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LETTER FROM MONTREAL.

DEAR MR. EDITOR.—One is sometimes amused at the trivial tidings sent from England by the ocean telegraph. The compensating consideration is that society there is not often disturbed by startling upheavals, and political revolutions. The great fabric of English civilisation, from the cottage to the throne, is well grounded and is ever progressing, both upward and outward. Thus quiet at present, are most matters in this city, a few interests have lately declined a little, but, it is believed for a short season only—whilst others are keeping on in their usual course of preventing evil and doing good. To report thus a few topics may not be unacceptable.

THE WINTER

has been peculiar. After a very cold beginning, and a heavy snow-fall the season has been moderate. But one snow-storm has occurred for many weeks. Hence the sleighing in town has become bad. The Corporation voted ten thousand dollars for the removal of snow from the streets. This afforded occupation to many men, and the streets have been in a better state than usual. Consequently there has been a good deal of driving. Snow-shoe clubs have been very active. These out of door exercises are extremely desirable. They take people out of their houses, which are now commonly heated with anthracite coal, and closed hermetically against the cold, and fresh air is excluded. Hence much of the sickness whereby families are disquieted. A question for the wise is—How to secure for our homes the maximum of pure air, and a minimum of hurtful cold. He who shall correctly solve this problem, and enforce his conclusions on the householders of the city will be entitled to have his name inscribed in the temple of fame near to the names of Hervey and Wilberforce, and Howard. The Board of Health is doing good service. Many valuable suggestions appear in the city public health magazine.

EMPLOYMENT

has been given to hundreds of men on the Lachine canal. Hence the number of idle men has been less than was expected. Among the people at work on the canal there have been several fatal accidents. This is a saddening truth. Some have been severely wounded while blasting. Others whilst undermining the frozen surface have been crushed to death by the sudden downfall of the superincumbent mass. In other ways men have had to suffer from fractured limbs, and amputation. They may well excite our commiseration. No doubt but the danger of prosecuting heavy field work in the winter is considerably increased. Cold benumbs men in body and mind. They calculate inaccurately the effect of frost, snow and ice on the substance they labour on, and the tools they work with. If intoxicants are used so much the worse. Any how there has been deplorable loss of life. Some have left a wife and children. It is undoubtedly the duty of overseers not only to expedite operations, but also to take kindly charge of the men, that by their superior intelligence or wise caution, the labourers who so hardy earn their own and their families subsistence may be suitably cared for while exposing their persons and their very life.

THE ANNUAL REPORT

of McGill University lately published is a document of no common interest. This college holds no secondary place in the Educational institutions of our country. It has not yet attained its utmost power of usefulness, and may not do so for years to come. The number of students at pre-

sent in Law, Medicine and Arts is 392. There are 119 teachers in training in the normal school, and 340 in the model school, making in all one thousand persons of both sexes who are deriving benefit from the University. Degrees in Medicine, Arts, Law and Applied Science were conferred on 48, and Diplomas in the Normal school 70. The corporation of the University feel very sore that the local Legislature should lately and quietly have made it possible for the Supt. of Education to issue "Engineers Diplomas" to pupils of a school recently established by the Roman Catholic School Commissioners, believing that it will tend strongly to lower the standard of engineering education. The corporation remonstrate against this and trust the proper authorities will provide a remedy. The disbursements for the past year amounted to \$43,535.67. Nearly one-seventh of this sum was received from the Local and General Governments, most of the remainder accrued from investments, subscriptions and fees. The Corporation of the University have taken action to have rescinded a recent order of the Board of Trade in England excluding Canadian surgeons from serving on board the steamships trading between this country and Great Britain.

