

# The Wesleyan,

124

Rev. A. W. NICOLSON,  
Editor and Publisher.

Published under the direction of the General Conference of the Methodist Church of Canada.

\$2 PER ANNUM IN ADVANCE  
Postage Prepaid.

VOL. XXIX

HALIFAX N.S., APRIL 28, 1877.

NO. 17

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**OUR ONTARIO LETTER.**

ONTARIO, April 12, 1877.

DEAR MR. EDITOR.—The extreme West of Ontario shakes hands with the extreme East of Canada; Amherstburg and Chatham District, London Conference, fraternizes, in your correspondents letter, with Halifax, and the Conferences on the Atlantic Coast. Twelve or fifteen hundred miles separate us. And yet that magnificent river which flows in beauty past our doors, is sweeping along the Northern Shores of your own provinces in its onward progress, seeking its home in the sea; and the craft which, loaded with grain, at Chicago, or with lumber in Georgian Bay, passes by us, may in two or three weeks later, be unloading its cargo on your wharves. The same stream of fresh water binds us together; and the same church of which these waters are the fitting emblem, unites and blesses us alike.

Our winter is past, and did we have many such, Canadian winters would lose all their terrors. Three moderate winter months, with beautiful sleighing, and one Spring month interjected between them, during which (February) we had not one stormy day, has given place to a real spring which has been ushered in without flood or freshet, storm or tempest. Gradually, as comes the light of morning, has come on spring, in the days of serene and cloudless skies and gentle breezes. The dreaded bad roads have disappeared, and good sleighing has given place to better wheeling.

It is *Guardian* and *Wesleyan* night; the same mail brings to me both those representative papers. A hurried glance over the Church news column of the first tells me of fourteen hundred converts added to the Church. Two weeks ago it reported over one thousand, and yet I know of some revivals not as yet reported. Belleville heads the list, under the pastorate of E. B. Harper, with five hundred saved and the work going on. Norwood, under R. Clarke, a country circuit, follows, with three hundred and thirty, and no abatement of the work. Newburg comes perhaps next, with one hundred and twenty five. So goes on the list, as it has been for several weeks past. A letter this morning from the pastor at Windsor, a thriving little town opposite Detroit and the Canadian terminus of the G. W. R., tells me he has received one hundred and fifty into his church during the past month or two. Many other circuits are waiting till they have garnered up their net results before they report. Surely, Mr. Editor, these are Pentecostal times; and the Spirit's blessing upon a consummated Union. The little friction, and trifling embarrassment, which came from a surplusage of men, and a deficiency of funds, will be wholly and gloriously annihilated in the abundant showers descending upon our Zion. "There shall be no complaining in our streets."

One of our fathers has fallen asleep in Christ—Bro. Sylvester Hurlbut. He was a veteran in our ranks, and belonged to a family which has been remarkable for its gifts to the Methodist Ministry. His brother Asahel has filled with honour our highest Conference offices, and now reposes upon his laurels, in a green old age, eminent among us for his sagacity, independence, and unbending integrity. Thomas, who died a few years since, was our pioneer Indian Missionary, a consummate master of Indian languages, and a Geologist of no mean proficiency. Of Sylvester we have not known as much as of the others, but his course has been one of sustained honour.

Our universally beloved John Carroll, the indefatigable writer and worker—the

most simple minded, and yet charming of our fathers—has received from an American college, the well merited title of D. D.

The work of Church dedication has been progressing, and villages which a few years ago would have deemed it presumptuous to have undertaken to erect a thousand dollar church, now rejoice in one worth from five or six to twenty thousand dollars, with the debt all provided for by ample subscriptions. Woodstock, a town of five thousand, has been the last to dedicate its new church, worth \$32,000, and its dedication has been marked by the same eminent success. Dr. Ives, of Auburn, N. Y., has been the honored instrument of inaugurating this remarkable era of providing for Church debts at the time of dedication. The grand lesson which the people are learning of trusting God with their substance is bearing fruit in all our finances, and is probably not unconnected with the great spiritual prosperity of the Church.

