

WESLEYAN ALMANAC, DECEMBER, 1876.

Full Moon, 1 day, 6m, Morning. Last Quarter, 7 day, 10m, m. Afternoon. New Moon, 15 day, 2h, 9m, Afternoon. First Quarter, 23 day, 7h, 57m, Afternoon. Full Moon, 30 day, 5h, 4m, Afternoon.

Table with columns for Day of Week, SUN, MOON, and various astronomical data points.

THE TIDES.—The column of the Moon's Southern sets the time of high water at Parrboro, Cornwallis, Horton, Hanisport, Windsor, Newport and Yfairo.

High water at Pictou and Cape Tormentine, 2 hrs and 11 minutes LATER than at Halifax. At Annapolis, St. John, N.S., and Portland, Maine, 3 hours and 25 minutes LATER, and at St. John's, New Brunswick, 20 minutes EARLIER than at Halifax.

FOR THE LENGTH OF THE DAY.—Add 12 hours to the time of the sun's setting, and from the sum subtract the time of rising.

FOR THE LENGTH OF THE NIGHT.—Subtract the time of the sun's setting from 12 hours, and to the remainder add the time of rising next morning.

CHRISTMAS FESTIVITIES IN WESTMINSTER HALL.

Our early kings kept this great Christian festival in the Grand Hall at Westminster—"Rufus's Roaring Hall"—from the Anglo-Norman times. Here John held his Christmas feasts in 1213 and 1214; and Henry III. in 1234, 1238, and 1241; and in 1248, whilst Henry himself kept Christmas at Winchester, he commanded his treasurer "to fill the King's great hall from Christmas Day to the Day of Circumcision (January 1st) with poor people, and feast them there."

Edward III. was a right royal provider of Christmas cheer. The art of cookery was now well understood; and the making of blanchmanges, tarts and pies, and the preparing of rich soups of the brawn of capons, were among the cook's duties at this period. French cooks were employed by the nobility; and in the merchants' feast we find jellies of all colours, and in all figures—flowers, trees, beasts, fish, fowl, and fruit. The wines were "a collection of spiced liquors;" and cinnamon, grains of paradise, and ginger were in the desert confections. Edward kept his Christmas in Westminster Hall in 1358, and had for his guests at the banquet the captive King of France, and David, King of Scotland. And in 1362, King David and the King of Cyprus met here at two grand entertainments given by King Edward.

Richard II, according to Stow, gave "a house-warming in this hall," upon the completion of this magnificent edifice of "profuse hospitality," when he feasted 10,000 persons. We need not wonder, then, that Richard kept 2000 cooks; they were learned in their art, and have left to the world "The Form of Cury; or, A Roll of English Cookery, compiled about the year 1390, by the Master Cook of Richard II." In 1399, Richard kept Christmas sitting in the great hall, in cloth-of-gold, garnished with pearls and precious stones, worth 3000 marks.

In 1478, Edward IV. kept Christmas here with great pomp, wearing his crown, and making costly presents to his household. Richard III., although his reign was short and turbulent, kept two Christmases here in sumptuous state; one in 1487, when chronicles Philip de Comines, "he was reigning in greater splendour than any King of England for the last hundred years." Next year he solemnized the festival most splendidly, and so attentive was he to the trivial matters, that we find a charge for the payment of 2000 marks for the Christmas dinner.

marks for certain New Year's gifts against the feast of Christmas." The festivities continued till the day of Epiphany, when they terminated with an extraordinary feast—"the King himself," says the historian of Croyland, "wearing his crown, and holding a splendid feast in the great hall, similar to that of his coronation."

Henry VII., though little inclined to spending money, kept the ninth Christmas of his reign with great magnificence in Westminster Hall; feasting the Lord Mayor and Alderman of London, and showing them sports on the night following, hung with tapestry; which sports being ended in the morning, the King, Queen and Court sat down at a table of stone to 120 dishes, while the Mayor was served with twenty-four dishes, and abundance of wines. And, finally, the King and Queen being conveyed with great lights into the palace, the Mayor and his company, in barges, returned to London by break of the next day. Henry VIII. mostly kept his Christmas at Richmond, Greenwich and Eltham. Edward VI., at Christmas 1552, kept one of the most magnificent revellings on record; but in Queen Mary's short and gloomy reign the Christmas festivities were neglected. They were, however, renewed by Queen Elizabeth, when plays and masques were specially patronized, and the children of St. Paul's and Westminster often performed before the Queen.

