

JUNE.

June is the pearl of our New England year. Still a surprisal, though expected long. Her coming startles. Long she lies in wait, Makes many a feint, peeps forth, draws coyly back.

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

MELINDA RANKIN.

At the close of the year there died in the State of Illinois a woman, well stricken in years, whose life history is worth recalling. She was the first missionary in Mexico, and her name, Melinda Rankin, will be, to those who knew any thing of her work, intimately associated with the introduction of the Bible into that Republic.

A WISE WORD FROM MONGOLIA.

Some time ago a Mongol said to me, "It is better to be in the mouth of a mad elephant than in bad company." "Why?" said I. "Because," said he, "a mad elephant can only hurt the body and kill this life; but bad company hurts the soul, and makes it suffer in the life to come!"—Rev. J. Gilmour.

BOYS' AND GIRLS' STORIES

THE OFFICE FLOODED WITH THEM FROM ALL-OVER CANADA.

THE JUDGES' REPORT FROM NEWFOUNDLAND, MANITOBA AND THE N.W.T. AND BRITISH COLUMBIA—A REMARKABLY SATISFACTORY SHOWING BY THESE PROVINCES—MANY GOOD STORIES AND FEW BAD ONES—AN EXHAUSTIVE REPORT.

One thousand one hundred and ninety-three stories have been received in the Dominion competition. The results have been more than satisfactory. In the first place, every Province is represented. In the second, a very casual observation shows that there are many really good stories amongst them. Of the stories

Table with 2 columns: Province, Count. Newfoundland sends 12, Prince Edward Island sends 72, New Brunswick 121, Nova Scotia 107, Quebec 131, Ontario 703, Manitoba, &c. 30, British Columbia 17.

The ratio between the number of contributors and the English-speaking population of the Canadian provinces, according to the census of 1881, is as follows:

Table with 2 columns: Province, Ratio. In Prince Edward Island, one contributor for 621, New Brunswick 2,020, Nova Scotia 1,000, Quebec 1,000, Ontario 2,050, Manitoba 1,287, British Columbia 811.

If this ratio proves nothing else it proves how widespread the circulation of the Witness and Messenger is.

What are the stories about? About pretty nearly everything—hunting adventures, adventures on the rivers and lakes, lumbering adventures, love stories, adventures in the early wars, clearing the forest and making farms; in fact nearly everything in the history and progress of this country that one can think of.

MR. DAWSON'S REPORT.

The first judges' report on the Dominion Prize Competition has been received. It is from Mr. S. E. Dawson, of Montreal, one of the best literary critics in America, whose opinion is of great value. It is gratifying, therefore, that he expresses so high an opinion of the stories submitted to him.

REPORT ON STORIES SUBMITTED.

My marks are in green chalk on the back of the papers.

NORTH-WEST TERRITORY.

Two papers are presented. Both are descriptive accounts of Assiniboia. Neither are stories. Neither are remarkable in any way. Being the work of children they are probably more truthful than most accounts we get of that country, although the stock phrases of older people continually are repeated in them.

BRITISH COLUMBIA.

These are very good as a rule. Arranged by counties, I have the following remarks to make:—

LILLOOET—There are two papers—both childish descriptions of the locality, evidently by very young people. The writing and composition do the teacher credit. There is nothing unusual in either paper.

CARIBOO—Four papers—all interesting, realistic pictures of life in that wild country, and I think should be put aside for revision and publishing. The handwriting is very good. The paper marked A (No. 5) is a capital story. B (No. 6) is good. C (No. 7) and D (No. 8) are good also. All four are highly characteristic, and contain some quaint phrases and touches of humor.

YALE—One story—and a capital one. Very characteristic and is worth printing, marked A No. 9.

VANCOUVER—Five stories—The one marked A No. 10 is a good story. B No. 11 is a hunting story—interesting. These two might be worth printing. C No. 12, D No. 13, E No. 14 are not of sufficient merit to notice.

NEW WESTMINSTER—Six stories—Five of which are good. A No. 15 is a capital story. B No. 16 is good, and so is C No. 17. D No. 18 is fair. These might all be printed. E No. 19 is a good murder story, disagreeable. F No. 20 is by a very little child.

