

The Evening Telegram.

ST. JOHN'S, JANUARY 12, 1888.

Want of Originality in the Pulpit.

The little mind who loves itself, will write and think with the vulgar; but the great mind will be bravely eccentric, and scorn the beaten road, from universal benevolence.—Goldsmith.

The present, says Mr. Gladstone, is pre-eminently an age of imitation, in the pulpit as well as on the platform, and this opinion of the "Grand Old Man" seems to be largely endorsed on both sides of the Atlantic. Whether clergymen are too much occupied with temporal affairs to admit of much "thought" in the compilation of their sermons, or whether the ecclesiastical mind is not so fertile and fruitful as it used to be, we are not prepared just here to determine. But certain it is, any way, that our clergymen do not now preach with anything like the power and effect which characterized their proclamation of the Gospel in years gone by.

From some cause or other, there appears to be a great lack of originality on the part of certain divines in Newfoundland to-day. They are attentive enough to some of their duties, it is true. But too many of them have fallen into the highly objectionable habit of discharging their pulpit obligations in a perfunctory manner—with the form but without the power.

A day or two ago we received a lengthy and interesting letter on this subject from an intelligent outport gentleman who has been here spending the holidays. He very sharply criticises the style and matter of one or two of our city clergymen, and asks a few really pertinent questions with respect to their fitness for "the sacred calling." We do not wish to hurt the feelings of the gentlemen to whom he refers. Hence our reason for not giving the public the benefit of our correspondent's comments, in full, with respect to their conduct.

Let a brief quotation suffice for the present. He says:—"The other Sunday I dropped into 'one of our fashionable churches, just as the service was about to begin. The minister, who occupied an elaborately-carved rostrum, 'was a young man of somewhat finical appearance. It was evident at a glance that his heart was not in the work. He seemed to be conscious of the fact that he had a certain duty to perform, and the quicker he got through with it the better. I could tolerate 'even these undesirable traits of character. 'But imagine my feelings when he commenced his text and began to preach, word for word, as near as I could remember, a sermon delivered by one of his predecessors 'nearly fifteen years ago! I can tell you I felt pretty bad over the matter, and kept 'wondering to myself, after the service was over, whether it could be possible that the 'young man was shirking his duty by preaching somebody else's old sermons and trying 'to make the congregation believe that they were his own, or whether he was acting on 'instructions from a party behind the scenes 'in reproducing those venerable reminders of 'the 'musty past.'"

Our correspondent then strongly animadverts on the whole proceeding, and expresses the hope that the young preacher may soon be led to see the error into which he has fallen and strike out for himself an independent line of action. No greater mistake could possibly be made by a young clergyman than to try and please his superintending by preaching the latter's stale and, to say the least, plagiarized sermons. What is preaching? is a question to which there could probably be as many replies as to what is truth. At the same time it must be borne in mind that originality is always required. Almost every minister, and almost every man, has his own taste, and his own standard, and his own weight, and his own measure on the subject. But there is no second opinion as to the necessity for originality in language as well as in gesture.

If young preachers expect to succeed in their holy calling, and prove a blessing to themselves and those amongst whom they labor, let them cultivate the habit of thinking, and let their minds always be fixed on lofty themes. The subject of a man's thoughts contributes much to the formation of his character. He whose imagination is wont to dwell on the world and worldly things, will be apt to contract a character of a worldly cast, as is the case with the young clergyman to whom our correspondent refers. He will be "of the earth, earthy." But he who is used to lift up his thoughts to high and heavenly things, will hardly fail of deriving thence, by God's blessing, and infusing into his own character, some particles of a celestial spirit; and of advancing, by means of these "exceeding great and precious promises," in that improvement in the inner man, which St. Peter terms a "partaking of the divine nature." Bishop Mant says:—"As 'the skin of Moses' face shone, when he 'had been holding converse with the Lord on Mount Sinai, so will the soul that ascends 'to Mount Zion, and meditates on 'the city 'of the living God,' with all its appropriate and divine accompaniments, reflect in some 'degree its loveliness and splendor.'"