We part from these pictures of the Royal Christmas of centuries since, as from one of Time's stately pageants; which bring the picturesqueness of the past into vivid contrast with the more widely-spread hospitalities of the present age; reminding us that, although Westminster Hall may be void and gloomy on the coming Christmas Day, greater enjoyment than was yielded by the prodigal heaps of luxury once consumed within those walls, is now, with each returning festival, scattered through the length and breadth of the land, and the national wealth of Christmas is thus brought home to every Englishman's friends.

For the celebrations at Colleges and Inns of Court, the Great Halls were specially adapted. In 1561, the Christmas revels at the Inner Temple were very splendid; brawn, mustard and malmsey were served for breakfast, and the dinner in the Hall was a grand affair; between the two courses, first came the master of the game, then the ranger of the forests; and having blown three blasts of the hunting-horn, they paced three times round the fire, then in the middle of the Hall. Certain courtesies followed, nine or ten couple of hounds were brought in, with a fox and cat, both which were set upon by the dogs, amid blowing of horns, and killed beneath the fire. At the close of the second course, the oldest of the masters of the revels sang a song; after some repose and further revels, supper was served, which being over, the marshal was borne in by four men, on a sort of scaffold, three times round the fire, crying, "A lord," &c., after which he came down and went to dance. The Lord of Misrule then addressed himself to the banquet, which ended with minstrelsy, mirth, and dancing. The Christmas masque at Gray's Inn, in 1592, was very magnificent. In 1592, the head of colleges at Cambridge acted a Latin comedy at Christmas before Queen Elizabeth; and in 1607, there was a celebrated exhibition of the Christmas Prince at St. John's College, Oxford.

THE CENTENNIAL AWARDS TO CANADA.—Arrangements are being made in accordance with a meeting of Canadian exhibitors at the Centennial, held in Philadelphia on the 15th of last month, for a grand banquet, at which it is probable his Excellency the Governor General, if he will accept an invitation to be present, shall present the successful Canadian competitors with the medals they won. It is intended to have the banquet in Ottawa soon after the opening of the session, and to invite to it, besides the Governor General, the Lieutenant Governor of the various Provinces, the members of the Dominion and several Provincial Cabinets, the United States Centennial Commissioners, the Foreign Commissioners and Consuls, the Mayors of the cities and towns in the Dominion, and any other gentlemen approved by the general committee having the matter in charge.—Toronto Mail.

ST. NICHOLAS.

St. Nicholas! time honor'd name! Memories of these are backward flung. When childhood's merry Christmas came, And stockings 'round the chimney hung. How sorely puzzled we have been, Wondering what he would ever do, To bring our presents nice and clean, Down that small, sooty, chimney flue.

And we had staid awake that night, Watching for Santa Claus to come, Hoping of him to catch one sight, Within our cosy little room.

But no, alas! 't was all in vain, He ne'er would put himself in view, No matter how our eyes we'd strain, We found that it would "never do."

And then, when sleepy, tired, cold, We'd nestle in our bed so warm, And dream, a Saint so wondrous old Could miracles, with ease, perform.

We took but precious little sleep, At the first streak of dawn's grey light, Into our stockings we must peep, And spread our gifts before our sight.

No sleep again was to be had, Among the merry girls and boys, No one could sleep, it was "too bad," Amid the jubilant shouts and noise,

We always thought it was so nice, To have our merry Christmas sport, When earth is robed in snow and ice, And days were dull, and cold and short.

And as the years rolled round again, We watched thy coming from afar; As when on old Judea's plain, The wise men hailed the beaming star.

Which rose upon the happy earth, In radiant beauty fixed to show, The place of our Redeemer's birth, That first glad Christmas long ago.

And the first Christmas gifts were spread, Rare perfume, incense, precious gold, Beside Immanuel's lowly bed, When wandering shepherds left their fold,

And angels sang to Bethlehem's sons, "To you this day, a Saviour's born." And joy is with the little ones, As 't was with angels on that morn.

Thou'lt come and go, bring thy own joy, And presents yet, a plenteous store, To every happy girl and boy, Each year, till "time shall be no more" Gaysboro'.

