

Next week we shall state who *should not* educate our children, and the following week who *should*.

[To be Continued.]

Pre-eminent Importance of the Study of the Scriptures.—Concluded.

The opinion has gone forth that the word of God is the most mysterious of books, and not to be understood, except through ponderous volumes of comments and notes. If it is mysterious in relation to the government of God, and the doctrines and ordinances of the Gospel, it is because *common sense* cannot find in it support for many of the opinions men have adopted, which are dear to those who hold them, as the sight of their eyes, and which must not be touched or questioned by any one, even at the remotest point, on pain of his being branded with heresy. The plain language of the scriptures must not be understood according to the obvious sense of the words used, but according to some article in a creed book; and should some ardent lover of the scriptures bring forth from their treasures a truth, long hidden under the lumber of men's opinions, instantly the cry of *heresy* is raised.

Every man who adopts a creed apart from the Bible, makes that his standard of orthodoxy, and bends his energies to make his Bible sustain it; *no wonder if he finds the Bible a mysterious book*.

By the word of God we are to be made perfect, and thoroughly furnished unto all good works. The word of God then must be our instructor and guide.

As our instructor we must receive it, esteeming it, concerning all things to be right; and not needing the aid of man to make it so. It must speak to us as men, as christians, not as philosophers nor as theologians.

We should reverence the scriptures and bow with humility to their authority. Do we want information respecting a doctrine? let us go to the holy word, to learn what God, the Lord, says concerning it—inquiring, "is it so?" and not saying "it is so."

Do we receive the word of God as our guide? we must follow where it leads;—it may lead us where we would not, and where we dread to go. But if the Bible, and the Bible alone, contains our religion, our religion must be like the Bible, in what we believe, and in what we practice. Let us read this book, not merely to look for a text, but that we may know what it teaches, on all the subjects it presents before us. Let us urge others to read it while we read it ourselves, not to the exclusion of every other book, but *more than any other*; yes, and more than all others together. Afe we weak? here is STRENGTH;—mourning? here is CONSOLATION;—fainting? here is the REVIVING ELIXIR;—ignorant? here is WISDOM.

Does our faith fail? here is the lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world;—Does our love grow cold?—here is the fountain filled with the warm blood of Jesus. Is our hope beclouded? here are the oaths and promises of God, and hence streams the radiance of our heavenly inheritance, to gladden our hearts.

Let us, my brethren, go anew to the study of God's word; determined not to know anything, as christians in doctrine, but what his word teaches; nor to admit anything to be christian in practice, except what this word plainly exhibits.

Let us study this word, and meditate in it day and night, with profound reverence and deep humility, earnestly seeking the aid of the holy spirit, that we may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, and be made conformable to his death; having the testimony of our own consciences that in simplicity, and godly sincerity, not by fleshly wisdom, we have sought to know, to do and to teach the will of God according to his own Word.

Correspondence.

[FOR THE CHRISTIAN VISITOR.]

ACADIA COLLEGE ENDOWMENT.

DEAR BRETHREN.—The subscription for the ten thousand pounds is now closed.—When the Board of Governors meet on the 12th instant, the subscription list will be examined, and measures adopted to collect the first instalment, and obtain securities for the remainder. Our kind friends who have given their names will bear in mind that an instalment of one fifth part of the sums subscribed is now payable, and that the remainder is to be secured by notes bearing interest, to be liquidated in four other annual payments.

They will no doubt be prepared to respond to the applications for these purposes, which will be shortly made by the authority of the Board of Governors.

When I state that the subscription for the £10,000 is closed, I only mean, of course, that the time has arrived within which that sum was to be subscribed. If the subscription had not reached that amount by this day, no payments would have been required; but as, happily, the object is accomplished, the money will now be called for, and will be cheerfully paid.

That specific subscription, therefore, is completed. But the friends of the College are informed that they may continue to found Scholarships, on the same terms and with the same advantages. It is hoped that there are many who will yet come forward, and thus enable the Governors, on realising a larger income, to increase the number of instructors, and adopt such improvements as may from time to time receive the sanction of experience.

Should not Scholarships be founded in honour of Henry Aline—and John Burton—and James Munro—and Thomas Ansley—and F. W. Miles? Who will take this in hand?—And then there are three brethren still living, (long may they live!) who have rendered important services to the denomination, both in connection with the College and otherwise, whose names should be placed on the honorable list. Let the Churches consider well their duty and privilege in this respect.

Brother Francis has sent in the names of certain brethren in Cape Breton Island who have subscribed various sums, amounting to £50, towards a Scholarship, to bear the name of the late Rev. Alexander McDonald, and to be used for the benefit of his children. Will those who loved that lamented brother, and derived benefit from his labors, in New Brunswick, subscribe the remaining £50?