The Present State of Newfoundland

CONFEDERATION.

WHEN a question arises that affects the future of a new country, the wisdom of age is not the only nor the chief light for the guidance of opinion, and the lessons of experience alone are not the safest channels of instruction. "Laudantur temporis acti," "give glory to the things of the past," is the generally accepted dogma of the experienced. It is based upon a feeling not only blameless but even creditable to that human nature whence it springs—the feeling of enthusiastic respect for persons, things, scenes and systems, that have accompanied one's whole career, and been associated with whatever good one has admired in the past and loves to recall in the present. As a feeling, then, this enthusiasm for things past cannot be reprobated, while as a guide for the future it cannot be accepted. If it were once received as the standard rule for national or even individual development, what progress could be expected, what wholesome change could be effected, what useful enterprise undertaken? If we admit, as a principle, that things were a great deal better long ago than they are now, or even may be under any change of system, the inexorable conclusion presents itself directly, that we had therefore better return to the past as soon as possible, dwell in the past as long as possible, and never be enticed from it by any consideration whatever. This conclusion we cannot accept, neither, therefore, can we accept the theory which would urge it upon us.

Giving to experience its due weight, as a motive of judgment, it should be the moderator, indeed, but not the opponent of legitimate progress. The aspirations of a young people should not be checked by the venerable tradition of the past era. We require for the proper discussion of a great political change not so much the matured wisdom of age as the hardy and aspiring hopes and energies of youth.

Let the dead past bury its dead, Act, act, in the living present, Hearts within, and God o'er head.

The whole argument of the Anti-Unionists is now an appeal to the past, and repudiation of change from a past system, for the simple reason that that system is a time-honored one. This is apparent from the question put with an air of triumphant defiance by the advocates of the old system of things, "What one single substantial benefit is Newfoundland to receive from Confederation?" That question has been answered, that gauntlet taken up. Here I only allude to it as a proof that they adhere to an old system simply because it is old; for if they cannot see what benefits may accrue to us from Confederation, how then can they prefer the old system to it? Preference supposes comparison between two positive goods, and choice of one before the other, but our adversaries prefer without comparing. They not only put all the weight in one scale of the balance of judgment, but they remove the other scale altogether, and ignore its existence—a system of weighing which, whether applied to things material or intellectual, can never produce an equitable result.

If the advocates of Confederation can show no good reason for joining it, how is it that its opponent can sum up for them, and publish as theirs, so many real and imaginary ones! How is it moreover that the very objections they make to the measure furnish often excellent reasons for adopting it? They set up arguments for Confederation as one would set up nine-pins, for the pleasure and triumph of bowling them down. One of them, they say, is that the people are now so wretched here that any change would be for the better. Yes, that is really one argument, and supported by the testimony of the Chamber of Commerce as to the productiveness of a trade sucked dry by monopolism; it is a very good argument, and has not yet been bowled down, nor will not easily.

A second argument of ours is (they say) that Canadians and their capital would come to the Colony, &c. I am not disposed to admit that this is an argument with the Unionists—at least they do not prefer it as a principal one. They cannot tell whether Canadians will come here or not, if Union be effected. They know they will come if they find their interest to do so, and that they will be far more likely under Confederation to examine, and more competent to decide, whether their advent here would be a source of profit to them or not, than they can be at present. Certainly in our present state of imbecility and pauperism it is to be hoped that Canadians may not anticipate the wishes of Confederates here, and make themselves witnesses of our pitiable misery. Unionists do not exactly expect Canadians to come here, any more than Americans or any other enterprising people; the country will be as open to capitalists of any nation after Confederation as it is now, and doubtless better prepared for their visits. What we stand in need of is, not Canadians, but Canada

itself; which means a strong and solvent Government, protection for trade, association with prosperous provinces, a cheap participation of all the means of subsistence we require, an opening for the middle classes, and a sufficiency for the poor. We can have these from Canada without ever seeing the face of a Canadian, so it is hardly fair to put the arrangement about "Canadian Capitalists" in the second place on the list of Unionist arguments.

