

In her scant and tattered garment,
With her back against the wall,
She shuddered cold and rigid,
She answers not their call.

They have lifted her up fearfully,
They shuddered as they said,
"It was a bitter, bitter night,
The child is frozen dead."

The Angels sang their greeting,
For one more redeemed from sin;
Men said, "It was a bitter night,
Would no one let her in!"

And they shuddered as they spoke of her,
And sighed:—they could not see,
How much of happiness there was
With so much misery.

Selections.

The Kafir, the Hottentot, and the Frontier Farmer.
By the Venerable Archdeacon Merriam.
London: Bell.

THIS little volume is a proof that much that is worth knowing may be pleasantly conveyed in a small space. We have read half a hundred volumes on the Cape which have not in the aggregate afforded us half the amusement, interest, or information which we have found in these pages from the "Missionary Life of Archdeacon Merriam." They are published on the responsibility of the Bishop of Cape Town, and they give the incidents of a pedestrian and equestrian visitation, embracing some thousand miles, and made during 1850 and 1851. The archdeacon thus speaks of the Dutch:—

"The superiority of the Dutch to ourselves in one of the great functions of social and civilized life—viz., the founding of towns, arises entirely from the strength and unity of their Church. Ten times the number of English, in consequence of their religious divisions, could not do what the Dutch so easily achieve. A new town is agreed upon as desirable in a given district; the Synod of the Dutch Church appoints a commission: a spot is chosen, the farm purchased (generally on very easy terms from a man anxious to do something for his Church), and a church is built; even are marked out, and sold with conditions attached to them securing the maintenance of the church. This is the centre of attraction: old Boers, who have been a long way from the public services of their religion, readily come and settle round the church; and the remaining elements of town life, as trade or tinkling, a clergyman and a magistrate, with Government salaries, speedily follow. I know of only one instance since the settlement of the Dutch in 1820 where any attempt to found a town, except by Military or Government expenditure, has been made, or, at least, where the Church formed to extend a prominent feature, and this is at Sydney; and a miserable contrast truly does that place bear to any of the Dutch towns I have alluded to here."

The Archdeacon speaks more favourably of the Dutch settlers generally than of any other of the sects; leaders of the most of which have a sharp eye to their own individual interests. Here is an incident of travel worth reading. The archdeacon had been travelling with a caravan. Sabbath had arrived, and the arrangements for the holy day were to be made:—

"Our host, with a proper delicacy, intimated that his Scotch Wesleyan would officiate for them on the morrow, while I went to my poor congregation of free in the Churchman's wagon. But after a bit I summoned courage and took up my parable, telling them that though a stiff Churchman, who could not deny any of my principles, I thought it was a scandal to the sight of the heathen, as well as a disgrace to ourselves, that an isolated party of Christians, close to each other where lurked so many Kafirs, and with a host of Fingo protectors round us, should exhibit our total religious disunion by worshipping God in separate congregations on the morrow. I could not but use the use of those prayers which bound me in to my fellow Churchmen in Africa, in England, all over the world; but if they would all join me in Church prayers, I would gladly give up the idea of preaching, which they thought so highly of, to my Wesleyan brother; only let us form one, and not separate congregations on the morrow. They applauded my discourse and to a man assented; when the Wesleyan minister, thinking me, said he would at once order the European congregation to me; and as I would talk Dutch, and had a good Kafir interpreter, he would assemble the Fingos and Hottentots, and conduct service with them. This accordingly agreed to, and so the knot of a very difficult and delicate matter was amicably cut through."

We report this trait with pleasure; and the book in which we take it we heartily recommend to the perusal of the public.—*Church and State Gazette.*

"Need is the thing, after all," as the man with the mallet said when the mad dog bit it.

EFFECTS OF LONDON GAS.—We have thousands of miles of gaspipes, and almost as many jets as there are lungs in the metropolis. It is time we should ask whether the system is perfect. Is our gas as good as it might be? Have we duly availed ourselves of the means discovered for its purification? We may also ask whether so great a boon is not necessarily attended with some drawbacks?

