

Christian Messenger.

HALIFAX, APRIL 27, 1864.

ENGLISH AND AMERICAN LITERATURE.

The character of a people is pretty correctly indicated by their literature. Their mental food has much to do with the development of their minds and morals.

Notwithstanding the unwillingness of American writers, generally, to admit that the British are more ready than the American people to patronize what is really valuable in mental cultivation, yet we find some who form a more correct estimate of British taste and character.

The following statements, from a late number of the above periodical, are doubtless more than founded on fact:

"It does not augur well for the mental strength of American youth that four-fifths of their reading lies in the department of light literature. Novels in public and circulating libraries are in great demand; histories, and biographies, and scientific works lie upon the shelves.

In Great Britain it is otherwise. Scientific and religious works, and volumes of permanent value find a ready market, and the taste for fiction is neither so exclusive nor so exhaustive.

"The 'Recreations of the Country Parson,' with its pleasant humor and genial wit, had a great run in this country; while his 'Graver Thoughts,' containing earnest religious counsel, found fewer and less appreciative readers.

It is strange that the pressure of war, and national calamity, and bereavement in many desolate homes, has not changed at all our national taste for fiction. It continues to form the sole or chief intellectual food of old and young, and the national frivolity and extravagance are its legitimate fruit."

It becomes important that our people should lay to heart such facts as the above. Our proximity to the Northern States affords great facilities for the importation of this light frothy stuff, which exerts such baneful effects on the popular character.

Let us cherish such encomiums of our mother-country, and strive to emulate her in this particular. There is great reason to fear that we, as a people, bear more resemblance, in this respect, to the U. States than to England.

All who are in a position to direct the taste of the young and introduce to them wholesome literature, should embrace every opportunity of doing so, and thus contribute towards the general diffusion of useful knowledge and sound literature.

ROYAL CHRISTENINGS.

The late christening of the royal infant has supplied a theme for much historic research, and numerous brief papers for periodicals in reference to the sons of the Princes of Wales who have preceded our present Sovereign's eldest son.

Wales, son of Henry VII. The Earl of Oxford was to have been godfather, but being behind the time appointed, and all the brilliant assemblage kept waiting, there was great anxiety for his arrival:

"Six hours, the Sovereign and ladies and officials had waited for him, when the wearied King nominated the Earl of Derby as Oxford's substitute, and commanded that the ceremony should be no longer delayed. The little prince had just received the British name of Arthur, the very sound of which, it was thought, would strike terror into the hearts of all foreign nations, and he had just been immersed bodily in the deep water of the capacious font, and Te Deum was on the point of being shouted, not only in the cathedral, but in every church in Winchester,—the bells were already 'ringing' in joyous thunders of clamour—when the tardy Oxford, booted and spurred, was seen coming up the centre aisle. He was in time, at all events, to see his godchild properly cared for, after his immersion, and to place him on the high altar, where he lay during the celebration of the evening service. No point of form was omitted which could add lustre to a ceremony which proved to be the last according to the Roman Catholic ritual, by which the Prince of Wales was made regenerate. And the conclusion was worthy of the occasion, for then, the chief personages assembled around the shrine of St. Swithin, where they ate 'spices,' and drank hippocras to the health of Prince Arthur, under the shadow of the thirteenth of saints.

Whether Prince Arthur was, or was not, the last little gentleman of his rank who was baptized by immersion, we are unable to say, but we may state, on the authority of Sir John Floyer, the physician, that baptism by immersion continued in general use till the year 1600; and its disuse is, with him, a matter of much regret. He looks on the sanitary, not on the theological side of the question, whether princes or people be concerned. "The English," he says, "will at last return to it, when physic has given them a clear proof, by divers experiments, that cold baths are both safe and useful. They did great injury to their children and posterity who first introduced the alteration of this truly ancient ceremony of immersion, and were the occasion of a degenerate, sickly, tender race ever since. Instead of prejudicing the health of their children, immersion would prevent many hereditary diseases, if it were still practised,"—and princes and people are now of the same opinion as Sir John Floyer, but they give it more practical application than ever he thought of.

Nothing is said of immersion at the christening of Arthur's brother, Henry; and there was nothing remarkable at that (in Scotland) of the two sons of James I., who were successively Princes of Wales, except that the King behaved with no more decorum than was expected of him."

"In the midst of Life we are in Death."

Few men have been better known in Halifax for many years past than Dr. JAMES C. HUME. On Friday last his friends were greatly surprised to learn that about 3 o'clock that morning he had been attacked with pulmonary apoplexy, and but a few minutes after his son, Dr. J. D. Hume, had reached the bedside and prepared what medicine his father had directed, he, in the full possession of his faculties, and conscious of his state, had departed this life in the 62nd year of his age.

