

illies destitute of the Bible, visited 67 Roman Catholic families, all of whom accepted a tract, except one: conversed on personal religion or prayed with 951 families besides many individuals by the way side, and visited in all 2252 families. I have organized several Sabbath Schools, helped forward others which were in operation, visited and encouraged a number of day Schools gave one temperance address, and have laboured constantly to put down liquor drinking and the use of tobacco from one end of the County to the other.

Mr. R. C. who laboured six months in Lunenburg county writes "I have visited every settlement, with the exception of Clearland in this country, reaching with few exceptions, every family. Of the Society's publications, exclusive of Tracts I have distributed throughout the county over ten hundred; of tracts over twenty two thousand pages. Very few of the latter have been sold. In nearly every house in the county there is some printed truth as issued by the Society.

Mr. J. McR. colporteur in Pictou, Guysboro and Antigonish writes, "During the quarter I have travelled over a large portion of Antigonish Co., and parts of Pictou and Guysboro. I visited 329 Roman Catholic families. There is a wide field for usefulness in Guysboro Co."

Mr. C. L. C. colporteur in Colchester and Cumberland writes, I have spent the quarter just ended in the county of Cumberland. I have found it an interesting field for Colporteur labour. In consequence of not being able to explore the whole county, I devoted the larger portion of my time, to the most sparsely settled and destitute parts. I have explored pretty thoroughly a number of settlements, situate in remote corners of the county, where I found a considerable amount of moral and spiritual destitution. Most of the places that I visited have no resident minister and are only partially supplied with the preaching of the gospel. Many families are seldom visited—and some not at all—by ministers. This makes the visit of the colporteur more necessary and much more appreciated.

I found a few families without the word of God; several without any religious books, and a great many with an exceedingly small supply.

I made it a point to read and pray with nearly all the families in the destitute localities and urge upon them the claims of personal religion. I also held meetings in several places, and good attention and interest were manifested to the word spoken.

Books were purchased by many with pleasure and those who were not able to purchase received tracts and small books with expressions of gratitude, I visited several Sabbath Schools, and delivered an address to each. The Tract Society's publications are highly appreciated. Their circulation will undoubtedly produce a salutary effect.

One Saturday afternoon I visited a small settlement comprising thirteen families, I found many of them in a state of physical wretchedness and moral and spiritual destitution. I visited nearly all the families that afternoon, conversed, read, and prayed with them, and distributed small books and tracts gratuitously. On Sabbath afternoon, in company with the friend I was stopping with, I visited a family I had not found the day previous, in which one of the inmates a girl of sixteen was prostrated on a bed of sickness. I found quite a number of the neighbours assembled who had called to see the invalid. I embraced the opportunity at once of addressing all present, on the subject of personal religion. Marked attention was given, while I spoke of the freeness and fulness of the great salvation, and the willingness of the Saviour to save the chief of sinners, urging on them to accept without delay the offers of mercy. Some present seemed to feel the force of the truths presented, I asked for a Bible and found there was none in the house. I read from a small copy of the New Testament which I carried with me and after making a few comments thereon, engaged in prayer.

I then approached the bedside of the sick girl who was apparently on the verge of eternity. While I conversed with her she wept profusely. I found her extremely ignorant. She could not read and knew but little of the way of salvation, through a crucified and risen Saviour, and urged her to come to Jesus.

I felt thankful that in the Providence of God, I was permitted to visit this family and my earnest prayer to God was, that my efforts to lead this poor girl to the Saviour of sinners might be successful. The parents thanked me with tears in their eyes, for visiting them. It was the first visit of the kind they had ever received.

I visited a new settlement where I found the

inhabitants in indigent circumstances and quite destitute of religious books. They told me that during their eight years residence in the place, they had never received a visit from a minister of the gospel. As they were a good distance from a place of worship they seldom attended, some of them not at all. My visit to them was exceedingly acceptable, and I trust profitable to myself. I felt, when going from house to house, warning the careless, instructing the ignorant, and encouraging the feeble christian, that the work was truly blessed. I read, prayed, and conversed with the families and supplied every one of them by sale or grant with good books. They thanked me kindly for visiting them and invited me to come again."

It will be seen from these extracts, that the work of this society is not a mere book selling operation, undertaken or prosecuted for pecuniary gain. On the contrary while it aims to supply families and Sabbath Schools throughout the land with a pure religious literature at a low price, its great object and aim are to seek those living without the gospel, and in a spirit of christian love and benevolence; carry to them the message of salvation in the works of Baxter, Bunyan, Doddridge, Venn, and other kindred authors, striving by words of earnest counsel and exhortation, by reading the Scriptures and prayer to lead them to seek an interest in the Saviour.

During the year twelve Colporteurs have been employed in this province. A large portion of the more needy parts of it has been explored. Many families hitherto without the word of God have been supplied, the officers of the local Bible Societies, kindly furnishing copies of the Scriptures for that purpose. Many without any religious readings or the means to purchase, have had a suitable volume presented to them. Prayer has been offered at many a fireside for the first time. Tens of thousands of tracts full of soul-saving gospel truth have been distributed. Thus this society co-operates with the ordained ministry by means of this combined agency and the personal prayerful efforts of christian men. It is a most important Auxiliary in the work of Home Evangelization.