Our Episcopal Methodist friends are not much behind us in the Spirit of enterprise and success. They, under Bishop Carman, are pushing on their new scheme of erecting a Seminary in St. Thomas, in which town they hold their Conference this year, though four years ago they had no foothold in it. At Chatham too they have just given out the contract for a church worth eight or ten thousand dollars, though they have neither class or member, I believe, in the town. Their Bishop is indefatigable, and their ministers are laborious, and their membership are remarkable for zeal.

Good night, Mr. Editor. Your Correspondent's wife has gone to bed, the clock has struck eleven, and to avoid a friendly scolding—no more at present.

Yours truly,  
H. R. R. S.

P. S.—Your Correspondent's letter would be defective without a mention of the Temperance movement. The two parties have been rallying in many of our counties all their forces over the Dunkin Act. The contest in these localities has been an intensely earnest on both sides. In a few instances the Temperance friends have suffered, but in several others, and amongst them some of the most influential and intelligent counties of our province—as Brant and Oxford—they have come out victorious. The Dunkin Act is not all the Temperance friends desire; but as an expression of the sentiment of the country, and an argument in favour of prohibition, its becoming law in so many counties is significant.

## THE SEAL FISHERY.

St. John's, Nfld., is in a state of wild excitement and unbounded delight at the great success which has attended the seal fishery this spring. Judging from the arrivals reported the whole city must be flooded with seal oil and covered with seal skins, both of which commodities, of course, will be exported with great celerity, the latter mainly to England, the number of seal skins exported thither yearly being about half a million. Whether any seals will be left for fishermen in future years to kill may well be asked, considering the thousands that have fallen victims to the crews of the steamers engaged in the fishery. This season these vessels have had a perfect run of luck and the sailing ships appear to have been equally fortunate. Money is made very rapidly in these ventures, and not unfrequently killing seals pays better than "panning out" on a rich "placer." The consequence is that sealing steamers never want crews; the system of giving one-third of the proceeds to the men and twenty cents per seal to the captain offering irresistible inducements to the sea-faring population. Of course luck is not invariably; ships sometimes come back as the vent empty, but this year the whole fleet appears to have done wonderfully well, the steamers, which naturally have the best chance, being closely pressed by

the sailing vessels, the latter being favored by an early season and the condition of the ice. One steamer, the Neptune, owned by Job Brothers, and commanded by Hon. E. White, has made an unprecedented catch. She was away twenty-six days, and returned crammed full with forty-two thousand fine harp seals; she could not have taken another on board, but had she had room, says her captain, it would have been easy for him to kill 110,000 more. The value of the cargo is enormous, considering how short a time it took to obtain it; each seal is worth some three dollars, the cargo, therefore, figures up to the splendid total of \$126,000, a capital return for less than a month's work. Besides bringing in his 42,000 seals Captain White, says the correspondent of the *Montreal Gazette*, placed 3,000 on board another vessel on condition of receiving a third of them, making an additional sum of \$9,000, and he left 7,000 "panned" on the ice and sent a sailing vessel for them. He happened to strike the main body of the army of seals and played havoc among them. The second most successful steamer was the Arctic, a Dundee vessel, which caught 24,000 seals, worth \$30,000, there being no less than 1,500 old hood seals, which fetch a higher price than the harp variety. Had this ship not met with an injury she would have brought a full cargo of 50,000 and been far and away ahead of every other sealer, past or present. The Greenland came in first of the fleet with 27,000 seals; the Kite brought in a full cargo, 16,000, and the Panther, 20,000. The Aurora, another Dundee ship, had caught 14,000 when last seen, and expected to make up her complement of 20,000. The Vanguard, at last reports, had 16,000, the Proteus, 18,000; the Bear, Lion and Wolf, each 8,000 to 10,000 and were hard to work filling up to complete cargo. Only four steamers were reported as doing poorly, and these, if they light on the right spot, may have a chance of filling up as fast as their luckier consorts. The sailing vessels are also stated to be doing well, their catch varying from 6,000 to 9,000 seals a piece, or in other words, very nearly full cargoes.

