

For the Christian Messenger.

ACADIA ATHENAEUM.

On the evening of March 11th, the members of this Society opened their doors for the admission of their friends. As many as the capacity of the Academy Hall would allow, accepted the invitation.

The exercises of the evening were opened with a lively speech from the chair. The routine of formal business was so arranged as to have a most pleasing effect, affording a varied scene of interest and amusement. A number of papers, prepared by members, were read by the Secretary. These productions attracted the attention of the audience and received frequent expressions of gratification.

The subject for discussion was then announced, "Is this the happiest age?" Upon which as many spoke as the time would permit. Both sides of the subject were viewed from many stand-points. Those who took the affirmative showed that we live in an age of progress and firm hope. They referred to the numerous improvements which are constantly springing up in the advancement of education, the progress of science, the increase of freedom, social and national, and the development of men's minds, and their increased capability of enjoying the many blessings bestowed by the bountiful Hand.

Those on the negative side of the question agreed that there had been progress in vice and misery, as well as in virtue and happiness. They compared the classic age with ours, and showed how much superior they were to us in poetry, eloquence and even in some of the deepest sciences. They maintained that education was an overtasking of the intellect, and a painful development of the faculties, rather than a natural and pleasant growth; and that true happiness was an attribute of the heart which could neither depend upon mental cultivation nor improvement in science.

The audience listened with unabated interest throughout the whole proceedings; feeling, no doubt a deep sympathy for both parties as their claims were severally advocated. While impressed by the remarks of those who portrayed the advantages of the present, they doubtless rejoiced that they lived under the present system of things; or, on the other hand, while carried back by the eloquence of those who vindicated the past, they longed for a return of the former days.

At the close all joined in singing the National Anthem, and returned to their homes, I hope with happy hearts, to enjoy the present in reality, the past in memory, and the future in prospect.

AUDIENS.

Wolfville, March 17th, 1864.

For the Christian Messenger.

HORTON ACADEMY RHETORICAL EXHIBITION.

The usual Exhibition in connection with Horton Academy took place as announced on Wednesday evening 16th inst. The evening was fine, and the admission fee, which was almost treble that of last year, seemed to no effect in diminishing the audience, which crowded the spacious Gymnasium in which the exercises were conducted. To say the Essays of the evening were good is but just to all, some certainly were better, and without any invidious comparison, Nos. 9, 14, & 15, may be set down as best. Both in composition and delivery, these last reflect the highest credit on their authors.

The proceedings were enlivened by music performed by an amateur choir presided over by Prof. Saffery with his usual ability.

The dialogues were of an amusing character and elicited rounds of applause.

PROGRAMME.

- 1 Power of Habit, P. R. Foster, Aylesford.
 - 2 Nature, a minister of happiness, N. C. Saunders, Yarmouth.
 - 3 "Know thyself," D. Eaton, Cornwallis.
 - 4 "Marcellus wept," H. C. Messenger, Falmouth.
 - 5 The unforgotten foe, Dialogue.
 - 6 Vanity of earthly grandeur, A. Locke, Locke's Island.
 - 7 Look well to the foundation, E. C. Spinney, Wilnot.
 - 8 Exhibition interrupted, Dialogue.
 - 9 "Excelsior," J. McDonald, Uigg, P. E. I.
 - 10 Individuality, J. G. Paint, Hawksbury, C. B.
 - 11 Farmer and Student, Dialogue.
 - 12 Early Impressions, Lewis Hunt, Cornwallis.
 - 13 Blood will tell, Dialogue.
 - 14 The Oases of Life, J. Wheelock, Aylesford.
 - 15 Solitude, J. Wallace, Wolfville.
- NATIONAL ANTHEM.
SEVEN PRINCE WA' PRINCE.

Christian Messenger.

HALIFAX, MARCH 32, 1864.

"SYSTEMATIC BENEFICENCE."

A sermon on this subject was preached before the Baptist Missionary Convention of Canada West, by Rev. Dr. Caldwell, of Toronto. By the request of the Convention it was published. We have had much pleasure in its perusal to see how well it puts the matter of using property for the cause of Christian truth and benevolence. An extract or two may be of some service to our readers.

