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LETTER FROM MONTREAL

DEAR MR. EDITOR.—For a few weeks the people here have been in a condition of more than usual excitement. The chief causes of the much augmented feeling they have shown may be told. One of them is the serious disagreement between the Corporation of the city and the Provincial Government respecting the

MILLION DOLLAR GRANT

of the former towards railway construction on the north shore of the St. Lawrence and the Ottawa rivers. In very brief the case is substantially thus. A few years ago the city prevailed on to

vote the large sum mentioned, to a private company that contracted to build the road. Circumstances led to this company's giving up their contract. The line they had engaged to make was to be direct from Montreal to Quebec in one direction, and direct to Ottawa in the other. The terminus of the road and the workshops were to be within the eastern limits of the city. After awhile the Government undertook to construct the railway, and expected to receive the million dollars. But the Government went about to change the line of the road to the great detriment of Montreal, and intended to erect workshops at a village, St. Therese, which is many leagues to the northward, which would also be a great loss to the city. On these new conditions the city refuses to pay the balance of the grant, \$300,000, that was made to another party, and on other conditions. The Government is moving the Legislature to enact laws whereby the city shall be compelled to pay. The city, complains, remonstrates and protests. It declares as things now stand, it will not pay. In the meantime the exigencies of the Province are said to require new, more, and nearly if not quite direct taxes. These affairs have created huge dissatisfaction. Leaders of public opinion counsel defiance to the Local Government, believing their proceedings to be at once unjust and unconstitutional. Great uneasiness exists. By what means it is to be allayed, and confidence and satisfaction restored, does not yet appear. The sooner it does, however, the better. The winter is passing. The business of the approaching summer should soon be commenced. But it must be greatly injured, if the Government and the people determinedly pursue antagonistic courses.

FATAL CASUALTIES

have occurred with lamentable frequency. At the time of the funeral of Dr. Peltier, a highly respected member of the Medical Faculty of Victoria (Methodist) University, a horse drawing a sleigh broke away from the driver, and ran off at full speed. The animal dashed through the procession, overturning the sleigh of Dr. Macdonnell, who being violently thrown to the ground, received a wound in his skull, of which, and the shock to his system the accident occasioned, he died two days afterwards. He was much and deservedly esteemed. At about the same time a young merchant suddenly disappeared, and unaccountably. Five hundred dollars have been offered for his discovery, but without success. His mother is grieving sorely. A few days ago within a few hours, there were three adult victims to intemperance, two men and a woman. This is mournful in the extreme. How much remains to be done before the temperance reform shall be adopted universally. Terrible is the loss of life, and its attendant sorrows to the inebriate. Mr. Rine has returned to the city and resumed his labors. It may be that these recent deaths from the use of liquors may induce many to resolve neither to touch, nor taste nor handle them.

THE CHURCHES

have not been idle in these stirring times. The Rev. Mr. Pitcher of Montreal fifth

circuit preached on the 3rd inst., two sermons on Methodism, in which he discussed its doctrines, usages, and present position. There are times and places when this example may be followed with a view to secure the intelligent, as well as the hearty support of the people called Methodists. The Rev. Mr. Gaetz delivered a lecture before the Civil Rights Alliance, entitled

YOUNG CANADA AND ITS WANTS.

The lecture was repeated by request of the ladies of the French Methodist Missionary Society. Among the wants which the Rev. lecturer would be glad to see supplied, he mentioned—men of patriotism and superior ability to occupy the highest places in the state—more protection to its manufactures; a much controverted branch of political economy; and the diminishing of the exceptional privileges of the Catholic Church in Canada, together with a great lessening of the influence of its hierarchy in public affairs. May the lecturer's eloquence and efforts be rewarded by speedy advancement of "this Canada of ours" in all things that go to make a great, united, free; a Christian and a happy people.

