

For the Christian Messenger.

ACADIA COLLEGE.

DOES IT GROW?

Mr. Editor.—

Does Acadia College grow? Is a question frequently asked. In reply I would say. Yes. Its staff of Professors has been enlarged from time to time, the number of its Students also is largely in advance of former years, and its funds though less than what are needed have been steadily increasing; yet not quite equal to its necessities, but there is a growth much more important than that alluded to. I refer to its influence on the Baptists of these Provinces. The writer well recollects the time when any education beyond what was merely rudimentary obtained, (and that very imperfectly,) at a common school, was not only considered superfluous, but somewhat dangerous, except where the profession of the law, or of medicine was intended. The ministry, why if a minister had "learning," it was deemed next to miraculous if he had any religion. It was thought the sons of the wealthy only were to be the recipients of Acadamical and Collegiate Education. Again and again has the objection been urged in reply to an appeal for aid, "I'm not going to help educate the rich, the College will do me no good." The earlier students were for the most part connected with wealthy families; and were sent to the College. Its support then depended mainly on the influence of a few over those who contributed to it, from feelings of personal respect and attachment; its founders fought its battles in public halls and private assemblies, carrying by their influence the majority of Baptists with them.

The growth of the College is seen in its present hold on the Baptist Denomination and the public generally. It has been a growth, slow it may be, but nevertheless certain, in the affections of the people. A growth vastly more stable and powerful than even endowment itself because it secures and will forever continue to secure endowment equal to its necessity.

The growth in its influence is manifest in the great change effected. Its own inestimable worth to the Denomination and to the world at large is appreciated, its advantages are no longer considered as available only to the wealthy, its students are now of those who come to the College. Men of very moderate means find its halls accessible to their sons, and often young men without means, work their way through the collegiate course.

It would not be just to pass unnoticed the very important change in public opinion in regard to Female Education. But little was thought and less said about it. But now the clamorous demand from all quarters is, "Give us a Female Seminary." Let it come louder and louder, until suitable buildings are erected, a first-class Female Seminary well patronized, and the doors of the College thrown wide open for the admission of females to collegiate honors. Let the women of our denomination give us in this matter a practical illustration of the old adage: "If she will, she will, you may depend on it."

I think, Mr. Editor I have answered the question, "Does Acadia College grow?" in the affirmative. The growth has been slow, permanent growth is usually slow. The oak is of slow growth but it is substantial. So with Acadia. It may have been in the first of its days that it was too far in advance of the people. Be it so, public opinion has now overtaken it, never again to be left behind. It may have been supported from personal consideration, rather than from any felt necessity of the institution itself. It now stands on its own merits, its necessity is acknowledged as a means of aiding, in all things pertaining to a higher life, socially, morally, and religiously. The people have a heart interest in it. They feel it to be their College, and an indispensable power, under God, in all their effort to evangelize the world.

The project of an "Independent Foreign Mission," now in its preliminary stages adds another important feature to its necessity. But I perceive that my letter is already too long. I may yet find time for a few more words on the subject.

RE VERA.

All hail! to the happy Christmas holidays—the season of presents to our friends. Shall we forget our best Friend? Shall "His body" suffer cold and hunger, and be forgotten through our happy holidays? The Home Mission, and Acadia College need presents, and are His.

The Christian Messenger.

Halifax, N. S., Dec. 20th., 1871.

THE STAR.

How beautiful the sign given of our Lord's birth into this world! How full of delightful suggestions! No successful attempt has, we believe been made to harmonize this appearance with any of the ordinary laws or facts of Physical Science. The miraculous appearance of a new heavenly body to guide the learned astronomers who had been looking and waiting for the coming of the Messiah, as it were, beckoned them on, and led them till they were at the very place where the child lay, and now they came with their royal gifts and spread them out before the Divine Infant.

A less elevated phenomenon might have been employed, but it would have been more liable to be charged to human agency or interposition.

How little we know of the stars! Somewhat of their distances have been ascertained, but how little of their numbers, their uses and the glory of God to be seen in them.