THE TEMPERANCE CAUSE

has many earnest workers in this city. The fruit of their labour will be conspicuous in the men and women of a few years hence. The reason is that the zealous temperance people are enlisting the young in the abstinence army. Many of the churches, notably, perhaps, the Episcopalian, have Bands of Hope, or some corresponding organization. On these time oratory and money is constantly expended. There is nothing new in the fact that some temperance societies have declined to the vanishing point. Others that had become weak have been incorporated with one that was either not strong or new. The Quebec Prohibitory Alliance has been absorbed by the Alliance for the Dominion, the object of both being the same, to procure Legislative Prohibition. The benevolent exertions of temperance toilers have been valuable beyond the possibility of accurate estimation. But for these the drinking usages of the country would have been indefinitely more alarming and ruinous than at present. Years may elapse before Canada shall have a Maine Law. But if the promoters of temperance reform individual drunkards, banish the fatal indulgence from families, and train up a generation of total abstainers, they will deserve unutterably well in the account of every lover of God and of men.

A LADY AND A GENTLEMAN

have lately had here large audiences at their Bible readings and lectures. The former is the modest name given to the exercises of Miss Smiley of Philadelphia. She is an educated devoted servant of God who has the gift of ready, reverent utterance of sacred things. Her discourses were emphatically the word of God. Her hearers were led through the holy Scriptures, to their great and wonderful theme throughout "Christ, the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." The latter is from Australia, and is published as "Rev." He has preached in the first Baptist church. His lectures are miscellaneous, being Historical, Biographical and literary. His latest subjects are "Charles Dickens," "Thackeray, the Snobographer," and "Oliver Goldsmith, poet, novelist, humourist." The performance, which is said to be highly interesting and most amusing, consists chiefly of lengthy recitations from the mentioned authors. The "Rev." lecturer gives his entertainments without book or note, reciting accurately page after page of the author illustrated. He does this in a clear voice and polished articulation. He is an example of memory so remarkable, as to give credibility to what is said of Cyrus, that he knew the name of every soldier of his army. There are some who wish either that Mr. Clarke would cease to use the customary prefix to the name of a Christian minister, or choose for his themes, those subjects which plainly harmonise with the holy resolution of the Apostle to the Gentiles, "For I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and Him crucified." Think of Paul going into Spain or Macedonia to lecture on

Epicurus, Menander, or even Plato. The writer hopes never to forget the unction, and the tears of grateful joy with which he heard the late Dr. Raffles say in his sermon, "I would rather be a preacher of the Gospel of our salvation than wear the costliest diadem that ever adorned a monarch's brow."

A CONCLUDING WORD OR TWO MAY BE GIVEN OF THE CHURCHES.

Ministers and their people are awake, they are up and doing. In a few cases the competition of churches is almost obtrusive. Sermons are advertised for weeks in advance of their delivery. These of course excite curiosity, and attract a crowd. Some sanctuaries are rather depleted and others overfilled. But if thus men are brought to God through Christ it is well. Entertainments in the form of concerts, readings, and free tea meetings are given by some congregations, in which a few years ago they would be looked for in vain. The worthy Rector of Christ Church Cathedral has announced that during the last days of Lent he will hold a protracted meeting. May the outcome of this ecclesiastical activity and benevolence be the advancement of the kingdom of God. Methodist churches have been holding their winter special services. These are now in progress in St. James Church. They are the occasion of prayerful solicitude to the thoughtful of the congregation. There is nothing in which our ministers more need, or are better entitled to the cordial sympathy of their people than when putting forth wise, holy, loving and authorised efforts for the growth in grace of believers, the recovery of those who may have lost their first love, and the conversion of the young and others of our household who are not yet partakers of like precious faith. May the good Lord give his sanction to these revival services. May the adopted children of God be multiplied. May our sons be as plants grown up in their youth, and our daughters be as corner stone polished after the similitude of a palace. Happy is that people that are in such a case, yes, happy is that people whose God is the Lord. Yours, E. B.