The choice for British Columbia is between A No. 5, A No. 9 and A No. 15. All three are good and of almost equal merit in every respect. They are strongly characteristic of the country and have a dash of Western humor about them which is very interesting. I rate them thus:—

- 1st—Yale, A 9. 2nd—New Westminster, A 15. 3rd—Cariboo, A 5.

MANITOBA.

WINNIPEG—One story—A No. 16—An account of a trip from Winnipeg to Prince Albert.

SELKIRK—Three stories—A No. 17 is a short incident of a deed of heroism worth preserving as an incident. B No. 18 is an account of experiences. C No. 19 is a simple young child's composition.

LISGAR—One story—It is told with a good attempt at dramatic style and is a good story, worth reproducing after revision—marked A No. 20.

DUFFERIN—Two stories—Very realistic—Children's accounts of actual family experiences in homesteading. They are worth any amount of emigration literature: A No. 21 is the better of the two. They ought to be put aside.

MINNEDOSA—One story—A good attempt at

literary invention for a boy and well told. The ice and the prairie fire do not match, but the writer will do better with more experience—marked A No. 22.

PROVENCER—One story, interesting and nicely told. An adventure of a little girl which should be preserved. Marked A No. 23.

MANCHESTER—One story—A good one, very well told. It is characteristic of the country and valuable as giving the dark side of Manitoba life. It should be printed. A No. 24.

NORFOLK—One story—A little boy's, of early emigration experiences. Simply told. He asks for a card on distribution day. Please send him one. Marked A No. 25.

PORTAGE LA PRAIRIE—One story—It is a descriptive account of Manitoba, not a narrative. A good emigration paper but without the lines of this competition. Marked A No. 26.

BRANDON—Two stories—A No. 27 is a capital narrative of a boy's life, simply told and giving a very real picture of the country. It has not much style but a great deal of truth. It should be preserved. B No. 28 is more ambitious as to style, but not so interesting.

DENNIS—Three stories—A No. 29 is a capital story of a real North-West blizzard, and very well told. It should be printed. B No. 30 is a very good story, told with much humor, of a skunk experience. It would be a pity to let it drop. C No. 31 seems to be a bit of family history, written by a little girl under a keen sense of injustice felt early in life.

ROCK LAKE—Five stories—A No. 32 is a capital story of the life of a pioneer, and very well told. It is most graphically descriptive of the country. B No. 33 is also very good, and should be printed. It is a simple child's account of a characteristic incident in prairie life. C No. 34 is a very good account by a little girl of the hardships and eventual success of the early settlers. It should be preserved. D No. 35 is by a boy with a sense of humor. E No. 36 is by a boy whose faculty of literary perspective has been impaired by too much temperance literature.

NORFOLK AND LORNE—One story—A No. 37, a good story of a great prairie fire. It should be preserved.

TURTLE MOUNTAIN—Four stories. A No. 38 is a capital story of pioneering, and well told by a precocious little girl with a discursive mind and formed opinions upon temperance and Canadian Pacific matters. She writes very well, and if she succeeds in her ambition to be a school teacher she will be at the top of her profession if her health is good. The paper should be printed. B No. 39 is very good—there is some literary style about it which should be revised out, and the paper would be a capital one to print. It is full of information. C No. 40 is not so good. D No. 41 is the simplest effort of a very little child.

The choice for Manitoba and the North-West, for I am taking into account the two papers from Assiniboia, lies among Nos. A 20, A 21, A 29, A 32, A 33, all of which are good. I rank them as follows:—

- A No. 29.—An interesting and characteristic story. A No. 32—Style more finished but not so interesting. A No. 21—An interesting story, not so characteristic. A No. 38—A capital picture of pioneer experience. A No. 20—A good incident told with an attempt at style.

These papers are all good. I am sorry to have to rank the first four.

NEWFOUNDLAND.

The young people of this country are at a disadvantage compared with those who live in the west. The stirring incidents of life are necessarily maritime, in which they can have no part as actors or even as spectators. The island is settled only at places along the coast, and communication is only by sea. These young people must draw upon subjects which have been treated in newspapers and books. There is no actual experience to draw upon. They have not themselves come in contact with strange or unusual events of life. This must be considered in reading these papers. It is not their fault. I think also that most of the young people have not apprehended clearly the conditions of the competition.