The sum of £10,000 was the smallest sum that could be fixed on for the Endowment. If we can raise it to £20,000, so much the better.

A friend who had delayed giving his name till the time limited had nearly expired, observed, that he did not know what he was waiting for, "except it was to see if the hand of Providence would close up the door in some way, so as to have a reasonable excuse; but instead of closing up"—no, there was no "closing up"—and so he sent me his name. It is still time. There is no "closing up," in any sense. The Endowment door will be kept wide open, and all who enter will be welcome.

The year 1852 is past, with its joys and its sorrows, its mercies and its judgments, its manifestations and its mysteries. There were "terrible things in righteousness" in that year. The design and the issue will be seen hereafter. Meanwhile, may God give us grace to "redeem the time!" Yours truly,

Jan. 1, 1853.

J. M. CRAMP.

[FOR THE CHRISTIAN VISITOR.]

Cape Canso, N. S., Dec. 26, 1852.

DEAR BRETHREN.—I intended to have closed my mission in behalf of Acadia College before writing you, but my labors having been suspended in consequence of indisposition, I have concluded to send you the result of the agency in Cape Breton. It may be well to state that some influential friends have resolved to subscribe, but were not prepared to name the sum at the time of my visit. Others, also, who were absent at that time from the Island, will (I have reason to believe, from conversation with their families,) yet cheerfully contribute in aid of the object; so that with their additional subscriptions it is probable that the sum contributed by that Island will amount to £1000.

There are many interesting particulars which I might refer to respecting the island. The grandeur of its scenery, so admirably described in the *Messenger* a few years since by our beloved brother, the late talented Professor Chipman;—the hospitable character of the inhabitants generally, of which I could not speak too highly;—the sixteen ministers of the gospel furnished by the island, who not only added to the numbers but also materially increased and strengthened the talent and efficiency of our ministry—the marked manifestation of strong affection for such of our brethren whom God had taken to himself, viz: John Hull, Alexander McDonald, William A. Grant, &c. &c. The noble spirit evinced by our Presbyterian friends in open-

ing their dwelling houses for the preaching of the gospel and for presenting the claims of Acadia College, and their handsome subscriptions to the Endowment Fund, amounting in one place (Mabou,) to £175.—The neat and commodious chapel erected at Ship Harbor, Strait of Canso; the result of the noble, persevering effort of a single family. But I must defer entering upon these and many other equally interesting subjects for the present, and conclude with one observation, viz: That the valuable aid afforded the mission by the Rev. Hugh Ross, who accompanied me from North Sydney to Port Hood, over almost impassable roads, entitles him to the warmest thanks of the friends of the College.

I am, dear brethren, yours in love,

JOHN FRANCIS.

[FOR THE CHRISTIAN VISITOR.]

St. John, January 1st, 1853.

DEAR BRETHREN.—This is a season of the year when friends meet together to mingle their friendly souls in one, and we wish them all the happiness that can arise from fellowship with God, and his Son, and with one another in the truth.

The following thoughts may not be unacceptable to your readers, as our happiness as a Nation, a Province, a family—or an individual must arise from it. "Righteousness exalteth a nation, but Sin is a reproach to any people."—Prov. xiv. 34.

The Gospel of Christ is the ground work of all true happiness, for—

"His doctrine is almighty love,
There's virtue in his name
To turn the raven to the dove,
The lion to the lamb."

There can be no difficulty in proving the axiom of the wise man, that "sin is a reproach to any people, and righteousness exalteth a nation," since every age and country will render its quota of evidence to demonstrate the fact. Two propositions, then, are clearly before us, viz., that a people devoid of true religion is exposed to every evil, and that true religion is a great blessing to any country.

I. A people devoid of true religion is exposed to evil. All nations have their false systems of what they call worship, but these are rather a curse than a blessing to those who profess faith in idol divinities. What have the million gods of the Eastern Indies done for their devotees? Have they made them honest and virtuous, moral and trustworthy, sincere and humane? Or have they destroyed all those finer feelings of sympathy and love, parental kindness and filial affection, which will ever accompany that religion which came down from heaven? Truly it may be said of them as it was of the learned Grecians and the warlike Romans, by one who had traced the effect of idolatry on both; "They did not like to retain God in their knowledge," that is, the true God. Hence those vile affections and carnal appetites which are "a reproach to any people;" which really shew that the religion they possessed was not of God. It has fed the infatuated mother to throw her offspring to the alligators, and the deluded widow to mount the funeral pile of her departed husband, and the worshippers of Moloch to force their children through the fires, and the ancient Druids to imbue their hands in human gore. Surely such systems of religion as these would be far better banished from the world, and mankind left in the very darkness of atheism, for then murder would not be held up as a virtue, but a vice, and "the name of God" would cease "to be blasphemed among the Gentiles."