The Unionists' third argument is "that union is strength." If that is their argument it is a very ancient and respectable one, nicely illustrated in Æsop's fables by the allegory of the bundle of sticks. We must admit that the union in the fable was a strong union only because it was a union of separate strengths; if, instead of sticks, the members of that union had been "ropes of sand," then indeed they were no stronger when united than when separate, but it remains to be proved that Confederation would be a union of "ropes of sand," and not of sticks. To prove this it is not sufficient to assert (even with truth) that there can be no "natural bond" between us and Canada—because the union that produces strength is not always a "natural bond," it is often a purely accidental one, often a political one, oftener than all a mechanical one, as in the very case of the bundle of sticks, whose nature it was not to unite, so that in point of fact they had to be forcibly tied together.

But it is not true that there is no "natural bond" between us and Canada. If we give the word "natural" the only meaning it can have in this discussion, the bond of our union with Canada would be "natural." 1st. Geographically—our relative positions on the map show that a union between us would look natural enough. 2ndly. It would be natural, socially descending, as our population do, chiefly from the same stock, using mainly the same language, and having the same form of Government and institutions. 3rdly. It would be "natural," politically, for it would give us a firm position, and unmistakable national identity before foreign nations, secure us consideration from them—and at home utilize those relative conditions of supply and demand that exist between us. I simply deny therefore the statement that there could be no "natural bond" between us and Canada. This statement is not corroborated by showing that our trade with Great Britain or the States is far greater than our trade with Canada. Be it so. May not our trade with those countries be as great as ever after Confederation? If the natural course of our trade is with the States or England, who is going to interfere with that course? Who is going to turn its channel forcibly into another direction? Trade, when free, will always have its own way, but the more competition it meets with, and the more rival attractions that are presented to it, the more diversified and vigorous will be its course, and it will shower greater benefit upon those who embark in it. In case of Confederation, Canada probably will not draw our trade from the shores it seeks at present, but it certainly will open up a new market for it, without attempting to close the old one except by the action of fair competition.

But my letter grows long and I must reserve further remarks till to-morrow. Yours, &c., AN OUTSIDER.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

THE Rev. Moses Harvey has again assured a palpitating and anxious country that he is out of politics and out of the management of church affairs as well. Let the holiday festivities therefore proceed.

ONE of the few immortal names that were not born to die is that of McNeilly, or McNeally. McNeilly may die, but McNeallyism will live as the vitalizing principle of the Reform Party; and the "policy" of those precious "Reformers," like Satan, will doubtless always be permitted to exist for some wise purpose.

THE following list shows the number of persons arrived and departed from Newfoundland, from 7th March, 1887, to 31st Dec., 1887, as gleaned from passenger lists in local daily papers:

Table with 2 columns: By Boats arriving at Shea & Co's. and By Boats departing from Shea & Co's. Lists various countries like Nova Scotia, Peruvian, Polino, Caspian, Groenlands, Corean, Hibernian, Assyrian with their respective counts.

Table with 2 columns: Harvey & Co's. and Harvey & Co's. Lists various countries like Portia, Bonavista, Coban, Miranda with their respective counts. Includes a total for arrivals and departures.

From Our Brigs Correspondent.

WHAT THE PROSPECT LOOKS LIKE.

The "Telegram's" Christmas Number.

FISH, FOG AND MERCANTILE MONOPOLY.

The Village Schoolmaster Plays His Part

A FEW WORDS IN REPLY TO "L."

Editor Evening Telegram.

DEAR SIR,—Old Christmas day has come and gone, and, like the year of 1887, can only be reckoned amongst the records of the "musty past." A brighter and better era has, we trust, dawned with this new year for our unfortunate country; for, notwithstanding our own doubts that any speedy and effectual remedy is at hand for our increasing and burdensome shore population, yet we have strong and bright hopes for the future of this our native land. A stern and self-reliant spirit must be instilled into the minds and the every day walk of our people, by the incoming Government. Side by side with the banner of progress must be unfurled by Sir William the banner of manly independence and determination. With "Excelsior" as our battle cry, onward and upward we will march on to those heights of prosperity and happiness we once enjoyed—respected, envied and admired by the world at large.

