

Through the gloomy passages, into the presence of the Governor, Agatha advances—the guards leave her at the door. She anticipates her fate—death in some cruel form—in the flames—in the torture room—by the wild beasts on a holiday. And she prays as Hannah prayed—her lips moving, but no sound heard. She is ready to die. "For me to die is gain." She has read those words in a letter from a faithful missionary, and she repeats them now. But she is prepared for the trial. The Governor commands obedience—expostulates—threatens. But his words move her not. Now comes the test.

"Woman: by this new doctrine you have lost a wife's affections and sacrificed a mother's love. By it you have seduced others into your own error, and made them the sharers in your punishment. It is written in your books that a wise king found out the true mother when he ordered her child to be slain, and that rather than that child should perish, she would give it up to a strange woman. See: if you do not resign this new faith—this Nazarene doctrine—I will order the execution of your youngest born: if you recant, for your sake yours shall be spared."

The Christian woman bowed her head, and was silent. Prayer from her heart went up to God's throne, and strength from God came down to her heart. So she made answer:

"They who love their children more than Christ are not worthy of Him. If God takes my children—to Himself shall I complain? Unjust judge, I trust in the Judge of all."

At a motion from the Governor the guards advanced towards her. She fainted, and they carried her back to her husband and children. When she recovered, the guards waited with the order for the death of her youngest born. He was a brave boy, with light hair and blue eyes, and a great heart. He bade his mother and the rest shed no tears for him. He would soon be with Christ, and sing with the children of the land. Herod slew when Christ was a child himself. He hears that they will expose him on the bleak mountains, and that he is to die of hunger and thirst; but he answers, "he has meat to eat they know not of," and that in the land he is going to "they neither hunger nor thirst." So they lead him away to death; and the mother covers her head, and weeps bitterly. Her first trial is over.

Next day the guards return. Another interview, with a like result, ensues. The mother is doomed to lose another child. It is a girl—a girl just blooming into womanhood. The mother and father tremble and shed tears, but they feel they must not surrender. It is a happiness, in their sorrow, that their children are brave-hearted. The girl throws her arms about her mother's neck, and whispers that her brother and herself are but going to heaven first—that they will all meet again—that in the world above the stars there are no tears and no more parting. She is to die in what they call the arena, before holiday folks, by wild beasts. So she whispers that God took care of Daniel, and that God will do better still for her—He will take her to Himself. And the second trial is passed.

Agatha is childless, and she fears that some new terror may come upon her, but her trust is in God. She prays that God would make her strong enough to bear all trials, and her husband joins her. Next day her husband is the victim. "Resign," says the unjust judge, "thine husband or thy faith." And she answers and says, "Christ, the Saviour, will help me—the Lord will enable me to bear it all." The husband comforts his wife with hopeful, happy words, and so they part. And the third trial is over.

A week has passed, and the widowed wife and childless mother sits in the cell alone. And it is night. There comes a visitor; he bears a lamp with him, and is troubled as he enters. It is the unjust judge. The captive lifts her head. "I have no treasure now," she says: "do with me as you will. They are all gone—why should I tarry? O Lord, send thy chariots—the chariots of Israel, the horsemen thereof." What does the man mean? He bids her come with him, and she mechanically follows. He leads her through the passages, ascends stone steps, crosses a garden, enters a pavilion, and there—What a scene bursts on her sight? Is she in a dream?—is she in heaven? There—here—around her—weeping on her neck, clinging round her waist—are the loved ones—husband, children, alive, from the dead. How is this? The unjust judge tells the story, touched by the constancy of these Chris-

tians, he had resolved to test them by the sharpest trials. He wrung the mother's heart—appealed to her tenderness for her children, and found that her religion enabled her to sustain that trial. He found that her children—her brave boy, her gentle girl—were as immovable as their mother, and he preserved them from the threatened sufferings. He aroused all the wife's affections—tore from her the husband of her youth, and found her still faithful. The woman gave up her husband for the Lord's sake, and the husband resigned his wife. He felt that the religion which could so strengthen them to endure all this must be no light matter. He sought to know more. He had been almost, ay, and altogether—"persuaded to become a Christian," and his object now was to fly with them from danger, and seek safety on a foreign shore.

So they fled together, and were saved from peril and from persecution—and saved with an everlasting salvation. The noble fortitude of this Christian family had accomplished its work.

Christian Messenger.

HALIFAX, DECEMBER 3, 1856.