At first sight one can scarcely realize the full meaning of these figures. The vessels named will have landed in St. John's, if those still fishing increase their reported catch even but slightly, over one million seals, the value being simply enormous and the gain made in a very short time. One cannot help wondering whether the seals can stand this slaughtering process without being both decimated and frightened away from their haunts. Sealers would probably say that you cannot kill off all the seals and that year after year they will reappear in large "patches" or herds, but experience has long since demonstrated the possibility of annihilating a fishery. For instance, whales used to be taken in numbers in the Gulf of St. Lawrence and further South, but now whalers have got to sail to the Arctic regions in quest of these mammals. The salmon, a fish that once abounded in all our streams, has disappeared from many of them and become so scarce that it is well worth the nation's while to spend money in propagating it artificially. So vigorous and destructive a war must tell upon the seal fishery, and while the Newfoundland ships may be congratulated on their remarkable success this year, a doubt may be felt as to the wisdom of killing the goose with the golden egg. But what is the use of talking when splendid cargoes, worth immense sums of money, are being landed by excited crews, assisted by still more excited shore population?—*Chronicle.*

## INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS.

FIFTH YEAR, 1877. MAY.  
FIRST QUARTER: STUDIES ABOUT THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL.

B. C. 892.] LESSON VI. THE FAMINE IN SAMARIA; or, God's Word Fulfilled.  
2 Kings 7. 12-20. May 6.

### EXPLANATORY.

KING JEHOHAM. The same who had called Elisha "My father," (chap. 6, 21); and who in a fit of rage had sworn the day before to take his life. (Chap. 31.) The last of the line of Ahab. Servants, His ministers, counselors. (See 1 Kings 9, 22.) Show you. Jehoram, knowing no reason why the Syrians should raise the siege, very naturally supposes they have set a trap for him—similar to the stratagem used by Joshua in taking Ai. (Josh 8, 4-7.) Hungry. Just how hungry they were is shown by the incident in chap. 6, 25-29. Catch them alive. Much of the triumph of victory was lost if there were no captives upon whom to wreak vengeance. (See *Bible Dic. Art. Captives.*)

FIVE.....HORSES. Five was used for a few. See Isa. 30, 17; Lev. 26, 8; 1 Cor. 14, 19. As the multitude...left. That is, few in number. As the multitude...consumed—or dead. They only go to the same fate if the news be not true. Compare the reasoning of the four leprous men in verses 3 and 4.

TWO CHARIOT HORSES. More properly two chariot equipages, requiring four, five or six horses. The Egyptian chariots having two and the ancient Assyrian three horses always abreast. Two chariots were probably taken that in case of surprise one might return with the news.

UNTO JORDAN. The route was probably nearly north to Jezreel, then nearly east to Bethshean, then up the valley to the upper ford at Jier Mejamia, a distance of about 45 miles. It is not necessary to suppose they went the whole distance before reporting. Vessels. Rather, utensils of various kinds. Haste. Heb., hasty flight. See ver. 7.

SPOILED. Plundered, pillaged. Measure. Literally, "a seah," containing six ephs, (chap. 6, 25), and one third of an ephah. Its capacity was probably about ten or twelve quarts. Shekel. Probably 220 grains of silver, about a half a dollar in value. Word of the Lord. See ver. 1. Be hold the long-suffering mercy of God in this repeatedly proving to his apostate children that in him alone was their help. (Hosea 13, 9.)

LORD. Heb. *shalish*, equivalent to the Latin *tribunus*. One of the king's life-guard, on whose hand he leaned. See Naaman's request of Elisha, Chap. 5, 18. This official was commissioned by the king to preserve order, or, perhaps, to collect revenue in the gate, the usual market place, (verse 1) and through which the hungry people rushed, meeting the eager crowd returning with their spoil. And the people trode upon him, probably in their impatience of control, or indignation at being taxed at such a time. We may well imagine his imperious manners from his reply to Elisha.

