

# The Wesleyan,

Rev. A. W. NICOLSON,  
Editor and Publisher.

Published under the direction of the General Conference of the Methodist Church of Canada.

\$2 PER ANNUM IN ADVANCE  
Postage Prepaid.

VOL. XXX

HALIFAX, N.S., JANUARY 12, 1878

NO. 2

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## OUR ENGLISH LETTER.

THE PROGRESS OF THE WAR.

DEAR MR. EDITOR.—The fall of Plevna was the first startling event of the past fortnight. It was at once seen to be an event of vast importance, a sore and irreparable loss to the Turks, and an immense advantage to the Russians. It changed the whole aspect of the war, for the losses were so heavy and the whole of the Turkish plan of defence so woefully disturbed, that little surprise was felt when it became known that the Porte had applied to the great Powers to secure their services as mediators between the enemy and the Turkish authorities.

THE PROPOSAL FOR MEDIATION

did not meet with much favour. On the part of Germany it was at once refused. Austria was more hesitating in its reply, but it was quite evident that Russia had little to fear in the form of opposition from the two Emperors who are the rulers of the great European states. Much anxiety was felt as to the action that England would take in the crisis that had arisen. For two days our Government sat in consultation and all kinds of rumours were afloat, which took form and color from the hopes or sympathies of the parties from which they emanated, at length it became known that it had been decided to call Parliament together, some

THREE WEEKS EARLIER

than usual, in order to afford our Representatives opportunity to take a full share in the responsibility. This is regarded as an eminently wise step, and has the double advantage of securing a little time in which to act, and enabling the whole nation to speak in the person of its representatives.

STARTLING RUMOURS

are constantly heard as to the intentions of our Government, but it is evident that they are waiting for further developments of the plans of Russia, and that they will not interfere until British interests are in greater peril than they appear to be at present. Yet it is a grave and anxious time. Some of our leading statesmen are intensely Turkish in their sympathies, and would, if they dare, at once go in for war, as allies with Turkey, and repeat the sad events of 1854-6 in order to blister up the effete authority of the Pope, and maintain what they call the "integrity of the Empire."

THE STATE OF TRADE

in England is most depressed. The low condition of trade has continued for some considerable length of time, and at present there is an unusual pressure which is widely and painfully felt. The closing weeks of the year are ebbing away rather gloomily, and with forebodings of even greater troubles in the future. Perhaps we are a little prone to anticipations of this nature, yet there is positive proof of decreased manufactures, of slackness in demand, and want of work in many quarters. It is further asserted that in not a few instances our supremacy is forever gone—that foreigners are manufacturing for themselves what we have formerly supplied, and that they can do so more cheaply than is now in our power.

WORKMEN'S STRIKES

are not unfrequent in the midst of all this depression. Some of these are fought out for many weeks, and in a spirit of great intensity and bitterness. The masters in self-defence, and to enable them to carry on the great works entrusted to them are employing foreign labor, and they claim that it is their interest so to do. This introduces another great difficulty into the social system, and places the termination of these deplorable quarrels far away in the future.

DR. ALLEN'S NEW CHURCH

which replaces the old Union Street Chapel, Islington, has just been opened. This is the third great Congregational edifice, which has been erected in London of late, and it is spoken of as a very superior and imposing structure. Its cost is about £95,000, and it is a fair and noble monument of the zeal of Nonconformists, and their deep attachment to a worthy and eloquent pastor.

IN METHODISM

there is not any very noticeable event in the past few days. There is plenty of work on hand which is being earnestly advanced from stage to stage. The great Connexion Committee to which was entrusted so many matters of pressing urgency is sitting from time to time. Now and then a little information leaks out, as to what they would like to do. These appear to be feelers as to the opinion of the Connexion, and may assist in the formation of proposals at the hands of the Committee which may be in closer harmony with the needs and wishes of our people.

