

For the Christian Messenger.
THE NEW ACADEMY BUILDING.

DEAR EDITOR,—

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For the Committee,
D. M. WELTON.

The Christian Messenger.

HALIFAX, N. S., NOVEMBER 10, 1875

THANKSGIVING, HUMILIATION AND PRAYER.

THE FIRST THURSDAY IN DECEMBER was named by the Convention as the day recommended to the churches to be observed as a Day of Special Thanksgiving, Humiliation and Prayer. The Report of the Committee on the State of the Denomination was published in the *Christian Messenger* of September 1st, and may be very properly examined as a foundation for this observance. Although the labors of the churches comprised in the Convention received a large measure of the Divine blessing and a large number of souls were gathered into them during the past year yet it was a far less number than we should be looking for every year. Whilst the increase of last year was:

In Nova Scotia, 1135	3 per cent.
In New Brunswick, 742	5 per cent.
In P. E. Island, 153	11 1/2 per cent.

Total.....2030 average 5 1/2 per cent.

In the previous year it was:

In Nova Scotia.....	2382
In New Brunswick.....	485
In P. E. Island.....	154

Total.....3021

It will require but a very cursory review of the experience of the past year to shew how much need we have of Thanksgiving; and we may well humble ourselves when we think of the contrast between our blessings from God and our labors for Him. In whatever department of labor we may have found, we must regard ourselves as unprofitable servants, and we should be found looking to the Most High in humble supplication for a more abundant blessing on our endeavours through the current year.

A Day of Thanksgiving for a bountiful harvest, and exemption from national and provincial calamity, was recently recommended by the Governor of the Province, and was in many places observed, and it the invitation had been sent on in good time to all the ministers of the gospel in the province, or more effort made to bring it to the notice of the congregations it would we believe have been more generally observed than it was.

The invitation to observe the first Thursday in December is from our brethren in Christian fellowship; and we think it a very proper and desirable thing for every church, that can possibly do so, to meet together on that day and hold appropriate services; so that a more general concern shall be felt in the advancement of the kingdom of Christ amongst us and around our borders.

The following article from the *Christian Era*, may afford some further suggestions as to the suitable spirit on which to enter upon the consideration of this matter:

ARE YOU READY?

Ready for what? For a revival. If you are, you will have one. You would have had one before this time if you had been ready for it. God is always ready to do his part towards it. The Holy Spirit is at work in the world, and has been at work doing his utmost to persuade men to do their duty toward God ever since he was sent. He has been striving with those who offer resistance, and helping those who ask assistance, to overcome sin and to render acceptable service to God. He does all he can, but like Jesus he finds many persons and places like Capernaum wherein he cannot do much because of unbelief. Ever since the day of Pentecost he has been ready to respond to the call of faith. He is waiting now to do a mighty work for any person, Church, or town where all things are ready for it.

Are you ready? Have you obeyed the voice which commands you to "prepare the way of the Lord and to make straight in the desert a highway for God?" Have

you done what you could "to make ready a people prepared for the Lord"? Have you exorcised the evil spirit within you by prayer and fasting? Do you feel the need of a revival of religion and a strong desire that God will visit you now? Are you "all with one accord in one place" and that place before the mercy seat? Have you confessed your sins against each other, one to another, and all your sins to God? Have you forgiven your enemies, as you hope to be forgiven? Remember that only he that hath "clean hands" shall ascend into the hill of the Lord. As of old, so now, there must be a preparation for God. Before he met the people at Sinai, they had to purify themselves for three days. Before they could enter Canaan they had again to cleanse themselves. Before he sent the fire upon Elijah's sacrifice the altar of the Lord had to be repaired. Before Jesus, John must needs come. It God is to come among you, you must make ready for him.

"We are ready," said the brethren of Chicago in their eloquent appeal to Messrs Moody and Sankey to begin their work in that city; "with peculiar emphasis, we feel we can say, We are ready." They have done what they could in way of preparation for a revival and now they send to the distinguished servants of God the Macedonian cry "Come over and help us." And what have they been doing to get ready? They say, "We have been moved to cry unto God that the great wave of his blessing might come even unto us, and flood all our city and all our land. We need a great outpouring of the Spirit upon our people. This need is most widely felt and most widely confessed. And so general and fervent is the desire in Christian hearts, that the eyes of the people are turned toward heaven in large expectation. We have asked the Lord to lead us. So far as we know we are wholly united in this request. We will greet you with most affectionate confidence and work with you as one man."