CONCEPTION BAY—Three papers. A No. 42 is original. It is a description of Harbor Grace by a child who lives there and, considering the age (13 years) of the writer, is nicely done. It certainly contains interesting information. B No. 43 and C No. 44 are descriptions of the whole island, taken probably from memories of the lesson books in use.

St. JOHN'S—The wrapper says nine stories, but it contained only eight. Adele's paper was in two pieces and had evidently been counted twice. A No. 45 is an exceedingly good story and prettily told. It is drawn apparently from the imagination of the writer, but it has local color. The scene is at Placentia during the French occupation of Newfoundland. B No. 46 is a narrative of the terrible tragedy of the wreck of the "Queen of Swansco," very fairly done, necessarily out of the writer's experience, and based on newspaper accounts. C No. 47 is on the same subject. D No. 48 is an account of the great fire at St. John's to which the same objection applies. E No. 49 is another account of the fire. F No. 50 is an account of the rescue of a part of the crew of the "Polaris"—the same objection applies. G No. 51 is an original story and as such must be compared with A No. 45. It is much inferior, but the young writer has a sense for literature and will do better the next time when her style will become less florid. H No. 52 is extracted no doubt unconsciously from the lesson book. I have no hesitation in awarding the first prize to A No. 45. SAMUEL E. DAWSON. Montreal, April 29, 1889.

DR. HARPER'S REPORT.

Dr. Harper's report on the Quebec stories has just been received and is also very satisfactory.

ADDRESS.

Address all letters to the Northern Messenger, care of John Dougall & Son, 321 and 323 St. James street, Montreal, Que.

WHAT DO YOU WANT?

What do you want that your Messenger does not bring you? Write, won't you, and let us know. We don't want only words of praise, though, naturally, we want as many as we deserve. When you next write, give us also any hint or suggestion that occurs to you, which, if carried out, would, in your opinion, be for the benefit of the readers. We may not be able at once to act upon them all, but they shall receive careful consideration. Below are two or three from those we have received lately, all that our space in this number permits us to publish.

THE CHILDREN'S EVIDENCE.

To the Editor of the Messenger.—DEAR SIR.—In the Messenger of a few weeks ago a letter appeared from a subscriber asking you to discontinue the paper as the matter was not suited to the children, and in the same issue was an article headed, "A man is known by his books." Now from experience we find the Messenger most eagerly sought after by the children of our Sabbath school, as is evidenced by the fact that it is only a little over a year since we began taking your paper when fifty copies supplied us, but in a short time we had to take seventy-five, then one hundred, and now we find one hundred and fifty are required. We think you should have an article headed, "A child is known by his Sabbath school paper." SECRETARY SABBATH SCHOOL. Campbellford, Ont., May 1, 1889.

GO ON IN YOUR OWN WAY.

GENTLEMEN.—With the utmost cordiality as well as with sincere thankfulness, I give you my opinion of the Messenger, which is this: That considering the price, quantity of literary matter and illustrations, its high moral tone, its scientific articles explaining the applications of modern science to the greatest engineering works of the nineteenth century, it is second to none either in this continent or in Europe. Go on in your own way. It can't be bettered. ALEXANDER TOD. Maguire, Ont., March, 1889.

A NECESSITY.

Your little paper has become a necessity to me, and I always try to get new names to send with my own renewal. Mrs. M. V. BROOKS. Philadelphia.

FROM A YOUNG WORKER.

DEAR SIR,—I have taken the Northern Messenger this last two years and I think it is the best paper going. I went around last year and got a few subscribers and you were very kind to send me "Uncle Tom's Cabin." This year, I got four new subscribers and one renewal, and you sent me the silver spoon and butter knife. I showed them to every one who came in, and they said they were the nicest pair they had ever seen. So they are. I send my best wishes to you, and will try and do more for you next year if I live. WILLIE WINEGARDEN. March 1889.

TAKE THE CHILDREN.

GENTLEMEN.—Your postal card of 21st received, glad you got the \$2.30, and am pleased to know you have sent the Messenger to—. I did not let him know I have done this. I would gladly have the Witness sent him, but I know he has little time to read it. Take the children instead of the fathers and make them kings and priests unto God. I was delighted with the account and picture of the Honey Ant. I showed it to the Sunday-school and found none knew of it; also the article on how the icebergs are formed, and what a glacier is. I think such articles should be repeated. DAVID MUIR. Chicago.

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