DR. WADDEY was the brightest and most vivid of men in society. No one that ever passed a free hour in social intercourse with him could believe that even Sydney Smith was a wittier man, or uttered more, or more pungent, or more brilliant notes. Every sentence sparkled, every repartee flashed. Now graceful, now caustic, now irresistibly comic and grotesque, the play of his wit was incessant and inexhaustible. Puns from his lips were not mere jingles; they were of a different order. He multiplied in proportion—that they were not seldom of a rare order. On sufficient provocation he could be severely witty. A lady many years ago received from him at table a helping that seemed rather bountiful. "O, Mr. Waddy she said, how much you have given me—quite a cartload!" In due time, however, with a sort of apology, she intimated to him that the fare was so excellent she would have to trouble him for a little more. "Certainly, ma'am," was the smart reply; "back your cart up." Sitting at dinner near an open window that opened toward Cheapside, the noise from that busy thoroughfare interfered with the flow of conversation, and he asked for the window to be closed. "I thought," said some one, "that you liked air, Dr. Waddy." "It is not the air," he replied, "to which I object, but the accompaniment." Riding in the train with a weakling and foppish youth, who lisped out an inquiry as to whether he would have any objection if he smoked a cigar, Dr. Waddy, after surveying the youth with a somewhat deliberate air of criticism, said blandly, "My only objection is that I fear it may make you ill."

No samples, however, can convey any just idea of the everlasting flow of wit from his lips. The multitude and incessancy of his witticisms, indeed, prevented more than a very few from being remembered. They effaced each other. One, however, just occurs to me as I now write, and was about to quit the subject, which I cannot refrain from giving it so comical, and at the same time of so pastoral a character. Dr. Waddy was at one time not only governor and chaplain of Wesley College, Sheffield but chairman (as we call it) of the Sheffield District. On one of the evenings of the district session an excellent brother—gifted too, as well as good—had been appointed to preach what should have been the principal sermon of the district session. Unfortunately the preacher was neither easy nor powerful in preaching, but he was long; and before he had ended, his congregation, ministers included, had largely melted away. One of the ministers, after the

service was over, went into the vestry, and found Dr. Waddy there, the preacher having disappeared. The minister expressed to the doctor his regret that the service had been so marred and so protracted. "Ah, well!" was the instant reply you see it was a *conci oad clerum*, (ad [to] clear 'em.) Many an address to the clergy before has been a sermon to clear 'em; but never, perhaps, had so felicitous and at the same time grotesque pun been made on such an occasion.—English Cor. Advocate.

DR. SCHLIEMANN'S DISCOVERIES IN GREECE.—Dr. Schliemann, the German explorer, has sent the following dispatch to the King of Greece:—

To His Majesty King George. With unbounded joy I announce to Your Majesty that I have discovered the monument which the tradition related by Pausanias, indicates as the tombs of Agamemnon, Cassandra, Edrymedon and their companions who were killed while feasting at a banquet by Clytemnestra and her lover Egisthus.

These tombs are surrounded by a double parallel circle, with tablets undoubtedly erected to the honor of the victims. In these tombs I have found immense archaeological treasures and numbers of articles of pure gold.

The treasure alone is sufficient to fill a large museum, and the most splendid in the world. In succeeding ages I am sure it will attract to Greece thousands of strangers from abroad. As I am laboring simply for the love of science I waive all claim to the treasure, and offer it with intense enthusiasm, entirely to Greece.

Sire, may these treasures, with God's blessing, become the corner stone of an immense national wealth. DR. HENRI SCHLIEMANN. Mycenae, Nov. 28, 1876.

REVIVAL PREACHING.

Baptist Union.

The great revivals which from time to time have visited Christendom have been associated with peculiar styles of preaching. Each epoch has been marked with a type of ministration specially its own; but in all cases these great results have followed in the line of the presentation of some grand and fundamental truth of the gospel. The men under whom these spiritual movements have occurred have, in their preaching, insisted on some great doctrine, which in its unfoldings antagonized the tendencies of the age in which they lived. Sentimental, sensational, or even philosophical utterances have not been the weapons which the Spirit has employed so mightily to the pulling down the strongholds of sin.

Luther roused Europe from its slumbers by preaching justification, by faith. Edwards insisted upon the doctrines of the retributive justice of God, and necessity of regeneration. Wesley effected his great reform by demanding spiritual life in distinction from worldly conformity. Finney expounded the operation of the law of God on the conscience, and Moody insists on the power of a simple faith in the atonement of Christ. But in all cases revival preaching, has been doctrinal preaching, and the preaching of those truths which reveal the sovereignty of God's grace, and the depravity and helplessness of human nature. These are doctrines which pre-eminently belong to the sphere of revelation. They antagonize the pride of the human intellect, and the rebellion of the human heart. They exalt Christ, and constitute just those truths which make up the message of the gospel and prove it to be the power of God unto salvation.