"There exists much infidelity on the subject of giving. This is one of the reasons why so much perplexity, loss and poverty abound. If God's people would honor him with their substance and the first fruits of their increase, their barns would be filled with plenty (Prov. iii. 9, 10). If they would bring all the needed contributions into the Lord's house, he would pour them out blessings, spiritual and temporal, increase their harvests and their profits, and prevent the losses that are now sustained both by devouring insects and dishonest men. (Mal. iii. 10, 11). Ministers of the gospel can in no way so thoroughly promote the temporal interests of their people, as by teaching them to be liberal. Ministers should never hesitate to preach on this subject, or to set the example. In doing so they will not only promote the present welfare of their people, but their own. If a people are taught to be liberal in other things, they will be liberal to their minister. If ministers have imperfect views or doubts on this subject, no wonder that the people should. 'Like priest, like people.' If parents would secure the temporal prosperity as well as the eternal good of their children, let them teach them liberality to the cause of Christ—teach them literally and liberally to seek first the kingdom of Christ, with the assurance that God will add temporal blessings unto them (Matt. vi. 33). No greater benefit can be conferred upon youth, than to teach them to give systematically to the cause of Christ. This will teach them the true use of money, to be economical for Jesus' sake, to live in harmony with the divine economy, and with the constitution of things about them. If young persons would prosper in the world, let them form the habit of systematically contributing to the cause of Christ.

How much should we give?
1 Let each one give according to his ability (1 Pet. iv. 11).—Let each one give, the poor as well as the rich. The blessedness of giving is so great that the poor are not to be deprived of it. The poor man's cent may be as much treasure laid up in heaven as the rich man's pound or thousand pounds. God requires each one to give according to that he hath, and not according to that he hath not (2 Cor. viii. 12). God would have no one excused from giving, nor any one burdened; but computing each man's ability, let him give according to that rule. Probably in no way can this equality be attained but by every man giving a certain percentage of his income, his whole income, whether that be derived from trade, merchandise, interest on money or stock, mortgages, rents, profits, wages, salary, labor, gifts, produce or manufactures, or any other source.

To give rightly and systematically, every one must give on his whole net income, and not on what remains after he has supplied his own supposed necessities; because every man can make his necessities equal to his entire income, and so have nothing left for God. Let the amount of the whole means, as nearly as possible, be ascertained for the week, month, quarter or year, as it can best be calculated for either of these portions of time; then, of this amount, set apart a certain per centage for the cause of God and the needy. There is no one but can, very nearly, ascertain the amount of his means; no man that cannot devote different portions of the same to different objects; and no man can make a wise apportionment of his income without system; none can save without system; nor any one give well without system.

But how much per cent. of their income ought Christians to give? When giving was regulated by law under the Mosaic economy, the Israelites were required to give one-tenth of their income for the support of the ministers of religion, the Levites, alone; one-fortieth additional to the priests; to provide animals, meal, wine and fruits for sacrifice, and offerings to the temple. Every seventh year they had to leave their land untilled, and to regard its spontaneous products as common property; every seventh year to remit debts, and to release all mortgages. Every harvest they left about one-sixtieth of their grain to be gleaned by the poor. The Jew was required by law to give about one-third of his income to the servants and the service of the Lord and his poor.

"While the primitive Christians devoted more than half of all their income to the cause of Christ, professors of our denomination in this country, at the present day, do not give to the same cause one-twentieth part of their incomes. Let them begin at once, and devote, at the very least, one-tenth of their whole property to the Lord. Surely it will not be too much for them to give for all objects, what the Jews gave to the ministers of religion alone! But for the sake of systematizing your beneficence, begin with one-tenth as the minimum. The following table shows the amount to be given weekly, monthly, quarterly or yearly, from an income of from ten dollars to fifty thousand dollars per annum.

