

# The Record.

TORONTO, JANUARY, 1858.

## THE PAST YEAR.

Ere our issue of the month will have met the eyes of most of our readers, the eventful year, 1857, will belong to the past. What affecting reminiscences will be associated with that year, in many a family! What a standing out point will it not constitute in Britain's history! Let us thank God that the dark cloud has already been so far dissipated. Let us hope that the crisis of our nation's difficulties has been reached, and that a gracious Providence will ordain peace to a distracted empire. We the less despair of our country, that the call to humble itself before the God of nations has been so promptly complied with abroad and at home.

It is not the sword alone that a righteous God has sent against our people. "The day of the Lord" has been upon all the stays of our pride and glory. Yet it may be in mercy that the iniquity of our covetousness has been made to reprove us. The woe denounced against those who add house to houses, and field to field, has overtaken many while hasting to be rich. Our deep sympathy is accorded to the sufferers, and especially to many an innocent, industrious, participant in the wide-spread calamity. And our prayer ought to be that the varied lessons taught by recent events may be deeply engraven on the public mind, and on the hearts of individuals.

As regards the church and missions, the question long ago proposed, "Watchman, what of the night?" perhaps scarcely admits of any other than the old answer—"The morning cometh, and also the night!" Very mixed are the signs in the ecclesiastical, as well as the political heavens. In one quarter the work of years seems to have been undone. The door that was once opened has been shut. Missionary establishments have been broken up,—missionaries and their families assassinated,—missionary operations suspended. Yet, already, from seeming evil good is educed; and the impression never so deep as now, of the value of Christianisation, and of the folly of discouraging it, is yielding its fruit in plans of Christian enterprise on a larger scale, emanating from centres of influence, and cheered with loud acclaim by widening circles of sympathisers.

Still the struggle on the part of the Anti-Christian interest is unintermitting, and it is everywhere. Protestants may dispense with none of their zeal, and need all their unanimity in resisting the man of sin. But the issue is not doubtful! The cause—the Christian, the Protestant cause—must prosper. The decree stands sure. Every year that dawns brings nearer the glorious consummation. The same summer that saw missionary organizations perish before the rage of Hindoo and Mussulman, witnessed Prussia's accession to the Evangelical—

we hope the Evangelistic league. The Churches in Britain—the Churches in Canada, increase in numbers and extend their operations. Our Colleges and halls are busy as ever in preparing the future heralds of the cross. General education spreads. Science is multiplying the facilities for the intercommunion of nations. God grant that every man whose lot is cast in these times—times of stir and progress unprecedented—we may add of singular privileges and means,—may know to do his duty, as God, and religion, and humanity require!

## OUR COLLEGE.

It is in no unnatural connection with the foregoing remarks, that we interpose a word for our Theological Seminary. It is in busy, hopeful, harmonious operation. But, never were its financial means at a lower point. It is indispensable that our Church rouse itself to its support. Severe as is the general financial pressure, we cannot think that the congregations, largely composed of agriculturists, are so vitally affected in their resources, as to require to withhold the means of preserving an institution, so valuable and so essential to the growth and even the continued existence of the Church. A circular regarding the College will be forthwith sent to all the congregations. But it is not necessary to wait for these circulars. A movement should be made at once in each congregation. The sum of at least £1500 will be required for the support of the College during the year, and notwithstanding the general scarcity of money, we do not think that this sum, distributed among the Presbyteries of the Church, is beyond our means. But each congregation must bestir itself. A subscription paper must be presented to each member and adherent. The effort must be made systematically, and we have no doubt of the result. At such a period as this, let systematic beneficence be fairly tested, and we feel assured that the revenue of our College will be as ample as our necessities require.

It is hoped that returns for the College be made as soon as possible, and that all collections be remitted, at the latest, before the end of February.

## THE SABBATH—GENERAL ELECTION.

We fear that ere our January Record appears, most of the elections may be over.—But where they are not, we would respectfully urge on the friends of the Sabbath to bestir themselves.

Let a preference be invariably given to those Candidates who are known, on the best evidence, to be sound on this great question.

Make the Sabbath question a prominent plank in your platform.

We say this, without meaning that other important questions are not to receive attention, such as the Bible in our Common Schools—License Law, &c., &c. But we attach peculiar importance to the Sabbath question; and indeed it will be generally found that the

man who is sound on this point, may be trusted on the other great moral questions, which are more or less connected with it.

Let it be remembered that the man whom the present Government has specially delighted to honor, is he who, from his seat as speaker, gave his casting vote, which defeated our Sabbath Bill on a recent occasion.

We feel that we are not going beyond our province in giving expressions to these sentiments. It is true, some look upon it as inconsistent with christian character and duty to mingle in the scenes of political conflict, or take any part in an election. But surely this is too important a matter, and too intimately connected with the moral and religious interests of the community to be left in the hands of worldly, and, it may be irreligious men. At such a time it is true christian men need to guard against that excited and intemperate spirit and conduct, into which political contests are so apt to plunge them. But it is not merely their privilege, but their duty, to exert, in a legitimate manner, their influence, for the return to the Legislature of men who fear God, and hate covetousness, and seek, not their own temporal profit, but the real interests of the country,—the moral and religious, as well as the material advancement, of the community in which they live.

## BENEFICENCE A DUTY PECULIARLY SUITABLE TO THE SEASON.

The man is not to be envied whose heart is a stranger to generous impulses as well as sober reflections, at this transition period of the year. The completion of another of those twelve-monthly cycles brings with it to every mind of right sensibility a fresh impression of gratitude to the Almighty preserver, and second to this only, a larger feeling of sympathy with our fellow-man,—him who travelling by our side, and ascending the hill of life, with like various fortune to our own, is seen to look back with similar joys and sorrows, and forward with like anxieties with ourselves. Whatever brings nearer the thought of God, whom we have not seen, is fitted, we aver, not to sever us more from our brother, whom we have seen, but to knit us in closer love to him, who hath one Father with us, and whom the same God hath created. There is a sentimental tenderness which spends itself in kindly greeting, and being the product of temporary exhilaration, evaporates with the hour. Some of us have more faith in Christmas thoughts, than New Year's day's—(albeit we are not keepers of yule)—were it only that the former stands near the close of the year, as the other is at the beginning. The farewell of the known and familiar departing time touches, perhaps, a deeper chord than the merry bell which ushers in the New Year morn. Do we not think of the past? Do we not contrast God's unwearied mercies with our accumulated sins?—God's forbearance with our unprofitableness. If blessed with prosperity, does not our felt debt to goodness and love divine