THE REV. T. B. STEPHENSON

has returned in safety from his American and Canadian tour. He reports very favorably of the good behaviour and hopeful position of a very large portion of the children sent out from the English Home. The work in England is very prosperous, and the heavy financial burdens are gradually disappearing. The work of the institution is being thoroughly done, and is in growing favor with our people.

Dec. 24, 1877.

## LETTER FROM MONTREAL.

Dear Mr. Editor—

If you could have been with your patrons when they read in the *Wesleyan* of 22nd ult., your cordial wish that they might all have "a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year" you would have heard them responding also from their hearts "the same to you." It must not, however, be forgotten that in many of your readers' families in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia sickness, suffering, and death, especially among the much loved little ones, have prevailed of late. Many might say as one of my friends in a letter to me written on Dec. 24th. The writer belongs to a household of which a youth aged twenty, third son of a sick and widowed mother, died from typhoid fever two days previously. "We cannot expect a merry Christmas, but we may be glad since Christ came to be the Resurrection and the Life." Yes, Simeon and Anna waited for him as the Consolation of Israel. The chief of the prophets declared (Is. 61. 2) that in the exalted functions of Messiah was comprised "to comfort all that mourn." Well does he perform his office. He is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. Let the weeping ones repair to Him. He will be the health of every wounded spirit, and if asked, He will become the light of every darkened dwelling.

A STRIKE

by hundreds of men employed in the enlargement of the Montreal and Lacbina Canal threatened serious disturbances in the city. Many of the men were receiving, during the shortest days, rather less than a dollar per day. But what was worse, they were not paid their wages often enough; and payment was in part made by orders on stores. These things became a grievance. Some more rash than wise made these things the ground of an appeal to the men to desist from labor, and demand redress. Multitudes at once dropped their tools. Others who were willing to work on the old terms rather than their families should starve, were coerced into joining with the strikers. Fire-arms were used. One of the leaders was shot by a revolver. The bullet lodged in his left side and remained there for some days. A strong force of police and volunteers were sent out to disperse the crowds, and to keep the peace. Soon and happily arbitrators were appointed. Laborers and Contractors were brought into agreement. Work has been resumed and quiet restored. Thanks are again due to the volunteers. A fiery and sanguinary Christmas in Montreal was thus averted. It is fearful to think of the damage which might have been done by hundreds of sturdy fellows exasperated and reckless, with picks in their hands,

had they entered the city to vent their rage on its inhabitants and their property. The threatened danger is for the present entirely passed. The wounded man is recovering. His assailant has fled. Contractors and their hired men have been taught once more that their interests are most closely united. They are best promoted by each party faithfully considering what is due to the other.

That most praiseworthy Institute for the training of

PROTESTANT DEAF MUTES,

held its annual business meeting at the usual time. The number of pupils is twenty-two—twelve of whom are free. Voluntary contributions amounted to about three thousand dollars. The new and complete buildings for this Institute—the magnificent gift of Mr. Joseph Mackay—by whose name they are to be called, will be occupied in the course of this month by the pupils and all their teachers. Endeavors will then be made to have some regular religious service on Sundays for the whole family belonging to the Institute. The Principal, Mr. Widd, and his wife are deaf mutes. Mr. Widd is excellently adapted to his office.

THE SEASON

here as in most other parts of the Dominion has been thus far characterised by unusual mildness, the consequent openness of the river, and the absence of snow and rain. A ferry steamer had not discontinued her trips to Loagnail up to New Year's Day. Then she took a large party further down the St. Lawrence, accompanied by a band. They were saluted by the firing of guns from many of the homesteads that were passed. Nothing like it ever before occurred on the St. Lawrence on the first day of January. Wheeling in the streets is admirable. They are smoother and clearer, if not drier than in the summer. The want of snow and sleighing has occasioned greatly diminished sales in some branches of business. Cabmen and livery-stable keepers complain greatly this winter. The general dullness was somewhat relieved by the number of bazaars that were held in the two weeks preceding Christmas. In the same space of time there were never before so many. Most of them were for church purposes, showing as may be supposed the need of money. The bazaars were well patronised. Perhaps their chief recommendation is that they utilize the skill, the industry and zeal of ladies, who are no doubt made happy by their gainful activity. The bazaar in which the Methodists were most interested was that of the morning Sunday School of St. James Street Church on behalf of

THE OKA INDIANS.