What we are to know of them hereafter is as yet altogether matter of conjecture. This one heavenly visitor had a great purpose to serve, and, like the Saviour's human harbinger—John the Baptist,—when that purpose was fulfilled it was taken away, that the glorious person might himself be the one lifted up and attract the attention of all. Lessons of Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, angelic joy, and gifts of love, are learned from the commencement of the Saviour's life on earth, and so continued to its close, when he gave up himself and his spotless righteousness to atone for man's transgression. Let us all rejoice at the "Glad Tidings," and in the exuberance of our happiness seek to follow the pattern, especially of the men, who, by the guiding Star found the infant Saviour, and presented to Him their gifts.

Gentle Reader, young and old, far and near, accept from us the hearty wish that this may be to you a Happy Christmas.

HOUSEHOLD BAPTISMS.

It has been often claimed by Pedobaptists that the fact of there being baptisms of whole households recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, was a circumstance in favor of concluding that Infants were baptized in Apostolic times. We might again affirm, what has a hundred times been proved most incontrovertibly, that there is nothing in any of the accounts given that affords the slightest support to such a conclusion.

A sermon by C. H. Spurgeon on "Household Salvation" recently published, shows the steps of experience that will be observed in such cases: (1) *The Household hearing the Word*, as seen in the case of the Philippian Jailor, where Paul and Silas "spoke unto him the Word of the Lord and to all that were in his house." (2) *The whole Household believing*; which appears to have been the result of hearing in the jailor's case. (3) *The whole household was baptized*. On this he remarks: In almost every case in Scripture where you read of a household baptism, you are distinctly informed that they were also a believing household. "In the case of Lydia it may not be so; but then there are remarkable circumstances about her case which render that information needless. In this instance they were all believers, and, therefore, they were all of them baptized. First, 'she' was baptized;—the jailor; he was ready to submit himself to the ordinance in which he declared himself to be dead to the world, and risen anew in Christ Jesus. Then 'all his' followed. What a glorious baptism, amidst the glare of torches that night, perhaps in the prison bath, or in the impluvium which was usually in the center of most oriental houses, or perhaps the stream that watered Philippi ran by the prison wall, and was used for the occasion. It matters not, but into the water they descended, one after another, mother, children, servants; and Paul and Silas stood there delighted to aid them in declaring themselves to be on the Lord's side, 'buried with him in baptism.'"

And this was done, mark you, straightway. There was not one who wished to have it put off till he had tried himself a little, and seen whether he was really ready or not. In those days no one had any reserve or objection to obey; none advocated the following of some ancient and doubtful tradition; all were obedient to the divine will. No one shrank from baptism for fear that water might damage his health, or in some way cause him inconvenience; but he and all his, wishing to follow the plain example of our Lord Jesus Christ, were baptized, and that straightway,—at once, and on the spot. No minister has any right to refuse to baptize any person who professes faith in Jesus Christ, unless there be some glaring fact to cast doubt upon the candidate's sincerity. I, for one, would never ask from any person weeks and months of delay, in which the man should prove to me that he was a believer; but I would follow the example of the apostle. The gospel of Christ was preached, the people were converted, and they were baptized, and all perhaps in the space of an hour. The whole transaction may not have taken up so much time as I shall occupy in preaching about it this morning. How, then, is it with you, who wait so long? Where is the precept or example to warrant your hesitation? Permit me to remind you that duties delayed are sins. Will you take that home with you, you who have been believers for years and yet are not baptized? Permit me to remind you, also, that privileges postponed are losses. Put the two together, and where duty and privilege meet do not incur the sin and the loss, but, like David, "make haste and delay not" to keep the divine command.

The remainder of the discourse exhibits the further results of Household Salvation, that it is "a whole Household at work for God." On this Mr. S. remarks: "Read the passage, and you will see that they all did something. The father called for a light, the servants bring the torches and the lamps such as were used in the prisons. He took his prisoners the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes. Here is work for himself, and work for gentle hands to do, to assuage the pains of those poor bleeding backs; to wash out the grit that had come there through their lying on their backs on the dungeon floor, and to mollify and bind up their wounds. There was suitable occupation for the mother and for the servants, for they set meat before the holy men. The kitchen was sanctified to supply the needs of the ministers of Christ. Everything was done for their comfort. They were hungry, and these gave them meat; they were bleeding and these bathed their wounds. The whole household was astir that night. They had all believed and been baptized, and their very first enquiry is, 'What can we do for Jesus?' It was clear to them that they could help the two men who had brought them to Christ, and they did so affectionately." And next "a family all rejoicing." The occasion of their joy was that they had believed. Believing obtains the pardon of all sin, and brings Christ's righteousness into our possession, it declares us to be the sons of God, gives us heirship with Christ, and secures us his blessing here and glory hereafter; who would not rejoice at this?