The preaching of just these old-fashioned doctrines in some and all of their phases is needed at the present day—a day of shallow sensationalism or of philosophical disquisition. We can never outgrow the wisdom of God, or afford to dispense with the Word of God, which is the sword of the Spirit.

Such preaching brings Christians to their knees, leads them to realize their dependence on God, and their need of "power from on high." It reaches and searches the devices of self-righteousness, and brings the sinner to feel his lost condition, and to trust in the sovereign and atoning efficacy of the cross. It honours the Spirit of God.

Reader, renew your subscription for 1877. We think we have given you Two Dollars' worth for last year in the WESLEYAN. It will be our aim to do even more next year.

THE NATIVITY.

Lift up your heads ye gates! swing wide, Ye dazzling portals of the morn! Forth let the Filial Godhead ride, On wings of cherubim upborne. Nor dare, thou flushed and flattered East! The Sun of Righteousness to stay, Now that the long dark night hath ceased, And souls are hungry for the day.

On mountain tops bright heralds stand, With beautiful and shining fold, And publish over sea and land, The welcome tidings glad and sweet.

We see! the sky is all on fire, We see the bannered pomp unfurled, The advancing splendor rushing higher, To flood and overflow the world.

OBITUARY.

"IN MEMORIAM."

BY MRS. J. SHEXTON.

Died at Athol, of Diphtheria, Flora Eliza, aged 11 years and 8 months, only daughter of Fred. A. and Eliza Donkin.

I give a short account of her happy death, in her mother's own words: "She professed Christ during the meetings held here in January and February of this year, and was received into the Methodist Church of this place. On Sunday, the 15th October, she attended church in the morning, and Sabbath-school in the afternoon; it was about four o'clock when she returned. At six she was very ill. We did all we could to save her, but it was death from the first hour. She took no food for the seven days she lived, her stomach rejected every thing; but her mind expanded wonderfully in those seven days of suffering; the activity or her naturally active mind was greatly intensified, and her perceptions were wonderfully clear. Death to her had no other sting than that of leaving her parents. She asked me if the struggles of death were very hard, and about an hour before she died, she turned her face close to mine, and said,—"Ma, it is harder to die than I thought it was;" but no sound of complaint came from her lips. On Friday we thought her dying, but oh! it was so hard to give her up; we plead with God to spare her to us. But then, as she lingered and suffered in the agonies of death, we were constrained to ask our Heavenly father to release her; for it seemed as though her departure was only delayed for our comfort. For hours before she left us, her face was radiant with a heavenly light that I never saw on mortal face before. Amid the most intense suffering, she would look upon us and smile; but oh! that smile, I can never forget it; it was not Flora's own, it was glorious. About five minutes before she left us, all pain ceased, she felt the end was reached, "Mamma, do not weep for me! Good bye, papa; O, papa, do not grieve for me, but love God!" She threw her arms around her brother's neck, and said, "Good bye, brother, love God and come to me in heaven!" She then bade the others, even the doctor, good bye, leaving the same earnest request. I had moved, to give others a place beside her. She then looked to me; I knelt beside her. She turned her face close to mine, closed her mouth and her eyes, and was gone. As she turned her face she smiled; and the angel of death left the smile so sweet and so perfect, that all who looked at her saw its impress.

As she lay in her robes of whiteness With her cold pale hands on her breast, Sad hearts were asking the Master Why so soon he had given her rest? Rest, ere the feet had grown weary, Rest, ere the heart had been sad, Why? Oh, why? had he taken their darling So soon, to the world of the glad.

How often we call in our anguish, And list for an answer in vain, And the silence, so dumb and so wild, Adds pang to the old dull pain, How oft hearts are breaking or broken, And life's light goes out of the soul, When his rivers and waves overflow us, And the billows of death round us roll.

Earth's farewells had only been spoken, When her pure spirit passed away, And their beautiful life was a dream, But the smile that the angel of mercy left, When her last fond look was given, Was the soul's farewell to the loved ones As she went to her native heaven.

O, hearts that are wounded and weeping, Catch a gleam from the glory to be; The bud is unfolding, in beauty, That was nipt from your own family tree. For Heaven's white portal has shut her, Away from earth's noise and its din; Away from its woes and its sorrow, Away from its anguish and sin.

Safe, where the victor's song floats free, And the anthems of Seraphim bleed, And the waves of her life, in beauty flow on, Like eternity's day, without end. Up, where the trees of life cluster, There, where the pearly gates gleam, And the immortal blossoms bloom, By the side of the crystalline stream.

DECEMBER CHRISTMAS

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