

SHORT SERMONS.

NO. XIX.

BY A LAY PREACHER.

Then shouldest not have entered into the gate of my people in the days of their calamity.—Obadiah, 12th verse.

MY FRIENDS,—It is written of Obadiah, that he was a man who "feared the Lord greatly," and though the prophecy from which my text is taken is the shortest book in the Old Testament, it is terrible in the strength and vividness with which it denounces those who wrong their brethren, and grand in the brightness of its promises to the poor and oppressed.

It is not necessary that I should recite to you the long story of the adversities of the Israelites; save that when they were coming out of Egypt, seeking relief from the taskmasters who made their life grievous to them, the Edomites refused to give the privilege of roadway through their land. All the travail gone through by the children of the Patriarch, all their ambitions and hopes, counted for nothing to the children of the man who sold his birthright for a mess of pottage—for Esau had settled Edom. They were doing well—why should they care for others? But in the days of David, when nations stronger than Edom were possessing themselves of its riches, that valiant Shepherd King, not only delivered Jerusalem and the territory of Judea from Philistine tyranny, but drove the invaders from the land of his neighbor the Edomite, and put garrison in Edom to preserve the peace he had won for them. Then after a few decades, envious neighbors combined against Jerusalem, and laid it under tribute. Edom did not now remember her helper of former times, but avoided the burden of the tribute by leaving her alliance, and "in the day that strangers carried away captive his forces, and cast lots upon Jerusalem, was even as one of them."

My friends, I see betimes in various journals call for help in different branches of labor, offering inducement, however, only to

NON-UNION MEN.

And I meet men who do not hesitate a moment, when their brethren are seeking to resist invasion of their right or retrenchment of their means, to not only enter the gate but lay hands on their substance, (verse 13).

I do not present these thoughts for the purpose of interesting for the moment only; but to ask my readers to help me, wherever they can, to enforce the idea on the minds of workmen that there is a moral wrong as well as an infringement on social economy, in taking undue advantage of any adversity that may befall a brother, and none greater than that of supplanting him when seeking to preserve to his family the necessities of life, means of comfort.

My friends, let me ask you to read the book from which I have quoted. It is full of plain truths; and there is great comfort in the assurance that though the poor do suffer for a while at the hands of those who should deal friendly with them, yet "the house of Jacob shall possess their possessions."

Correspondence.

ST. CATHARINES.

(From our own Correspondent.)

MISS DE MONTFORD.

This distinguished lady mesmerist appeared for four nights before the Saints, during the past week, and on each occasion with marked success. On every occasion except on the Town Hall was crowded to the door, many of the principal families in town being present. To give even an outline of the wonderful power of this lady would, indeed, be a very difficult matter. On Saturday evening the risibility of the vast audience was perfectly uncontrollable, particularly when she made two young men believe that one was Sir John A. Macdonald and the other Mr. A. McKenzie, and again when she made one of the same gentlemen believe he was Blondin, walking the tight rope. Some would make us believe that with regard to mesmerism, the lady is a sciolist, or one having a superficial knowledge of the science she professes to demonstrate. On the contrary, we firmly believe that the lady has a profound knowledge of that interesting science called mesmerism, and further, from the way which she examines the organs of the head we are strongly of opinion that she is an ardent follower of Gall and Spurzhoim, the founders of phrenology; indeed, we would strongly advise this lady, on her reappearing before the Saints, to vary her entertainment, by devoting part of the evening to phrenology. We have no doubt, on her coming back to St. Catharines, she will meet with a warm reception. In conclusion, we would cordially advise all who have an opportunity to go and see her.

UNION SUPPER.

The officers of most of the Unions in town met on Friday evening, in the Barwick House, to arrange preliminaries for the above supper. The best feeling prevailed during the sitting. The committee arranged that the supper should take place

in the Barwick House (Mr. Howard's) on Tuesday evening, 24th of February. Tickets are placed at 75 cents. A good time is anticipated.

THE DUNKIN BILL AND THE REDUCTION OF PUBLIC HOUSES.