What church has been crying unto God as these ministers and laymen of Chicago have been? What one is so thoroughly united in desire and promise and purpose as they are, though of different denominations? What one is saying with the whole heart to God, "Come Thou among us; we will work with thee as one man?" That church will have a revival, nay, it has one already.

Is any church asking, Shall we have a revival? The answer is just as you elect. So far as God is concerned "all things are now ready;" he challenges you to try him and see if he will not open the windows of heaven and pour you out a blessing. Whether, then, you will experience that refreshing from the presence of the Lord which is so needful to your spiritual strength depends upon yourself. Are you ready? If not, begin the work of preparation which is the most sincere invitation. Carry on that work to completion, and rest assured that the Lord will come to you when you can say to him truly, "We are ready."

NEW SUBSCRIBERS with \$2.00 for 1876 will receive the *Christian Messenger* the remainder of 1875 free, and to January 1st, 1877 postage paid.

We have in the last issue of the *Canadian Baptist*, the Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Baptist Missionary Convention of Ontario, held on the 20th and 21st of October, at Guelph. The Annual Sermon was preached by Rev. A. H. Munro from Psalm xlviii. 12, 13, "Walk about Zion, &c."

Among the visiting brethren is the name of Rev. D. A. Steele delegate from the Maritime Provinces.

A committee appointed to consider the question of the Secretaryship reported that although the duties require "the whole time, energies and efforts of one of our strongest brethren," yet all things considered they did see the way clear to recommend the appointment of such a superintendent but recommended the reappointment of Rev. W. A. Stewart for the present year.

At the close of the Platform Missionary meeting a collection was taken up, when upwards of \$700 was subscribed to liquidate the entire indebtedness of the Convention.

The following is an extract from the Auditor's report:

The balance on hand at last audit, Oct., 1874, was \$758.35, at this audit it is \$546.47. There is now required to enable him to pay off all claims of Missionaries, the sum of \$966.25, leaving a balance due the Treasury of \$420.25. The entire receipts for the year were \$6,107.86, and the expenditure for the year \$5,681.59.

The Secretary also reported that the sum of \$923.25 had been received and paid out by him on the Evangelistic Fund.

A resolution was passed suggesting "that the sisters connected with our churches form themselves into mission circles for the purpose of aiding in Home and Foreign Mission work."

The next annual meeting is to be held with the Jarvis Street Church, Toronto.

HARD TIMES.—Please send on all payments due.

NEWTON CENTRE, MASS.—Rev. J. A. Durkee writes from this place. "There are about twenty students in attendance. Twelve of these are from the Maritime Provinces. That which most attracts and interests as is the widespread deep desire for a work of grace like that of 1858 and a general expectation that the Lord is about to visit, as then, his churches here."

We are glad to learn that our brother's health is steadily improving so that he can thoroughly enjoy his work.

EDUCATIONAL RECORD.

It is proposed to found a new University in Bristol, England. It is designed especially for the proper scientific and technical training of the young men of that section; but courses are to be opened, also, in all subjects which form the staple of university teaching. Some of the Colleges of Oxford and Cambridge will contribute for a term of years, in aid of the new university. The museum and library, now belonging to the city of Bristol, will become the nucleus, and funds for the endowment of chairs and for erecting class-rooms will be collected by subscriptions.

—The Democratic party of Ohio, as in other States of the Union, have been favorable to the demand of the Catholics, that the School fund shall be divided for the support of "separate schools." The demand probably has its origin with the Clergy, in distinction from the laity, as the latter are generally friendly to the public-school system. The present school law of that State provides that the reading of the Bible and other devotional exercises shall not be practised when any objection is made. But the Catholics are not satisfied with this. The opposition to the use of the Bible in schools, in other parts of the United States, probably proceeds from the Catholics. In Rochester, N. Y., the School-Board have prohibited the use of the Bible in the public schools. The School-Board of Chicago have, also, passed the same prohibition in regard to the schools of that city; and the Presbytery of Chicago have protested against this decision and demanded its repeal. This means that we have not yet reached the end of the discussion of the educational question.