The neighboring Union has just emerged from the throes of the Presidential Election, an election by far the most important, as far as the principles involved in its issue were concerned, of any that has taken place since Washington was returned by the united suffrages of his countrymen as the first chief of the infant Republic. As far as a present decision, as to the stability of those principles are involved, the Republic of Washington and his compatriots has in our view, received a deep, if not a deadly wound. The return of Mr. Buchanan, upon the express ground of his being more favorable to the cause of Southern Slavery than his opponent, by however small a majority, has inspired the Southern States with an additional courage in their evil cause, which will unquestionably induce them to take an immediate advantage of their strengthened position, and urge their claims with greater boldness and pertinacity. But this is not all. There is already in some of the leading Southern journals a direct proposal to open the African Slave trade, in order to supply the enlarged demand which is being already made for Negro flesh and blood. This surely is a startling fact as regards a country where Freedom has been supposed to have been holding high holiday, ever since the severance from British rule. But, strange to say, the votes of the North have done the mischief—the minority, though probably not large as compared with the numerous honest and determined lovers of freedom in the Northern and Eastern States, has been large enough to allow the undivided South to carry their point, and probably to give a death blow to human liberty throughout the largest portion of this northern continent. It seems almost unaccountable that any of the descendants of the Pilgrim fathers and who sacrificed so much for freedom in the war of Independence, should within a little more than half a century, have so far forgotten and ignored the very essence and vitality of the professed principles of their disruption from the mother country, as to become the avowed advocates of the most obnoxious of all despotisms. There is a change here which argues a deep dereliction of social obligation, and can only be accounted for by the prevalence of some master passion which will sacrifice everything to its indulgence. Among our neighbors, as is too much the case among ourselves, the love of gain is subduing every other feeling. In the United States, the specious pretence for giving an underhanded lift to the cause of Slavery is the fear of a breach of the Union. This however is but a shallow fiction. The real fear probably is lest, the loss of some branch of commerce or manufacture should be the consequence of such an event. Many an honest and noble hearted man in the north sincerely deprecates a rupture of the Union, but deems it an insignificant evil compared with a sacrifice of all that can make the Union worth preserving—the sacrifice of freedom and of conscience, under the hollow pretence of maintaining a Republic whose very life blood has ebbed away. But mammon is doing his work, and we fear it will be a very thorough one. We do not know when we have been more surprised than on hearing not long since, that a gentleman in one of the northern states—with whom we were well acquainted—a highly respectable, nay, we should hope, a religious man, would vote for the slavery candidate for the Presidency. We can only account for the fact upon the principle, that

some strong view of the commercial consequences overpowered every other consideration, and blinded his eyes to the dangers that to every unbiassed, thinking man are so plain and imminent. We have frequently returned to this subject because we feel convinced that in a religious, a moral, and a political point of view it more nearly touches the future destinies of the whole of this northern portion of the great American continent than any other that can be named. We cannot therefore contemplate the issue of what is now transpiring on the subject of slavery, but with corresponding emotions.

The Rev. Robert Sedgewick delivered the second lecture of the season before the Young Men's Christian Association, on Tuesday, the 24th ult. Temperance Hall, was filled to overflowing. The audience was highly respectable and listened attentively for about two hours and a half to an able and eloquent lecture on "The Sphere and Influence of Woman in Christian Society." The Rev. gentleman after some general observations on the peculiarity of woman's constitution and her equality to man, in all respects but her physical power, showed those positions which she was not fitted to occupy. The military profession had on some rare occasions, been undertaken by females, but it was an impropriety which all would admit. The halls of legislation, the judicial bench, and the legal profession were each referred to as open to serious objection as suitable spheres in which women could appear. The abject state of slavery, was not that in which the peculiar endowments of woman could be developed, neither the harem, the nunnery, nor the factory were adapted to her capacities and weaknesses.

Having shewn what was not the sphere for woman the lecturer proceeded to exhibit her in her own true condition "at home." HOME he considered the only place in which her powers could be properly developed. He described her in the position of a child, a daughter, a wife, a mother, and finally as a christian—a member of a christian church, and concluded by passing a high eulogium on Her Majesty the Queen.

The chairman, T. A. S. Dewolfe, Esqr., announced at the close that the next lecture would be delivered by the Rev. Charles Churchill on "The Life and Times of the Patriarch Job."

Temperance Prize Essay.

We have been favoured with the perusal of the Essay, to which was awarded by the United Kingdom Alliance, the prize of One Hundred Guineas. It is entitled "An Argument for the Legislative Prohibition of the Liquor Traffic, by Dr. F. R. Lees." If the Alliance had done no more than the producing and publishing of this work it would have accomplished that for which every friend of humanity, temperance, and righteousness should feel grateful, and of which they might well be proud. It is at once dignified, philosophical and thorough.

We might proceed with further commendatory remarks, but shall content ourselves by letting the author speak for himself.

"While we claim the right to speak and argue freely on this subject—free from clamour and other unseemly methods of interruption—it is but justice to remind the public, that the Alliance proposes no coercive law to enforce the convictions of its members upon them. The 'total and immediate prohibition' contended for, is of course conditional on the formation of a Public Opinion of the same kind as its own—it proposes that the evil shall be removed as soon as the Nation shall come to regard it as a total evil—and not one day before.

"We make no apology either to Critics or the Public in reference to the execution of the Essay as a literary performance. The critics, if it so please them, may say the smartest things of its style, and be quite 'killing' in their tone of contempt—if only they will pounce upon the argument, and not ignore the facts? The Book was not, like a novel, penned to please, but to convince; or at least, to induce the serious and meditative portion of the public to consider. This is the great thing in practical reforms. The Essay is to be viewed, therefore, from this standing point—as an earnest, however imperfect, Argument addressed to Thoughtful people, on a subject of practical and pressing moment.