Petitions for the enforcement, or rather the adoption, of the Dunkin Bill are being signed by large numbers of the Saints; also, one for the reduction of the number of licensed houses. As both are good objects, we wish them all success.

TRADE.

Trade is exceedingly dull at the present time, and, as a necessary consequence, many families are suffering intensely. We trust that matters will soon take a favorable turn.

St. Catharines, Feb. 16th, 1874.

ONTARIO EDUCATION.

(To the Editor of the Ontario Workman.)

The issue of the Chief Superintendent's Annual Report, is suggestive of certain reflections which it behoves those interested in the subject to take to heart. The document bears as usual the impress of the Royal insignia, mutilated, but that circumstance affords only a feeble foreshadowing of the nature of its contents.

One is confronted, on the opening page, with exhibitions of the vernacular tongue, sufficiently startling to any one whose experience is not limited to one hemisphere; "expenditures," "ages" (of pupils) to wit. The "essential minimum" (of a good English education), whatever the phrase may mean, is somewhat suggestive of the character of the tuition young Ontario is likely to receive under the auspices of him (one is obliged to say) not of them, in whose name the report is issued. One cannot proceed far with the perusal of a report of the character of the present, without enquiring as to the antiquity of the legislation on which the present educational authority reposes. "Three and twenty years" is the answer to such an enquiry, and the search discloses the amusing, (one would hope not ominous) fact that the law stands in juxtaposition with an Act for the destruction of wolves. Nearly a quarter of a century has elapsed, then, since "Her Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Council and Assembly of Canada, enacted" that the Governor might appoint a Council of Public Instruction for Ontario, to consist of not more than nine persons (of whom the Chief Superintendent of Education was to be one) to hold office respectively during pleasure, and that such council should, in the exercise of its duties, be subject to all lawful orders, issued by the Governor from time to time. Such is the foundation on which the present authority rests, but inasmuch as the Province may be said to have attained its majority two years ago, it remains for the present generation to determine how far a system originated when they were in their cradles, is, or is not commensurate with the requirements of to-day. There are certain principles and postulates, relating to the persons on whom the duties of Educational Superintendents may devolve, in which all intelligent men will agree.

1. That men of the highest order of intellect and attainment, coupled with unimpeachable integrity, should be selected.
2. That the representatives of the people should divide with the Governor, the responsibility of nominating members of a Council of Public Instruction.
3. That at least half of such Council shall consist of men unconnected professionally with any religious community.
4. That direct remuneration be paid to the several members of the Council, and that no other pecuniary benefit shall accrue to them from their connexion therewith. Forfeiture of office should be involved by any proved breach of the latter principle.

With regard to the report in question, it is, unhappily, impossible to treat of it separately, inasmuch as minutes of the Council of Public Instruction exist which disclose the fact that certain of its members, past and present, have violated the spirit of the law, by seizing the opportunity presented to them to turn a penny by book-making, etc. The writer has also seen a letter from the Provincial Secretary, inquiring of the Council, in the name of the Government, "if these things be so." He has further seen a denial on the part of the Chief Superintendent of the facts disclosed in his minutes, and a copy of an Order in Council, in which the Government of the day expressed their surprise at the aforementioned denial, and advised His Excellency to direct that no member of the Council of Public Instruction be pecuniarily interested in the preparation of any text-book authorized by the Council, or be appointed to any paid employment in its gift. I observe that "Religio, scientia, libertas" is the motto selected by the so-called "Council of Public Instruction," as that which is supposed to foreshadow the sentiments of the Council. It is my conviction that the principles of the body would be more suitably represented by the words, "By this craft we have our gain." I shall, therefore, treat the report with as much respect as I should that of any other individual under impeachment for high crimes and misdemeanors. "Our present system sketched in 1846."—Does that mean that the distinguished secr, "Chief Superintendent, D.D., L.L.D.," forecast "our present system"

from what he styles his "stand-point of view" in that remote era?

