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## OUR ENGLISH LETTER.

**THE TRAINING COLLEGES.**  
DEAR MR. EDITOR.—The good educational work of Methodism suffers no check in the midst of the sharp competition of the National schools on the one side and School Board schools on the other. The high character of our schools for efficient teaching and a high percentage of children who pass in the Government examinations, is still maintained—the trained teachers are in request everywhere, the colleges are well supplied with pupil teachers who have secured the scholarship entitling them to the privilege of two years study mainly at the expense of the Government, and the whole machinery of the departments appear to be working admirably. There are three men of ability, Dr. Rigg, G. O. Bate, and G. W. Oliver entrusted with the management and devotedly toiling for its success. The high religious tone of the Institutions contributes largely to their undoubted value and stability. The last valedictory address to the students, previous to the Christmas vacation, was given by the President of the Conference, Dr. Pope. It was full of valuable counsel; and adds another excellent contribution to a stock of unique literature connected with the educational work of our church. The eminently wise and thoughtful addresses of John Scott, have been followed by many others worthy of preservation and valuable to all engaged in any form of teaching or training work.

**THE POLITICAL SITUATION**  
is the great absorbing topic of the day, and everybody talks and conjectures freely upon it. We are nearing the anniversary of Parliament, and as days roll on, the dangers anticipated a fortnight ago, look less alarming, and fears are subsiding. It is true that Russia declines an overture on the part of our Government for mediation, but expresses no unwillingness to treat direct with the Porte. It is now pretty generally admitted that England has received no affront, nor are our interests imperilled to-day any more than they were a few months ago. Turkey is not yet so humiliated as to submit to very hard or unconditional terms of peace, and is even threatening an overwhelming levy of troops that shall be able to cope with the hosts of the invader, and hurl them back crushed and defeated. Nevertheless the tide of battle rolls on despite the heavy snow fall and severity of the winter. The Russians are winning one post after another, gaining a firmer hold in many important places both in Europe and Asia, and the Turks are demoralised and beaten,

**THE REVOLT OF SERBIA**  
adds to the thronging trouble of their position, while it complicates all the arrangements of the future. The integrity of the Empire is gone and not all the Turkish sympathisers in Parliament or out of it will be able to reverse the fact.

**CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR'S DAY**  
have been duly observed and thoroughly enjoyed by vast numbers of the population. In many business houses Christmas extended from the previous Saturday afternoon up to Thursday morning, thus opening the way for lengthened trips and extended visits. The services for Divine worship were largely attended, and Watchnight services increase in number and popularity. Methodism still leads the way in those solemn gatherings, and many attend who on no other occasion are seen in our sanctuaries. We cherish the hope that they retain some degree of benefit from what they hear, and that results follow which cannot be tabulated on any record.

**THE WEATHER**  
with us, in the south has been singularly fine and mild, but to the northward they have had snow and frost in good old-fashioned style.

**SAD DISTRESS**  
has prevailed for some length of time in parts of our favored land, and lately it has strengthened and deepened so as to cast a gloom of sorrow over wide districts during the present winter. This may in part be the result of the vexed disputes between masters and men, but its main cause is found in the wide and serious depression of the trade of the country. It is stated that hundreds of men and their families are in a starving condition. At some solitary where a thousand men

have been employed only a few days work have been found for some length of time, and even when a little job has been found, the poor fellows have been compelled to go to work hungry, leaving the family to beg for food during the day. A stream of help has begun to flow for the relief of the distressed population, and surely we may expect that when nearly half a million has been raised for the sufferers in India the poor at home, so near to us, will not long have to endure such painful want and misery. Here we have a strong plea for the maintenance of peace. War would certainly increase the burdens and sorrows of multitudes, and in the long run add heavy taxes on all ranks and conditions. The idea prevails that if England enter into this struggle, it will be the signal for a frightful outbreak of ambitions, a tremendous European war, which may affect the whole world, and every branch of commerce. This has a strong influence on the English mind. The Government will scarcely dare to encounter the forces that will be arrayed against them and in favor of peace.  
Jan. 7, 1878. "B"

