Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

"THE SPIRIT OF THE AGE," AND ITS EDUCATIONAL LESSON.

IV.

Sir,—

Let me ask your readers to remember that the mental faculties are not only rational or intellectual, but æsthetic or emotional also. The expression "æsthetic or emotional" must not be taken, in what I shall say, as meaning anything or nothing; but as referring to that faculty of the soul which is identified with the *elementary* source of loves, hatreds, propensities, and primary talents or predispositions for the Fine Arts. Perhaps some of your readers would prefer the expressions "rational intellect" and "emotional intellect."

"The spirit of the age" demands a radical change in the aim and means of collegiate study. It matters little whether good grounds can be shown for these demands; it is enough, so some of your correspondents think, that "the spirit of the age" is clamorous with them. I ask the attention of thoughtful men to the fact stated, as evidence of some defect in our methods of culture. "The spirit of the age" is the legitimate outcome of the education of the age. The object of culture, as was forcibly said by Prof. Higgins in his recent address, is the development of man: the making the educated as much a man as possible, and not as much a parson, lawyer, doctor, or farmer,—which latter object will be effected by a *special* schooling or apprenticeship. The secret of mental education is not the storing of the mind, but the making of it.* It is the evolving of power or faculty: faculty of intellect, science; faculty of emotion, feeling. The associated development of the faculties, and coördination of their functions, ought, I think, to be regarded as the standard of culture. Have not our later methods of education recognized too exclusively the rational powers of the soul? Witness "the spirit of the age" bent on change, change, for the sake of change. Starved, or (which is the same thing) unwholesomely fed emotions crave new sensations. Need I cite as emphatic evidence of neglected impoverished emotions towards nature, "Modern's" imbecile estimate of such cultivated sympathy with nature as the Greeks unostentatiously exhibit? That we are unconscious of our deficiency, is the worst of it; as witness "Modern" mistaking critical cant about sympathies with nature and the picturesque, for the veritable feeling itself.

Emotions neglected and untrained in the direction of nature attain to monstrous growth in some other direction, and most of all in the direction of the novel and the startling. We live in an atmosphere artificial beyond precedent, and dense with dust and vapour of scientific novelties. Such an atmosphere is friendly neither to culture, nor to philosophy or truth. "The spirit of the age," this tyrannous, unsated, and insatiable thirst for novelty, refuses to take its eyes off this atmosphere of phantasmal wonder. Stuart Mill ponders the possibility of twice two being five, and men gravely entertain the proposition. It used to be proverbially impossible for a thing to be all black and all white at once, for two straight lines to enclose a space, or for a square to be round. These and some such truths were held to be primary and eternal; novelties might arise, but here there could be no novelty; and men consented that some things should not change. But now the itch for novelty will exempt nothing from change, not even these eternal truths; and accordingly it is asserted that nothing is wanted but new experiences (and these arise every hour) to make it possible that two straight lines may contain a space, and that twice two may be five. The mere statement of a thing being fixed is regarded as a challenge to upset it.

This despotic appetite is the most striking characteristic of "modernism" or "the spirit of the age." It is a restless emotion provoked by the absence of noble and sustained occupation for the emotions generally, which cannot be suppressed, but will be doing. This passion—for it has become a passion—has a large source and foundation, I suggest, in our studies and daily life. Commerce, machinery, physical science, these are constantly presenting new phases to the student of phenomena, whose *intellectual* estimate of these is as constantly changing, and who, only conscious of his *intellectual* existence, naturally conceives that all things are in flux and transition; and, therefore, that no established truths can be accepted. His ever roving intellectual faculties have no basis, no bond of union, and do not register themselves in the form of emotions, as the various phases of creation ever register themselves in the form of beauty. He is appetent of change and novelty—the most restless and self-destructive of all pleasures. Lacking the harmonious grasp of both intellect and emotion, he knows little of that detaining solace which comes of a close and deep converse with any one object. And ought we not to expect that if the emotional faculty receives no culture or less than is necessary to reciprocal and harmonious action on the part of the whole mind, a one-sided habit of thought must be the result? Every careful observer must have noticed that an exclusively rational culture begets a sanguine tendency to argue out and vindicate the views and beliefs the person happens to affect. Emotion was clearly designed to be the forerunner and handmaid of reason; but so sure as the emotions become estranged from the reason they set her strange work to do.

