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THE FATHER OF THE BRITISH FLEET.

ANOTHER HONORED CANADIAN.

Of all British North Americans who have entered the Imperial army and navy, the most prominent living representative is Sir Provo Wallis, G.C.B., the Senior Admiral of Her Majesty's fleet, who attained his 100th birthday on Sunday, April 12. He is a Nova Scotian by birth, born in the historic city of Halifax, and the son of Provo Featherstone Wallis, who was Royal Naval Commissioner on that station. Young Wallis was destined for naval life, and, when 13 years of age, joined H.M.S. "Cleopatra" as midshipman, and served throughout the war with France which was so steadily waged during the early part of this century. The most prominent feature of Sir Provo's life is that he is the last survivor of the memorable fight between H.M.S. "Shannon" and the United States ship "Chesapeake," which took place on the 1st June, 1813, resulting in the total defeat of the American vessel and her capture by the "Shannon." The story of this fight has been ably told by many pens, and it is unnecessary to here enlarge upon it. It is sufficient to say that the victory was complete in every way. Captain Broke, of the "Shannon," was dangerously wounded, while his brave opponent, Captain Laurence, received injuries which resulted in his death. Lieut. Wallis, being the senior officer unhurt, took command of the "Shannon," and sailed her into Halifax, where they were received with every demonstration of joy at the result of the fight. Shortly afterwards Lieut. Wallis was promoted to the rank of Commander, followed up in due time by further promotion to post captain. In 1857 he became Admiral, and, despite his great age, still remains on the list of active admirals to the fleet, of which he is senior. To do honor to the event, Her Majesty ordered his flag to be hoisted and saluted at all the chief naval stations and the crews of all ships in commission to commemorate the glorious victory of which he is sole survivor. Since his retirement from active service he has been living at Funtington House, Chichester, England. We trust that he will still be spared to the nation as a good type of the old "Mariners of England," who guarded her seas and shores so faithfully nearly a century ago.—*Dominion Illustrated.*

NEESIMA.

The life of Joseph H. Neesima (1843-1890), covers a period of marvellous progress in the history of Japan. At the age of fifteen he refused to worship the

"whittled" images which stood upon the shelf in his father's house, giving no heed to the food set before them. He began to have a thirst for knowledge, and longed to "bring a light into the darkness" of his country, and in 1864 he left Japan by stealth, at the risk of his life, and became "a penniless wanderer with an unknown tongue, in a vast, mysterious world of which he only knew that truth was there." When he died in 1890, Christianity had gained a domicile in his native land; the entire Bible had been translated and circulated freely among the people; the first day of the week had become a legal rest-day; nearly ten thousand persons were

enrolled as confessors of their personal faith in Christ; and Neesima himself was an ordained minister of the gospel and the president of a University in Kioto which he had founded, with an attendance of nearly a thousand pupils of both sexes. In the constitutional parliament now in session thirteen of the members are said to be Christians, one of whom is chairman of the "committee of the whole." The personal history of Mr. Neesima furnishes a striking illustration of the providence of God, in its use of the printed page instead of oral utterance as a means of illuminating the mind and revealing the way of salvation. From the story as told

by himself after a few months' residence in this country and before he had mastered our language, it is evident that before he had ever talked with Christian men he had learned to pray and to trust in the heavenly Father.

A sketch of his life, prepared by Dr. J. D. Davis, has just been printed in Tokio, and the following extracts give the story of his enlightenment, principally in his own words:

"A day I visited my friend, and I found out small Holy Bible in his library, that was written by some American minister in China language, and had shown only the most remarkable events of it. I lend it from him and read it at night. I was afraid the savage country's law, which if I read the Bible, will cross [i.e. crucify] my whole family."

This abridgement of the Bible contained little but the grand facts of creation and redemption, and these were entirely new to this earnest young soul which pored over its pages. The opening sentence of this book was: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." He says:

"I put down the book and look around me, saying: I, who made me? my parents? No, my God. God made my parents and let them make me. Who made my table? A carpenter? no, my God. God let trees grow upon the earth; although a carpenter made up this table, it indeed came from trees; then I must be thankful to God; I must believe him, and I must be upright against him."

He at once recognized his Maker's claim to love and obedience, and began to yield them. He prayed: "Oh, if you have eyes, look upon me; if you have ears, listen to me." From this time his mind longed to read the English Bible, and he burned to find some teacher or missionary who could teach him.

On first asking permission of his prince and his parents to go to Hakodate, where he hoped to meet some Englishman or American, he got not only a refusal, but a flogging; but in March, 1864, having at last received permission, he left his family in tears and started on his search for truth, "not thinking, that, when money was gone, how would I eat and dress myself, but only casting myself on the providence of God."

He spent a year on the "Wild Rover," on his way to the United States. While they lay in the harbor of Hong Kong, Mr. Neesima found the New Testament in Chinese, and felt that he must have it; but how should he get it, since he had promised not to ask the captain for money? He thought of his two swords, and he



SIR PROVO W. PARRY WALLIS, G.C.B., WHO ATTAINED HIS 100TH BIRTHDAY ON APRIL 12.

W. N. POZER
GALLION QUE