It was really well got up. The articles were numerous, elegant and suitable. Indians were in attendance with the peculiar productions of their own handicraft. These were pretty indeed. Chief Joseph and several of his tribe with their Missionary were in the room, which was decorated with verdant festoons and flags. The telephone was employed, whereby singing in a distant telegraph office was distinctly heard. This new and marvellous instrument excited more than a little the admiration both of the yellow-skinned and the whites. The net proceeds were over six hundred dollars. One hundred of these were donated to the Missionary Society, the rest is to be expended to relieve the extreme destitution to which these pious Indians have been reduced by their ecclesiastical oppressors.

THE MISSIONARY ANNIVERSARY

of the Central Church was held shortly before Christmas. The preachers the Rev. Messrs. Briggs and Potts were from Toronto. The latter being a great favourite here drew an overwhelming congregation. His text was the sad, joyful, prophetic declaration of the Baptist of himself, and his Lord; "He must increase but I must decrease." (Jno. 3. 30). Mr. Potts' apostrophe to the faithful forerunner of Christ was unique, pathetic and powerful, moving many hearts. His illustrations of the predicted growth of Christ's cause in the world were attractive, convincing and assuring in a high degree. That sermon will long be remembered with profit and thankfulness. The truth as it is in Jesus has nothing to fear from scientific discoveries. It has triumphed over every kind of unbelief. Its innate power remains unabated, while the

barren speculations of a materialist philosophy, and their originators too, will soon belong to the forgotten past. The platform meeting on the day following and the Missionary tea meeting the evening after were satisfactory and successful. This anniversary yielded more than two thousand dollars.

THE CHILDREN'S GATHERING

on New Year's Day was the largest yet held. Nineteen schools were present. These with their teachers number three thousand, one hundred and twenty-nine. They filled the spacious galleries and the central tiers of pews on the floor of the church. Hence only the pews by the walls were available for parents and friends, some of whom were obliged to stand in the aisles. The Rev. G. Douglas, LL.D., conducted the whole service with his usual effectiveness. Several ministers delivered appropriate addresses. The singing by the happy multitude of scholars was thrilling. How blessed a beginning of the year to these children of the church? The impressions made on them were of Christ, and God, and heaven. The feelings excited were good, deep, and will be ineffaceable. Each received on departing the accustomed packet of confectionary. The Schools' Missionary Offering was two thousand three hundred and seventy-eight dollars and sixty five cents.

The mild weather led to a revival here of the old English custom of singing

CHRISTMAS CAROLS

at midnight in the streets. A choir of an Episcopal church that had been practising Carols for a concert, serenaded their bishop and others. It was a new pleasure to hear at midnight in the open air the quaint old English Advent songs, and songs that were neither obsolete nor ancient. The melody may have wanted some of the tender accessories which prevailed in the olden time in England, but it served well to awaken in people from that dear country reminiscences of its venerable churches, its quiet church yards, their solemn yew trees which keep their sombre watch over departed generations; the old people and the poor who were cheered in mid-winter by substantial dinners, and the gifts of warm woollen garments.

CONCLUSION.

