

Messenger and Visitor

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University Consolidation.

The subject of University Consolidation is again under discussion. During the past few weeks there has been in some of the Halifax papers considerable writing upon the subject. It has been so far almost, if not entirely, a one-sided discussion. The Morning Chronicle, we observe, quite bluntly declines to publish an article from a correspondent in opposition to the projected union, on the ground that those who are opposed to it should in common fairness keep silent until the advocates of the movement have said all that can be said to convert those who are of a contrary opinion. As a single writer in the Halifax Herald has already published five articles of considerable length in advocacy of the project, one would not like to predict the date at which a word per contra may be deemed permissible.

The interesting proposition which is now being discussed—in the affirmative—is, as we understand it, to the effect that the several Arts Colleges or Universities now existing in the Maritime Provinces, shall be consolidated in one University. The proposition originated with the authorities of King's College, the Episcopal school situated at Windsor, N. S., and it has been favorably considered by the authorities of Dalhousie College, Halifax, who have appointed a committee looking to co-operation of at least to conference with King's in the matter. The other colleges will be, doubtless, perhaps have already been—approached as to the project, and will also in due time take action for or against it. Just what the scheme for consolidation may involve in the minds of its projectors, we are not informed. Indeed we suppose it is premature to speak of it as a scheme. It is rather a project, and the formulation of the scheme would naturally wait upon the acceptance of the general proposition looking toward consolidation. So far we can gather, however, from what has been written, it is expected that the consolidated University, if it should materialize, would depend for support partly on public funds to be voted by the Legislatures of the several Provinces and partly upon funds or contributions now going to the support of the denominational colleges, with whatever donations or bequests might in time come to it from other sources. In support of the movement, it is argued that the present plan of having many colleges is to be condemned on the grounds of economy and of efficiency. Departments that are duplicated at large expense in the several colleges could, we are told, be made much more efficient at a much smaller outlay, and a thoroughly equipped scientific department—a great desideratum which none of the existing colleges is supplying—would, with consolidation, become practicable. Further, it is said that the religious bodies are finding it difficult to maintain their educational work even at the present standard of efficiency, and that consolidation, by relieving them of a part of their present burdens, would enable them to give a more ample and much needed support to their theological seminaries, ladies' colleges, and other schools, as well as to all the other work of the denominations.

A great deal can be said, certainly, in favor of having one strong and thoroughly equipped college or university for these Maritime Provinces instead of eight colleges handicapped by inadequate endowments, failing more or less, in spite of their best efforts, to keep abreast of the requirements of the time. With a clean slate as to the work of higher education, we should doubtless not attempt to reproduce the present situation. But we are not at this work *de novo*, and we cannot with an easy stroke cut clear from the past in this matter. Time

was—sixty-five or seventy years ago—when doubtless the Baptists of these Provinces would have been very glad to lend every encouragement to the project now apparently so earnestly desired on the part of King's and Dalhousie, but there was then a very decided inertia as to any such movement on the part of those institutions. Since then some interesting chapters have been added to the educational history of these Provinces, and the Baptists have necessarily played some part in it. For our part we have no sympathy with those people, if there are any, who would cherish ancient grudges, and a very small opinion of the wisdom of any man who would cut off his nose to spite his face. At the same time we must recognize the fact that the present situation has grown out of the past and is still rooted in it. Our denominational colleges are not so much like buildings set upon the earth's surface as like trees planted in the soil, and to remove them, or so disturb them as would be necessary in the acceptance of a scheme for University Consolidation, would seem to be pulling a good deal up by the roots. The Baptist people of these Provinces, three-quarters of a century ago, felt very deeply the need of a school at which their ministers, and others among them who desired intellectual training, might be educated. They had no wealthy men among them and no rich endowments from over the sea to provide for their wants. It was in their poverty that they undertook this work of education, and their schools have been established and sustained at the cost of much sacrifice. The college, which has grown with their growth and strengthened with their strength, has been a most influential factor in promoting their development. What is true of the Baptists in this connection, is, in some considerable measure, true of the Methodists of these Provinces. Each of these bodies regards its college not only with strong attachment and a pardonable pride but as being, under present conditions, absolutely essential to their advancement. What attitude the Roman Catholics may be disposed to take toward the proposal for consolidation we do not know, but we should suppose that their three degree conferring colleges in these Provinces are the outcome of a well-considered policy which they are hardly likely to abandon. The religious influence which the denominational college throws around its students has always been felt to be a powerful argument for its existence, and the sense of its importance in this respect has, we judge, lost none of its strength either among Protestants or Roman Catholics.

We do not indeed write these things with the purpose of prejudging or discrediting the proposition looking to University Consolidation. On the contrary, we should hope that the whole subject might receive open-minded consideration from Baptists as well as from others. We believe that under the conditions that have obtained in the past, the denominational college in these Provinces has been worth all and much more than all it has cost. Will it under changed or changing conditions have a correspondingly high value in the future? This is a question which at the present juncture we ought not perhaps to ignore. It seems clear that if we are to keep our college as well abreast of the times in the future as it has been kept in the past, we must love and cherish it with a devotion no less hearty and practical than that given to it by those who founded it and watched over its early development. We must be prepared to face the fact that, with the advance of the times and enlarging opportunities, enlarged endowments or other means of support will be imperative; and in continuing to assume the responsibility of this work can we give reasonable assurance that it shall be done so efficiently that in time to come we shall not be justly charged with having failed in the service which we undertake to render to the cause of higher education? It may be expected, we should think, that those immediately in charge of our educational work, and the Baptists of these Provinces generally, will listen patiently and without unreasonable prejudice to what can be said by those who are advocating University Consolidation, but we take it that before endorsing such a scheme they will need to be assured by more definite facts and more cogent arguments than have yet been presented that the advantages to be gained would overbalance those to be surrendered.