In immediate connection with this lucid "sketch," we are informed that it is the "Chief's" opinion that "we can remain no longer in a state of educational probation." One hails this announcement as the first exhibition of modesty, on the part of the "Chief," one has yet met with. "Probation" necessarily implies an appeal to some tribunal, and, as we infer from this, that the "Chief" deigns to submit his achievements to the arbitrament of public opinion, we think it possible he may, ere long, listen to accents of disapprobation. The subject-matter of the "sketch" consists of a combination of bad English and bunco, of too unifying a character to merit further comment.

Pending the aid of an interpreter, I am at a loss to understand "the proportion of criminals to the illiterate population, in regard to education." Under the foregoing head, I find the following figures:—

"ILLITERATE CRIMINALS."

In New York and Pennsylvania 4 p.c. to 33 p.c.
In Central West 3 1/2 " 48 "
In West Pacific 3 " 31 "
In the South, 22 " 60 "

"It appears, therefore, that in the Middle States, the proportion of illiterate criminals is eight-fold the proportion of illiterate people."

According to this unique statement, I gather that among other social phenomena of the great Republic, they have eight times the number of illiterate criminals to that of illiterate persons, a state of society which would appear to involve an indefinite enlargement of Sing Sing. I looked, with some uneasiness for a copy of a "circular to American Superintendents and others," which I found had been despatched from this enlightened department.

The letter and its accompaniments are the offspring of an *argumentum ad hominem*; they are a disgrace to the department, and by consequence, to the country. Their moral, or rather immoral, aspect is the most reprehensible. Jobbery of a debased type had substituted devotion to the exalted vocation of a teacher, (assuming the latter disposition to have ever existed) the same became bruited abroad—protests were uttered, and instead of meeting them manfully, the serpent blended with the dove, and the wily (but shallow) manoeuvre of issuing the above-named circular was adopted.

(To be Continued.)

BESON.

HISTORICAL QUESTION No. 1.

Wanted, the name of the Island where Napoleon (the great) was born, and the name of its Capital.

D. W. T.

TRANSPPOSITION No. 1.

STATES AND CITIES IN THE STATES.

1. Sam Sets hut Sac.
2. lad we are.
3. Cum Sub lo.
4. at So me Nin.
5. ill med give ell.
6. rue go on Tab.

D. W. T.

GEOGRAPHICAL CHARADE.

- A State in America.
- A City in England.
- A Country in Europe.
- A County in Ireland.
- A British Dependency in Europe.
- A Mountain in Europe.

My initials read downward, will give the name of a celebrated German Poet.

D. W. T.

CURRENT EVENTS.

The official census of the population of Japan for 1872 just published, fixes the entire population at 33,110,825. The males and females are about equal in numbers.

A despatch received at London, Eng., states that the British troops captured Coomassie, the Ashantee capital, on the 29th of January. No details have been received.

The Trades Unions of New York are preparing to take action against the Police Commissioners for interference in clubbing the recent mass meeting at Tompkins Square.

The Worshipful Company of Plasterers, London, offer prizes to be competed for by students in metropolitan and provincial schools of art in connection with the Science and Art Department.

No country upon the face of the habitable globe, having a railroad system in operation, is so carefully guarded against the possibility of collisions as the republic of Costa Rica. It rejoices in a single locomotive.

It is reported that the band between the bodies of Chang and Eng was operated upon on Saturday, and that a report will be made to the College of Surgeons shortly. Everything is conducted with the greatest secrecy.

The report of the annual meeting of the Hamilton Fire Brigade shows the actual number of fires during 1873 to have been 13, the total loss resulting therefrom being \$1,147,500, being nearly eighteen times greater than in 1872.

The Spanish Brigadier Vascones, at the head of a column of 1,200 men, is reported to have been attacked while recently crossing the

River Canto, by a force of Cuban soldiers. Vincente Garcia, losing 600 men, and himself killed.

As they were going to bed Friday night, Jesse Clark, aged fourteen years, playfully pointed a pistol at his cousin Jesse Wicks, in Jones street, N.Y., remarking, "this is the way we would treat robbers," when the pistol exploded, and Wicks fell dead with a bullet through his brain.

