

Messenger and Visitor.

THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER
VOLUME LXIX.

PUBLISHED WEEKLY BY THE MARITIME BAPTIST PUBLISHING COMPANY.

THE CHRISTIAN VISITOR
VOLUME XLVIII.

Vol. XII., No. 2.

SAINT JOHN, N. B., WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 8, 1896.

—After the protracted "soft spell," a cold wave struck this latitude and longitude last Friday night and since then Boreas and Jack Frost have combined their best endeavors to make amends for anything in the way of "unseasonable weather," of which some folks had been complaining. They succeeded in getting the mercury down to -10° to -15° according to situation, on Monday morning, and at present writing are still keeping up the attack and handling their forces with telling effect.

—It is noted as a curious fact that two Jews of Bagdad have purchased the night of the ancient Babylon. There is nothing in the place or its surroundings, it is said, to make the possession of it seem an object of desire on financial considerations, unless it is on account of the expected results of exorcisations to be undertaken. But one can conceive that a rich Jew might feel a sentimental interest in becoming the owner of all that time has left of a city so intimately and sadly connected with the history of his people—a melancholy relic of the long departed glory of the once proud oppressor.

—During the present week many of our churches, either by themselves or in union with others, will be engaged in special services. We trust that a rich blessing may rest upon the meetings. It is always well that the people should draw near to God. The breath of sincere and faithful prayer is never spent in vain. But at the present time, when so many disturbing elements are at work among the nations and when the immediate future seems so charged with uncertainty, and it seems possible that the prevailing conditions of peace may be suddenly overthrown and the nations of the world be turned into mutually hostile camps, it seems especially appropriate that the people of God should prostrate themselves before Him to seek His mercy, to pray that He will grant to men repentance and the remission of their sins that His wrath may be stayed and His righteous judgments turned aside.

—During the past week we have received intelligence of the death of two of our brethren in the ministry in this province. Rev. J. E. Fillmore died at Turle Creek, Albert county, Saturday, Dec. 29, we believe, was the date of his death. It is stated that he had gone into the woods, and not returning as was expected, search was made and he was found dead. Bro. Fillmore had not of late been engaged in the regular duties of the ministry. He had suffered a paralytic stroke a year or two ago and his death was probably caused by a return of the disease. Bro. F. was a man of excellent spirit and enjoyed the esteem of all his brethren.—Rev. Solomon Smith, of Harcourt, Kent county, passed away on the last day of the old year. His death was not unexpected as he had been in failing health for some time and his friends had seen that the end was near. We hope to be able in subsequent issues to present suitable obituary notices of these brethren who now peacefully rest from their labors. We desire to express our sincere sympathy with their families in their affliction.

—The election for the repeal of the Scott Act in Westmorland County takes place on Monday of the present week. The liquor sellers and their sympathizers are of course doing their utmost to have the law repealed, but the temperance people are making a vigorous and what we trust will prove to be a successful fight in favor of the law. The Scott Act does not afford a perfect machinery for the suppression of the evil traffic, but it certainly supplies the most effective means of dealing with it at present with- in reach, and this is especially true of the villages and smaller towns and of country districts generally. The law has not been perfectly enforced in Westmorland county, though a good deal of moral has been manifested by the temperance people in bringing it to bear on the traffic, and a very considerable amount of money has been collected every year in fines. It was stated by Rev. Mr. Grant at a meeting in Sackville that previous to the enactment of the Scott Act in the county there had been a steady increase in the traffic, but since then there has been a decided decrease. No doubt the best thing Westmorland can do is to retain the law and to make its enforcement as effective as possible.

—The services in some of the St. John churches on New Year's day were of a specially interesting character. At Brussels Street a New Year's morning service was held. The meeting was well attended and was of an interesting and helpful character.—At Germain

Street too, the customary New Year's service was held. There was a large attendance and many to take part in the meeting, which, as on previous years, was felt to be an occasion of uplifting and of deep spiritual enjoyment for many. The pastor made mention of the fact that he had just completed ten years of service in the ministry of the church, and both he and others spoke with gratitude of the warm and unbroken friendship enduring through all the experience of these years between pastor and people and the great reasons for gratitude to God because of the blessings which the church had received during these ten years.—On New Year's evening a meeting of a deeply interesting character was held in the Main Street church. A feature which gave special interest to the service consisted in the replies to questions contained in a circular, which the pastor had caused to be put into the hands of each of the members, touching the relation of each individual to Christ and to His cause, and the duties which each would undertake during the year in the Master's service. A spirit of deep seriousness pervaded the meeting and the responsibilities connected with christian profession and life were felt by many as they had seldom or never been before. The outlook for the Main Street church is very hopeful. The treasurer reported that over \$10,000 had been raised by the church during the year, of which some \$7,500 was for the building fund. The work of building has been pushed on vigorously. The exterior of the new church is practically complete and work on the interior is going forward. The expectation is to have the church ready for opening sometime during the coming summer.