IT CAME TO PASS. An inspired commentary on the meaning of the incident. What God speaks will come to pass, be it never so improbable to mere human reason. Happy the man whose faith never falters, who never asks, "How can these things be?" What more improbable than that in this so closely besieged city, within twenty-four hours, such plenty should reign? But God brought it to pass as he had said, and so will he prove all his promises to us to be true.

ANSWERED. How often is unbelief looked upon as wisdom? And yet it is always foolishness. (Psa. 53, 1.) This was more than unbelief. It was scoffing and jesting at the message of salvation—just as many are doing even now. Windows. Probably referring to Gen. 7, 11, where the same word is used, meaning "sluices" or "openings." "Thou talkest of incredible things, O prophet! for as it is impossible for God to pour down torrents of barley or fine flour out of heaven, so it is impossible that what thou sayest should come to pass.—Josephus." (Ant., Book 9, chap. 4, § 4.) Shalt not eat. The fearful punishment of unbelief.

SO IT FELL OUT UNTO HIM. Let not the wicked flatter himself that he shall escape. God's word of mercy is sure, and so is his word of doom to the unbelieving. He died. He was a "lord," high in favor, prided himself on his superior reason and discernment, laughed at the old prophet's word as quite beneath his attention, yet when others were rejoicing in abundant salvation, he died. Alas, that any should follow in his footsteps!

The London *Methodist* says: "We are informed that the clericals in France have been endeavoring to enlist popular sympathy on behalf of the Pope by a very ingenious stratagem. They have been circulating, we are told, photographic pictures representing his Holiness lying in a dungeon on a heap of straw, with a jug of water and a brown loaf by his side. Of course, we do not know what are the sources of information open to those for whose special instruction these sensational sketches have been designed. We suppose, however, that they have not read any description of the recent creation of cardinals. We would recommend the perusal of these descriptions, not only to the benighted Frenchmen whom the clericals are making such strenuous efforts to excite, but to all who entertain, in any form, the idea that the Pope is in a state of such dishonorable confinement. The excess of pomp that has attended the historic ceremony teaches a very different lesson."

Dr. W. M. Taylor, in his fifth lecture on preaching, to the Yale students, declared that the clamor for brevity in sermons is a bad omen for the Churches. "No great theme," he said, "can be treated in fifteen minutes; therefore, brevity means the banishment of doctrinal instruction and systematic exposition, and as a consequence of that, spiritual dwarfs, and a piety from which manhood has disappeared."

## NEED OF AN ATONEMENT.

There are very few men in the world who say that a deserter when he comes back should be treated as though he had not deserted. It cannot be that a deserter from God should be treated just as though he had never been a deserter. It is not in your conscience to say that. It is not true to say that Lady Macbeth may get up in the night, and by the use of a little water clear herself of all the blood on her hands. William Shakespeare says she did rise and wash her hands, and yet called out afterward, "All the perfumes of Arabia won't clean this little hand." Where is the religion that will wash Lady Macbeth's red right hand. There are styles of religion that affirm that when we are reformed we are washed. Shakespeare didn't say that Lady Macbeth had learned to loathe her crime, had gone insane about it. Nevertheless she felt the spot was still there, and still after washing she cried, "Out! Out!" No form of teaching, I affirm, which leaves out the doctrine of the Atonement ever has, or ever will, or ever can, wash Lady Macbeth's right hand. You have not committed murder, but what other things have you done? Think of the unutterabilities here, my friends! But our guilt has been assumed by Christ. There are senses in which guilt may be assumed; the first, by assuming the blame over thinness; the second, by assuming the obligation to pay the penalty of violating the law. Our Lord did not assume our guilt in the first sense. Our personal demerits cannot be transferred to another. But Christ did assume our obligation to pay the penalty, in a secondary sense. He gathered into His bosom the penalties of the law which we had violated and before which he was innocent. And whoever looks on God, thus pictured as our Redeemer, will gladly affectionately, and proudly, take Him as Lord.—*Joseph Cook's Lecture.*