Editorial Notes.

Our excellent contemporary, 'The Canadian Baptist,' appeared in its first issue of the new year in a new dress of type. There has been a change in the editorial management, by which Mr. George R. Roberts who for several years has been the Business Manager of the paper, becomes also its Managing Editor. The paper will have a large staff of editorial writers, including a number of the best known Baptist ministers in Ontario. The new arrangement is not expected to involve any material change in the paper as to its policy and general management.

Somewhat contrary to an editorial intimation in our last issue, we publish this week two articles having refer-

ence to a subject which has been under discussion in our columns for some weeks. Mr. Clark's article was received last week, but too late for publication, and Mr. Waring had also intimated his intention of writing on the subject. Mr. Clark pressed for the publication of his quotations from Mr. Spurgeon, on the ground that as he had already been quoted in the discussion, his position in reference to the subject at issue was liable to be misunderstood. We have accordingly acceded to Mr. Clark's request. Mr. Waring deals with the subject in a non-controversial spirit, and we think his article will be received as a new and valuable contribution to the discussion of the subject. There will, we think, be no good reason for continuing the discussion at present.

The many friends of the Rev. H. Morrow, of Tavoy, Burma, among the readers of the MESSENGER AND VISITOR, will be glad to know that he is enjoying excellent health. He writes: 'I have never been so well and strong since we came to Burma, and it is not because I am resting by any means, for I work incessantly.' At the time Mr. Morrow wrote Nov. 24th, it was the beginning of harvest, and the rice crop, he says, is fine, the best for many years, the rains having continued later than usual. Mr. Morrow's work is among the Karens. He speaks of the work among these people as slow and often discouraging. 'We work, & exert, pray for something better and wait in hope. But the same is needed in all places and among all who own His name. May a wave of more likeness to God spread over the whole world.'

Our Brother N. P. Whitman, as will be seen by his communication in another column, is of opinion that the Twentieth Century Fund of fifty thousand dollars, which our people of these Provinces have undertaken to raise for missions should be raised by the churches, without the employment of a general agent. It certainly would be a most desirable thing that the churches should act in this spontaneous way. It would be a blessing to themselves and it would save expense. We confess, however, that we have little hope that the fund would ever be raised without the aid and inspiration which a strong and earnest man, giving his whole time to the work, would bring to the churches and their pastors. But if there are any of the churches which are prepared to raise their quota without outside aid, we are sure that the committee in charge of the work would be glad to have their assurance that this will be done, and thus Mr. Adams would have the more time to devote to the churches which need and desire his cooperation in the work.

At present writing, Monday the 13th, it is ten days since a case of smallpox was reported in St. John, and there seems to be good ground for hope that there will be no new cases in connection with the present outbreak. Since the disease was introduced by the case of the sailor, Barton, in October, there have been in all 99 cases and 23 deaths. Only a comparatively few persons are now suffering from the disease, and they all, we believe, are in a fair way toward recovery. Rev. H. H. Roach has been very busy of late distributing contributions of bedding and other clothing to those families who have had to have their clothing destroyed on account of the infection. Services were resumed at the Tabernacle church on Sunday, Rev. Dr. Manning conducting the services morning and evening. Mr. Roach expects to be relieved from quarantine during the week, and, we understand, will take a brief vacation, visiting his friends in Nova Scotia, before resuming his usual pastoral duties. For the preservation of his life and health during this trying period of heroic service the members of his church and all his friends will render devout thanksgiving. We trust that his ministry here may be all the brighter and more fruitful because of the dark cloud which has rested upon its commencement.

Fatherhood of God.

DEAR MR. EDITOR:—Notwithstanding the excellent arguments of Bro. Freeman and his lieutenants, notwithstanding the fact that these gentlemen are backed by the whole Word of God, unless the subject is dropped and the columns of the MESSENGER AND VISITOR left for newer material many of us will be compelled to believe in the Fatherhood of the Devil after all.

Very truly yours,

A. J. ARCHIBALD.

The above note, taken in connection with expressions from other valued brethren, illustrates one of an editor's difficulties, that, namely, of pleasing many men of many minds. Thus, Bro. C. writes to say:—'I am greatly interested in the discussion on the Fatherhood of God, etc.; keep it up, it is as good as a course in theology.' Other brethren likewise express their sense of the value of the discussion. Bro. M. who has criticized the MESSENGER AND VISITOR rather strongly because it 'did not reflect the thought of the denomination,' expresses his deep satisfaction that, now at last, he is beginning to find out what his brethren believe. But Bro. X expresses the apprehension that, if the brethren begin to tell what they believe in reference to the fundamental doctrines of the faith, there will be an end of Christian fellowship among them, and then Bro. A. comes and says, 'Well, we have seen what he says. If we had time we should like to sit down and rest awhile and try to think out something that would be likely to please everybody.'