NOTES FROM ST. JOHN

MR. EDITOR.—So many matters of greater or less interest have transpired since we last wrote you, that it is almost impossible to know where to begin. Your columns have been so liberally supplied with Methodist intelligence from this quarter that we feel it quite unnecessary to refer at any length to such topics. One of the chief events in Methodist circles was the presence in our midst of

DR. REID,

of New York, on our missionary platform. The Dr. is a man beyond middle age, of medium height, pleasing appearance, gentlemanly bearing, and entirely "at home" in facing an audience. His style is more remarkable for clearness, than beauty of diction, though by no means devoid of the latter. He makes his points well, and knows when he has made them—a characteristic we may add not universal among modern orators. Our people are highly pleased and deeply impressed with Dr. Reid, and we hope a favoring breeze may soon again waft him to our shores. The second volume of

MR. POPE'S SERMONS.

has just issued from the press of J. & A. McMillan. These volumes reflect great credit upon the firm that has brought them out. The mechanical "get up" is tasteful and good. We have not yet had leisure to peruse these sermons carefully, but when we have done so, may give your readers the result of our examination. At present it is enough to say that Mr. Pope is a gentleman of fine and varied culture, much literary taste and finish, broad and generous sympathies, and deep and fervent piety. It would therefore be strange indeed if his volumes did not largely bear the impress of these characteristics, and meet with an extensive and rapid sale.

COMMERCIAL.

The business outlook is not as good as anticipated, of course this season of the year is the most trying, even in prosperous times. A considerable quantity of lumber will be got out this season, but no one can predict what the prices will be. It is to be hoped they will have an

upward tendency. The suspense attendant upon the Presidential contest in the United States, and the Eastern question in Europe, have thrown the commercial machinery of the world somewhat out of gear. A speedy settlement of these questions will restore greater confidence in trade generally. Our people have always relied too much on lumbering. The result is that a change in the demand of England produces a shock at Chubb's Corner. Greater efforts would be forth among us to foster and develop our manufacturing and agricultural interests. We feel confident these Maritime Provinces are capable of great and indefinite expansion in these directions. This leads me to observe that

MARITIME UNION

begins to loom up as a living question for consideration. And well it may. Ever since Confederation we have been keeping up three petty legislatures, with all that that implies, when one would have answered just as well, and in fact much better. As matters now stand New Brunswick has been going behind hand year after year, so that our finances today are in a deplorable condition. Rose-colored budgets may allay for the time being the apprehensions of our people, but the day of reckoning must finally come. Our Government has foreshadowed a general system of municipalities, which means, if it means anything, self support in schools, road bridges, and kindred public services. After these municipalities have been established, with certain limited legislative powers for local self-government, the propriety of abolishing local legislatures entirely, will force itself upon the attention of the people of this Dominion. That question, may, however, be a long way off—it may be very near.

We have had some conversation with some of the delegates to Fredericton and St. Stephen on our

EDUCATIONAL

enterprise. The reports are much more encouraging than last year. The great difficulty seems to be in getting our people to look upon this educational movement as a very necessary and important agency in the work of our church. Whose fault is that? The fault belongs to those whose duty it is to educate the people up to the importance of this movement. The duty of doing this rests upon our ministers, and until they throw more earnestness and zeal into this matter and talk to their people as if they meant what they said about the claims of our Educational Society, that society will lack vigor, efficiency, and a standing in keeping with the claims and wants of our great Methodist Church of Canada. Feb. 26th, 1877. N. B.

EXETER HALL, LONDON, TEMPERANCE SPEECH.

Mr. Edwd. Baines, who was received with loud and prolonged cheering, said—I will state my own personal experience of total abstinence, and respectfully ask for it the consideration of those friends of temperance who would class themselves, or not be offended at being classed, as moderate drinkers. There are scores of thousands of good men and women, rich and poor, who if they could really believe that alcoholic liquors were absolute superfluities, and also dangerous as well as useless, would discontinue their use. I remember when I thought a glass of good sherry must necessarily help digestion, and that a glass of old port must pour strength into the veins. Happily for myself, I was led to put the matter to the test of fair experiment, and it will be in accordance with the object of this meeting that I should tell the result. Wishing to save a man addicted to drink from impending ruin, and knowing that persuasion would be useless without example, I resolved to try total abstinence for a month. Finding myself just as well at the end of the month as at the beginning, I repeated the experiment for a second month, and with the same satisfactory result. It then occurred to me that it would be useful to know how long I could dispense with strong liquor without affecting my health and strength. But I had to wait a long time for the final conclusion of this experiment, and I have not yet arrived at it. (Laughter and cheers.)