If I have not greatly erred in what I have said, it is obvious that the course of culture proposed by some of your reformers is altogether wide of the mark. Not Mathematics *less*, but something else *more*, is the lesson clearly deducible from the results of the methods already employed. The deepest basis of the Mathematics is in the Reason. They lead the patient student from the varying scenes of created things, to the investigation of the relations of pure existence. The study of them compels the discipline of the reason as reason, and not as a bias or prejudice. Such culture is essential, and can be had unalloyed nowhere but in the study of the pure Mathematics. To strike them from the college curriculum would be to ignore as an instrument of formal culture the only perfect science known to man. They, and their related subjects, are and must ever be the balance wheel in a system of true culture, since Reason is the balance wheel of the mental system itself.

But, be it remembered, the rational faculty is not the whole man; the emotional faculty must be cared for, and that, too, in a manner to meet the defect in our course of culture, of which "the spirit of the age" is, it appears to me, one of the natural fruits. The time was when the Greek and Latin Classics were the chief means of culture. Æsthetics flourished then; in fact, the rational faculties languished, and feeling was dominant. Then came a period of happy co-adjustment, and men grew strong and noble, and were perfect of their kind. In these modern days, empirical sciences have filled the minds of men, and are polarizing all thought in one direction. They cannot help us in this matter of culture, since they deal not with the emotional nature, and far better instruments already exist for the culture of rational powers. The Modern Languages are equally devoid of any power to supply the want of emotional culture, and are inferior to the classics as a means of linguistic discipline. There is needed a deeper knowledge of the Greek and Latin languages, in order to a fuller æsthetic culture. Relaxing here is the error of modern method, as disordered minds abundantly prove. I trust the College authorities will hold their students to this point. But more: let them tell us that they acknowledge the necessity of *strengthening* this weak side of the modern course, and are ready to say *Thank you* to any gentleman who will give $20,000, to enable them *to assist* the classics in the unequal struggle,—unequal when compared with the time given to them in former days, and the number of "rational" competitors to be coped with. Let the college authorities say (if they think so), and say it clearly, that the study of the graphic art, the drawing of nature's forms and structures in black and white, in short, the study of *Form*, is needed to supply the degree of emotional culture necessary to correct that mental aberration, issuing in "the spirit of the age." This spirit is an evil one, and can be exorcised by true culture only.

Acadia College has always had a life and method of her own. She has some reason for feeling a degree of pride in her remarkable history. She has done a fair share of good work and nourished many worthy sons. The Commencement Address of Prof. Higgins was a protest, as manly as it was able, against the "modernism" which seeks to subvert the old foundation. Let those who direct Acadia College conceal nothing of her trials, her needs, her aims, but rather spread them before the people; and they will find noble-hearted christian men ready to deny themselves, that all necessary means may be afforded for the exemplification of Acadia's views and methods of mental culture.

OUTIS.

*The belief of some people in "storing the the mind" is absolute enough. Ben Jonson thought this conceit worthy of a Lantho n Leatherhead howling forth his wares: "A fine hobby-horse to make your son a tilter? a drum to make him a soldier? a fiddle to make him a reveller? What is't ye lack?"

For the Christian Messenger.

PASTORAL VISITATION AND PERSONAL RELIGIOUS CONVERSATION.

Thoughts suggested by the following conversation, between a Pastor and a Sister whom he visited.

Pastor—"Well sister, how are you getting along. Is your hope brighter than when I saw you last."

Sister—"O yes, I feel very differently. I am getting along so much better. I have not enjoyed the Saviour's love so much for years."

Pastor—"Well, I am glad of that. The Saviour prayed for his disciples that their joy might be full, and he still desires, and prays the same. I believe we do not love to see our children happy in *our* love more than our Heavenly Father does to see us happy in *his* love. But how or when did you experience such a change." She had been very dark, and doubting, when he last visited her.

Sister—"During the meetings I have been revived, *but your talk with me has done me a great deal of good* I have been a member of the church *twelve* years, and no minister or deacon ever talked with me on the subject of religion before. I was young when I professed religion, and I grew so cold and careless that I hardly cared whether I went to meeting or not. I never felt so interested in going to meeting, and in a Minister before; and it is just because you call and talk to me."

So spake the poor woman in her simplicity, and I went away reflecting on the subject of personal religious conversation, and of Pastoral visitation.

Many passages occurred to my mind as I walked thoughtfully homeward. Such as Isaiah xl. 11. Matt. xi. 4, 5. John iv. 6–10 and xxi. 15, and Matt. xxv. 34–40.

I wondered too, how many there might be, even in this small town, with its many churches and ministers; how many in other towns, cities, villages and country places, like this poor woman, by whose doors christian members, deacons and ministers—I will not say how *Christ-like*—pass and repass continually, who yet have too much reason to complain, "No man careth for my soul."