That household is now in glory; they are all there—the jailor, and his servants; they are all there, for it is not written, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved?"

These particulars may be learned from the narrative of the conversion of the jailor and are the natural consequences of a hearty reception of gospel verities, and submission to gospel commands. We see them continually and as the grace of God produces its conquests they will be every where found.

We copied two or three of Rev. Dr. Boardman's interesting letters from Palestine last summer. It will be remembered that on his return while passing through Germany he lost some of his baggage which contained amongst other valuable things all the manuscript notes of his journey. The *National Baptist* says, respecting these lost treasures. "We have too long delayed the announcement of their safe recovery, but it was only a day or two ago that we learned the precise facts. A special agent was sent out to search the railway stations between Paris and Strasburg, the road on which the valise was lost, but no trace of it could be found. On reaching home one of the first letters received by Dr. Boardman was a note from the custom house at New York, saying that certain baggage there, to his address, was awaiting his orders. It proved to be

the veritable luggage lost in Germany, without diminution or damage. On being received it was found, most singular to tell, to have crossed in the steamer "Scotia," the very vessel and the very trip which brought Dr. Boardman himself. The happy owner is entirely ignorant of the ways and agencies, other than the care and goodness of Providence, to which he is indebted for his recovered treasures."

THE N. Y. ROMAN CATHOLICS versus THE BIBLE IN SCHOOLS.—We have seen several versions of the war made upon the Bible in the Public Schools in New York, and have supposed some of them tinged by feelings of national or religious hostility to the Irish Catholics. The facts appear, from an account in the Boston *Christian Era*, a very moderate and apparently unprejudiced view, that Hunters Point, part of the First Ward is composed largely of Irish: "The by-laws of the New York Department of Education, require Bible reading. Two out of the three trustees of Hunter's Point school were illiterate men. Trouble arose between the commissioners and these trustees with regard to the appropriation of the school fund and the employment of teachers. The new board insisted that the teachers employed should be examined. The Hunter's Point teachers, instigated by Father Cummins, the Catholic priest, and the trustees, refused to be examined, and were dismissed in a body. Since then there has been an uninterrupted fight to secure the reinstatement of the old teachers, and one of the means resorted to to break up the present arrangement was to excite the sectarian antipathies of the scholars against the reading of the Bible in the school. So stimulated by bad advice were they, that they not only refused to listen to the reading of the reading of the Holy Word, but engaged in disturbances and profanity. A number of scholars have been expelled, but the teacher is daily insulted in the streets. The end is not yet nor will be until this question is firmly and finally settled."

Notwithstanding the difficulties and sources of discouragement under which we often labor, we do from time to time receive cheering words from our subscribers, shewing that whilst seeking to defend the truth and promote the best interests of Christ's kingdom we have a host of good men and true, who rejoice in co-operating with us and are pleased to send words of sympathy and support.

Our modesty forbids the frequent publication of such complimentary notices, two or three may be taken as samples.

One writes:

I always find that reading the *Messenger* makes a man a much more intelligent Baptist. Therefore I am anxious for all the members of my church to have the paper.

Another says:

I have been doing what I can for the good *Messenger*, I have got one new Subscriber and hope soon to have more. Believe me the *Messenger* has a place in my heart and shall have my support. May the Lord abundantly bless you in your work and in your soul.

Another remarks:

"I am much pleased with the *Messenger* with the reading matter and general management."

Again another:

Mr. Editor,—As the end of the year is drawing nigh, I wish to renew my subscription in season. I have been a reader, (if not a subscriber) of the ever welcome *Messenger*, a dozen years or more, and it is with pleasure and satisfaction I receive your valuable paper.

I have read of the conversion of souls, with a rejoicing heart, or it reminded me of the time when I trust peace and pardon were granted me through Jesus, the Sinners Friend.