His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor has been pleased to authorize the issue of Letters Patent, incorporating "The St. Catharines Stove Company limited, with power to carry on business at the Town of St. Catharines, in the County of Lincoln, and with the nominal capital of \$30,000.

A neighbor going to the house of David Thompson, Chicago, to see Mrs. Thompson, who was recently confined, found the doors were fastened, and suspecting something was wrong secured help and forced an entrance into the house, where they found Mrs. Thompson lying insensible, two of the four children dead, and the other two in an apparently dying condition. The cause of their illness and death has not been ascertained, though it is supposed they were in some way poisoned by foul gas.

The formal opening of the Hudson Cotton Factory took place on Saturday on the premises at Hochelaga. The building is a fine brick five story one, and measures 210 feet by 80 feet, and the engine-room and boiler-house adjoining, the former being 75 feet by 42, and the latter 40 feet square. On the arrival of the visitors the whole machinery of the factory was in operation, including 210 looms, all arranged on the second floor of the factory. It is expected that in a few weeks there will be about 250 employees at work. The present employees are mostly French Canadians, who have been trained in American factories.

It has lately been felt in St. Catharines that there has not been sufficient interest taken in the welfare of the volunteers in that neighborhood, and it has been thought that the organization of a new company would not only be a welcome addition to the force in itself, but would have a beneficial influence on the existing companies. Mr. Willard C. Copeland, the energetic Adjutant of the 19th Battalion, has accordingly undertaken the task of organizing a new company, and we hope he will be successful. There are says the *News*, "many young men in town who can well afford to spend a few hours in acquiring a knowledge of military drill, and we hope they will enroll themselves in the new company."

The real condition of the poor classes of New York as revealed in the daily cases of destitution which have come to light, is daily exciting sympathy among the charitable people, and every effort is being made to alleviate their sufferings. The number of families in affluent circumstances before the panic, but who have been reduced to poverty since, is very large. The suffering, however, is greatest among the laboring classes. Cases have been discovered where whole families have been starving for weeks on one meal per day, and other cases where no food has been tasted for three or four days, and were just discovered in time to save life by administering relief. The various charities of the city are making large disbursements for their relief. "The labor situation has undergone a slight improvement lately. Until the spring trade fairly opens the present condition of the working classes will continue.

The importance of a comma is shown in a discovery recently made at Washington. Among the additions to the free list in the tariff bill enacted about two years ago was the following:—"Fruit plants, tropical and semi-tropical, for the purpose of cultivation." The clerk who engrossed the bill inserted a comma after the word fruit, making it read "Fruit, plants," etc., thus changing materially the sense of the bill. The committee did not observe the change, and the bill with the clerk's amendment became law. The Treasury Department, however, administered it according to the original intention of its framers, until some shrewd importer of fruits planted himself firmly upon the comma and refused to pay duties upon his imports, except under protest. Insisting upon his construction of the law, he at last obtained the return of the duties, and ever since fruits have been admitted free. That comma is said to have cost the Government \$2,000,000. A bill has been reported to remove the comma, however, and the law will soon be in operation according to the intention of its authors.

ACADEMY OF MUSIC.

At the performances of the Academy, Mr. Z. R. Triganne, the manager, is determined that there shall be nothing vulgar, old, or tedious, but everything select and in good taste. The old favorite, Mr. John H. Clarke, met with a genial reception on his re-appearance, as did also the Richmond Sisters—those charming "Little Frauds." Rob. V. Ferguson has been retained for the present week, and nightly convulses the audiences with laughter. The favorite stock company each retains their popularity. A pleasant evening's entertainment can always be depended upon at the Academy of Music.

H. J. SAUNDERS, PRACTICAL TAILOR, 323 Queen Street West, opposite W.M. Church.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, that the Confederation Life Association will apply to the Parliament of Canada, at its next session, for an Act to amend the Act, incorporating the Association, by changing the time of holding the Annual Meeting, and other amendments. W. P. HOWLAND, President. Toronto, 2nd March, 1874. 93-a

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82-oh

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