

Messenger and Visitor.

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 A. H. CHAPMAN, Editor.
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Messenger and Visitor.

WEDNESDAY, OCT. 21st, 1906.

OUR BAPTIST SCHOOLS.

With encouraging prospects our schools at Wolfville have entered upon another year. It is unnecessary to say to the readers of the *Messenger and Visitor* that the record of these institutions is one which affords us as a denomination cause for great thankfulness if not for pride. The work undertaken by our fathers in prayer and faith and in the pursuit that it was necessary to the best development and usefulness of the denomination has been carried forward not without much thought and labor and self-denial on the part of their successors. There have been vicissitudes and perplexities. There have been times when those who were leading in this educational work seemed to themselves to be as Moses was between Pharaoh and the sea, which behind was slavery and ahead apparent destruction. But a voice seemed to say to them—"Speak to the people that they go forward," and forward they have gone by God's help through the sea of their difficulties into larger conditions of liberty and power. It is not to be contended that in all the history of our educational work nothing has ever been undertaken which was not marked by the highest wisdom and nothing has ever occurred which leaves no occasion for regret. To err is human, and wherever the human element enters some traces of imperfection in purpose and execution are to be expected. Speaking in general terms, however, the management of our college and its affiliated institutions has been characterized by wisdom and integrity, as results abundantly testify. Of few enterprises could this be affirmed with greater emphasis and confidence. The management was probably never more careful and efficient than it is at the present time, and our institutions are in a position to claim and deserve in the fullest measure the confidence and support of the denomination.

It is gratifying to note that the College has entered upon the new year with a large number of students and under otherwise favorable circumstances. At the formal opening which took place on the evening of Oct. 9th, Dr. Sawyer alluded to the condition of matters in regard to organization and the manner in which the classes had gotten to work, as exceptionally good and indicative of a prosperous year. Two of the professors having spent their vacation abroad engaged in special studies, have, we learn, returned refreshed and stimulated for their work. President Sawyer's successor has not yet been appointed. It may be that the Governor will be able to take definite action in that matter at the November meeting of the Board; but if no appointment shall be made until June, it is not probable that any interest of the College will materially suffer. Much may depend on the action that is finally taken in this matter. It is one in which the denomination should feel a profound interest. The churches and all who have the cause of Baptist education in these provinces at heart should pray that the Board of Governors may be divinely guided to select the right man for this very important position.

It is to be desired that the pastors should systematically bring this educational work to the attention of their congregations and seek to promote in their people concerning it an intelligent and prayerful interest. It is to be desired also that those who are engaged in this work as teachers or as managers should use to the full the opportunities which are offered for interesting the pastors and their people in its behalf. We need to keep constantly in mind the great purpose to promote Christian education. Our aim must be not merely to develop intellectual forces and capabilities, but also to develop moral character and to promote spiritual life. If we fail in these latter things it will be hard for us to show a sufficient reason for our continued presence in the field of education. Year by year, it would seem, an increasing number of young men and women are seeking the advantages of a college education. These are going forth to exercise in the world an influence corresponding to the enlargement of power which their education has given. It is of the greatest importance that the insensible influence thus exerted shall be positive and in the highest sense salutary. In order to this it must be Christian. The characters of those who are passing through the colleges into the world of earnest, practical life must be permeated and dominated by Christian faith and love.

It is therefore a matter of utmost importance to us as a denomination in connection with our grand purpose to promote the coming of Christ's Kingdom in the world, that Acadia College should be, and continue to be, not merely nominally, but positively and powerfully a Christian institution. It is not enough that in all that pertains to thorough intellectual training the College be fully abreast of the times. It is highly important that it be that. But beyond that, it is of the utmost importance that in the future as in the past—the spiritual life of the College shall be strong and dominant. Much will depend in this matter on the spiritual sympathy between the College and the churches. Let these great interests be felt by the pastors to be of vital concern, let the churches be instructed as to their importance, let prayer go up continually for our institutions of learning, and especially at this time, that the Divine blessing may rest upon teachers and students, so that the year which has just been entered upon may be one of abundant blessing.

THE ARMENIANS RELIGIOUSLY.

