterians! Withhold, when the life of Common School Education is being quickened, when ways and means of developing the youthful mind are multiplying as fast as stars under improved telescopes, and the whole complex machinery of schools is being classified, adjusted, and put into running order, within a few hours travel, of the majority of their young men and young women! Surely this is to put them far far in the rear, and to cripple the best interests of their respective denominations. It is for the "other denominations" to see to it that no undue advantage is reaped by any other denomination, and in no way can this be so effectually accomplished, as by encouraging their young men and young women, who contemplate teaching, to avail themselves of what belongs to them as much as to any other. The boon contemplated is too noble in itself and too grand in its results to justify the harboring of petty jealousy and self-destructive animosity.

As one of the Alumni of Horton, I am just as staunch a supporter of our Institutions there, as your correspondent "Quis," and it is just because I am so that I would urge all our young men and young women, who intend devoting any part of their time to the difficult yet noble work of teaching, to avail themselves of the benefits of a thorough course of training for the profession itself. If the Normal School had no other end in view, but the matter of scholarship, as in duty bound I would say, avail yourselves of our efficient Academies at Horton,—there are none better. But who does not know that the aims contemplated by Normal Schools and Academies are totally distinct and different!—The latter has to do with the acquisition of knowledge; the former, with the science and art of imparting it. One moulds the youth into the student; the other transforms the student into the teacher. Surely it we require a certificate from a man before he can minister to the body of a child, it is doubly binding upon us to require as much at least, before we commit its immortal mind to his charge.

By encouraging our Teachers to come here, I feel that I am doing the highest good for our denomination. My anxiety is, that, when an application comes to the Normal School, from a Baptist community, asking for a Baptist Teacher, we shall not be obliged to return them an answer,—“We have none that can fill such a position,” but, that we may be able to send them one who is not only an excellent scholar, but is familiar with all that appertains to his profession, one who is able to cope with the best in the land. How can we send Baptist Teachers abroad, if those, who ought to be their school-conductors (paidagogoi), exert their powerful influence to deter them from entering the school at all? I am fully persuaded that the true course for the Baptist denomination in reference to the Normal School is to walk manfully up and be generous partakers of the Provincial bounty. When such shall be the case, there will be no complaints about the Normal School intruding on Horton Academy. That Academy will reap its harvest of gold in the superior qualifications resulting from the benefits of a sound Common School education enjoyed by those who shall enter within its walls.

Yours &c.,

T. H. RAND.

Truro, Aug. 8th.

*[We beg to inform our friend Mr. Rand, that "Quis" is not connected with Horton Academy, and does not reside at Woltville.—ED. C. M.]

Christian Messenger.

HALIFAX, AUGUST 13, 1862.

The Office of Deacon.

To the Editor of the Christian Messenger.

MR. EDITOR,—

Please answer in your next issue the following question.

What length of time is usually allowed to elapse after a deacon of a Baptist Church is removed by death, before a successor is chosen?

NOVICE.

Colchester, Aug. 1st, 1862.

We are not aware that any rule, as to time, should be observed in such case as the above, but from the general principles of government in a christian church, we are of opinion that such vacancy should be filled as soon as possible, so that the interests of the church be not allowed to suffer, by want of its proper officers.

There is, we believe, far too little importance attached to the office of deacon, in many christian churches. Because it is an office that has not much publicity given to it, and a simple dereliction of duty does not bring down public censure, therefore those duties are often overlooked. But when it is considered what may be done by two or three faithful men of active minds who in the fear of God enter into the fulfilment of the duties of the deacons' office, it is almost impossible to overrate the power and opportunities, for doing good possessed by them.

The members of churches often look to the deacons to perform many of the duties which belong to themselves, and frequently abstain even from doing good because they are not elected to the office of deacons, or because some of the more prominent brethren do not move in the matter. These things ought not to be.

The instructions given in the Word of God concerning the qualifications of deacons, plainly indicate that great obligations rest upon them. Without giving any precise directions as to what is to be expected of them, they are described in such general terms as to lead to the conclusion that under certain circumstances they may perform almost any christian labours without im-

propriety. Generally however there is too much expected of them, in addition to the duties which unquestionably belong to them,—the management of the secular affairs of a church.