## LETTER FROM ONTARIO.

January 16th, 1878.  
DEAR MR. EDITOR.—Our inspiration to write to the WESLEYAN usually comes upon us from the perusal of the last number which comes to hand. We live, though we are very quiet in the West. Methodism is never busier than when she is making least noise in the world. The great work of saving souls is going on night after night, day after day, in a hundred obscure school houses or village churches, although the world seems nothing about it. A minister is plodding day after day through miles of mud, or amid sleet and rain and snow, to visit a few families and pray with them and preach to them at night and exhort them to Jesus. He returns home through darkness, cold, and midnight solitude, to find a "light in the window," and a careworn wife anxiously watching for him. The same is repeated every day for a month or six weeks, and an awakening is produced; a few persons are added to the church, but the results are such that he hardly thinks it worth while to chronicle them. But by and bye they are summed up. District meeting comes and the circuit has lost many by death, removals, &c., but has on the whole advanced. The Conference reports an increase and the work goes on.

**A CONVERTED PRIEST DISAPPEARS.**  
In the West we have a little village rejoicing in the name of Woodalee. In it are two parsons, and they almost adjoin, and contiguous to each are the two churches. One a stately one of brick, belonging to the Roman Catholics. The other more humble one, the Methodists own, the occupant of which is at present Rev. W. Henderson. Now between the priest, a Rev. M. Fitzpatrick, and the preacher, there sprang up an acquaintance which ripened into an intimacy. The priest was uneasy under the calling system of Popery. He began to advocate liberality of sentiment and to preach salvation through faith alone in Christ. His bishop removed him and after two years silenced him. He came back to Woodalee, called on Mr. Henderson, stated he had left the Catholic Church and wished to join the Methodist Church. Mr. H. advised him to attend his Quarterly Official Meeting, in November last, which was to meet on the next day, and he did so. The official members were favourably impressed. He was invited to attend the religious services of Sunday. In the love feast he spoke for half an hour. He impressed every one with his sincerity and earnestness. He dined with Mr. H., accompanied him to his evening appointment, and that evening, just before service—while walking on the street, was kidnapped, and all attempts to ascertain his whereabouts have since failed. A very common opinion is, that he sleeps under the Detroit river. The Catholic prelates are afraid of another Chiniquy, and take the most effectual method of preventing it. As investigations are said to be pending, we have said as much as is prudent upon the subject. But this is an exhibition of the Liberty of Nineteenth Century Catholicism in Canada.  
**CHURCH BUILDING EXTRAORDINARY.**  
What an era in Methodism for collec-

tions! We see the account of a new church to be dedicated, costing from \$5,000 to \$30,000, and the next news is debt all provided for, and a thousand or two over and above the amount thereof. Thus Bloor street, and Elm street in Toronto have both enlarged their borders and provided for their indebtedness. How a preacher—strong in faith—has in his appointment, the want of a new church; but the trustees are unwilling to take the responsibility. With their permission he takes hold of it, builds in faith, takes hold of God in prayer, and obtains signal answers. He succeeds. The new church, worth many thousands of dollars, is completed, and the grateful people come forward and pay for it. Such I believe to be in brief the history of a new church in the village of Morpeth, on the Ridgeway Circuit, built by Rev. R. W. Woodsworth, now of Jarvis. No wonder that we hear from the last circuit of an astonishing contribution as the result of the missionary anniversaries. "The entire amount raised to the present time is \$657—being \$344, or 150 per cent. in advance of last year; and the probability is another hundred dollars will yet be raised, which will be an average of \$250 per member on the Circuit. This circuit is an almost entirely rural one, and embraced within the township of Walpole. Nor is it one of the richest circuits in our province by any means; but who shall compute the moral influence of its example.

**MISCELLANEOUS.**  
The Editors of our two leading Periodicals and our Book Steward, are resolved that it shall be owing to no want of zeal or enterprise on their part if the *Guardian* and *Magazine* are not found in every Methodist home in Canada—and they are both fully worthy of all the patronage that can be given them. The progress of the Temperance Reformation is one of the "signs of the times" in Ontario. As an instance, a private letter informs me that, in the little town of Dundas, 600 signed the pledge. Grocers resolve to send back their stocks of wine and spirits to the wholesale merchants, as the demand for them now is falling off. Dealers say it will not pay them to take out license for another year. The reign of alcohol is doomed in Ontario, but he may die hard.