More than nine and thirty years have passed, and I declare that I have the same consciousness of sound health, though not of youthful elasticity, in the year 1877 that I had in the year 1837. (Loud applause.) I found that He who made the human frame, made it so wisely that it does not need the stimulus of beverages which when taken in excess, blind the reason, influence the blood, sow the seeds of disease, and implant an unconquerable craving for the fatal poison. To the doctor it speaks volumes when I say that I never sit down to table without an appetite, and I never rise from bed with a headache. When I hear total abstinence designated as ascetics, I smile at the ignorant blunder, because it has always been my firm conviction that I enjoy the pleasures of the palate much more than if I had taken wine of any kind, or in any quantity. If examined as to my mode of life, I may say that it has been one of no small activity, first as a pretty close student, and afterwards as having taken part in the public questions and controversies that have stirred one of the most exciting periods of our history. After many years of editorial and political work, I was called at the age of fifty-nine to enter Parliament, where I spent fifteen years in charge of the business of a great borough and taking interest in the concerns of the empire through several eventful Parliaments. (Applause.) When I entered the House of Commons I was told by one of my predecessors that I should not be able to go through the business without the help of wine. (Laughter.) My judicious medical adviser knew better. He did not recommend any alcoholic drink, and only laid upon me one injunction—namely, that whatever late hours the House might keep, I should never lie in bed seven hours. The advice was worth more to me than all the wine in London docks. (Loud cheers.) Not one glass of wine or ale ever touched my lips, and in consequence—not in spite of it, but in consequence—I say I was able to do almost as much work as any man in the House. (Renewed cheers.) I left Parliament almost unscathed; all but unworn. I need scarcely say that this simple statement owes whatever value it may have to the fact that it disapproves the necessity or usefulness of alcoholic drinks to the human frame, and therefore to man in general as well as to me. For I am an ordinary and average person. I think my constitution is sound, but not particularly strong, and I am as fair an experiment as Doctor Richardson himself could desire. If these drinks were necessary to make blood, or muscles, or nerve, or sinew, or bone, I must for want of them have experienced constant deterioration, and by this time have wasted away, if they even imparted cheerfulness, or inspired thought, or kindled affection, I must without them have dried up into a log. How can it be accounted for that, well advanced in the eighth decade of life, my pulse beats as firmly, that I walk up hill nearly as fast, and that I play with my grandchildren as merrily as ever. If any propositions are beyond question, they are these—that wine is the most seductive of drinks, and that the thirst for it grows stronger with indulgence.

Therefore the moderate drinker, if he continues moderate, has every day to put a constraint upon himself and to deny himself in that which he enjoys most keenly. He is constantly tempted to go beyond moderation the boundary line where safety ends and danger begins. (Hear, hear.) I put him on the horns of this dilemma. If his enjoyment of the cup is great, his danger in tasting it and his pain in leaving it are proportionally great. If, on the contrary, his enjoyment is trifling, why, for a trifling pleasure, should he run any risk at all? The abstainer, on the other hand, has never tasted her cup of sorceries; and he no more craves it than he craves a thing unthought or unknown. (Cheers.) One word more to the moderate drinker. By taking strong liquors he not only continues in danger himself, but he sets an example that may be fatal to others. A professional gentleman once followed me at a temperance meeting, and said that he was older than I was, yet he had lived as a moderate drinker. He thought the reply was conclusive. But it was not. He did a moderate drinker, but I dare not tell how many of his children became confirmed drunkards. Could he have foreseen this, he would not for worlds have touched the drink. I fear there are not many families in England from which the demon of intemperance has not selected one or more victims, and it is said that the annual sacrifice of precious lives and souls by this vice may be reckoned by scores of thousands. If this be so, is it considerate, is it humane, is it Christian to continue the practice which leads to issues so dreadful? (Loud cheers.)