

e "a menace to our national life," and calls on patriots to unite for its extermination. These are weighty words from an old and honoured servant of the Church, and deserve our most serious consideration. This outcry is certainly timely or the associated press despatches of December 28th tell us that General Littlejohn, in South Africa, finds this habit has sapped the strength of the great majority of the recruits offering for service there, and, we are told by the press, that the whole trouble can be traced "to the recent American invasion of England by the American tobacco trust."

A Worthy Churchman.

The "Toronto News," of December 26th, devotes a column to Mr. James Connor, B.A., of Berlin, Ont., who has long been a licensed lay reader of Huron diocese. Mr. Connor was born in Ireland in 1843, graduated with distinction from Toronto University, in 1864, and joined the teaching staff of Berlin High School in 1870, where he has been for thirty-three years, till his retirement a few weeks ago. For twenty-one of these years he was principal of the school. The old boys of the High School gave him a testimonial in 1901, and it was then found that 1,400 of them were scattered over the earth. His service at Berlin and his previous experience in the County of Renfrew make a teaching record of forty years. He is, moreover, an author of repute, his "Etymology," and his edition of "Coleridge's Ancient Mariner," being well-known to educational men. His retirement from teaching sets him free for further literary work. He is indeed a worthy citizen of the State, and a true son of the Church.

Alexander the Coppersmith Still Alive!

The Bishop of Manchester, speaking of offertories at a recent meeting connected with the Episcopal Fund, said that he had always found in them one great foe to all good objects—Alexander the coppersmith—whose vexatious presence had annoyed St. Paul at the very beginning of Church missionary effort. The coppersmith was responsible for the pennies in the offertory. He wished working men in England would feel, as they did in the colonies, that the threepenny-bit which he had once thought his particular foe was the lowest sum a working man would condescend to give. What sensation of loss or self-sacrifice could a man have who contributed a penny? It was a mere form to save not giving at all, though, of course, where there was genuine self-sacrifice, he would respect a halfpenny as much as a rich man's bank note. The work of Alexander the coppersmith can be discerned in our own alms-basin often enough to make the Bishop's remarks pertinent to our own conditions.

Alaska.

The "Church of Ireland Gazette," of December 4th, quotes our utterances on the Alaska award with warm approval. We counselled calmness and restraint—that national self-respect which enables any people to snatch victory out of defeat. The true greatness of an individual or a nation is often seen in the hour of defeat. Then the reserve power of men and nations is seen, and it is the reserve power which tells in the long run. From a Church standpoint, we can look on Alaska with hearty friendship. It is at present in charge of Bishop Rowe, a Canadian whom we are proud, and whatever political barriers may be erected between the United States and Canada, there will still be one strong chord linking large sections of both nations together—it is the family tie of the mother Church.

An Illustration.

In our article on "Support of Clergy," we pointed out the utterly inadequate provision for

many of our clergy, and traced it largely to lack of business methods, and urged the appointment in all dioceses, where such a state of things existed, of an officer whose duty it should be to raise the ideal of clerical maintenance, and by personal effort augment the stipends of the clergy to an amount that they could live upon with some approach to decency and comfort. We are pleased to know that this has been tried with eminent success in the diocese of Ontario, and the following, which appeared under the head of diocesan intelligence from that diocese, in a recent number of this paper, should encourage every other diocese in Canada to take like action, with good hope of obtaining a similar happy result. "At the Diocesan Mission Board the principal interest lay in the report from Mr. Burton, the diocesan agent. Briefly, his report showed that in those parishes he had visited, the incomes which had formerly amounted to \$1,794, had been raised to \$4,821, showing an average increase of \$368 per parish. The Mission Fund collections in these places amounted formerly to \$433. They have been raised to \$890." This is a record most creditable to the Rev. Mr. Burton and the diocese of Ontario, and as what has been accomplished there can be also elsewhere, we hope this example of wise and successful effort will be followed in all our dioceses, where a similar need we are sure exists.

The Fire at Chicago.

