

## Messenger and Visitor

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### SOCIETIES AMONG THE STUDENTS OF ACADIA.

The work the student does in preparation for lectures of the class room, in collateral reading, and in efforts to reduce to written form the results of his study must always be the principal part of his education. He must educate himself. If the student really works Professors can do much for him; but the essential part is the every day independent effort of the student himself.

But in addition to the regular studies of the course there is provision for helping the student to use his knowledge and to prepare him for leadership when he leaves college. In personal study he gains power; in college societies he learns how to use his power. And this knowledge is beyond all price. For unless a man can impart his knowledge and so relate himself to his fellows as to help them, his education loses half its value. Power is not enough; power must be related to be worth anything. The energy of Niagara is useless until it is so related to machinery as to do some of the world's work. The study of human nature as embodied in his fellows is the complement of the student's poring over books. Now the student life at Acadia is organized so as to provide for the exercises of the gifts of all. The first of the societies named in the calendar is the Acadia Athenaeum. "The object of this society is the improvement of the students in debate and public speaking. The laws and regulations of the society are subject to approval of the faculty. Besides its weekly meetings arrangements are made for a course of public lectures during each college year. The society has under its control a reading room furnished with a selection of newspapers, provincial and foreign, and other periodicals." In this society numbers of our public men have cultivated their powers of speaking and obtained the facility of expression and the ability to think on their feet by which they wield a potent influence. And the power of speaking is not apparently waning. Within recent years the students of Acadia have met students of other colleges in public debate and have always done credit to themselves. In only one case have they failed to win a decision in their favor. We have also to remember that a larger number of the graduates of the last twenty years have distinguished themselves in the pulpit and in the courts of law, and in legislative halls, showing that the older graduates have worthy successors. All this proves the value of the debating society. We hope the students will avail themselves of the opportunity offered and that every man who takes his B. A. will be able to take his part in public assemblies as an educated man and as a citizen. Not all will become orators. It is not necessary that all should win fame for public speaking. But a man is at a disadvantage who cannot give expression to his views on matters affecting the public welfare.

The second department of organized College life named in the Calendar is the Acadia Athletic Association. In the elder days of the College the students took their exercise in walking over the hills of Horton. But "old times are changed, old manners gone." Now "a large and convenient campus gives abundant opportunities for Athletic games in the Spring and Autumn. There is also on the University grounds a large and well equipped Gymnasium. From the first of November to the first of April the students have regular gymnastic drill under the director of the Gymnasium. In May of each year a public field day is held."

Some well informed people think too much attention is given in the large Universities to foot-ball and other forms of Athletics. We are of this opinion. But there is a use as well as an abuse of College athletics. And we think Acadia in general has the use with the abuse reduced to a minimum, it being understood that some who go to College will be principally known as athletes. The situation of the college is one of comparative isolation and so match games that are most likely to develop unhealthy excitement are limited, while enough competition is available to keep up earnestness in practice. The instruction of the director in the Gymnasium has intellectual value. That work is does may be inferred from the brilliant record of Acadia

men in the Intercollegiate Competition held in St. John a few weeks ago.

A College Young Men's Association has been formed and is in a flourishing condition. At present there are about ninety members. Addresses are delivered monthly before this society by clergymen invited for the purpose. The Executive Committee of this Association publishes in the summer vacation of each year a College Hand Book containing a large amount of useful information." The young women of the college also have formed an Association similar in aim to that of the young men. Under its direction in addition to regular meetings a prayer service is held every Sunday morning of the college year. Acadia is visited during the year by representatives of the International College Y. M. C. A. who give much encouragement and stimulus by their reports of Christian work in other colleges the world over. Acadia has for several years been represented at the summer meetings at Northfield, Mass., and the evangelical spirit is strengthened by the reports of the delegates.

The Acadia Missionary Society, dear to the graduates of many years, holds public monthly meetings. "Its aim is to cultivate interest in Missionary work, and especially to gain information respecting Christian Missions in foreign lands." It has been the means of leading young people to enter on service as foreign missionaries.

The Propylaeum is "a society composed of the young ladies in the Arts course. The meetings are held on Friday afternoon. The exercises consist of studies and discussions on assigned topics. Occasional public entertainments of a social and literary character are given by the Society."

While literature and religion are cultivated by the societies here named, Science is not forgotten. "A King's county branch of the Nova Scotia Institute of Science has been organized in Wolfville and holds monthly meetings in the college library. The purpose of the Society is to encourage the study of local Natural History, and to disseminate scientific knowledge of a general character."

"Prayer meetings, conducted by the students, are regularly held on Sunday morning and on Wednesday evening throughout the college year. These religious meetings have been maintained ever since the founding of the College. All students are required to be present at morning prayers, and also to attend public worship regularly on the Sabbath."

The maintenance of the foregoing Societies shows the presence of a strong current of intellectual and moral life for the continuance of which the societies themselves are almost sufficient guarantees. The students of Acadia seem to be thoroughly organized for the promotion of an intense and manifold life.

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### THE FREE CHURCH SITUATION.

