

and with patient resignation yielded herself to the final struggle. While we deeply mourn her loss, the sorrow is lightened with the assurance, that she has gone to her rest.

About eight years since, our dear departed sister found a hope in Christ and united with the Canard Baptist Church, since then her walk has ever been consistent with her high and holy profession. Her very amiable and quiet christian disposition readily secured for her a place in the esteem of all who enjoyed her society. When the last hour was at hand, being asked how she felt in the prospect of death, replied, *I can only trust.* Trusting, she triumphed,—and all shall triumph who make the Lord their trust. And thus our sister passed from this home of sorrow and pain, to her home in the bosom of God. Well may her sorrowing relatives say, "Thy will be done," for to her whom they loved, death was but an entrance to the joy of her Lord.—*Com. for the C. M.*

The following is from a Cincinnati paper of November 14th, and is the obituary of an aged and much loved disciple of Christ, her many relatives and friends in various parts of the province will doubtless peruse this notice of her death with much interest. In former years Mrs. Peck corresponded with the late Father Edward Manning, and I believe her deeply interesting letters often gave an additional interest to the pages of the Christian Messenger. She was a worthy sister of such a brother as Father Harris Harding.

A. S. HUNT.

MRS. MARY HARDING PECK.

DIED,—in Lunbury, Delaware Co., October 10th, Mary Harding Peck, aged 80 years and ten months.

The deceased was born in Nova Scotia, was the daughter of Israel and Sarah Harding, and sister of the late Venerable Harris Harding, of Yarmouth, Nova Scotia. She embraced Christ as her Saviour when about seventeen years of age, but made no public profession until a few years after, when she was baptized into the fellowship of the Horton Baptist Church, by Elder Theodore Seth Harding. Previous to her union with the Church she was united in marriage to Mr. J. Peck. Her removal and settlement in Johnstown, Licking Co., was in 1817, when she united with the Baptist Church in that place. Her husband lived only about two years after locating in Johnstown. He died in 1819, leaving her a stranger in a strange land with eleven children, but she trusted in God and found him to be a "Father to the fatherless and the widow's God." Sister Peck was a faithful companion, an affectionate wife and mother, and as far as known was universally regarded as a devoted consistent christian. A mother in Israel, one of the burden bearers of the church, one of its most active members, showing a lively interest in all that pertained to its prosperity. She was a christian of rich, ripe, and varied experience. Her house was a home and resting place for preachers of righteousness, as many of Zion's watchmen who have enjoyed her hospitality can testify. She laboured and prayed for the salvation of her children earnestly, and had the happiness of seeing most of them and some of her grand-children converted to Christ. For some time before her departure she felt that her work was about done, and seemed to ardently desire to depart and be with Christ. She died as she lived, trusting in Christ. At her funeral an appropriate sermon was delivered by the Rev. R. B. Dickey, formerly of Liverpool, Nova Scotia, from Rev. xiv. 13, to a large assembly of weeping friends. Her remains were taken to Johnstown for burial, and there laid in the grave until the resurrection. She has left a large circle of relatives and friends to mourn her loss. May they imitate her virtues, live as she lived, die as she died, and meet her before the throne, to reign with Christ forever. D. D. WALDEN.

European & Foreign News.

For the Christian Messenger.

LATEST FROM EUROPE

[From our Special Correspondent.]

LONDON, Feb. 13.

PARLIAMENT: ITS NEW HOUSES AND NEW SESSION.

England's great national Council has assembled: the representatives of her people—statesmen, would be Solons, place-hunters, and a few real patriots—are met to pass and repeal laws in name of the common weal, but oftener for mere party purposes, and to favour existing institutions. Those who know the internal constitution of the House—its cliques and coteries, set on self gratification and advancement—the indirect but powerful influence of Ministerial Patronage, and all the gilded baits that pertain thereto—can understand how it is that but few members can take an independent course, and carry out convictions to their honest and legitimate issue.

Still, we must not be unfair. Never formerly was Parliament an equal exponent, as now, of popular opinion. The press acts powerfully both on it and the constituencies which make it (that is, those constituencies which are not pocket-property as really, to all purposes, as houses or lands): elections are purer, because

more voters are educated; and the system is improving. We must, however, have a complete change before Parliament becomes what it should be—the perfect representative of the nation's sentiments. Money and territorial influence must cease to ensnare a man's return to the senate; and false systems, depending for existence on a packed House of Commons, must be prevented from rendering our senate-chamber a committee room for the discussion of certain confined interests.

But, with all its faults, every Englishman is justly proud of that sturdy House of Commons which has been the ancient, as it is the present, palladium of English liberty. Our kings have trembled and fallen before it: the principle of justice to even the lowest, and of freedom to the slave, have oft been vindicated and established. Yes; our "Lower House" is virtually greater than the "Upper," or even the Throne itself. We live under a monarchy, but the real monarchy is a people's own will in the most essential and vital questions, however much they may be cheated or governed in others.