A reader of the *Messenger and Visitor* has expressed a desire for information respecting the religion of the Armenian people. As this is a subject in which probably many others feel an interest, we shall endeavor in this article to give some account—necessarily very brief and fragmentary—of the religious beliefs and practices of these people whose terrible sufferings at the hands of the Turks have made them, during the past few years, a spectacle to the world and have so strongly appealed to the sympathies of Christian men and women on this continent and in Great Britain.

The Armenians claim for themselves the distinction of having been the first people to embrace Christianity as a nation. There is a tradition, which, it is said, finds general acceptance among the Armenians, that their king, Agbar, who reigned in the days of Christ, being afflicted with a disease resembling leprosy and having heard of the great healer who had appeared in Judea, sent a letter to him requesting him to come and heal him and offering to Jesus in Edessa an asylum from the persecution of the Jews. The tradition further says that Jesus promised that, after his departure, a disciple should be sent to Agbar who should cure his malady and bring life to him; and this, that after the Lord's ascension Thaddaeus, one of the seventy, was sent by St. Thomas to Edessa, and Agbar, with many others, believed and was baptized. It is further matter of tradition that St. Bartholomew, Jude and other early preachers of the Christian faith, suffered martyrdom in Armenia. After the first success of Christianity in that country there was, it is said, a relapse into heathenism until about A. D. 300; when Gregory, the Illuminator, arose and preached the gospel with wonderful power and success in Armenia, baptized as converts King Tiridates and thousands of his subjects, and was ordained the first bishop of the Armenians by Leontius, bishop of Caesarea, about A. D. 302.

The Armenians accordingly maintain for their church a claim to independent origin and existence as an ecclesiastical body. They rejected the decrees of the council of Chalcedon (451) and accordingly have been anathematized as heretics by both the Greek and Roman churches. In doctrine and practice the Armenian ecclesiastical system seems to be quite closely related to the Greek or Russian church and somewhat less so to the church of Rome. They baptize infants (or adults converted from Judaism or other religions) like the Greeks, by partially immersing them in the font and then thrice pouring water on their heads, but unlike the Greeks, they admit to their communion Roman Catholics or Protestants who have been baptized by sprinkling. Like the Roman Catholics, they believe in transubstantiation, adore the host, in the mass and profess belief in the seven sacraments; they also pray for the dead though they reject the Roman doctrine of purgatory. The people have the communion in both kinds, the broken bread or wafer being dipped in undiluted wine and laid on the tongue of the fasting communicant. They worship saints and their pictures as well as the cross, insist on the perpetual virginity of Mary, maintain baptismal regeneration and the spiritual efficacy of penances and sacraments, and regard confession to the priest as essential to salvation. They have nine grades or orders of clergy, viz., the Catholicos, bishop, priest, deacon, sub-deacon, porter, reader, exorcist and candle-lighter. There are two grades among the priests: the varabed, (doctors or teachers) who must remain unmarried, and the parish priests who must be married before attaining the rank of sub-deacon. The bishops are generally elected from the varabeds. At the head of the entire hierarchy is the Catholicos. He resides in the convent of Richmadzin in the province of Erzerum, which is under the rule of Russia. The authority of the Catholicos is universally recognized except by a small body under the patriarch of Aghtamar on Lake Van. The Armenian church has also patri-

archs at Sis, Constantinople and Jerusalem, all acknowledging the higher ecclesiastical rank of the Catholicos. The Patriarch of Constantinople, however, has been since 1461 the civil head of all the Armenians in Turkey, and under his direct ecclesiastical jurisdiction are all the dioceses of Turkey, excepting those belonging to the patriarchates of Sis and Jerusalem. He takes rank with the great pashas of the Empire and is elected by the ecclesiastical heads and the notables of the Armenian community in Constantinople. There is a body known as The United Armenians which acknowledges the supremacy of the Pope of Rome. Its members are said to number 100,000 in the Turkish Empire and its representatives are to be found in different parts of Europe.