O it is sad, as Dr. Wayland used to remark in his last pastorate, to find so many even aged, as well as young, who have never been personally addressed on the subject of their souls' salvation.

Let not christians, but especially christian *ministers*, say, "It is too crossing for me," or, "I have no talent for personal religious conversation." From what christian requirement will not people similarly excuse themselves. "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Feed my lambs."

Christianity is the same as when first promulgated. So also is human nature. They stand in the same attitude and relation to each other. There is no different gospel, or better method of promoting it. Civilization, refinement, intelligence, can never supersede the necessity, for a simple, earnest, faithful, public and private ministry, or presentation of the old, blessed soul-saving gospel. Perhaps, at the present time, emulation for fine churches, fine music, fine preaching, &c., we need as much as ever to "stand in the ways, and see and ask for the old paths, the good was, and walk therein." "As my Father sent me into the world, even so send I you into the world." May we each be able, when we leave our present spheres of labor, either for some other, or for rest and glory; to say as the Apostle did to the elders of the church of Ephesus, Acts xx. 18–20, and from the Master's lips at least, receive the welcome, "Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a little, I will make thee ruler over much; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

Who knows what blissful spheres of labor vast;
Awaits the faithful servants of our King.
Not weary, greeding toil, like servile task,
But sweet, spontaneous, as "is done in Heaven."

For the Christian Messenger.

"SAVED FROM GIVING UP THE USE OF TOBACCO."

Mr. Editor,—

In a late number of the *Christian Messenger*, in a list of donations to the Foreign Mission, I observed that one item in the list was $5.00 from a friend "saved from giving up the use of tobacco." It struck me as worthy of notice. The sum of $5.00 is *saved*, but this is not all. There is a saving of valuable time—physical energy—mental vigour and personal cleanliness, all of which—more or less—must of necessity be sacrificed by its use. This itself would be ample recompense for the sacrifice of giving it up, but there is as till higher view to be taken.

This sum of $5.00 is given to the Foreign Mission. Through its instrumentality 500 tracts may be scattered broadcast among the heathen—or many copies of the Word of God may be circulated—or it may help to support a native preacher in telling "the story of the Cross" to his fellow countrymen. In either case it may be the means of the conversion of perhaps 100 of the poor heathen. Out of this number ten may be called of God to preach the gospel, who may in their turn be instrumental in the conversion of hundreds or perhaps thousands of degraded idolaters, and the work thus commenced may go on through successive generations till the fulfilment of that glorious prediction shall be realized which declares that "the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea."

Now although this may be regarded as mere conjecture, and by some as altogether visionary, yet I am fully persuaded that it is not out of the range of possibility. There may be thousands of blood-washed souls among the redeemed at the great last day whose conversion from idolatry and sin may be traced, directly or indirectly to the $5.00 saved by that friend, from *giving up the use of tobacco*.

Admitting then even the possibility of such a result will that friend ever regret the sacrifice—if sacrifice it may be called—which he has made in this little act of self-denial? How many more *friends* are there who could save twice that amount every year—by giving up the same sinful practice—and turn it to good account in sending the gospel to the perishing heathen. I hesitate not to say that if the money that is wasted by the use of tobacco year after year by professing christians *alone*, were poured into the Foreign Mission Treasury it would be full to overflowing and the great cry at our Conventions would be, not for means to send the gospel, but for *men* to go and carry its glad tidings to the benighted in far off lands.

Will not *some* of our ministers, *many* of our Deacons and *a host* of our church members who use tobacco, sit down, or rather go on their knees before God and there make the calculation how much they can save in one year, how much in ten years by giving up its use, and think how many dark and degraded souls might be reached by the gospel and saved by its power, through instrumentalities employed by money thus saved? And will they not then and there come to the firm determination in the strength of God to abandon at once and forever an idle and worse than useless practice,—so disgusting and degrading in itself and so fraught with evil to society,—and consecrate the means thus saved to better, *nobler* and HOLIER purposes. I am persuaded Mr. Editor that if this appeal were responded to generally, instead of a solitary five dollars being saved now and then, thousands of dollars would be thus turned into channels of benevolence which otherwise would be worse than thrown away.

Yours very truly,

Ess.

For the Christian Messenger.

IN MEMORIAM.