Are we lazier than of old time: or, so much busier, and, generally, so much better off, that we have not time nor inclination to make a really desperate row about anything particularly? Yet so it is. The income tax is set down for special attack, and there are a few other minor battle-cries for future fights this Session, including of course the standard questions that are brought forward every year—as, Maynooth, &c. But, these apart, there is really no great question which absorbs the nation, and on which men ride in or out of office apart from every thing else.

But a few years ago, the vacations were but breathing-places to prepare busily for renewed warfare with political foes; bivouacs, to arrange for next campaign. We look dreamily back, now, to the times when Fox, Pitt, and Burke thundered out their invectives—when a man used his party as an Irishman did his shillelah, and when wives and daughters took a more hearty part in the exciting concomitants of an election than half the burghesses themselves do now.

Still later, we can recollect the intense interest with which the nation lung on the lips of party statesmen—the excited mobs, fierce platform declamation, and midnight meetings, as the great battles of Reform, Catholic Emancipation, and Corn-law Repeal, were fought; as Peel stood calmly before an enraged Land-ocracy, and met as patriot should the biting, burning sarcasms that seethed from Disraeli's venomous lips and rang from one end of the land to the other! as O'Connell mustered his monster meetings of ragged thousands, and stood trial for sedition in the Five Courts; as Frost, Williams, and Jones, headed bloody riots for the Charter: and, lastly, as the Irish incendiary Mitchell advocated street hand-grenades, in severance of the union of Great Britain and Ireland.

Those "good old times" of war taxes, corrupt ministries, pocket boroughs, land-interest autocracy, and crushed poor! of fierce debate in the House, and plot, bribery, intimidation, without! where are those days and those scenes, now? Party has become comparatively extinct; there is no longer a sink or swim policy with one man and one man alone: even the famous trial of strength for a Speaker has fallen into abeyance. Fusion has confounded old Toryism with Conservatism in a liberal form; and that, again, has almost joined hands with popular cautious democracy. Expediency—shifting, convenient siding with foes on the one hand, and avoidance of combat a *Poutrance* on the other—mark the legislative mind. And this is very important, because the nation takes its character from legislation, and fusion of party affects reform.

But, to begin at the beginning. Her Most Gracious Majesty did not open the House in person: for reasons which newspapers announce as "matter of national rejoicing." So, the ceremony was robbed of its chief charm, and came off like a stage rehearsal.

But, if the Queen were absent, "Big Ben" was present for the first time, and announced the fact, in sonorous tones, to all, far and near. The boom was heard, I think as far as 15 miles from London. Your readers, Mr. Editor, will now understand that "Big Ben" is the new monster bell of Westminster, named after Sir Benjamin Hall, Her Majesty's Chief Commissioner of Works and Public Buildings. Its height is 7 feet 10½ inches; diameter at mouth, 9 feet 5½ inches; weight with clapper, 10½ tons.

At the foot of Westminster Bridge (which has been doomed for some time) rises the beautiful Clock Tower of the new Houses of Parliament: and here Big Ben is to swing, silencing

even St. Paul's with his majestic tone (tenor E natural). The clock will have four faces, and be illuminated, so as to tell the hours of night and day; and, for the locality of Parliament, the former necessity is greater than the latter.

This splendid pile of buildings now approaches completion. The Clock Tower, at one end, is high, with long lanced windows, like a Norman Church tower, but lighter in character; then comes the immense clock; and the roof tapers to a point with ornamentations that remind one of oriental architecture, or the Alhambra. A Lantern Tower is in the centre of the building, peculiar in fancifully constructed and arranged pinnacles and spire top. Then, at the other extremity, stands the massive, immense Victoria Tower, with four domed pinnacles, lofty arched entrance, and a total height of 340 feet. The River frontage has been complete for some time; that fronting the Abbey is now fully seen; and, with a noble central entrance for the Peers, rich in architectural beauty and carving, and the whole erection lighted up by gas in its thousand rooms, it presents a sight of such beauty, novelty, and splendour, as is fully worthy the great council of a great nation.

The chief drawback is, that queer buildings so hem in this new creation as to prevent its beauties from being properly seen. So it is at present, but so it will not be always. Westminster Bridge is to be changed for a new one; Bridge St., King St., Abingdon and Millbank Streets, and the old cumbersome Law Courts—so famous in the history of equity—are to be cleared away: the new street to Belgravia and its mansions, immediately in front of the Houses, is to be completed and *inhabited* (now, it is a dreary waste of respectable bricks, mortar, and stucco facades). Then, if old Caxton could once more look from his Abbey chapel, whence emanated the first English printed sheet: nay, if even Fox or Pitt could again visit St. Stephen's—they would not know again localities which were the scene of their fame.

But all this will require immense sums, and have to be achieved by degrees. Perhaps, Mr. Editor, by the time all is complete, some of your readers may be over here to see it: and they will not, in looking at it, be ashamed of old mother-country's progress. Meanwhile, let me just run over the speech which opened proceedings for this Session.

QUEEN'S SPEECH.