About 1830 Protestant missionaries in connection with the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions began work among the Armenians in the Turkish Empire, and though persistently opposed by the Armenian ecclesiastical authorities, the missionaries have been enabled to carry on their work with some degree of success. Important stations of American Congregational and Presbyterian Missions have been maintained in Turkish Armenia, comprising in 1894, 15 stations, 158 out-stations with 150 American laborers and 791 native helpers, 119 churches with a membership of 11,481 and an attendance at Sunday schools of 46,864. The Mission has also 29 theological schools, 31 colleges and schools for boys with 1443 pupils, and the contribution of the natives to the American Board of Missions was \$34,788. There are, we believe, other Protestant bodies carrying on mission work among the Armenians but their operations are less considerable.

THE WISE WILL HEAR.

Respecting the character, composition and authorship of the Book from the first chapter of which the Bible lesson for next Sunday is taken, there are many questions which will repay investigation and which the student will find more or less satisfactorily answered in the commentaries. It does not fall within our purpose to enquire into these questions here. What we desire to note first in connection with the lesson is the general purpose of the Book including, of course, the passage immediately under consideration. That purpose is instruction. It is to this end that these words of the wise have been uttered and preserved and treasured in a book. Further, the instruction offered is in the highest sense serious and practical. It is the wisdom of life which men of wisdom and of religious faith have deduced from practical experience of life in its various phases and conditions. The aim is to impart wisdom rather than intellectual culture. It is not to stimulate the imagination, to present ideals, to cultivate esthetic sentiments, philosophic moods and pious emotions; the aim is rather to help men to that practical wisdom which they require in dealing with the every day events of life. It looks to the impartation and the acquisition of discernment and understanding, to instruction in wise dealing in righteousness, judgment and equity, to give sublimity to the simple and to the young man knowledge and discretion. There are many things in this book of Proverbs—in the discourses of its earlier chapters and in the sententious maxims of its later pages—which are of priceless value to the man who desires to get understanding and to cultivate the companionship of knowledge and discretion. The young man will do a wise thing who so fastens in his memory these precepts of wisdom that when he needs them most they shall not be beyond his call.

Knowledge in order to be symmetrical and healthful must have a religious basis. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of it. The Bible puts God before all things. It never undertakes to prove His existence, but assumes His being and authority as the grand axiom of all right thinking and of all right living. "In the beginning God," are the first four words of the Bible, and the denial of His existence is never recognized as possible, except in the heart of the fool. The Hebrew youth of Solomon's day was asked to take God for granted as the one fact eternally supreme and central in human thought and life. And in view of the results of human history, seeing what evils have come to the nations who have forgotten God, seeing what blessings have come to those individuals, generations, nations by whom the God of the Bible has been worshipped, trusted and obeyed, we may well ask whether the youth of this day can do better than accept the God of the Bible as the Supreme Fact in the universe, the first axiom of all his thinking, the object of his reverence, his faith, his love, his deepest hope? Surely wisdom demands from the young man this recognition of God unless he can show that he has discovered some better foundations on which to build.

The young man or woman who chooses wisdom and walks in the fear of the Lord will not despise parental counsel. The instruction of a father will be treasured and the gracious law of a mother will not be despised. Parental instruction is not always the wisest possible. But gen-

erally it is unselfish, sincere, and therefore valuable. No one is likely to feel so deep a solicitude for the child's welfare as the parent. Young men and women can put on no ornament as becoming as that in which they clothe themselves by a tender deference to the wisdom of their parents and a polite respect for the laws of the household. And, on the other hand, they cannot do anything to render themselves more unlovely than by arrogant disrespect and disobedience toward those in whom they owe such sacred duties.

The sinners who entice make their evil presence felt in every generation. There may be great difference between the circumstances of those who attend our Sunday schools today and those Hebrew youths to whom these words of wisdom were first addressed. Our young men are not likely to be strongly tempted to join hands with brigands or freebooters, but, through one course or another, the temptation comes to turn away from God and the admonitions of wisdom, to despise a father's instruction and forsake a mother's law for the sake of the fellowship which sinners are offering.