Yearly Income.	10 per cent contribution.				Yearly.
	Weekly.	Monthly.	Quarterly.	Yearly.	
\$ 10	\$ c. 0 02	\$ c. 0 08	\$ c. 0 25	\$ c. 1 00	
50	0 10	0 40	1 25	5 00	
100	0 20	0 80	2 50	10 00	
200	0 40	1 60	5 00	20 00	
300	0 60	2 40	7 50	30 00	
400	0 80	3 20	10 00	40 00	
500	1 00	4 00	12 50	50 00	
1,000	2 00	8 00	25 00	100 00	
2,000	4 00	16 00	50 00	200 00	
3,000	6 00	24 00	75 00	300 00	
4,000	8 00	32 00	100 00	400 00	
5,000	10 00	40 00	125 00	500 00	
10,000	20 00	80 00	250 00	1,000 00	
20,000	40 00	160 00	500 00	2,000 00	
30,000	60 00	240 00	750 00	3,000 00	

There are very few of Christ's disciples either so poor or so young as to be unable to obtain an income of ten dollars yearly, and out of that to give one dollar. The one dollar, expended on themselves, can make but little difference to their earthly comforts, but it may make a vast difference if deposited in the bank of heaven, or used as seed-corn for means of increased usefulness. Let such a one remember that in giving a dollar a year he has given as much to the Lord as the man of ten thousand a year who gives one thousand.

The proportion recommended in this pamphlet to be devoted to the various objects and Societies is considered very fully, and if the Canadian Baptists were but to adopt the principle here propounded, and work it out but partially, they would soon have abundance for all their operations at home and abroad. The same thing may, of course, be said of the Baptists of Nova Scotia; and of Christians generally.

THE EDUCATIONAL BILL has now passed the Legislative Council. The *Morning Chronicle* of Saturday last gave the following report of the Hon. Mr. McCully's speech, on the reading of the first clause of the bill in committee on Friday.

"Hon. Mr. McCully briefly addressed the Committee in opposition to the Bill. He characterized it as a most injudicious measure, wrong in principle, defective in detail. It was so drawn up that he believed that it was next to impossible to comprehend many of its enactments, some of which not entirely inconsistent with others were certainly not in harmony. He thought if the Autocrat of all the Russias should ever see the Bill he would be sure to send for the person who drafted it to make him Prime Minister of his Empire. So despotic a measure he had never before in his life perused.—No body seemed to know whether the bill authorized taxation or not. The machinery was expensive and most critical and cumbersome. It contained no provision for the management of schools till next October, and was well adapted, he thought, to create a vast amount of dispute and litigation, ending in the injury and destruction of all the best schools in the Province. He had made up his mind to offer no opposition to the measure. He should move nothing. If any attempt to improve it were made, and the bill proved a failure, it would be charged upon the Opposition. He was sorry to see it pass, but there seemed to be no alternative. If it proved to be a failure, as he predicted it would, the responsibility by this course would fall upon the right shoulders.

Some few amendments were made at the instance of Hon. Mr. Creighton. One or two were suggested by Hon. Mr. Almon. Hon. Mr. Creighton said he felt his hands tied and could not consent to their being made.

The Council adjourned over till Monday."

Since the above was in type we have read Mr. Oldright's report of the discussion, and it does not materially differ from the above, except that the Hon. Mr. Creighton said that he did not think that the government were by any means desirous of having the control of the educational machinery of the country. He thought that the chief object of the clause was to save the expense of another Board of instruction. His difficulty was how they could find time to attend to their duties as a Council of Instruction.

On the reading of the 5th clause, Mr. Creighton moved an amendment to make the Inspectors of Schools, inspectors for the counties, instead of for the districts merely. The amendment passed unopposed.

Hon. Mr. Almon moved an amendment to exempt Teachers from taxation, but it was negatived, and no amendment but those made by Hon. Mr. Creighton were agreed to.

The following are the principal clauses, we presume which were referred by Mr. McCully. We copy them from the amended Act for the information of our readers. It is, doubtless, a most important measure and should be well understood by the people generally.