A METHODIST CONVENTION

was held on four consecutive evenings, beginning on the 5th inst. One of the ministers presided. Ministers and laymen read papers on the topics for the day. Short addresses followed. The members of the church generally attended, and were much interested in the proceedings. The subjects considered were—Holiness—Methodist literature—the class-meeting—personal effort—and the relation of children to the church. Every one will perceive the great importance of these subjects to the Methodist connexion. If our people depart from the old paths in regard to them, other changes will follow to the Body that will not promote its piety—its union, nor its power to do good. The class-meeting is essential to the system which our fathers (of precious memory) have handed down to us. Some are probably observing what effect upon it recent alterations in financial economy may have produced. Superintendents who are in favorable positions, may take notice what influence on the attendance at class, and on the pastoral care of its members the envelope mode of contribution may have in those circuits in which subscriptions in classes have been wholly discontinued. Old members will notice what substitute, if any, has taken the place of the Society meetings in which our ministers used to talk so paternally on Christian experience, on relative duties, on the various means of grace, and the temptations to be resisted by those who in the happy service of Christ would endure unto the end. Those meetings were a great comfort—an occasion of edification and encouragement to the aged and the young, to the rich and the poor. Perhaps, too, considering the unspeakable value of the class-meeting, both direct and indirect, some will enquire whether it is referred to with sufficient frequency in the sermons of ministers. Your friend can have no valuable opinion on this matter for he has long since ceased to hear the sweet persuasive counsels which are spoken in the pulpit. He happens however to know that sermons on Christian fellowship from Mal. iii. 16-18: "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another," &c., formerly received commendation. He also believed that no Methodist in the review of life, from the shore of the river of death, ever for an instant regretted that he had constantly and consistently met in class. Let not the living race of Methodists be slothful, but be followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises. The convention is to result in special revival services—including a fast in the principal churches. May these be productive of abundant and abiding spiritual benefit.

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES

of the city have under their auspices a course of lectures to be delivered this month and the next. Tickets admitting a family to the course are sold for one dollar. The proceeds are for the library fund of the college. This college has lately been enriched by a gift of a copy of the celebrated *Codex Sinaiticus* obtained by the Emperor of Russia. The lectures are to be on—The Pioneers of the

Presbyterian Reformation—The Catholicity of the Presbyterian Church—Its Psalmody—Its Constitution—Its relation to Civil Liberty and Social Progress—and the Presbyterian Churches of America. The lecturers are selected from the ablest ministers of the Body in Montreal. They will command large audiences, and will well repay all the attention they may receive. The omissions in the course are notable. There is to be no lecture on the Creed—or the Calvinism of the church.

OBSEQUIES FOR THE LATE POPE

have been solemnly performed in Notre Dame, the parish church, and in the church of the "Gesu," the clergy of which are Jesuits. In the former a grand requiem mass was conducted by Bishop Fabre. The ceremonies and surroundings were most imposing. The vast edifice has been lately painted and otherwise richly ornamented. The papal colours, purple and yellow, were lavishly yet tastefully suspended. A large catafalque was arrayed in mourning drapery; on both sides were hung the papal arms. It was surmounted by the form of a cooesal tiara having a cross on the top. The whole was illuminated by a large number of gas-jets. The Rev. Care preached an eloquent sermon in praise of the Church, and in vindication of the supremacy of the Pope as the successor of the Apostle Peter. Many societies of Catholics in a body were present. Notre Dame was crowded to the door, from which multitudes retired unable to gain admittance. There were probably more than twelve thousand persons in the building, including the Lieut. Governor of the Province, volunteers, and papal Zouaves in uniform. The services in the church of the "Gesu" were also crowded. Here the music of the large highly trained choir in which a variety of instruments are played was a chief attraction. Here too a sermon was preached, but alas! the theme was the Church of Rome, and not Christ as the only and perfect Saviour of men.

HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR GENERAL

came to Montreal with his Countess, Staff, and Mr. Webb Hayes, son of the President of the United States, at the time appointed. The vice-regal party were accommodated in the Windsor hotel, which is sumptuous, but Lord Dufferin feared he would now not be content to occupy the inferior rooms of his official residence at Rideau Hall. The festivities as pre-announced were well arranged—numerously attended and gave great satisfaction to all the lieges of the Queen in this part of her Empire. The proceedings at his Excellency's visit included his receiving from the McGill University the degree of LL.D. The address of his Excellency and his reply were in Greek, the language of Aristotle and Plato. The Convocation Hall was full to overflowing. The Governor General visited two Convents, inspected two manufactories—opened the Mackay Institute for Protestant deaf mutes, and gave five hundred dollars towards the erection of a building for the Society of Arts. In this will be placed pictures already acquired by the society, that are among the best on the continent of America. One can but admire the tact—the talent—the good nature that his Excellency displayed in all places—and towards all persons who had occasion to approach him. The sinking of his individuality in the Representative of the Queen, and the sentiments he expressed in regard to her Majesty and the great Empire of which she is Sovereign, were above all praise. The weather and the state of the roads were all that could be desired. Never before perhaps had Montreal such bright days—moderate equal temperature—and smooth icy streets in the middle of February, and never before was a Governor of Canada so well entertained as the Earl of Dufferin. His deportment and his speeches cannot fail to promote the unanimity of the people—their love of British connection—and their progress in Christian civilization.

Yours truly E. B.

Feb. 9, 1878.

The Presbytery of Newark, New Jersey, will prosecute no farther the case of the Rev. I. M. See, censured and requested to resign for permitting a woman to occupy his pulpit. Mr. See has refused to resign. The Presbytery have it in their power to dissolve Mr. See's pastoral connection with the Wickliffe Street Church, but have decided not to do so.

UNITED STATES LETTER.

BY CECIL.

The subject of future retribution is now discussed in nearly all of our periodicals. This is a remarkable fact. The secular press have taken up the subject and are discussing it with great freedom. The discussion is conducted generally with great propriety, though in a few instances with considerable lightness and levity. The larger magazines are taking up the subject, and it is being subjected to the most thorough examination of the ablest writers of the country. The *New Englander*, a bi-monthly, for March, contains an article on the "Christian Doctrine of Future Punishment," by Dr. George P. Fisher, in which he gives a historical sketch, interspersed with critical observations of the doctrine as held in the patristic period, in the middle ages, and by modern representative theologians of different countries. Following this are two articles on the same subject, "The Teaching of Christ respecting the Duration of Future Punishment," by James M. Whiton, Ph. D., and Prof. W. S. Tyler, D.D. The articles are all exceedingly able and valuable, and while they take widely different views on the subject, they evince great care, candor and research, and an honest purpose to communicate Bible truth. This is one of our ablest magazines in its department, and its discussion of the subject will command respect and do good.

The March-April number of the *North American Review*, the oldest periodical of its class in the country, and now issued as a bi-monthly by Messrs. D. Appleton & Co., will contain a discussion of the subject, written by six of the most prominent clergymen of the country, representing as many sects.

In this extraordinary discussion, a question generally is not whether there is to be a punishment for sin after death, but whether that punishment is eternal. May all seek to be saved from any punishment in the future world, whether it be long or short.

FINANCIALLY,

We are far from being prosperous. Business is dull, and vast multitudes are out of employment. There is money enough—more than we know what to do with—but the people are afraid to invest it in any business. The consequence is, much of the money is lying idle, and there is a stagnation in the business and commercial world. The Church finances suffer greatly. The Churches in debt, and they are many, find it very difficult to meet their current expenses.

SPIRITUALLY,

we were never doing better. The Church has received a large measure of the Spirit's influence. Revivals are in progress in many of the churches, and in most of them there is more or less revival influence. Messrs. Moody and Sankey are visiting the principal places in New England, and their labors attended with the divine blessing. Some of the churches, pressed under great financial embarrassments, are experiencing great spiritual blessings; they look to the Lord for help, and they do not look in vain.

THE PRESS

is active notwithstanding the hard times. The people will read, and this creates a demand for books and periodicals, a large number of which are being issued. We will call attention to a few. "History of the English People," by John Richard Green, M.A., in four vols., from the press of Messrs. Harpers, is perhaps the most interesting English history ever issued. His "Short History of the English People," prepared the minds of the people for this work. For accurate scholarship, breadth of view, candor and impartiality of statement, and charm of style, we venture to say, it has no equal. It treats of early England, of England under foreign Kings, the Charter and Parliament to 1461. Their "Cyprus; its Ancient Cities, Tombs and Temples," by General Cesnola, is a most fascinating narrative of researches and excavations during the ten years the author resided at Cyprus. Much of its information is new and full of thrilling interest. It contains a portrait, maps, and 400 illustrations.