—Schoolmasters are not allowed to marry in Austria without the permission of that government. A late official decree reads as follows:—"Considering, 1, That the schoolmaster, N., applying for permission to marry, is possessed of no private fortune and enjoys an income of only 431 florins p. a., which would not suffice to sustain a family; and, 2, That his affianced bride has no more than 400 florins of private fortune, the legal license to marry can not be granted to said schoolmaster."

—And, furthermore, it is enacted and declared, that into this liberal and Catholic institution shall never be admitted any religious tests; but, on the contrary, all the members hereof shall forever enjoy full, free, absolute, and uninterrupted liberty of conscience; and that the places of professors, tutors, and all other officers, the President alone excepted, shall be free and open for all denominations of Protestants; and that youth of all religions denominations shall and may be freely admitted to the equal advantages, emoluments and honors of this college or university, and shall receive a like fair, generous and equal treatment during their residence therein, they conducting themselves peaceably and conforming to the laws and statutes thereof: And that the public teaching shall, in general respect the sciences: And that the sectarian differences of opinions shall not make any part of the public and classical instruction; although all religious controversies may be studied freely, examined, and explained by the President, professors, and tutors, in a personal, separate, and distinct manner, to the youth of any or each denomination: And, above all, a constant regard shall be paid to, and effectual care taken of, the morals of the college."

This is a copy of the fundamental law, adopted more than a hundred years ago, for the government of a denominational college, as some people are pleased to call such an institution, —or to speak more precisely, for the government of a Baptist College. This institution is now known as the Brown University, and still is governed by the fundamental laws adopted a century ago.

The new Boarding House at Wolfville approaches completion. Something remains to be done before the drains, tanks and furnace will be in condition for work. But all this will soon be completed. The steward and his family are in the house. Students are moving into their rooms. The furniture of the dining room has been purchased. We understand that it is the purpose of the Committee having charge of the House to provide for a formal opening at the earliest convenient time. The grading of the grounds, and the erection of the verandah on the north side of the building, will have to be postponed till next spring. But everything needed for the comfortable occupancy of the House during the winter, will be provided. The number of students in the Academy is large, in both departments; and every thing is encouraging for the future. The number of students in the College is, also, larger than in some previous years; but the attendance in this department is seriously affected by the "hard times." Within less than a year eleven young men have left their classes from the want of funds to meet their necessary expenses. But the young men who are on the ground are earnestly at work; and the Professors manifestly have the purpose to effect improvements in all departments.

At a recent public meeting in this city, the assertion was made that at the end of the last session of Dalhousie College, the highest official authority in this Province said that it was to Dalhousie as a Provincial Institution, which was doing important Provincial work, that an additional grant of money had been voted—that this money was not given to the Presbyterian body or bodies. We have a little trouble with the tense of a verb in the preceding statement; for it is our impression that the Supplementary Estimates, in which the increase of grant to Dalhousie was included, were not voted until after the close of the last session of Dalhousie College. And we have further trouble in determining who "the highest official authority in the Province" may be. Sometimes the expression might refer to one officer, and in other connections to another. It seems to us that the highest official authority in such matters is the House of Assembly; and while the majority of its members voted for an increase in the grant to Dalhousie, they omitted to declare on what ground they made the increase. The two Presbyterian bodies applied for a larger appropriation for the College. The Governors of the College, also, petitioned for an additional grant and argued their case on three grounds: First, the Presbyterians deserved more money; secondly, the College may be regarded as Provincial and deserving of better treatment from the Legislature; thirdly, ours is the greatest College in the country and therefore deserving of more money—the denominational and the Provincial basis, and the basis of payment by results. The Governors petitioned for an increase of grant on each one of these grounds, and desired the Legislature to decide which it would adopt. The leaders of the Government managed to get the vote for the increase through the House, but, like wary politicians, omitted to insert any declaration in regard to the ground on which the additional grant was made. It was generally understood by the people that the money was given to the Presbyterians. That is the common opinion now. One thing is clear. If the grant was not made to the Presbyterians, then their arguments and petition may be renewed at the next session of the Legislature for twenty-eight hundred dollars more.