18. One fifth of the whole sum appropriated for common schools shall be applied to aid poor and scattered sections in addition to the amount to which they may be otherwise entitled, on such terms as the Commissioners shall decide; the remainder to be distributed among the sections where suitable school houses are provided, in such manner that teachers of the same class shall receive at the same rate,—that second class teachers shall receive not more than three-fourths of the amount paid to the first class teachers,—third class teachers one half of the sum given to first class teachers; provided that in cases where the Inspector shall report that the teacher has not sustained the standing as a teacher

or indicated by his license, when it shall be competent for the Commissioners to withhold the Provincial grant in whole or in part.

20. The Commissioners shall allow twenty-five per cent. to all schools supported by assessment in addition to the amount to which they would otherwise be entitled, provided the Inspector shall report that instruction has been impartially afforded to all seeking it.

It shall be the duty of the Trustees

(2) To contract with and employ a licensed teacher or teachers for the section for a period of not less than five months, and to determine the amount of his or their salaries, which must be procured from the people by voluntary subscription or assessment, and not by fees per pupil. All common schools shall be free to all the children residing in the section in which they are established. And in case the sum subscribed for their support fails to be realized, the balance shall be raised by assessment; the amount previously paid being taken into consideration.

These clauses afford but little encouragement to Schools supported by subscription. No aid will be given to any school except it be free to all—every child received into it without payment of school fees. Those schools which are sustained by Assessment are to receive a bonus of 25 per cent from the Provincial Grant, over and above what they would, if the amount from the people were raised by voluntary contribution. We do not clearly perceive how this is to be done; for if the whole, or nearly all, of the sections in any district decide to accept the proposal, and adopt the principle of Assessment, how can the 25 per cent additional be allowed to them, except it be by enlarging the Grant from the Provincial Treasury to that extent? Again, if all the Districts were to adopt the same mode of supporting their schools and this were the correct interpretation of the law, the grant for Common Schools would then have to be \$73,600 instead of \$58,880 as it is. Perhaps however we are in error in our interpretation of the above clauses; if so, the Boards of Commissioners will have to devise some means of making five-fourths out of a whole, which we have not yet learned.

We make these suggestions not in a capricious spirit, but by way of anticipating a practical difficulty which must arise, if the measure become law, and to any extent realize the apparent intentions of its framers. Will the organ of the government please inform us on this point?

Other sections of the bill provide the means for carrying out the Assessment principle.

THE PICTOU RAILWAY BILL.

Last week we gave our readers a summary of the action taken in the House of Assembly in reference to this Bill. As the Act is a short one and many of our readers may wish to read it for themselves, we copy it entire:—

An Act to authorize the construction of a further section of the Provincial Railway.

Be it enacted by the Governor, Council and Assembly as follows:—

1. The Governor in Council is hereby authorized to contract for the construction of a further section of Railway between the station house at Truro and the navigable waters of the harbor of Pictou, and, as far as practicable, on a site adapted for a common line for an extension of a line of railway from the station aforesaid to the frontier of New Brunswick.

2. The provisions of the Chapter of the Revised Statutes, so far as may be, are hereby made applicable to the construction and management of such section.

3. The Governor in Council may appropriate any deposits in the Savings Bank towards defraying the cost of construction, and may also, for the purpose of this Act, issue Provincial Debentures bearing interest at a rate not to exceed six per cent. redeemable in twenty years, and not to exceed the sum of sixteen hundred thousand dollars in the same manner as is provided for issuing Debentures under the said Chapter of the Revised Statutes.

The speeches on its introduction, noticed in our last, were sufficient to elucidate the measure. The members from different sections of the province had to speak upon it, and endeavored to show the consistency of their action on this occasion as compared with votes formerly given. The altered state of the revenue was the great explanation.

The difference between the position of the Intercolonial road formerly and now, too, had something to do with the speech of each member pro and con.

The following speech from one of the members for Pictou contains a good epitome of the arguments in its favor.

Mr. D. Fraser said that what he had heard to-night, compared with declarations made in time past, convinced him that some hon. members could change their minds. The present opposition had frequently asserted that Mr. Laurie was extravagant in his calculations, but if he were, the hon. members for Shelburne (Mr. Locke) rivalled him in that respect, as he (Mr. Locke) had asserted that the extension of the line from Truro to Pictou would cost £17,000