Nobody can have seen the paving of our streets disturbed, and it all is disturbed once or twice a year, without perceiving with dismay that the whole subsoil of the metropolis is thoroughly saturated with some black, stinking ingredient, of a most sickening nature. It tells its own tale; for common sense tells us that, where the effluvia from such soil can reach the lungs, it must impair strength and shorten life. As to its effect on vegetable life, we have heard repeated instances of healthy trees suffering by the approach of this underground foe. As the evil is cumulative, what will it come to? The question was answered the other day in some remarks by Dr. Letheby, addressed to the City Court of Sewers, on the subject of his report on the city gas companies. "Then, again (he says) there is a quantity of ammonia, which holds in solution a large quantity of tar, and whenever there is a leaking in the streets it oozes out. During the last fifty years, where it has got into the public roads, it has rendered the road near to it so offensive that you can hardly move the pavement without doing a great deal of harm. What it may be in twenty years hence I cannot say, but I think it will be almost unsafe that you should then disturb the pavements at all." In twenty years, or at all events at the end of this century, we shall not be able to move the ground under our feet without the same results as if we were opening a common sewer; but as waterpipes, drains, and, more than all, the gaspipes themselves, are frequently in want of repair, the ground must be disturbed, in winter or summer, as may be, and that for whole streets at a time. Thus far it has been found impossible to prevent this leakage on account of the continual, but equal, subsidence of the soil in which the pipes are laid. The only thing to be done is to take stringent measures to compel the utmost possible purification of the gas itself.

Perhaps a still more palpable proof of the deleterious properties of the gas now in use is to be found in its effects upon many substances in rooms where it is used. Dr. Letheby says, "There is not a library in the metropolis the books on the upper shelves of which are not tumbling to pieces from this cause." As it happens we can bear witness to the truth of this remark. We have seen the bindings of books shrivel up and break after only two or three years' exposure, rather than use, in a room where gas is constantly burnt.—The destructive effect of gas on furniture and perishable substances is a matter of universal complaint, and is only tolerated because furniture in London is changed very soon, and few shopkeepers keep large stores of perishable substances. It is the oil of vitriol that does the mischief, and Dr. Letheby says that so highly is the gas of one company charged with sulphuret that he has obtained twenty-one grains of oil of vitriol from one hundred cubic feet of gas. Now, if the gas of this metropolis is so destructive to inert matter, how much more must it be so to the vital organs! It is true that gas is only one of the many deleterious agents at work in this metropolis. Dr. Letheby finds the snow itself, apparently so fresh from the purer regions of the sky, charged with sulphuric acid in combination with ammonia; and he has found the same with regard to the leaves of trees. But, if mischiefs are so rife among us, that is only the more reason why everything should be done to diminish their number and influence. Gas is becoming one of the most formidable. It assails us everywhere. It oozes from the soil, it rises from every area, and fumes out of every neglected basement. What with leakage, imperfect combustion, and the original bad quality of gas, it is seldom used without forcing itself on more senses than one. This is a heavy penalty to pay for an evening's illumination, and there is no real occasion why we should have to pay it. Gas can be brought under the public surveillance quite as easily as any other modern necessary of life. Parliament has lately enacted some stringent and costly regulations as to the part of the Thames from which water shall be drawn, and as to the filtering and reserving of that water. The air that we breathe is even more important than the water we drink; and, if Dr. Letheby's account of the gas in London be correct, it is high time that Parliament did interfere to neutralize the subtle poison we have admitted into our atmosphere, and into the very ground that we tread on.

ATTENTION TO HEALTH.—If men gave three times as much attention as they now do to ventilation, ablution, and exercise in the open air, and only one third as much to eating, luxury, and late hours, the number of doctors, dentists, and apothecaries, and the amount of neuralgia, dyspepsia, gout, fever, and consumption, would be changed in a corresponding ratio.