Your Christmas number is a gem of art and literature, and every lover of this country who can afford, should send them abroad, and thus not only "scatter seeds of kindness," but also correct and substantiate evidence of what can be done in this land of fish, fog and mercantile monopoly. Wishing you all a happy and prosperous new year, I will now address my friend "L."

Chafing under the cutting rod of truth, "L." has, in his last letter, unmistakably shown the cloven hoof. In his hasty vindictiveness and narrow-minded prejudice, he has proven more than many in this or the surrounding settlements knew before, and a good deal more than "One of the People" would have even hinted at previous to this correspondence. Underneath the lamblike, saintly and gentlemanly deportment and exterior of our "Village Schoolmaster" can now be seen the rank, noxious, and bitter weeds of deep-rooted bigotry and self-conceit.

Educated, brought up and associating for the most part within the confined and limited circle of the charmed few, "L.'s" opportunities and general surroundings were not the best calculated to enlarge or develop that most beautiful of all the virtues, "Charity towards all men." "L." has, I fear, drank deep of that pharisaical disposition which thanks God he is not as other men, and who considers that outside of the pale of his particular denomination, all other creeds, all other sects are looking for the Star of Bethlehem from the wrong point of the compass. "L." says:—"I admit I have a dislike for the Salvation Army and all who are connected with it," and winds up his letter by saying, "I did not ask 'One of the People' to give me a sermon on Methodism or anything connected with it." He has unwittingly substantiated my charge of bigotry and narrow-mindedness, not only toward the Salvation Army, but toward the Methodist body. Dislike, as "L." mildly puts his bigotry, I consider the original sin of hatred—the mustard seed of a deep-rooted, uncompromising and unchristian feeling, from which all other and greater evils spring into existence. No "dislike," no hatred—the two go hand in hand; destroy one and the other must perish. Now, Mr. Editor, I fearlessly challenge Mr. "L." to point out one single word of evidence in my letters in proof of his assertion "that I am influenced by religious fanaticism." No, sir, not one word of bigotry or fanaticism can be found, while his letters, from beginning to end, are composed of these materials, and dictated by these feelings.

I may also inform him that Sergeant Grimes never spoke one word in relation to this matter. I have avoided him ever since his name was questioned by "L.," so that I might be able to use a free lance without compromising the Sergeant or bringing his name before his superior officers through the press. I am somewhat amused at "L.'s" quotation from our worthy magistrate's charge when referring to the Salvation Army and the peace of Brigs. Now, I fail to remember anything his worship said reflecting on the army. His worship paid a high and gentlemanly compliment to the fair sex; and if "L." was not so blinded by hatred, he would also see that his worship, in frank and open language, admitted the principle of "Home Rule and domestic Government." And if "L." were as frank, he too would be forced to admit that he knows something of the temporal rule of home life.

I would also inform him truthfully, in answer to his question, that I have no idea from what source the Salvation Army sprang, nor do I

care. I have no love for "unearthing or tracing back." All I say in answer is: "By your fruits are ye known." So I leave my antiquarian friend "L." to seek elsewhere for the information he seems to be ignorant of himself on this point. I may lastly inform Mr. "L." that the gospel precept which teaches us to love our enemies, to take to our bosoms those who "persecute" us, and when "smote" on the right cheek to hold up the left, on which to be smitten also, is, I admit, admirable doctrine; but, alas! in this depraved and unregenerate world of ours, is seldom practiced to advantage. I admire, I say, the precept, and it may be most unchristian for me to commence the New Year with such a spirit, but I cannot help feeling a thorough contempt for the man or the people who allow themselves to be kicked and cuffed without kicking and cuffing their assailants in return. Were there no such things as aggressors, no oppressors, no pharisaical bigots to grind the weak and trample on the divine precept itself, or of that other most excellent one, "Do unto others," &c., I should be its most ardent preacher; but, as a matter of fact, you must fight your corner now-a-days or expect to get tumbled into the mud, or otherwise be knocked out of all "human shape."