False religion is precisely the same in its effects wherever it is found. What is it that paralyzes that beautiful Isle of Erin, and pauperizes a country rich in every natural advantage? It is Popery! that system of superstition which holds a great part of Christendom in bondage. It is priestcraft! which is the most crafty of all crafts! It is ignorance! a misery which error always draws in its train, and fosters with more care than the pelican does her young. Oh! Ireland, what shall we do for thee? Shall we follow the advice of thy false friends, and let thee alone to the tender mercies of thy priests and bishops? No, no; we will give thee the Bible, the Word of God, as the antidote to thy misery, as a balm to thy wounds, as a cordial for thy care. Then ignorance shall bow before knowledge, religion, true religion shall supercede superstition, the midnight or mid-day assassin will protect both the property and

lives of his countrymen, and Ireland shall appear as the gem of the ocean, and her sons as a people whom the Lord hath blessed. What makes Italy, Spain and Portugal, notwithstanding their many advantages, the meanest nations of Europe? They are debased by Popery, with its cardinals, inquisitions, nunneries, and winking madonnas. Hence they are overrun by brigands, torn asunder by revolutions, and cowed down by the galleys and executions. The absolutisms of popes and priests encourage the same vile spirit in emperors, kings and presidents, until the people, both noble and peasants, are driven from Christianity to rebellion, socialism, and infidelity, as the only refuges from misery and superstition.

We now proceed to notice that—

II. True religion is a great blessing. "Righteousness exalteth a nation," this fact is illustrated in the history of the Jews—who in the days of Moses were taught the law of the Lord; "To read therein by day, and meditate by night," until Joshua became the Captain of the Lord's host they were put in possession of the promised land. Here David ruled them in the fear of the Lord; and Solomon built them a Temple, and prayed for their prosperity, which they fully realized under the happy reigns of those pious monarchs, Asa, Jehosaphat, Hezekiah and Josiah, when victory, peace and prosperity (in general) crowned their days.

That righteousness exalteth a nation is equally manifest from the history of the Roman empire. That people appeared in the full blaze of their glory, when under the happy reign of Constantine the Great, idols were destroyed, the true worship of God established, the eagle surrendered to the cross, Christianity became triumphant through the known world, and war, anarchy and confusion gave place to "faith, hope, and charity," so that Satan fell as lightning from heaven, and Jesus reigned in the hearts and lives of the people.

Righteousness has exalted many people in our days. Take for example the South Sea Islands, or Otaheite in particular. When missionaries first visited that dreary spot, it was a useless island in the midst of the wide ocean, bound tightly round by a choral strand. Then ignorance, war, and rapine reduced it to a kind of hell upon earth. Now the gospel has cultivated its soil, civilized its warriors, and blessed and elevated its daughters. Now industry, frugality and prosperity mark its history, while Christ, hope, and glory raise the affections of the people from things below to those above.

Righteousness hath greatly exalted our highly favoured land. The dawning of the day was seen at the reformation, when Wickliff translated the sacred volume, afterwards improved by Tindale and Coverdale, and printed in good old English for the comfort of the people. Our sun brightened gloriously when the Act of Toleration was signed by that constitutional monarch, William III., and each man could "sit under his own vine and fig-tree, and none could make him afraid;" but our meridian beams were reserved for the happy period when the Test and Corporation Act were swept away, and the Reform Bill passed: when missionary societies were established, Sunday schools extended, benevolent institutions multiplied, and free trade united all countries into one great brotherhood. We enjoy a gospel ministry, daily increasing the armies of the living God, and triumphing over many adversaries, while thy march is onward, onward; till thou reach the goal, the palm, the crown, which God hath prepared for them that love him!

God has blest Great Britain and America in a variety of ways far beyond their deserts. This is most conspicuous in the rich effusion of the gospel of Christ. No other countries are so extensively favoured, so that we can sing those sweet lines of the poet with peculiar emphasis—

"My lot is fall'n in that blest land,
Where God is truly known;
He fills my cup with liberal hand,
'Tis he supports his own."

The grace of God may be seen in the senate house, both among lords and commons; in the ministry of the establishment as well as that of dissenters; in the mansions of the rich and the cottages of the poor; in the ranks of the army and between the decks of the navy. Yea, these nations have been blessed with the fostering care of God more than any others, for while they have suffered from war, anarchy and famine, we have not heard the can-

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