Many things may be done by deacons which do not belong to that office, as such, but which as christians and members of churches, should not be omitted, either by them or by their fellow-members. The usefulness of ministers and the prosperity and happiness of a church, is, perhaps, dependant on the character and harmonious action of its deacons, more than on any part of its arrangements. We would suggest to ministers whether they do not often neglect the instruction of deacons in their duties, both publicly, before, and privately after their election and ordination to that office.

Dalhousie College.

In our last we gave a brief paragraph or two from the *Monthly Record* and the *Home and Foreign Record*, the organs of the two principal Presbyterian bodies in this province, concerning this institution, and the proposals of those bodies in reference to its resuscitation. In the August No. of the former periodical, just come to hand, we have a fuller development of the plan and a summary of the discussion which took place on the subject at the late session of their Synod. The following is the article referred to, signed "G" (probably from the pen of a popular young minister of that body, recently from Scotland, the Rev. G. M. Grant, he being the mover of the overture referring to Dalhousie college):—

THE MEETING OF SYNOD.

The great question before the Synod of 1861 was "Union." This year the most absorbing topic was "Dalhousie College." Threatened as the funds of that Institution are with confiscation by the leaders of both political parties, the members of synod seemed to feel that if something were not done, the last hope for the higher education of the country on a liberal basis would be lost forever. They acted wisely then in considering and canvassing the subject; they are now committed to an enlightened study of it; and it becomes their duty to inform the people upon it, to ascertain their opinions, and to secure their co-operation. The history of Dalhousie College is a strange and unequalled one. Intended according to the terms of its endowment, to be formed on the model of the University of Edinburgh, but never realizing any grade higher than that of School, Museum, Post Office, Lumber Room, or something of the sort, as the effete, or whims, or indifference of governments and of provincial public opinion drifted it; a standing reproach to Nova Scotia; a too truthful illustration of the shamelessness of our political morality, and of the Pharisaic Sectarianism of our religion. Such are but poor omens for its future usefulness; and did we believe in atality, ill luck, or auguries, we would say, have nothing to do with that ill-starred College. But we believe in something higher than good or bad luck. Dalhousie College has never yet had a fair trial; let us give it one, if we are allowed. The buildings are solid, and in fair repair; the endowment amounts to about £900 a year, and the object aimed at in its institution is avowedly a purely secular education.

What has the Synod done in the matter? Not much as yet; though all that has been done was with the cordial support of all the members lay and clerical. An overture on the subject was introduced; after a harmonious discussion, a committee was appointed. It met, went over a good deal of ground, and reported itself, as pretty unanimous on several points; 1, that the Church of Scotland in Nova Scotia had not taken the interest in the cause of Provincial University Education that she ought to have taken, and which from the history of her Mother Church she would be expected to take. 2, that it was possible to sketch a feasible plan in accordance with which a sound curriculum of literary and scientific education might be established in Dalhousie College through the co-operation of its governors with any or all of the religious denominations of the Province. 3, that therefore a conference on the subject with a Committee to be appointed by the United Presbyterian Church of the Lower Provinces then in session in the adjoining Church was desirable. The Synod on hearing this report, empowered the Committee to arrange for the desired conference. This was done, and accordingly on the same evening Professors Ross and King, Rev. P. G. McGregor, and U. McCulloch, and C. Robson, Esq., met with us in St. Andrew's Church. Though no conclusions were definitely arrived at, yet several particulars were very generally accepted; 1, that any religious body that endowed a chair, (a matter involving the funding of £3000 or £4000 or some such trifle) should have a representation in the governing council of the College; 2, that any religious denomination that took part in the great scheme, should keep its own funds under its own control, so that it might have perfect liberty to retire from the partnership whenever it considered that it was not dealt with in good faith. It was represented to us that were a satisfactory arrangement made, the United body would be willing to give up their own denominational Institute at Truro, and become partners upon the broad platform provided. When we reported progress to the Synod, our diligence was approved, permission was given to go forward in the matter, the Synod