

Africa and the islands of the sea. The United States have gained no increase of territory since the acquisition of Alaska in 1867. The population of the republic 100 years ago was about 4,000,000. Assuming it now to be 60 millions, we find a gain of 56 millions in the century. During the same period the British empire has added 295 millions. The empire is old, but not in decay. In fact never in the thousand years of its history has it displayed such aggressive vitality, such unprecedented progress as within the past hundred years. It fears comparison with none, not even the great republic, in growth of territory or population, or in material and intellectual advancement.—*Telegraph.*

"IT IS WRITTEN."

A good preacher once gave his auditors the privilege to ask any question they pleased. A gentleman arose and said, "Do you believe that baptism is necessary?" The preacher answered, "Jesus said, Suffer it to be so now, for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness." "But," said the man, "do you think it is necessary?" Again the preacher said, "Jesus said that many of the Scribes and Pharisees rejected the counsel of God against themselves by refusing to be baptized of John in Jordan." "But what do you think of it?" said the man. Again the answer came, "Jesus said, Go, teach all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit." "You are trifling with me," said the querist, "I want to know if you think it is necessary." Said the preacher, "Jesus said, Except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of Heaven." "But I want to know what is your opinion of the matter," said the querist. Again came the Scriptural reply, "Peter said, Repent and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

At this juncture the colloquy ceased. The preacher did just right. There was no room for his "think-sos" and "opinions." The Lord had spoken, and what could the loyal preacher do, but give a "thus saith the Lord" in reply to the man's question? The people should be made to feel that it is rebellion to question the authority of heaven, for a moment. They should be made to feel that baptism is right because it is commanded. That is all the loyal heart needs to know. It is not necessary to know its design in order to make baptism acceptable. If the individual loves the Lord and that love leads him to be baptized, his baptism is valid, whether he knows its design or not. Too many sermons have been preached on the design of baptism, and too few on the necessity of loyalty to Heaven's King. Salvation is in Christ and his blood takes away all sin. Faith, repentance, confession and baptism are only stepping-stones to bring us to Christ. I never use the expression, "Baptism is for the remission of sins." The Bible nowhere uses the expression, and much less teaches the idea. O, the unguarded expressions that have fallen from the lips of many brethren and even preachers! What wrong impressions have been made when these expressions have fallen upon prejudiced ears! In dealing with these mooted questions we cannot be too careful to use the very language of Scripture.—*Simpson Ely, in Atlantic Missionary.*

LETTER FROM AUSTRALIA.

The cause of Christ in Australasia seems to be on the advance. The reports from the recent annual conferences held in New South Wales, Queensland, Victoria and New Zealand are of an encouraging character. It is said that in point of interest and numbers, the Victorian Conference was the best yet held in that colony. We have now in and

around Melbourne eighteen churches of Christ, with a total membership of 2,805. But notwithstanding the rapid progress of our sister colony, New South Wales and Sydney have the highest rate of increase for the last year. Sydney may never overtake Melbourne in the number of churches, but we are making strides in that direction. I am pleased to be able to say that in Elizabeth Street, Sydney, we are having good meetings and some additions. We have recently organized a Band of Hope for the young people. The officers of the churches in Sydney have organized a meeting for the purpose of talking over matters of mutual interest to all the churches of Christ represented. The meetings are held quarterly, and each church takes her turn in entertaining the meeting with a good tea. Not much business can be transacted in these colonial churches without a tea-meeting. The people here do not believe in losing sight of the social side of church life.

Our Sister A. B. Maston is now in Sydney, on her way to her father's home in India. She and her three children will sail for San Francisco on the steamship Mariposa this week (May 16). Bro. Maston will remain in the colonies a few months and then return to America by way of Europe. Bro. and Sister Maston have been in the Southern Hemisphere about nine years, during which time they have been the means of accomplishing much good for the Master in New Zealand and Australia.

For some time Sister Maston has not enjoyed good health, and it is to be hoped that the change will do them both good. Whether they go to the States on a visit, or to remain, is a question which I am not authorized to decide.

Bro. W. S. Houchins is leaving Dunedin, New Zealand, and will preach awhile for one of the churches in Melbourne. We are anxious to secure the services of Bro. Houchins to labor under the auspices of the Conference of New South Wales, and our committee will probably make him a definite proposition in a few days. We hope he will see his way clear to accept the work.

We are pleased to know that Bro. J. W. Shepard has reached New Zealand, and has commenced work in Christ Church—an important field and we hope Bro. Shepard will be instrumental in building up a strong church in that city. There is strong talk of changing the *Christian Pioneer*, edited by Bro. D. A. Ewers and published in Melbourne, to an eight-page weekly. This will be an excellent move; for Australia now needs a good weekly paper.