FOREIGN MISSIONS.

THE KARENS

Some remarks by the Rev. W. F. Armstrong in a recent letter to Dr. Cramp, are here transcribed, and commended to the attention of our readers. "The Karens have been compared by some of our home friends with the Indians of your woods. The comparison rests upon a total misapprehension respecting the state of things out here. The Indians are a mere handful in number, scattered through the world's conquering race, the race which leads the van of civilization. The poor Indian never can be expected to exert any influence there.—The Karens, on the other hand, although a small people are not so small comparatively as I know many of our brethren imagine:

—they form, in British Burmah, one-ninth of the population, and they are not surrounded by people who are ahead of them in civilization, but by peoples who like themselves, have nearly all yet to make—the Burmans, Shans, Taleings, Tounghoos, &c. A greater change has come over the Karen people since English rule commenced than has come to any other people in the East. The Gospel is working wonders among them. There is a future for the Karens."

TAVOY.

Some time ago Dr. Cramp requested Mrs. Armstrong to give an account of her labours at Tavoy. The first instalment of her Report has just arrived. It is contained in a letter dated Cocanada Sept. 3:—

"At the Convention in Rangoon which I attended before going to Tavoy the two courses presented to me were to go to Toungoo to help Mr. Bunker among the Red Karens, or to go to Tavoy and do from thence what I could for the Siamese. I chose the latter, because I thought it was more in a line with the plans of our people at home, but pre-eminently because I thought it was the right thing to do; nor have I ever regretted my decision. Whatever was done there was done in a vacant field, though it has been reaping where others had sown, it is a harvest that I fear would have been wasted in the field had there been no hand to gather it.

My attempt to work directly for the Siamese I had to abandon for precisely the same reason that your missionaries of a later date had to abandon their more extended plan of Mission labour. The Karens were too few and too far apart to make any direct effort among them a wise expenditure of time or means. On the 15th of January, 1873, I returned from my trip to Siam and took up my residence at the Karen Mission Station, Tavoy. I had yet three months in which to seek for pupils and make preparations for the rainy season School. I had already seen the principal villages of the East, having passed through them on my way to and from Siam. About the first of February I went up the Tavoy river to visit the Northern Churches. There are three large native Churches in this district, and I spent some time among them, talking with the people, taking the names of all who would promise to come to the town-school, holding prayer meetings with the women, and gathering every one in the evening to sing hymns. After returning to town I was anxious to visit the churches Southward, but it was already the hot season, when it is considered dangerous to travel; there was also much to be done in town preparatory to receiving a large school for the rains. I should probably have gone to Mergui had not a fall from my pony decided the question and kept me at home.

"I now turned all my attention to the study of Burmese. This whole Burman town, and especially the handful of disciples among them, without any one to tell them of the way of life, or lend them a helping hand, was too loud a call to be disregarded. I engaged the former teacher of the girl's school, who came an hour a day and taught me to read. This, with the Superintending of the roofing of the house, the two chapels, &c. and the building of a new house for the Karen teacher, sufficiently large to accommodate his family and twenty or thirty Karen boys beside, occupied my time till the first of May.

"I might say here, that always when in town we have had a Burman female prayer-meeting during the week, and another for the Karens, during the school session. Usually a Wednesday evening prayer-meeting, and four sessions on Sunday—an early morning prayer-meeting, two preaching services, and Sabbath School in the afternoon. When practicable, we have had separate services in Burmese and Karen.

"My work then from May to October was to ride in the early morning down to the Burman School, something more than a mile distant. This opened at 7 A. M., and I could give it an hour and be back in time for the Karen school, which opened at 8.30. I have always taught till 10, then taken an hour for breakfast and worship with the servants, and given the rest of the day to the School. My evenings also were given chiefly to the Karen girls and the little boys, all of whom lived in part of the Mission House with me.

"The direct fruit of our labours among the Burmans was satisfactory, though we had no baptisms to record. Some 70 or 80 children were taught to sing Christian hymns, and the elements of Christian knowledge were given,