"The Maine Law will, of itself, when faithfully enforced, do but a negative work—it will suppress the evils of the Traffic. The positive work of humanity will remain to be done—the seed to be sown—the harvest to be reaped,—but the law aims simply at preparing the way, by draining the swamps and destroying the weeds. That great and glorious possibilities are enclosed within the womb of the Future, is at least our faith—and it has been the faith of the prophets since the world began. If it is not so, then are Statesmen, with their cares and conflicts, engaged in the most pitiful of ambitions."

It is a work of 317 pages, and published at 1s. 6d. sterling. The friend who has

placed the volume in our hands requested us to announce that if orders were sent to our office, so as to be able to import a number of copies at one time, they might be supplied at 2s. currency. We shall be happy to receive orders and assist in giving the work a wide circulation.

We beg to acknowledge receiving from the Provincial Secretary's Office a copy of AGRICULTURE IN NOVA SCOTIA, LIVE STOCK, &c., by J. W. Dawson, M. A., F. G. S. Second Edition; Revised and Improved. Published under a grant of the Legislature.

The author says, in a note to His Excellency:

"In treating a subject so extensive, many omissions must have occurred; and I regret that owing to my departure from the Province before the printing of the work could be commenced, I have been unable to revise the proofs, or to make such corrections and additions as the delay in the printing and the rapid progress in agricultural science had rendered desirable.

"Notwithstanding these defects, I trust that the large amount of practical information contained in the work must may (?) render it an acceptable and useful addition to the agricultural literature of Nova Scotia. To young persons especially, who may be desirous of obtaining an acquaintance with the principles and most improved practice of Agriculture, it should be exceedingly valuable; and I beg leave to suggest that for their benefit it should be largely introduced into the Schools and School Libraries."

It has 14 chapters on the following subjects:—Introductory Remarks; Soils; Grain Crops; Green Crops, &c.; Rearing and Management of Cattle; The Dairy; Farm Horses; Sheep; Swine; Poultry; Manures; Orchard and Garden Fruits; Rotation of Crops; Miscellaneous Hints.

General Intelligence.

Foreign and Domestic.

Rev. T. H. Porter informs us that on Friday, 21st ult., whilst in the store of E. Billing & Co., he by some means dropped from his purse, a small parcel of about nine £1 bank notes. There were several persons in the store at the same time, yet, on discovering his loss, and on returning a short time afterwards, no trace of it could be found.

PROBABLE SHIPWRECK.—The following melancholy slip, which was picked up in a bottle at Long Island, we have received from our respected Agent, Mr. H. E. Payson, of Westport. We publish it for the purpose of its meeting the eye of those concerned, and shall be willing to give up the original to an application from owners or friends, properly authenticated. Editors of other papers will please make it known.

EIGHTH MONTH, 9th day, 1856.

On board the good Brig Friends, about the middle of the month of the Bay of Fundy. Oh a desperate day for—our masts going. Oh all the pumps going frequently. I commit this to the mighty deep, hoping it may reach land; and, when published in the papers, may meet the eyes of enquiring friends. Good bye East, welcome West.

WILLIAM L. MCGUNIGLE,
JOHN MCCASKELL.

Belonging to the Gulf of St. Lawrence, Pictou, or Arichat.

SHORTEST PASSAGE BETWEEN BOSTON AND HALIFAX.—The packet barque Halifax, Capt. Laybold, which arrived hence at Halifax on the 17th ult., made the passage in 30 hours. She left here on Saturday evening, Nov. 15, and passed the Light at 6 P. M. On Sunday she took a strong westerly wind, and made Sambro Light on Monday morning, arriving at her wharf in Halifax at 8 20 same morning. This is believed to be the shortest run of a sailing vessel from wharf to wharf on record; and is several hours shorter than the average run of the Cunard steamships.

The Rev. Mr. Martin, married a couple last week. During his ministry he had also married the grandfather, and the father, of the bride.

A SMALL pocket telegraph apparatus has been invented, not larger than a tobacco box which can be attached to the wires at any point along the line, at the instant, and a message sent as desired.

New Brunswick.

THE RAILWAY.—We perceive by the handbills posted about the City, that the Contractors require several hundred men immediately, to commence operations at this end of the line. Tenders are advertised for Grading and Masonry, of the Railway between the third mile stake and the nine-mile house. Between Saint John and the third mile stake, the line will be completed, so as to convey workmen and materials hence to the works.—*Courier*.

RIVER NAVIGATION closed at Fredericton on Saturday last, where foot passengers have since crossed the river on the ice.—*Id.*

PUBLIC HOSPITAL.—A subscription list has been started, in order to raise funds for the erection of a public Hospital for St. John, an institution that we should have had years ago. One mercantile firm, we are gratified to say, has headed the list with £500.—*News*.