MR SAMUEL STRONACH,

Son of the late Reis Stronach, Esq., left Margaretsville, on the 21st day of Oct., on a trading voyage in New Brunswick, as super-cargo. As has been stated in the public papers, through the violence of the wind in the course of the night following—probably about 4 o'clock the next morning—this amiable young man found a watery grave; from which his body has not yet been recovered. The severity of this painful bereavement is greatly mitigated by the satisfactory assurance, that for him "to die is gain." Happily he was led early in life to embrace the Redeemer. On the 31st day of March, 1865, at the age of 14 years, he was baptized by the writer, and became a valued member of the Baptist Church, of Lower Aylesford and Upper Wilmot. His path has evidently been that of the just. No complaint has ever been alleged against him; but he has been justly held in high esteem by all his acquaintances. Our young brother has greatly aided in upholding prayer-meetings, by singing, prayer, and exhortation. It is a pleasing consideration, that on the last Sabbath before his decease he delivered a very earnest and impressive exhortation in meeting. It is said that a short time before he left Margaretville he sang with friends the hymn commencing "When shall we all meet again?" It is also stated by those who were with him, and who very narrowly escaped with their lives, that he was most earnestly engaged in prayer till his strength wholly failed, and he was unable to speak. (Bro. S. was 21 years of age.) This deeply afflictive visitation was improved yesterday by the pastor, assisted by Rev. Obed. Parker, in a discourse addressed to a numerous congregation of persons evidently sympathizing with the bereaved mother, brothers and sisters, and other relatives, from Prov. viii. 17, "I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me." May this solemn call be duly regarded by the young, and prove the means of leading many to embrace the Saviour while in youth, and to walk in Wisdom's ways!—*Com. by Rev. C. Tupper.*

WILLIAM A. BUCHANNAN,

a native of Liverpool, N. S., on the coast of Labrador, on the 28th of August last, aged 35 years. The circumstances attending his death where briefly these. He left this port in April last, in company with two of his brothers, for a Summer's trading in the Labrador coast. His vessel was shortly afterwards wrecked, and while his brother was in Liverpool for material to repair her, the accident that cost his life occurred. It seems he was conveying some iron from one part of the coast to another in a small boat. A sudden squall struck her, sinking her immediately, with her only occupant. Nothing was ever seen of the boat or anything in connection with her after the squall. Parties saw him just before, but after it passed he was seen no more. The sea had seized its prey, to release it only when it "shall give up its dead." Bro. Buchanan was a member of the Liverpool Baptist Church. He made a profession of religion about 10 years ago, and was baptised by the Rev. Thomas Higgins. His subsequent walk shewed his high appreciation of the christian profession. His life was marked by deep devotion, fervent piety and constant seal. All who knew him regarded him as an honest and conscientious business man, and respected and loved him for his exemplary christian deportment. He was truly a "living epistle." "For him to live was Christ and to die was gain." Only recently did his parents receive positive information of his death. The blow has fallen heavily, yet it has fallen on "believing ones," who can kiss the hand that has smitten them, and bow in humble submission to the Divine Will. May the fullest measure of sustaining and sanctifying grace be imparted to all who have by this dispensation of Providence been made to "pass under the rod."—*Com. by Rev. J. Jones.*

AGUSTUS IRISH,

Of Mabou, Cape Breton, died on the 11th of last September, at the age of 22. This dear young brother merits at least a brief tribute of christian affection to his memory. Three years and two months before death's angel bade him come up higher, he became a child of God and a member of Mabou Baptist Church. From the happy hour of that gracious change until the exceeding gain of death became his experience, for him to live was Christ—Christ in spirit, in demeanor, and in diligent effort to save souls. In these respects, whether at home or abroad he was eminently Christ-like. Doubtless his amiable spirit, his exemplary life, and his untiring, though brief, labors in the Lord were not fruitless. The early premonition of death occasioned at first a struggle of the flesh. In common with others in the period of youth he had much of life and of earth to give up; but through triumphant grace he soon yielded to the infinitely greater gain of dying. And after enduring with great patience the trying changes, the increasing weakness, and the extreme suffering of lung-consumption he gently fell asleep in Jesus.

"Go, spirit of the sainted dead,
Go to thy longed for happy home;
The tears of man are o'er thee shed;
The voice of angels bids thee come.

If life be not in length of days,
In silvered locks and furrowed brow,
But living to the Saviour's praise,
How few have lived so long as thou!"

"O for the dead of those
Who, slumber in the Lord;
O be like theirs my last repose,
Like theirs my last reward."

—*Com. by Rev. A. Chipman.*

TOUNGOO.—Mr. Bunker writes that he has the gospel of Matthew [in Red Karen] nearly ready for the press, and hopes to put it in print about this time.