It is pleasing to hear of the success of Missionary effort; the harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few. We should earnestly pray the Lord of the harvest to send forth more laborers.

"Lord of every tribe and nation! Spread thy truth from pole to pole; Spread the light of thy Salvation 'Till it shines on every soul."

May the Lord hasten the glorious period when, "Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders; but thou shalt call thy walls Salvation and thy gates Praise. Thy sun shall no more go down; neither shall thy moon withdraw itself; for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended."

At the Barrack St. Mission Chapel on Sunday last the Y. M. Christian Association Prayer meeting was under the direction of J. B. Morrow, Esq., the

President. Two requests for prayer were read, both on behalf of men who were falling into habits of intemperance. A very earnest and faithful address was given on the insidious nature of vice and crime, and a touching exhortation to young men to avoid the beginnings of evil, and to keep their expenditure within their income. Indifference to this often leads to dishonesty and disgrace, and to grief and sorrow to whole families for all future time where one member has yielded to such temptation.

A little more distinctness on the question of total abstinence from intoxicating drinks would have been highly appropriate to the occasion. A large work of prevention, if not of the cure, of this parent sin lies open before the Halifax Y. M. Christian Association. Any parley with this gigantic evil of intemperance is death to those who have become its victims. So long as there is any doubt in the mind of a young man about the propriety of total abstinence there is danger, and so in christian workers, if they are known to hold loose opinions on the use of intoxicating beverages, so far is the influence of their example weakened. We do not say this because we have any doubt about the opinions and habits of the President for we believe him to be a consistent total abstainer. Prayer may be offered for the recovery of those who fall, but unless they are helped to take a firm stand on this sure foundation—total abstinence—their case is hopeless.

We hope the leading brethren of the Association will accept this suggestion in the same spirit in which it is offered and add this to their many other good works.

An editorial paragraph in the *Witness* of Saturday last may be here appropriately quoted:

INCREASE OF THE LIQUOR TRAFFIC.—An influential and public-spirited citizen writes to us stating that drinking saloons and places for the sale of a ritinous liquors have greatly increased in number in recent years in this city, and that there is a corresponding increase in the amount of drunkenness observable. He states that drinking prevails among young men to a frightful extent, and that some of the most promising among them are hastening to a drunkard's grave; and he asks, "Is it not possible to stop the accursed traffic?" We wish we could answer in the affirmative, but at present we cannot. But though the traffic may not for years to come be positively stopped, it may be so regulated as to check its power for evil. As our correspondent suggests, we have no doubt that the Local Legislature would in response to petitions give the power to a majority of electors in each ward of the city, as they have given in the counties, to veto the granting of licenses, and also make such other regulations as might put a stop to the indefinite multiplication of places for the sale of liquor. We are in danger of falling far behind other communities in the temperance movement. The first thing we believe is to make the most of the laws already on our Statute Book. Laws that are much in advance of public opinion are sure to be a dead letter. It is frightful to see the rate at which drunkards are being manufactured in this city. Let us direct public opinion and public attention to this point.

The Christian Era, (Boston,) has for several years been one of our most valued exchanges. It was always lively and readable, straight forward and manly in its advocacy of freedom and equal rights to all. It has changed its form to an eight-page paper, and is enlarged in size, and equal to the best of our Baptist weeklies. Brother Webster has our best wishes for enlarged success and usefulness.

REV. JAMES PARKER, we are glad to learn from a member of his family, is recovering from his recent illness. His health is much improved, and he hopes in a few weeks to be enabled to attend to his pastoral duties.

Notices, &c.

COLCHESTER COUNTY BAPTIST SABBATH SCHOOL CONVENTION.

The next quarterly meeting of this Convention will be held in Great Village on the last Friday of this month, commencing at half past 2 o'clock, P. M.

The evening session will commence at 7 o'clock.

Ministers and all others interested in Sabbath Schools are invited to be present. A. J. WALKER, Sec'y.

Truro, Dec. 11, 1871.

NOTICE.

The Yarmouth County Baptist Ministers' Conference will meet, (D. V.) at Beaver River, Dec. 26th, at 10 o'clock.

Preaching at 2 o'clock, by Dr. Day. Missionary Meeting in the evening. Collection and subscription for the French Mission.

W. H. PORTER, Secretary of the Conference.