There are two truths which ought to be emphasized in connection with the concluding verses of the lesson. First, the life to which sinners entice is basely and cruelly selfish. It always means injury to others in some form, generally in many forms. Sometimes the evil man sheds his fellow's blood, sometimes he despoils him of his goods, sometimes he is inspired by the diabolical design to rob his neighbor of virtue and honor. Sometimes evil men despise all law, human and divine, and sometimes again they cunningly shield themselves under the protection of the law of the land. They organize combines, corner markets, engage in the traffic in strong drink, or other nefarious business; thus by obstructing the natural channels of trade and industry, destroying the business of others to enlarge their own, making the bread of the poor scarcer and dearer to them and putting temptation in the way of every honest toiler, they "pay out" of the poverty and sorrow and ruin of others, "find precious substance," and "fill their houses with spoil." There is also this other fact that the way of sinners is their own destruction. If it means ruin to those who are their dupes or victims, it means ruin still more terrible to themselves. For men to shut their eyes to the law of the Lord and to despise the counsels of wisdom, is to choose death instead of life. It is the greed of gain—or of what seems gain—in some form or other, which now, as in the days of the ancient Hebrew sage, takes away the life of those who surrender themselves to its power.

TESTIMONIAL TO DR. STEELE.

A meeting was held last Friday evening in the Baptist Church, Amherst, for the purpose of presenting the retiring pastor Rev. Dr. Steele with an address and a testimonial as expressive of the sentiments entertained for him by the church and congregation. A large number were present. On the platform were, Revs. J. H. McDonald and J. L. Miser, the present pastors, Rev. J. W. Bancroft of Springfield, and the pastors of the Presbyterian, Methodist, and Episcopal churches of Amherst. Hon. T. R. Black presided. The address, read by James Moffat, Esq., church clerk, referred in the most appreciative terms to Dr. Steele, to the honorable and unblemished reputation which he had borne in public and in private during the 29 years of his pastorate in Amherst, to the interest, which, as a citizen, he had taken in everything pertaining to the welfare of the community, and in most kindly and appreciative terms, to the services he had rendered as pastor and preacher and the strong and tender ties which had bound pastor and people together. The testimonial consisted of a purse containing the handsome sum of \$540 which it is said will be supplemented by other contributions. Dr. Steele responded in a graceful address, reviewing the history of the church and town during his residence in Amherst. Appropriate addresses were also delivered by the other ministers present.

CALLED HOME.

Another venerable father in our Baptist ministry has heard the Master's call and has bidden farewell to earth and all earthly labors. The death of Rev. D. W. C. Dimock occurred at the residence of his son, W. D. Dimock, M. P., Truro, on Tuesday, the 18th inst. Mr. Dimock was born in December, 1812, and was ordained to the ministry December 1841, nearly fifty-five years ago. Most of his active life in the ministry was spent in Colchester county, as pastor of the Onslow and Truro churches. His last years were spent quietly and happily with his son and daughters in Truro, enjoying the esteem and affectionate regard of many friends and neighbors. As a sheaf of ripened grain he has been gathered. Father Dimock was the fourth in a direct line of Baptist preachers descending from father to son—a truly apostolic succession. The large number who attended the funeral services on Thursday afternoon and the addresses delivered in the church attested

to the general esteem in which the departed was held. The address of Pastor W. F. Parker, of the Truro church, where Mr. Dimock worshipped, will appear in our next issue.

It is this week our sad and unusual duty to record the death of two of our brethren in the ministry. We have noted above the departure of Father Dimock, of Truro, called home in a good old age and after the completion of a long period of service, and now again it is our painful duty to record the death of another servant of Christ, called away in the midst of his years and his usefulness. The death of Rev. I. R. Skinner occurred at the home of his brother, J. W. Skinner, Weston, Cornwallis, on Saturday last. Readers of the *Messenger and Visitor* know that Mr. Skinner was taken ill at Weston at the time of the Convention in Berwick. He had gone from his home at Oak Bay, N. B., with his family to visit his friends in Cornwallis and to attend the Convention. At the time he seemed to be enjoying his usual good health, but was taken suddenly ill and symptoms of heart-failure occurred. For a few days his condition caused his friends alarm. Then he began to improve and it was thought that in a short time he would be around again. But soon it became apparent that he was not rallying, and his strength continued gradually to fail until the end came. His taking away in the midst of his years and his labors, and with a young family needing his care is one of those strange providences which we vainly strive to fathom. For Skinner was a man beloved and respected by all who knew him. We think it safe to say that those who knew him best esteemed him most highly. He was honest, kindly and true, faithful in the ministry to which the Lord had called him, and his work has been blessed. The intelligence of his death will cause sorrow to many. A suitable obituary sketch will appear in another issue.