—The following note received from Rev. W. H. Rishon, of East Boston, will be perused with much interest by many of our readers: "Yesterday it was my privilege to visit Dr. W. S. Mackenzie at his beautiful home in Winchester, Mass. He lies upon his bed unable to change his position, and is evidently a great sufferer, but strong in faith, giving glory to God. His mind was clear and his voice firm, and he talked very much during the interview. He said that when first made aware of his hopeless condition, he was overwhelmed with a sense of his sinfulness and completely dismayed at the thought of his final account. Then there came such a view of the breadth and depth of the infinite love of God, reaching to the uttermost bounds of human demerit, as made him feel that that embraced even him, and that he was saved by grace and secure in the everlasting arms. But on a review of his life work, that seemed to him a total failure. He could not see that he had ever said or done anything to benefit a single soul. Presently letters came pouring in from every part of the country in which references were made to utterances of his by which people had been helped and blessed. He referred particularly to a letter from J. F. L. Parsons, of Halifax, who spoke of the influence exerted upon him and several of his companions when boys by the decided stand taken by young Mackenzie in early life. These communications encouraged him to hope that his life had not been spent altogether in vain. Referring to his lingering beyond human expectation on the brink of the river, he thought he could see a divine purpose enabling him to gather up some loose threads of work, and by his pen and pencil to start influences which might be helpful to the cause which he loved. There is no darkness or gloom in that sick chamber. It is a benediction to come into contact with this dying saint. Even the members of his family, as much as they sometimes dread the thought of separation, cannot be sad in the presence of such triumphant faith and cheerful hope as beams in the countenance and is expressed in the eloquent language of the patient sufferer."

—The hysterial temper in which this Venezuelan Commission was begotten certainly militates against the hope that it will be able to make any important contribution to the peaceful settlement of the difficulty. If, being in doubt as to the merits of the case between Great Britain and Venezuela, and suspecting that the stronger nation was unduly encroaching on the weaker, the United States government had proposed a commission jointly appointed by Britain and the United States, with a view to a thorough and impartial investigation of the rival claims, the British Government would have been bound to treat such a proposal with respect. If even the United States Government had appointed its own commission on the matter in a calm and judicial temper, forbearing threats and bad requests, the British Government would have been entitled to the greatest respect. The people of the British Empire do not want any extension of British territory in South America which cannot be effected on principles of justice. The people of Canada especially must deplore the existing jealousies and conflicts on this continent by any unwarrantable claims put forth by England. It is quite possible that Lord Salisbury was wrong in declining to submit the whole boundary question to arbitration. It is possible too that the British Government is claiming more land in South America than it is entitled to in justice. But these things remain to be proved, and while they were unproved, for the president of the United States to assume that the resources of diplomacy were exhausted and to take action which meant that England must either submit to the dictation of the United States in this matter or to war with them, was to assume an attitude of insolence and folly incredible in the ruler of a great and civilized people. What course of procedure the Cleveland Commission will adopt is not announced. If they do, as secretary Olney seems to have done, study the subject wholly from the Venezuelan side, they may not unlikely adopt his conclusion that England is wholly to blame and that her rapacity must be resisted, else she will swallow the continent. The British Government cannot of course recognize a commission brought into existence under such circumstances. But an English paper which may perhaps speak with some authority, intimates that the Foreign Office may not be unwilling to give the members of the commission every facility for making themselves acquainted with the evidence for the justice of the British claims. A good deal may therefore depend on the wisdom, moderation and thoroughness with which the Commission shall go about its work.

—The names of the five men who are to compose the United States commission on the Venezuelan boundary question have been given to the public. They are Andrew D. White, Daniel C. Gilman, Richard H. Alvey, David J. Brewer and Frederick R. Coudert. The first named is ex-President of Cornell University and ex-Minister to Germany and to Russia. As a man of wide scholarship, diplomatic experience and free from strong partisan bias, Mr. White is a member of the commission who will command respect both in his own country and abroad. President Gilman, of Johns Hopkins University, and Judge Alvey, who is Chief Justice of the Court of Appeals of the District of Columbia, are also recognized as men of broad outline and of calm and judicial temperament, which make them worthy to be the associates of ex-President White on the commission. So much can scarcely be said for Judge Brewer and still less for Mr. Coudert. The former, though a member of the U. S. Supreme Court and a man of fine ability and

good judgment, has given expression to radical utterances which do not indicate a judicial frame of mind respecting the matter in question; and Mr. Coudert, a distinguished lawyer and advocate, of New York city, has forfeited all claim to the possession of a judicial temper in this case by publicly endorsing and defending the position recently taken by President Cleveland on the Venezuelan boundary question. Two members of the commission, Messrs. White and Brewer, are recognized as moderate republicans, two others, Messrs. Alvey and Coudert, are democrats, while president Gilman is said to be without party affiliations. Considering what appears to be the predominant character of this commission, it may be expected that it will endeavor to employ its influence wisely and in the interests of peace, and if its proceedings shall be characterized by calmness, deliberation and an honest and evident purpose to arrive at the real facts of the case in the interests of impartial justice, it may be possible for it to promote peace on stable foundations of righteousness.