He had been as well as usual on the previous day, and had been engaged in the duties of his profession till late in the evening, only a few hours before his death.

Dr. Hume had lived in this his native city nearly all his days, with the exception of the time in which he was pursuing his professional studies in the mother country. For upwards of thirty years he had been in active service as a physician. His father, Dr. Robert Hume, lived to a good old age, as one of the first practitioners in the city, and resident medical officer of H. M. Dockyard. Dr. James C. Hume was his eldest son, and succeeded him, after having himself had an extensive practice for several years previously. He was President of the Medical Society of Nova Scotia, and had been several years President of the Royal Acadian School Society, in which institution he had taken a deep interest for the past quarter of a century.

Dr. Hume had been a member of Granville Street Church almost from its first formation, and continued regularly to fill his place there up to the last Lord's day of his life. Much might be said of his kind and genial nature, which caused him to be highly esteemed by a very large circle of friends, and of his warm-hearted piety, which endeared him to his brethren in the church and other christian communities; but whatever we might say in these respects, we should fail to express what would be due to his memory. Hundreds of his fellow-citizens will long have cause to remember his efforts to alleviate their sorrows and sufferings in various ways, besides those of his professional attendance. The writer's pleasantest associations with Nova Scotia, on his arrival here, were in a great measure secured by such kindness and christ-

ian friendship, as he found in Dr. Hume and his family.

His remains were attended to the City Cemetery on Sunday last by an immense concourse—probably more than a thousand—of those who sympathized with the family in their sorrow,—including the Medical Society and members of both houses of the legislature. Rev. Dr. Pryor officiated at the funeral. Rev. Mr. Grant also attended and participated in the services.

These unexpected removals read to all the solemn lesson: "Be ye also ready, for at such an hour as ye think not the Son of Man cometh."

Had the following highly important measure been adopted twenty years since, with such modifications as might have been necessary to obtain the concurrence of the Southern States, and which, had the great leading politicians of the day, who professed to deprecate the existence of Slavery in the Union, earnestly and honestly endeavoured to carry out, what rivers of blood, what millions of treasures, what misery and desolation, what bitter hatreds and unhallowed enmities might have been saved or avoided. We greatly fear that under present circumstances its immediate effect will be to exasperate and prolong the quarrel. Whatever may be its present effect, however, in itself it is right and just:

"The Senate of the United States on Friday last, April 8, 1864, adopted the following joint resolution, by the decisive vote of THIRTY-EIGHT TO SIX.

Be it Resolved, by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America, in Congress assembled, two-thirds of both Houses concurring, that the following article be proposed to the Legislatures of the several States, as an amendment to the Constitution of the United States, which, when ratified by three-fourths of said Legislatures, shall be valid to all intents and purposes as part of the said Constitution, namely:

ART. XIII.—Section 1. Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime, whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or in any place subject to their jurisdiction.

Section 2. Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation."

"The House will adopt the resolution by an equally decisive vote, and the President will be forward to give it his signature. It will then receive, as we believe, the concurrence of three-fourths of the Legislatures of all the States in the Union, including what are called the Seceded States; and the amendment will be made part of the Constitution, to be recognized and hailed through all time as one of its justest and grandest provisions."

NEWS SUMMARY.

It would certainly seem, from all outward indications that we can gather from papers and telegrams, that the opening campaign of the two belligerent parties of the North and South, must be productive of the most important and decisive results. The forces and the preparations on each side are on an enormous scale; and the spirit which appears to animate each, nothing but decisive results can satisfy. There appears to have been some hard fighting in Louisiana on the west of the Mississippi, in which the Confederates are said to have gained an important victory, but which was immediately followed by an equal success on the part of the Federals, whose reinforcements came up the day after the first conflict. But, as we have often remarked, the accounts are always so obscure, and unsatisfactory, that we must wait to know what are the real facts. The armies on the Potomac are still occupying their winter quarters, the impracticable state of the roads having rendered any important movement on either side all but impossible.

Notices, &c.

We were glad to learn a week or two since that the lost bundle of Central Minutes had been found, and forwarded to the Postmaster at Wolfville. He informs us that he has sent them by mail as directed; for which he will please accept our thanks.

French Mission Board and Donation. There will be a meeting of the French Missionary Board, at Hebron, on Tuesday, May 3rd, at 10 o'clock, and on the following Tuesday, May 10th, there will be a donation visit at the Mission House, Tusket. We hope that the friends of the mission will largely attend, and by their presence and aid cheer the heart of our missionary.

Annapolis Co. Ministerial Conference. The next meeting of the Annapolis County Conference of Baptist Ministers, will be held D. V., at Granville Ferry, on Wednesday the 18th of May next, at 9 o'clock, A. M. Preaching on previous evening. A full attendance is desired.