The holiday time being over, work will be the order of the day for all. In the toil of secular callings it will be well to keep in memory that great Pattern, who, in the days of his flesh went about doing good. The exercise of benevolence by word and deed is the surest way, and to a degree is in the power of everyone to obtain a happy New Year. Those who are honored with a divine, a providential, a gracious call to serve God in the Gospel of His Son will not cease to respond in adoring thankfulness by setting before themselves that exemplar who came to seek and to save that which was lost. To be helpful to Christ in this most divine of all employments is a happiness without equal upon earth. The reward of faithfulness in this service will be great in heaven, when the servant called to the Master's home from the field of labor shall be bidden enter into the joy of his Lord. Yours truly,  
January 7th. E. B.

BELL'S TELEPHONE.

At a recent lecture by Professor Bell on the speaking telephone, Sir William Thompson introduced the lecturer to the audience by the following remarks:

"That evening there was to be brought before them one of the most interesting of the scientific inventions that had been made in this century, or that had ever been in the history of science—(applause)—the conversion of the quality of speech into motions of electricity, and the reproduction of the effect in audible sound. (Renewed applause.) They might have heard of telephones before that which was now to be brought under their notice. There were telephones before that of Mr. Graham Bell, but those telephones differed from Mr. Bell's in the same sense as a series of claps of the hand differed from the human voice. The previous telephones were in fact electric claps-

pers. (Laughter.) They were instruments in which, by electric action, a succession of shocks, produced by stopping and starting the electric currents suddenly, were produced. Mr. Graham Bell conceived the idea—the wholly original and novel idea—of giving continuity to the shocks, and of producing currents which would be in simple proportion to the motion of the air produced by the voice, and of reproducing that effect at the remote end of the telegraphic wire—reproducing that effect at distances of a few miles, or of scores of miles, with a motion as nearly similar to the motion of the air caused by the voices as that not only was the articulation of the voice heard distinctly, but the different qualities of different voices are heard—(applause)—so that through the telephone, at a distance of 50 miles, one could not only tell what the words were that were being spoken, but they could tell who the person was that was speaking of all the 900,000,000 people living on the earth.

## A STEAM SLED FOR THE NORTH-POLE.

At a recent meeting of the London Association of Foremen Engineers and Draughtsmen, Mr. Daniel Cartmel, late Chief Engineer of H. M. S. Discovery, and now of H. M. S. Cleopatra, read a paper on "Polar Exploration, with Suggestions for the Employment of Steam Power in Effecting it." The author, with the aid of several charts and diagrams, explained, in the first instance, the geographical and meteorological characteristics of the arctic regions, and then advanced to his subject proper. Mr. Cartmel, from his experiences during the expedition of Captain Nares, came to the decided conclusion that sledging by manual power was a hopeless method of attempting to reach the North Pole, and since his return has been busily engaged in devising a steam sledge for that purpose. This contrivance, as described by the inventor, consists in its general outlines of a flat-bottomed boat with two stern wheels, the midship cross section being a parallelogram. It would be constructed of steel plates lined with wood, perfectly rigid, and capable of standing the roughest usage. The boat-sledge, as it may be termed, would be highly polished so as to minimize friction, whilst the bow would be stayed and strengthened to the fullest extent, so as to resist concussions. Of course the steam power is intended to be concentrated as much as possible, whilst the steering wheels would be driven directly from the crank shaft. The proceedings closed with a vote of thanks to Mr. Cartmel, who also explained that the sledge might be warped forward with rope, and capstan, when desirable. Here is a suggestion for Captain Howgate and other members of the American Arctic Colony, now trying to reach the North Pole.—*Scientific American.*

Says the London *Methodist* :—

The pressure on the ministers this year must be heavy. The President has already sent out twenty-five men from his list of reserve to supply the places of those who are temporarily disabled, and to fill up the vacancies caused by death. I hear that the President has rendered peculiarly valuable service at several "conventions" recently held. At Manchester, Sheffield, Exeter, and elsewhere, he has been the centre of remarkable gatherings. The Connexion is profiting largely from his abundant labor.

Oxford is nearly eight hundred years older than Harvard, and her library has only twice as many volumes, though the income of the former university is annually one million dollars. Each has about thirteen hundred undergraduates.