THE CORRUPTIONS OF THE HEART.—I see it is much easier to pull up many weeds out of a garden, than one corruption out of the heart: and to procure a hundred flowers to adorn a knot, than one grace to beautify the soul. It is more natural to corrupt man to envy than to imitate the spiritual excellencies of others.

Diocesan Church Society.

FOR THE CHURCH TIMES.

SIR,

THE Annual Meeting of the Pictou Branch of the D. C. Society took place in Mr. Smith's School Room on Friday the 27th of January. The building was well filled. After the evening prayers and those appointed to be used on the occasion had been offered, the 100th psalm was sung. After which the Rector opened the Meeting by calling on the Secretary, J. H. Lane, Esq. to read the Report of proceedings for the past year.

REPORT.

The Committee of the Pictou Branch of the D. C. Society of Nova Scotia, in making their Report for the past year, feel that the first duty they owe is to express their thanks to Almighty God for his goodness in having preserved the Province from the ravages of war, pestilence and famine, calamities to which other countries have been severely exposed. The earth has yielded forth her increase, and commerce has undergone a decided improvement. Pictou has shared in these Provincial blessings. There is no scarcity of food among us, nor that commercial depression which for some years hung over our town and saddened the hearts of its inhabitants, and therefore the Committee would express a confident hope that though our numbers have been lessened by emigration to the U. States and New Brunswick a ground of diminution to which we have long been subject, the contributions to this Society will not be less in the aggregate than for the year 1853.

Those who have taken an interest in the Colonial Church and carefully watched the causes that have either retarded its growth or advanced its prosperity, must have observed that these causes are of a very mingled character, and have led to very opposite effects. In some few instances we see the Church of England flourishing under the voluntary system, while in others we behold it attaining vigour and rapidly extending itself under the united influence of local efforts and foreign aid. The result of general observation is, that the Church when left to depend entirely on local resources, has failed to maintain its high and proper ground in many places, and has shown symptoms of languishing and decline. The Church of England seems to act on this view, that it is a duty to occupy the whole extent of any country where she establishes herself, and therefore it is very evident that it could not be kept up in the rural and more distant settlements without assistance from public societies or from a local endowment fund.

In a Parish like our own, where the Church population does not form more than one-fiftieth of the whole, and these widely scattered, members from different countries, without any particular bond of unity, it would be next to a thing impossible so to concentrate their efforts and to call forth their liberality, as to provide for the regular and efficient services of the Church. Some few populous towns may support their own Clergymen without extraneous aid, but the rural districts could not at present. But while the Committee have expressed these sentiments they feel it a duty to record also their decided opinion that Churchmen in this Province, perhaps in the Colonies generally, have not done all that they might have done for the maintenance and extension of the Church, and that if foreign help is to relax instead of stimulating our energies, it is no longer a blessing. They would therefore earnestly call upon this congregation, while the support of a Clergyman bears lightly on them, to provide for the day of trial, either by the erection of a parsonage house, or by creating a local endowment fund. If we have done all that lies in our own power, we shall then be supported by that comfortable reflection, and may with some degree of propriety hope that the Church in Pictou will always have one to minister in holy things, "a man to stand before God for ever."

In local matters the statistics furnished by the Rector to the Venerable Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts are nearly the same as those for the preceding year. The return shows 88 communicants, being an increase of one. Contributions to Clergyman, the same. Children in Sunday School 45, being 20 less. Marriages the same. Baptisms 51, being 2 less. Burials three more than in the preceding year. The leading difference then is in the attendance at the Sunday School, and the Committee deem this a matter of such vital importance to the interests of the Church, that they would like the causes of this declension ascertained, and if possible the evil remedied.

They cannot close the Report without noticing the death of the late Henry Hutton, Esq., with whose name the early history of the Church in this place will long be