Messrs. Appleton's Annual Cyclopaedia has been issued. It is a complete register of the important events of the year 1876, and is the sixteenth volume of the Annuals. We have here before us a reliable history of the world for

the year. The current history of each nation is sketched, giving everything of importance that transpired from most reliable sources. There is no book published so important and valuable for reference, and it must be most essential to every library. The same publishers have laid the public under great obligations for their issue of the "Life and Words of Christ," by Cunningham Geikie, D.D. This is regarded the best work on the life of Christ yet issued, and this claim for it is undoubtedly just. There are others of great merit, among which is Canon Farrar's, but we think in some respects this claims the pre-eminence. Its statement of the condition of the world prior and at the time of our Lord's coming will be regarded as of great value. Its style is admirable.

Messrs. E. P. Dutton & Co., have issued "Lady Alice, or Two Sides of a Picture," by Emma Marshall. This is a most charming work, pure and chaste in style, sweet and elevating in spirit, and illustrates with fine effect many of the important states and phases of life, and a Divine Providence in directing and shaping the affairs of life. They have also issued "Sunday echoes in Week-day Hours," by Mrs. Carey Brock. The object of the work is to illustrate the miracles of the Bible. This is the seventh vol. of the series of "Sunday Echoes," by the same author, each illustrating some exercise of the Church, or some portion of the sacred records. The miracles of the Bible are here presented in a new light, and made exceedingly attractive by the fascinating style of the author. It is just the book to be read by all young persons, and no one in reading it can but feel a greater love and reverence for the Bible. The author has learned the rare art of writing as to be read.

Dr. Duff is dead. One of the heroes of the Christian faith, he will be remembered long in England, America and India. He was born in 1806 in Perthshire, Scotland, and studied in the University of St. Andrews. Here he formed an intimacy with Dr. Chalmers. In 1829 he was selected by the Presbyterian Church of Scotland to lay the foundations of its first mission in East India. In this field Dr. Duff had great success. He found a college which became the largest of the kind in the East. Upon the disruption of the Scotch Church he joined the Free Church party, and in 1851 returned home. The succeeding four years were spent in an arduous in the Christians of Great Britain and America a stronger sense of the importance of missions to heathen countries. In the prosecution of this purpose he visited the United States, where he attracted great attention by his extraordinary eloquence. In 1855 he went to India again, where he remained till 1863.

In pleading for missions Dr. Duff displayed a fervor which gave his speeches an overwhelming force. On one occasion, when addressing the Free Church Assembly on this theme, he fainted from exhaustion. He was carried to an adjoining room, and after a time revived. Expressing a desire to return and resume his speech, he was told that the consequences might be fatal to him. He insisted, however, upon appearing again before the Assembly and finishing what he had to say, declaring that if he must die, he would prefer that it should be there and then. Dr. Duff was noted all over Scotland for his disinterestedness and spotless purity of character.—Ez.

MR. FRANCIS MURPHY, after creating a wonderful fervor for temperance in Springfield, Massachusetts, has gone to Washington. As, like Cook and Moody, he has become one of the most noted of the popular speakers of the time, a description of him will not be out of place. "He is a short man," says the editor of the *Sunday Afternoon*, "about as tall as Moody, but not quite so stout, although his chest is full and his limbs are muscular. The face is Celtic but shapely, the bright eyes look out from under heavy eyebrows, the clean-shaven jaw is firm, and the generous mouth is curtained by a black mustache. A good-natured man beyond a doubt, and on the best of terms with his environment." Mr. Murphy is a Methodist; usually opens his addresses with the reading of the Bible, and tells the story of his life in the most dramatic way. With all his earnestness he avoids controversy, declaring that he will not quarrel with any body.