The more the condition of things brought about by the recent decision of the Privy Council in reference to the Free Church of Scotland is considered the more remarkable—not to say inexplicable—does that decision appear. Some idea of the present situation may be gathered by the following statement contained in a London despatch to the New York Evening Post:

"In Edinburgh 23,000 worshippers are deprived of churches, 55 ministers occupy their homes on sufferance, and the victorious minority has not a single minister within a radius of twenty miles to fill the gap. In Glasgow a hundred and three congregations, with seventy thousand membership, are spiritually houseless, while their pulpits have to be supplied by the Presbytery of Wee Frees, consisting of two ministers only, resident in Glasgow. Dundee, Aberdeen, indeed most of the Scottish centres are in similar predicament. Wee Frees is preparing to take over the Glasgow and Aberdeen theological colleges, though they have not a single professor. Magnificent Free Church missions, involving an annual expenditure of \$250,000 and 304 European and 344 native missionaries pass to twenty-eight Highland ministers, who have neither funds nor missionaries. Parliament is just rising, with more thought of grouse shooting than the Church crisis, and will do nothing. No way out has yet been suggested, beyond the temporary expedient of an emergency fund, which has already reached a hundred and eighty thousand dollars."

It appears that the victorious Highland ministers refuse to surrender any part of what the judgment of the House of Lords has given them in trust funds and buildings except on the condition that the majority retrace the whole doctrinal progress involved in union with the United Presbyterian Church.

The Outlook in commenting upon the decision of the House of Lords in this case says: "The decision is to the effect that the Free Church which made that costly sacrifice in 1843 to free itself from control by the State, did not thereby free itself from the right of the State to hold it to its ancient formularies; that by modification of these and union with another branch of the Presbyterian body it has destroyed its identity; that consequently a ministry who split from it in protest against these changes, though only two or three per cent. of the whole, is the only body that the law can recognize as the Free Church and as the legal holder

of the entire property of the church." If such a decision is law, it is hard to see how it can be in accordance with justice and common sense. It would be justice that the Free Church minority which refused union with the United Presbyterian Church should receive a share of the invested funds of the church proportionate to their numbers, but in right and reason they could hardly ask for more. If the change in the views of the majority had been a sudden one, and all the funds of the church had been contributed on the understanding that they would be used to promote the principles held by the minority the case would be different. But it cannot be fairly claimed that this is the case, and it must be regarded as gross injustice that the majority should be arbitrarily deprived of funds which they and their fathers have contributed, simply because they do not in all respects hold the views which were held by the Free Church fifty or sixty years ago. The injustice is the more apparent when it is considered that the small remnant which by the decision of the House of Lords has been put in possession of all the funds and buildings of the Free Church is quite incapable of administering the trust. They have no ministers to fill the pulpits, or professors to man the colleges, or missionaries to carry on the missions, and so far as these enterprises are dependent upon popular support, they will of course be also without funds.

The British Weekly in a long editorial on "The Scottish church case" says: "They [The sufferers] know, as their fathers in Scotland have known, that the visible reward of fidelity is often nothing but pain and baffled hope. They know also that if the crisis is met with faith and firmness the result will be a precious addition to those old records of constancy which are the reserve force of humanity. It has seemed oftentimes that on these the church of the martyrs and the church of the martyr of martyrs has sustained her life. Very soon defensive and recuperative energies will find free play, and the prospect will brighten."

Dr. Nicoll, if we do not mistake his meaning, has something against the Scottish church because it has not come up to the help of the English non-conformists in their struggle on the Education question, so fully as it should. He says: "It has been said that no individual, no family, no nation has ever so grievously erred or transgressed so deeply as the great Christian church. There have been doubtless in the Free churches, as in all churches, things to mourn over. It has seemed to some who have watched her with friendliest eyes that there have been signs of that dry rot of the minds noble temper which often comes of prosperity and ease, a gentle indifference to the great issues of the present, and the hard fights that are being fought for righteousness. Whether this be so or not, the Free churchmen have come to a crisis where justice is the first and last word, and they have learned beyond the possibility of forgetfulness that indifference to righteousness in one cause promotes unrighteousness in all. Nor will they forget that a church's life is not in the abundance of things it possesses. It can dispense with numbers, with wealth and with worldly honor. Indeed the church has never been so strong as when it looked to Christ alone. If the ministers rise to the call, their people will stand by them to the end. Rats, of course will run."

### THE SCENE OF JUDSON'S IMPRISONMENT.

The life of Adoniram Judson, one of the most interesting of all biographies, has few parts more thrilling than the account of his sufferings while undergoing imprisonment. In Rev. E. M. Kelly's report to the Missionary Union there is a reference to the place and its present condition.

AUNGBILN.—"This is the oldest outstation of the field. The historical interest of this village as the prison site of Dr. Judson's sufferings has always attracted visitors. In 1888 I was so fortunate as to obtain by purchase for the Union the compound in which the prison stood, a compound in which Dr. Judson and Mrs. Ann H. Judson verified the power of the Gospel of Christ to give in this our day the noble and heroic strength of the martyrs. In 1899 the monastery on the land where it was purchased was burned to the ground. We not only mourned the loss of this interesting building, but have been unable to rebuild. In January of this year two generous Baptist travellers and their families visited Aungbinle, Mr. Ambrose Swasey of Cleveland, Ohio, and Mr. Edward Canby, of Dayton, Ohio. Unsolicited they gave me \$800 to build here a suitable brick chapel as a prison site memorial and a house for a native preacher. The two buildings were erected and a front fence placed on the compound and the whole place put in order. It seems like a model outfit for an outstation. On Sept. 13 the chapel was dedicated with pleasant and appropriate services. Mareng The Nyo, A. T. M., of Mandalay, gave the furniture and entertained the gathering for the day. The furniture given is worth more than \$80. These new buildings help us to work Aungbinle from vantage ground." Mr. Kelly reports that a new church, with 40 members, has been formed at Amarapura, an old Capital of Burma, and that the number of baptisms reported is larger than usual.