The Relation of the Study of Literature to the Study of Philosophy.

Notes of the Opening Lecture at Acadia College, Oct. 9, 1906.

PROF. S. H. KESTRUP, D. D.

Among the subjects in our curriculum you will find Literature and Philosophy. These subjects, however, are more nearly related than the mere fact that they are thus associated would indicate. Their most interesting connection for us springs from their common relation to the study of man. The study of the human mind comes more from their common relation to life than from any artificial standard or even from any speculative relation on the basis of cultivating what we call the faculties. In current thinking man is not so much an orderly arrangement of separate qualities as he is a function, an activity, a force, a life. Whatever therefore comes into this activity to strengthen and complete it is of high value, and as the life of the time is the collective force of these separate lives whatever affects them will be proportionately valuable. So it comes to pass that a high estimate is placed on life and it becomes a determining standard of value. This estimate is due to many causes. The growth of science and its ameliorating effect on the conditions of livelihood; the increased means of transportation and communication making the race almost one family; the greater power of modern democracy in which government is in the hands of all the people—all these have made the solidarity of the race so evident that each shares in the life of all and so values his own life the more. Then the influence of Christian civilization tends to the same result. The power of medical science to relieve pain has made pain more precious; the philanthropy of the age has shown how much may be made of the fragments of life, wails and wrecks of humanity; and the spread of popular education has made each life capable of a wider range of enjoyment. Then the effort to distribute the best life by Christian missions, the power of Christianity to reveal the worth of man as man and what he may become, and the increasing conviction of the relation of this life to life to come—all these have helped to increase the interest of life and to broaden and deepen its currents. And so it comes to pass that studies like other things are prized, not for themselves alone, but for the degree to which they help us to solve the problems, to bear the burdens, to increase the power and awareness of what is called the life of the people. This view is higher than that of mere utilitarianism which would ask for what contribute to the lowest elements of life. This spirit looks upon truth as related to human souls; it desires the knowledge that is power, but a power that is in every way helpful, enlarging, uplifting.

This current of thinking which has grown since the days of Kant will, it would appear, be the determining force in the future. Studies will be cherished not for their age but for the food they can furnish to the millions perishing for lack of knowledge. It is this element of life in our thought that gives personal interest and permanent place to philosophy and to literature. It is this view of whatever value they possess as means of mental discipline they have this great claim that they seek to explain the meaning of life and to contribute directly to it; the thoughts of the poets and philosophers "enrich the life-blood of the world." We shall look into these subjects for a few moments to see how each helps the other. We shall thereby see, also, how both add to man's welfare.

Let us note:

I. The Study of Literature as helpful to the Study of Philosophy, and

II. The Study of Literature as helpful to the Study of Philosophy.

Before these points can be discussed we must briefly indicate the nature and scope of literature and of philosophy. Literature is variously defined, but it will be enough for our purpose to consider it as "the artistic presentation of the fruits of reflection on some of the more obvious problems of the world and of human life." It puts these problems before us in the greatest variety. It leads us into them in the most subtle and charming ways, it shows what they are and stimulates the feelings that arise therefrom. The artistic element is a source of power to the great facts of suffering and enjoyment. From Homer to Chaucer and from Chaucer to Tennyson what a presentation of the heights and depths of human experience; what pictures of the passions, the hopes and fears, the struggles and aspirations, the concord and conflicts of nations, of tribes, of classes of individual souls! What portraits of the supernatural is depicted and what depths of the human mind are shown in the divine; what a search into the mystery of human life!

All this we have portrayed in the literature of the ages, and in the beautiful flights of song, now in mournful elegy now in heroic and dramatic exhibition of the real life, now in the epic that mingles the human heroic and the divine inspiration. All this is set before us in the glowing pictures of poetry and prose, and in the character sketches of fiction. It is presented in every form adapted to interest, instruct and transform.