There is now sitting in Sydney what is called the International Centennial Temperance Congress whose meetings are largely attended and prove quite interesting. The Australian colonies are a long way behind the United States in the temperance work, and Sydney is among the most intemperate cities. Almost every important business corner is occupied by a "public house." Mr. R. T. Booth is among our small force of temperance reformers; and while we do not look for prohibition for years to come, yet we are moving slowly in that direction.—*J. F. Floyd in Apostolic Guide.*

TEACHERS' CONVENTION.

The Interprovincial Institute was formally opened July 18. Dr. Allison in a felicitous speech introduced the first speaker of the day. A man whose fame is now more than continental, whose name to-day is honored everywhere. He had pleasure in introducing to them the president of McGill college, president also of the Royal Society of Great Britain—Sir William Dawson.

Leaving personal matters Sir William proceeded to contrast the period to which he had referred with the present, having special reference to Nova Scotia. In 1850 there were 886 schools on the list—now 2,000; then 3,000 pupils in attendance—now 105,000; then an average salary of \$144 per year, with some as low as \$64—now a third-class teacher gets \$169, and the general average is \$250. And the time is coming when the remuneration will be still more satisfactory; but to accomplish this the quality of work must rise and the number of incompetent competitors be lessened. In 1850 Dalhousie college was doing, practically nothing,

and Kings, Acadia and Mount Allison working in a very small way. In Halifax there were some good schools, both public and private, but there was no common system, no satisfactory supervision. There were only 1,600 pupils in attendance in the city. Now there is an admirable system, good buildings and apparatus, and 5,000 pupils are in attendance. Doubtless the city has grown, but the educational progress has been more than proportionate. New Brunswick was ahead of Nova Scotia in the old time, in having two training schools, and still leads in that she obliges all teachers to be trained. In Nova Scotia last year, however, 82 diplomas were granted. Teachers' Institutes in the old time were non-existent. Now there are county, provincial, and lastly an inter-provincial institute, as well as an educational review, which is marked by a high excellence in tone and matter.

With an apology for an old man's love of reminiscence, Sir William referred again briefly to personal experiences while superintendent, and then turned to the consideration of the educational outlook. We have an unfortunate habit in the Maritime provinces of regarding ours as a small country. We are over modest. He had been led to believe that the children reared in these provinces by the sea were more shifty, active, independent, and self-reliant than those farther inland. This is largely owing to the more varied character of their training, which gives them greater adaptability. This was an advantage to be profited by in education. As to arts and trades a little of these should be taught. The elements, the woods and how to work them, the metals and their properties—these should be learned; but rather as a matter of play than of work. The real work should be in training the general intelligence. That has largely been the plan in the New England and Scotch schools, and to a large extent with us. Technical instruction is valuable as an accessory, but is not essential. The young people from these provinces scatter everywhere over the continent. You meet them everywhere, and find that they have made their mark. They owe it to their training in shiftness, to the influence of pious homes, and the training in good elementary common schools. It should be our aim to keep up the standard of these common schools—keep them up to the standard of the best—so that what New England is to the United States these provinces may be to the Dominion.

The resources of these provinces mark for them a destiny such as you scarcely dream. Nowhere from here to Florida or from here to the Rockies are there such magnificent natural resources, such facilities for developing and profiting by them. In the matter of this development we are somewhat behind. Circumstances political and financial have caused the delay. We cannot hurry these great movements. But the time of development will come. Nature will prevail. The countries of great natural resources become the countries of great wealth and population. That time will come to these provinces—a time when their relative influence will be infinitely greater than to-day. There are indications even now. These provinces are being drawn together. But this union has to grow and develop. It will, this development will come, and those now young will when they are old look back to these days and note a greater contrast than that to which attention has been given this morning.

Personally the speaker was glad to look upon the progress made, thankful for any personal part in it. He had not shaped his own life. We may rough hew, but it is God who shapes. If we do our best as Providence points the way, perform the work that comes to our hand, we will be able in old age to look back with satisfaction, finding joy in the memory of every kind and helpful act and word. He hoped all would so regard it, regard themselves as having a great commission given them, having faith in God and Christ, and animated by the spirit of their fathers train up a generation of like character to go out and make the name of their country great. Let us not think little of our country. It has boundless wealth in sea and soil, and in the bowels of the earth. Let us train the heads and hands of our children, and if we do not see it then, they who follow us will see these provinces become a centre of wealth, civilization and enlightenment, from which shall radiate beneficent influences, not alone through the Dominion but throughout the continent.

When the applause subsided that greeted Sir William's address, Dr. Allison observed that it was truly an inspiration to see an old man with his face toward the morning, speaking words of hope and cheer, and he felt that the speaker's words as to prospects and duties had fallen as gentle dew upon the understanding and the hearts of the listeners.