The awful fire which occurred in the Iroquois Theatre, in Chicago, on the 30th ult., is undoubtedly the worst catastrophe of its kind which has ever taken place on this continent, if not in any part of the world. In the short space of ten minutes, no fewer than 580 people—many of them being young children—were killed outright either by suffocation or by being knocked down and trampled upon by those, who in their frantic efforts to escape from the holocaust, took no heed either of sex or age. One of the saddest features of this most terrible affair was the very large percentage of women and children who were numbered amongst its victims. Nearly 100 more were more or less seriously injured. This direful calamity, which has turned the great city of Chicago into a city of mourning, has sent a thrill of horror throughout the civilized world, and at the same time has created a chord of heartfelt sympathy with the bereaved ones, which is no less universal in its extent. It is to be most sincerely hoped that the obvious lesson, which is to be learnt from this event, terrible as it has been, will be most seriously taken to heart by all of those who are now—or who will be in the future—responsible for the planning and erection of public buildings of every kind, so that such precautions may be taken as will render the recurrence of a like catastrophe—so far as human foresight can suggest—impossible in the time to come.

THE YEAR: PAST AND PRESENT.

The flight of time, man's most precious possession, something he cannot purchase, and which he is powerless to lengthen, as its successive periods pass by, demands reflection, when we recall and review the past, and anticipate with hope or dread, the coming year. The comforting thought in connection with what lies before us, either, as it affects the world at large, or the individual, is that the Lord reigneth, and that men collectively and separately are under the providential government of God, and all that comes to pass is part of a great plan, which will eventuate in the greater glory of God, and the welfare of the human family. The year past was unmistakable for the prevalence of peace in all the world, and though there has been no decrease in warlike preparations, and the nations continue to augment their armies and navies, there was no armed conflict between the great powers that control the destinies of the world. Not only has there been no war, but steps have been taken to render it less probable,

and to promote arbitration, as a means of settling difficulties between great nations. A proof of this is the arbitration treaty negotiated between France and England, and similar treaties among other powers. There is an evident disinclination to appeal to the arbitrament of the sword, produced partly by a humanitarian sentiment, and partly also by the increasing uncertainties of war, and the difficulty of gaining by it any decisive results. Whatever the cause, all must rejoice that the waste and loss, moral and material, of war have been spared to us in the year past. An accompaniment of peace has been the reign of plenty, and our own favoured country has been blessed with an abundant harvest, a great increase in its population, and an unparalleled expansion of its trade. In the political world the most striking event has been the resignation of Mr. Chamberlain and his brilliant campaign in favour of preferential trade within the Empire. He proposes to revolutionize the trade policy of Great Britain, not only in the interests of commerce, but also, as tending to strengthen the ties, which bind the colonies to each other and the parent State. This lifts it above the mere issue of free trade and protection, about which men differ more or less in all countries, and makes it an Imperial issue of transcendent importance. Whether England is protectionist, or not, in its trade policy might be a matter of small importance, for a change from one to the other could easily be made, but if for lack of unity of interests, the Empire disintegrates, that is a mistake, that is irreparable, and hence the seriousness of the issue, which is presented to the people of England. Mr. Chamberlain has entered upon the contest with a brilliancy, a daring, and disinterestedness that must command the respect and admiration of all whatever their views, as to his policy; and whatever the result, the colonies and their relation to the Mother Country are up for discussion and settlement. We feel confident that the ties which bind are stronger than the forces that tend to dis severance, and that the wisdom of statesmen, as well as the instincts of the people, will favor the still further consolidation of the varied countries and peoples, which constitute that unique and powerful combination known as the British Empire. The year has had its losses in the death of many eminent men in all departments of human activity, and the world is poorer for their departure from among us. We have not space to mention many, but such names will occur to all, as those of Lord Salisbury, one of the greatest of English statesmen; Pope Leo, who distinguished his exalted office by his great and varied talents; Herbert Spencer, the philosopher, and many others, who, by their gifts and labours, helped on the chariot of human elevation and progress. The Church at home and abroad has been active in missionary effort, and was never more alive to her responsibilities than at present. The Church in England has been harassed by the educational controversy, and the unscrupulous attempt of her adversaries to weaken her because of her conscientious stand on behalf of the religious instruction of the youth of the nation, for which in the past she made great sacrifices. The violent prejudices of many of the English Nonconformists against the National Church is hard to understand, much less to sympathize with. Our Church in Canada is, we believe, awakening to its responsibilities, and with greater zeal and wiser methods seeking to discharge them. We had occasion to draw attention to serious danger signals, as revealed in the last Government census, and have reason to believe that the alarm sounded then was the direct cause of an improvement all along the line, and the appreciation of the fact that self-satisfied complacency, or a resting on our part, or on what was done elsewhere would not suffice, but that we must be up and doing, if we would not fall far behind in the race with others, as to whom should be foremost in love and good works. To our Episcopal leaders, Dr. Matheson is a most welcome addition, and we anticipate from his