For literature can deal only with a part of the problems that beset us, for only a part of these will lend themselves to the artistic treatment which forms a large element of literature.

Here accordingly appears Philosophy which may be for our purposes defined as "the systematic and scientific presentation of the fruits of human reflection on all the problems of the world and of human life."

It is easily seen from this definition that the field of inquiry is extensive. Philosophy asks: What is man? What is he? What does he do? What are his relations to the world and to God? It asks what the world is and what God is to man?

It will be seen from these statements that the sources of philosophy are in all nature, especially in human nature. It will also be seen that literature and philosophy are, in the first place, closely related. "The poet for instance, like the philosopher, is a seeker for truth and we may even say for the same kind of truth." (Caird). But this is only his highest vision.

"Philosophy," Caird says, "is in the end at one with poetry. It might even be said that ultimately it is nothing more than an attempt to prove that which poetry assumes as given, or to enable us by reflection to recognize as the universal principle of reality that which poetry exhibits to us in special creations. Yet the essential difference of method makes it difficult for two such disparate activities to come to any understanding with each other." It is true, however, that philosophy is as one thing and look upon literature as another. And we now ask how the study of literature helps the study of philosophy?

It helps (1) by giving us the most interesting and instructive presentation of man. Of course in studying what is in man there is (a) The introspective method, the study of consciousness, the looking into the mind itself in its operations to see what is taking place there. Nothing can replace the study of man. It is true that in examining this action we have only our recollection of states of consciousness; but this knowledge is close and personal and becomes to each the key to the consciousness of others—the condition of interpreting the works of others.

But introspection is not all! It is not enough. A philosopher needs all the facts of human life that can be compassed by a finite mind, and he needs knowledge of man and not simply of a man—even of so good a man as himself. And so literature comes to his aid as revealing what is in other members of the race—men, women, nations, races, places, times, and in the most interesting presentation of man's intellectual powers. Read a book of philosophy like Locke or Hamilton's *Metaphysics* and you have indeed a valuable setting forth of man's mind as far as you can see it, but it is a chart. But then read literature and what a new thing man's mind becomes to us. Look at this intellect in its operations as depicted by the great authors, and what marvelous powers it is seen to possess.

See what various views of nature are presented by Chaucer and Wordsworth, Shelley and Tennyson—to go no farther afield. Or see men and women as they are set before us in the complex relations of life in the dramas of the past, the tales as shown in the range of characters from Caliban to Hamlet; from Juliet's nurse to Portia, and Desdemona and Cordelia. See this mind going to evil's height in an Edmund or rising to such heights of faithfulness as Horatio and Kent. Or look at the exhibition of conscience in the remorse of Lady Macbeth or Claudius or Dimmesdale and compare this with a cold analysis of a moral faculty. See the working of this conscience as portrayed in the multifarious forms of tragedy, in the many types of society, in the complex relations of life.

We say with Hamlet, "What a piece of work is man! how noble in reason! how infinite in faculty! in form and moving how express and admirable, in action how like an angel, in apprehension how like a god!"

Now this view of what man's intellect is in its range, its elasticity, its power can be given nowhere else than in literature. It is this view of the intellect in its extent and richness that is in Milton's mind when he makes Belshazzar say:

"For who would lose, Though full of pain, this intellectual being, To perish rather, swallowed up and lost In the wide womb of uncreated night, Devoid of sense and motion?"

In brief, literature gives to us the fullest, the most interesting, the most instructive presentation of man.

So the great masters have presented the world of life with their own greatness. Says Caird: "If we could learn the

circumstances of temporary life, we should know much of the elements of human life." It puts these problems before us in the greatest variety. It leads us into them in the most subtle and charming ways, it shows what they are and stimulates the feelings that arise therefrom. The artistic element is a source of power to the great facts of suffering and enjoyment. From Homer to Chaucer and from Chaucer to Tennyson what a presentation of the heights and depths of human experience; what pictures of the passions, the hopes and fears, the struggles and aspirations, the concord and conflicts of nations, of tribes, of classes of individual souls! What portraits of the supernatural is depicted and what depths of the human mind are shown in the divine; what a search into the mystery of human life!

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