—The despatches from Ottawa, published in our Monday morning papers, which give the latest information available at time of writing, it is evident that a grave crisis has been reached in the affairs of Sir McKenzie Bowell's administration. The clash of opinions, feelings, and interests in the Cabinet are so great that it seems impossible for it longer to hold together under Sir McKenzie's leadership, nor does it appear that there is any member of the government upon whom all could unite as a leader. On Saturday seven heads of departments sent in to the Premier their resignations. These were Sir C. Tupper and Hon. Messrs. Foster, Haggart, Ives, Dickey, Montague and Wood. As matters are, the Premier is supported by only five ministers—Hon. Messrs. Outmet, Castigan, Ferguson, Sir A. F. Caron and Sir Donald Smith. The resignations given forth by the ministers who have resigned is that they are convinced that Sir McKenzie Bowell has not that command of the party and ability for leadership which would enable his party to face the country in a general election with a good hope of success. It is admitted, however, that the proposed "remedial legislation" is having much to do with the matter. The result of the elections in Montreal Centre and Jacques Cartier, both strongly adverse to the Government, goes to show that the promise of Governor measures toward Manitoba is not winning any enthusiastic support from the Catholics of Quebec, while on the other hand it is sure to arouse opposition in Protestant constituencies. Just what will be the outcome of the situation cannot be certainly told, but the prevailing opinion seems to be that Sir Charles Tupper, Sr., will be called to the leadership and will undertake the task of reconstructing the Cabinet.

—No little excitement has been aroused in England during the past week by news of an expedition, of a filibustering character it would appear, led by Dr. Jameson, administrator of the British South African Company, into the Transvaal or country of the Boers. According to the dispatches, the British government became aware of the expedition after it had started, and despatched to Dr. Jameson a command to desist from his undertaking. The message was delivered to Dr. Jameson before he reached his destination. He however disregarded it and proceeded to attack the Boers, but suffered most disastrous defeat, a considerable number of his force being killed, and he with the remainder taken prisoners. As matters are represented, it would seem almost certain that Sir Hercules Robinson and Hon. Cecil Rhodes, the Governor and the Prime Minister of Cape Colony, must have been cognizant of Dr. Jameson's designs, and it does not appear that they put forth any effort to prevent the expedition. There is said to be in the Transvaal country a large English population, attracted thither by the gold mining interests, who are permitted no share in the government and find the rule of the Boers oppressive. It appears that it was Dr. Jameson's purpose to act in concert with these people to overthrow the Boer government. The ambitious designs of Hon. Cecil Rhodes, as to the extension of British Empire in South Africa, were made very prominent not long ago, and he has not hesitated to threaten that an independent State would be established in that part of the world unless he were permitted by the British Government to carry out his ideas. Dr. Jameson's unauthorized action is causing much annoyance in England and may possibly lead to serious complications.

—At length the appointment of a successor to Lord Tennyson as poet laureate is announced. The choice has fallen upon Mr. Alfred Austin, who, in addition to whatever claims he may have to being a distinguished poet, is a man of letters of some note, having published three or four novels and several other prose works, including a series of essays in which he severely criticises English current poetry. It was Mr. Austin who some years ago defended the character of Byron from certain grave charges brought against him by Mrs. Stowe. Considering that Mr. Austin has been producing verse for the last thirty-five years and that he has published several volumes of it, it would seem that if he is really worthy of a high reputation as a poet, the world has been rather slow in its apprehension of the fact, for it is certain that on this side the Atlantic, at all events, he is comparatively unknown. But then the world has been proverbially slow to recognize, in their life time, the genius of its poets. Mr. Austin, it is stated, has been a vigorous and consistent supporter of the politics of the party now in power in England, and there are those so ungracious as to say that he owes his appointment to the laureateship quite as much to his politics as to his poetry.

—The W. M. A. S., of Chipman church, held their annual meeting in the Baptist meeting house, at Gaspeaux, Dec. 23, 7.30 p. m. Envelopes had been distributed by members of the 'Aid' some days previous. The B. Y. P. U. assisted the sisters in furnishing music, readings and recitations, which with an address from the pastor and the reading of Scripture verses, enclosed in the envelopes, made a very interesting and we hope profitable meeting. The collection amounted to \$13.60, with some envelopes still to be heard from. We are glad to have done even a little to help with this part of the Lord's work.

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