First it announced that the difficulties connected with the full execution of the treaty of Paris had been removed. Then, that Her Majesty and the Emperor Napoleon entertained hopes of bringing to a peaceful solution the Neuchatel "insurrectionary movement." France had joined Her Majesty, also in remonstrances to Bomba, whose reception of them had induced the remonstrants to let him alone for the future. Central American difficulties have been removed by treaties with the United States and Honduras, and a friendly treaty has been made with Siam. The Persian government had besieged and taken Herat, contrary to treaty, so we had besieged and taken Bushire. "Acts of violence, insults to the British flag, and infraction of treaties, with pertinacious refusal of redress," by the Chinese, had rendered it necessary for us to employ force, "with great forbearance, but signal success."

Then follows the antiquated, time-worn sentence to the Commons, about the estimates being "prepared with every attention to economy, and due regard to the efficient performance of the public service." My Lords and Gentlemen are then referred to the consideration of law reform, the Bank Charter, and Joint Stock Banks. Her Majesty expresses gratification at witnessing the "general well-being and contentment" of her people; but forgets to mention, that in the rich country whose "resources remain unimpaired by the late war," 50,000 able-bodied men are out of work and nearly starving in London alone. Her Majesty, too, may state that our "productive industry remains unchecked in its course of progressive development;" but how does the above fact agree with it? A recognition of, and sympathy with, the distress that so widely prevails, would have been only in accordance with Her Majesty's private character. But then everyone knows that the Speech is made for her by Ministers. These same 50,000 men suffer, but riot not. They wait in deputations on magistrates, eke out a scanty workhouse dole, and hope for the spring. A beautiful feature of our police courts is, their charitable relief of deserving cases, from the poor boxes. Justice sits on the bench, but Merey stands by her side; and, where Retribution meets a Judas, there also soft charity heals the sores of a Lazarus.

The press aids this. Every morning, at half a million breakfast tables, millions hear of the woes depicted on the previous day, and special cases of distress are often abundantly relieved. Poor widows are set up in business, children educated or provided with homes, labour is directed into right channels, and a mass of practical good effected, which is worth more than a hundred of the resolutions and half-frozen proceedings of some other relief funds.

REFORMATORY SCHOOLS.

One very good Bill has been introduced this Session, giving counties and boroughs power to unite for the formation of reformatory schools. At present, the most difficult question in our criminal jurisprudence, is how to treat criminals,—against the principle held by most Dissenters, that the State has no right to educate the people. One grand evil stands out, as yet, with but little alleviation. The courts and alleys of all our great cities swarm with a juvenile population, who, trained by vicious parents, idle, and completely uneducated, only grow up to crime, spend their lives in alternatives between jails and "thieves' kitchens," cost the country an immense sum of money (more than the cost of primary education), and become but preys upon society at large. It is also found, that imprisonment, with its gregarious assembling of the hardened in vice, with those who have made but one false step, and can be reformed, most frequently completes the moral debauchery already begun, instead of punishment deterring from future crime. These schools then would just meet the difficulty which now constantly assails magistrates. Vicious children are separately brought before them, only to be re-committed to prison; and the law has no other course. Penitentiaries and institutions like Parkhurst are far too few to meet the demand. These schools, I believe will be paid for out of local taxes, and if carried out, must do immense good. What can poor children do, when turned out of prison, and finding every respectable opening closed against them, but revert to their former practices? And it seems hard, that while the State is ever ready to punish the infraction of law, it should deny a training which alone can enable the punished to understand the laws, ignorance of whose obligations too often prompts their violation.

Then there is the ticket-of-leave system. A meeting of these men was recently held, in which they forcibly portrayed their miserable condition. The police hound and hunt them everywhere. So soon as one of them has obtained a situation, his character is made known to the employer, which in most cases leads to his discharge. So many "garrotters," burglars, and thieves, have been found to belong to this body, that popular opinion is very strong against the system. Final change is, however, I believe, yet undecided on.

NO CHURCH RATES.

Sir William Clay has given notice of an Anti-Church-rate Bill. Many members of the church, now join with Dissenters in decrying the injustices of these imposts. Even those who still advocate the support of religion by the State, cannot all say that its compulsory aid, by those maintaining their own conscientious and differing creed, is just or right. Of course, there is a powerful and bigoted party, who, to preserve the present loaves-and-fishes, exactions which support themselves, relations, and prejudices, out of other men's pockets, howl against this infraction of the church's revenues. Fit exponents are they of a greedy system: exposing, themselves, the greatest weakness of their system, by saying, that without these revenues the church could not maintain itself, and so "religion" would suffer. Their "religion" might, as the creed of the Pharisees suffered from Christ's teaching of old. But, though their system needs worldly props and stays, lest it fall, when, in times past or present, was pure and god-like truth unable to maintain itself, even though government coffers were locked fast, and Kings, the sword, ecclesiastic, and the civil law, all arranged themselves against it? When will the advocates of the church consent to stand on the merits of their system, alone, and agree to let it stand or fall, as truth shall of itself support it, or its innate error cause it "to come to nought?" We may hope that Sir W. Clay will succeed, and the church be left, in this respect at least, to find her own cash for the support of pluralists and money-gorged functionaries.

ECCLESIASTICAL COURTS, AND DIVORCE.

But another blow is to be struck against this conglomeration of law, politics, and religion.

A Bill is introduced into the House of Commons... "Divorce is to be facilitated by the State... necessary for... separate...

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