Lower Granville, N. S., April 20th, 1864. Rev. Warren L. Parker wishes all letters for him to be directed to "Acadia, Yarmouth" Co.

Letters Received.

S. Morrison, 20th, \$7. Rev. W. H. Porter, \$1. J. M. Parker, Esq., 8th, \$33 00. M. Kinsman, 18th, \$4, and 21st ult., \$4. (omitted.) Rev. P. F. Murray, 13th, \$4. J. F. Masters, Esq., 19th, \$2. Rev. G. F. Miles, 20th. Rev. D. M. Welton, 22nd. Rev. E. M. Saunders, 21st. Rev. J. C. Morse, 19th. Rev. H. Angell, 16th. —Yes. Rev. S. B. Kempton, 23rd. E. Page, 21st, \$2, 1 sub.

General Intelligence.

Domestic.

SHAKESPEAREAN CELEBRATION.—Monday last being so fine, the people of Halifax felt no reluctance in accepting the invitation of His Worship the Mayor to suspend business, and make the occasion a general holiday. The programme arranged for the commemoration was carried out pretty fully. Flags were flying from many of the houses in the principal streets. At seven o'clock in the morning, the Volunteer Artillery came to the Parade and fired a salute of 52 guns, and the bells of St. Paul's Church rang a merry peal.

The procession was formed on the Parade at 10 o'clock. After the Shakespearean banner came the orator of the day—Hon. Joseph Howe,—supported on either side by F. W. Passow, and Walter Manning, Esqrs. Then came the Volunteer Artillery with six field pieces, the St. Georges Society, the North British and Highland Societies, the Caledonia Club and the Charitable Irish Society. The marshals were on horseback. The Halifax Police force in their uniform showed to good advantage. Three military and Volunteer Bands were in different parts of the procession. These, with the crowds of spectators, made it quite a stirring pageant. There were a large number dressed in full highland costume. The handsome banners of the different societies were gaily decked with wreaths of flowers. Most of the members, too, had floral decorations. The grand cavalcade proceeded through several of the streets to Temperance Hall.

His Excellency Major-General Doyle presided over the meeting there. Several members of the government and Judges were on the platform. The Hon. Joseph Howe delivered the Oration on the occasion, after which F. W. Passow, Esq., gave some readings from some of Shakespeare's plays. The procession then returned and proceeded to the south area of the Province building, in the centre of which His Excellency the Administrator of the Government planted an Oak tree to commemorate the occasion.

We regret to learn that an accident of a serious nature occurred just before the arrival of the procession at the Province Building. A little boy about 9 years of age, named Lucas, was at play on the balustrade of the stairs in the Province building, and fell over to the stone floor below fracturing his skull. We were informed that the poor little fellow died in the evening.

The Grand Lake Land Company's property was sold at Auction, on Wednesday last, and purchased by B. Wier, Esq., for £2,300. The Shubenacadie Canal property, was offered at the same time; but there being no advance on the upset price, £11,000, the property was not sold.

The steamer Caledonia, recently ran ashore near LaHave, was sold on Monday last, for \$1150! Messrs. P. Ross, R. Davis, J. King, A. Keith, jr., and Mr. McBean, were the purchasers. The cargo sold for \$600.

It is said that St. Luke's Church is to be enlarged by a chancel, and to be made the cathedral of the diocese.

The R. C. Bishop of Charleston, S. C., arrived in the Alpha from Bermuda last week, having previously run the blockade. It appears that the cathedral, private residence, and other property of the R. Catholic church amounting in value to near \$200,000 have been destroyed by the bombardment of that city. Not half-a-dozen men have been killed by the shot or shell which have been thrown into Charleston by the Federals.

The Halifax Free Library it is said will be ready for opening next week.

Little fortunes are being made by dealers in molasses. It is selling at 43 cents per gallon.

THE FLOWERS AND POULTRY SHOW, at Mason Hall during two or three days last week and on Monday last was patronized by a very large number of visitors. A fine collection of plants, and a great variety of pigeons and fowls were brought together for exhibition. In addition to these Mr. Downs had a beautiful young Deer, a Chinese Sheep and her three Lambs, a pair of Skye Terriers, a number of Monkeys, a case of Hungarian Squirrels and other curiosities.

One case contained a tamed Raccoon and another a "Happy Family," embracing a large Cat, two Rats and two Rabbits, all good specimens of their classes, and dwelling together in perfect harmony.

NATIONAL SCHOOL.—Mr. Joseph McLaughlan, recently from Ireland, has succeeded Mr. J. R. Willis as Principal of this institution. It is an important field of usefulness, and we shall be glad to hear of success attending Mr. McLaughlan's labors, and that he secures for himself the same honorable position as a teacher, and respect in scientific circles won by his predecessor.