Our Provincial Parliament is now in session, and the Lieutenant Governor has congratulated the members in his speech from the Throne upon the improved financial state of the country. Hon. Mr. Crooke, the successor of Rev. Dr. Ryerson as Chief Superintendent of Education, is distinguishing his administration by many changes. Prominent among which is the establishing of Normal schools in most of our County or Principal towns, and in connecting them with the existing High Schools. This will be a great boon to many who could ill afford to go up to Toronto, and as every teacher is required to attend one of these schools, the country will reap the benefit. We never had a more open winter than the present. The lighthouse at the mouth of the Detroit River blazed forth over the sullen waters of Lake Erie on the night of New Year's eve, as brightly as in October, for the first time in its history. The waters were as open for navigation until that time as during any period of the summer.  
Yours truly,  
H. R. E. S.

## "SCEPTICAL DOUBTS."

**THE REV. E. B. MEREDITH'S REGULAR MONTHLY SERMON TO YOUNG MEN AT THE TEMPLE STREET CHURCH, BOSTON.**  
The Rev. R. R. Meredith at the Temple Street Methodist Church last Sabbath preached his regular monthly sermon to young men, his subject being "Sceptical Doubts," and his text, Psalms, lxxiii, the first second and seventh verses: "Truly God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart." "But as for me, my feet were almost gone, my steps had well-nigh slipped." "Until I went into the sanctuary of God then understood I their end." This Psalm is supposed to have been written by Asaph, but the question of its authorship is of little importance. But this is one of the Psalms that is local or temporary. It presents a view of society which has perplexed every man in every generation. It brings before us an important passage startling crisis. We may ask what brought about this crisis. It is the problem of human life. This problem belongs to everyone, and meets the most thoughtful and the most thoughtful, and especially presents itself to the mind of every thoughtful young man. Those who are never stirred in life by events of any description are not the most troubled. Asaph walked out into the world and saw very bad men in very good circumstances. He describes these men. He says that they were sensual, gluttonous, impious men, and spoke against God with their lives. It seems strange of belief, yet Asaph actually saw men prosperous, full of robustness, full of life and strength, but they were

not troubled like other men. He saw very good men in suffering circumstances. Asaph was perplexed. Many a man is as much perplexed in this generation as Asaph was in the generation in which he lived. Asaph began to doubt and to ask, "How does God know?" Many a thoughtful man has looked out on this problem of life and pondered, and has come out just as Asaph did—doubting. Many a man has been led astray by that doubt and his superficiality until he stood in Asaph's position. Let a young man, who purposes to do well in life, ponder on this problem, and ask: "Is there knowledge with the Almighty?" and he will see the indirect means by which men achieve success. There are men in this city today with the weight of chicanery and poverty like Asaph's. Some of the worst men in Boston possess everything which the world calls comfortable fortunes. Asaph doubted God's severignty, the personality of life. It is awful for a young man without father and mother to step into the temptations of life without God in his thoughts. This is the awful crisis. I speak to earnest young men, the young men who study the problem of life. But why was Asaph perplexed in his study of this problem? The answer is that he had endeavored to extricate himself from his reason alone, he walked up to study this problem from his own unaided reason. He had wrestled and been floored every every time. The crisis wasn't an innocent one. But he had no business to get into one. This Psalmist had no business to be there. He was envious of those bad prosperous men. If he had taken the right path he would not have been there. Asaph got out, he did not fall into the depths of atheism. Asaph saw at last his own folly and the solution of this problem. In the solution of this problem don't try to accomplish it yourselves. Go into the sanctuary and there get the light of divine revelation. Let us profit by this man's experience. When you come to open the book of God be sure to get the revelation of God, the personal God, the One who never made a mistake, and get fast hold of that truth. There is one thing in this universe which never changes and that is God. Asaph was superficial. He thought that God should round out the retritions of this life and that every sin should receive its just reward. He saw the very contrary. When you come into the sanctuary, young man, you can get one thing, and that is character. It is not what a man has which makes him good, but what he is. This life-lease is running out. Oh, that men would look at these things in the light of God. If young men are tempted to envy the wicked, remember that we are approaching a time when things will be reversed up. It will do you good to remember that you must be good, be afraid to do a wrong thing, grasp after the genuine good, the true salvation, and before God to night you will believe that there is an eternal punishment for the unrighteous.—*Boston Globe.*

**INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS.**  
FIRST QUARTER: STUDIES ABOUT THE KINGDOM OF JUDAH.  
B. C. 897. LESSON V. JEHOSHAPHAT REPROVED; Or, Righteous Judgment. 2 Chron 19. 1-9. Commit to memory verses 1-4. February 3d.  
EXPLANATORY.  
RETURNED. Safe, if not successful. While Abah was slain, Jehoshaphat was spared, though both were in the same circumstances. The day of grace was suddenly darkened from one, while the other was given time to repent of his folly and evil companionship. Often God cares for men when they do not deserve it. A safe issue is not always a proof of a just enterprise. In peace. In personal complicity because of personal escape; thankful for a deliverance which he had no right to expect. *Jehu the son of Hanani.* His father had suffered for his just rebuke of king Asa, but the son is not deterred from reproving King Jehoshaphat. Not always, yet often, are the traits of parents, whether good or evil, perpetuated and intensified in their children. *Help the ungodly. He who com-*

bines with evil men in their purposes, 1. Encourages them in sin. 2. Increases their power for wrong-doing. 3. Endangers his own character by the temptation of their example. 4. Misrepresents God's cause by giving evil impressions to others. *Love them that hate the Lord.* A righteous love for the ungodly is that which pities them, and incites to effort for their salvation; but this was the love of fellowship and of compromise, leading to evil, and eliciting divine wrath. *Wrath.* The fruits of his sin came in the invasion of his territory (chap. 20) and the failure of his schemes; (20, 25-37.) in the slaughter of his descendants, 21, 4; 2 Kings 10, 13-14.) and in the usurpation of his throne (by Abah's daughter, (22, 10-12.) So wide-reaching and baleful are the results of one iniquitous act. [Teacher, warn your scholars against bad companions.]  
GOOD THINGS. Men are of mingled gold and dross, with good in all, yet none altogether good. God's estimate of each man makes full allowance for every element in the character. [Teacher, urge the duty of fairness in opinions. Don't forget the good that is in people; see it, and seek it.] *Groves.* Dark, shadowy recesses of evil association and of the vilest crimes, disguised under the name of worship. *Prepared thine heart.* As the astronomer prepared his telescope to see the stars by careful adjustment to the right point of view, so the heart should be placed where it will reflect God's grace. The heart prepared accompanies the land purged. We should not only purify ourselves but exert to our utmost ability a hallowing influence; should help in reforming politics, and in the cause of temperance, and join in every effort for the uplifting of society.  
DWELT AT JERUSALEM. Taught by experience, he remained within his own borders. The lessons of discipline, though sharp, are wholesome. *Through the people.* It was a benefit to the king to come into personal contact with his subjects; and a blessing to the people to be strengthened in good ways by the example of their king. Personal effort with individuals will have greater power for good than proclamation. *From Beersheba to Mount Ephraim.* In this tour of itinerant preaching, what themes were suggested by the hallowed associations of the places! At Beersheba he could point to the well of Abraham; at Hebron to the sepulchre of his sainted ancestors; at Be'lehem he could say, "Here David lived," at Shiloh, "Here the ark rested," and each spot would suggest motives to earnest service. *Brought them back.* While the king had wandered abroad the people had backslidden at home; for his example in departing with idolaters had proved stronger than his precepts against idolatry.  
JUDGES. His journeys led him to notice irregularities in the administration of law. He reformed the entire system, and instead of requiring the people to bring their causes up to Jerusalem, instituted judicial districts. The distribution saved labor, promoted more speedy and exact justice, and tended to develop the character of the people. *Take heed.* A charge with three commands, to carefulness, to reverence, and to integrity; and with three sanctions, a divine commission, a divine witness, and a divine example. *The Lord, who is with you.* The Ethiopian judges always reserved the chief place on the tribunal empty for God, of whose presence they were persuaded, though they saw him not.—*Titcomb.*  
JUDGMENT OF THE LORD. For the decision of questions relating to religion and its services. *He charged them.* Note concerning the duty of one in authority. 1. The spirit in which he should rule—the fear of the Lord. 2. The manner in which he should execute justice—faithfully. 3. The measure of his fidelity—a perfect heart. These lessons are applicable to young as well as to old—to the boy-monitor in school, as well as to the President of the nation.  
GOLDEN TEXT: There is no iniquity with the Lord our God, nor respect of persons, nor taking of gifts. 2 Chron. 19, 7.  
DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION: Divine impartiality.  
The next lesson is 2 Chron. 20, 14-22.