Since the days of Nimrod, and doubtless anterior to that date, down to the present time, "the survival of the fittest theory" is the only one practically recognized and acted up to in this age of scramble; and, despite the teaching to the contrary, will likely remain so; at least until the Millennium dawns over this case-hardened world. I now strongly advise Mr. "L." to think twice before he again replies to "ONE OF THE PEOPLE."

Brigs, Jan. 6th, 1888.

LOCAL VARIETIES.

No foreign arrivals last night.

The S.S. Peruvian, hence to Britain, arrived at Queenstown last evening.

The Rev. Father O'Neil of Pouch Cove won the pianoforte at the drawing in the Star of the Sea Hall last night.

We are requested to state that St. Andrew's Bible Class will meet at 7 o'clock prompt. It is hoped there will be a large attendance. All are invited.

In the first paragraph of "Prohibition's" report of the meeting in the Temperance Hall on Monday evening, for "one of the strongest inducements," read, "one of the strongest inducements."

A BAND OF HOPE meeting will be held in Queen's Road Congregational School-room, commencing at half-past seven o'clock on Friday evening. Speeches, songs, recitations, &c., will be given. All are invited.

At the annual meeting of the St. Andrew's Society, held on the 10th inst., the following officers were elected for the ensuing year:— President—HON. SIR R. THORBURN, Vice-President—J. LEDINGHAM, ESQ., Treasurer—A. TAYLOR, ESQ., Secretary—MR. A. STARK, Committee of Charity—MR. J. MCKINLAY, MR. J. WILSON, MR. H. S. CURRAN.

We understand that full arrangements are completed for the Sociable at Alexander Street Methodist Church this evening, and the prospective success is so assuring that those in charge are sanguine of a crowded house and a splendid programme. Tickets for half of the accommodation are disposed of. Mesdames Rogerson, March, Harvey and others of our sweetest singers are taking part. Rev. G. J. Bond, B.A., will take the chair at 7.30 o'clock.

A RUDE AWAKENING.

By S. Prowse.

With dreamy looks and reckless mien we pass Along the sunlit surface of Life's sea, And shake the golden moments from Time's glass In fleeting dreams or listless reverie. 'Neath cloudless sky, with pleasant summer breeze, We sail our bark along without a fear; Our hearts are blithesome and our minds at ease, And joyfully and carelessly we steer. But sunshine soon is followed by the shade, And Night's black robe falls on our pleasant course: The winds increase and hope begins to fade When seas sweep o'er with unrelenting force. The lethargy of ease we cast aside, The duties of the hour we must perform, We jettison our selfishness and pride, And ride with safety through the trying storm. When Duty faces us with stern demand, We boldly steer and see the morning's gleam, Then learn as we approach the Golden Strand, Life's varied voyage is no idle dream. Chicago, Dec., 1887.

MARRIED.

On Wednesday, the 11th inst., at the Cathedral Church of St. John the Baptist, by the Rev. Ambrose Hoygate, assisted by the Rev. Henry Dunfield, Edgar Rennie, son of the late John Bowring, Esq., of Liverpool, England, to Flora LeMessurier, eldest daughter of the late Hon. James Shannon Clift, of this city, and widow of the late W. P. Munn, Esq., of Harbor Grace.

DIED.

At the Lunatic Asylum, on Wednesday, 11th instant, Mr. Nicholas Green, aged 77 years.—May he rest in peace. Last night, after a short but painful illness, Catherine, beloved wife of George Power, in the 40th year of her age. Last night, after a long and tedious illness, Anastasia, beloved daughter of Joseph and Margaret Murphy, aged 17 years.—Funeral on Sunday next, at 2.30 o'clock, from her father's residence, No. 21 LeMarchant Road; friends and acquaintances are respectfully requested to attend.