Will it not commend itself to all christians and Philanthropists?

ALEX. McBEAN.

For the Christian Messenger.

Fasting and Prayer.

Dear Brother,—

I am very happy to learn from Dr. Tupper that I had misapprehended his views on the subject of fasting. Doubtless a man may injure his health by fasting or by praying, or by going to meeting or by working, and most especially by eating and drinking. But no sane man would think of abandoning all these exercises because they can be abused. Not many months ago a brother in the ministry made an attempt to fast. He took no breakfast on a fast day, preached, and when dinner time came, he could not eat, for pain and sickness, and was rendered quite ill by the process. He naturally inferred that fasting for him at least was not beneficial. It reminded me of an attempt I once made to take exercise when pursuing the study of Latin, and Greek. I held on for weeks without exercise, until I could stand it no longer, then went and split wood with all my might, as long as I could stand that. The result was so deleterious to my health that I did not recover from it for weeks. But had I inferred that exercise might be proper for some constitutions but not for mine—or had I persevered in my absurd mode of taking exercise, I would undoubtedly have been a dead man long ago.—The frequency and duration of our periods of fasting and prayer, should be regulated wisely, and by circumstances and with reference to the command, "Be ye holy, for I am holy." My esteemed and venerated uncle will, I presume admit that this command is more binding than "Thou shalt not kill." Many cases may be conceived of, in which it would be proper to sacrifice our own lives and that of others. There is no conceivable exception to the command, "Be ye holy."

But I can say nothing more appropriate than what is contained in a private letter received the other day from a beloved brother in the ministry, which I enclose. You may suppress the name—as it would hardly be fair to publish it.

Yours truly,

S. T. RAND.

B—, Nov. 24th, 1865.

MY DEAR BROTHER,
I read your last communication in the Christian Messenger, with much pleasure and, I hope,

with some profit. Your remarks are timely and I am glad that you published them. I think that there is much cause for deep humiliation,—for we have deeply revolted from the Lord. And if fasting and prayer would help to produce a change in us for the better, we ought not to neglect either. I believe there is much scepticism among our people in respect to the duty and utility of fasting. Resolutions are so framed sometimes as to omit all mention of fasting, and only in general terms call to humiliation. This is well, humiliation is good; but it would also be well to specify one of the means of producing, or at least of expressing and also increasing it. "What you say as to the utility of private fasting is, I believe, correct. In my earlier religious life I used to observe such seasons, and I think, with profit; but for several years past I have not done so. I am sure I have lost by the neglect. We are disposed enough to pamper the flesh; the hard lessons of self-denial are thought to be unnecessary. We perhaps think we will make good enough Christians without them. Indeed some will go so far, in order to justify their neglect of fasting, as to say that it is a relic of Popery. What may have been the abuses of fasting under a corrupt system, Protestants, and especially Baptists, ought to return to a practice recognized in Scripture and practised by our Great Teacher and Exemplar. I shall endeavour to reform my practice in the matter and, I desire to do so in everything wherein I have failed to do my duty.

I wish you to remember me by name before the Lord; I need Divine grace to its utmost capacity;—without Christ and his righteousness I am forever undone. Do pray for me. I believe God is with you—I like the spirit you have manifested on public occasions, especially for a year or two past. We want the Spirit of Christ much.

I send enclosed one dollar which you will please accept as a slight acknowledgement of my desire to see that course you have adopted, as to support in your work, successfully carried out.

I am, Dear Brother, &c.

For the Christian Messenger.

The School Law.

MR. EDITOR,—

Will you allow me the privilege of expressing my opinion of the present School Law.—I gave my humble opinion on the Bill before it became law, through the columns of the Messenger, and otherwise, in the forlorn hope that perhaps even at the eleventh hour its friends might take warning and so amend it that it would be acceptable to the friends of Education in general. But the warning was not heeded. The Bill passed and is now the law of the land. And did we judge from the flattering reports published in the papers we might think it working well. But is it so? "All is not gold that glitters" never was more verified. There need be no stronger evidence of the detestation of the present School Bill, than the two last elections.

Politicians say it is Confederation and continue to manufacture a little capital out of it, but they know better, Confederation has very little to do with it. The fate of government rests on Education. Confederation must take place as a necessity, and is only a question of time, but the School Act must be so amended this session of the Legislature as there will be no just cause of complaint. There are two courses to pursue, either of which I think will give general satisfaction:

One is by indirect taxation, the Government paying all Teachers. Or otherwise let the Government allowance be as at present and to meet the deficiency let their be an equal tax on every source of income, exempt no one. Let all be taught and every dollar taxed to pay for teaching. I had a conversation on the subject of taxation with a gentleman who took a prominent part in framing the Bill. He was not willing to go the length of taxing everybody but would exempt Clergymen and School Teachers.

Now, Mr. Editor, I am satisfied that to legislate for one part of the community at the expense of the other part, will have a bad tendency and in the end injure the parties intended to be benefitted. The tax on either Clergymen or Teachers would be light and trifling in comparison with what they had to pay under the old law to educate their own children. The Farmers of Nova Scotia are taxed for all their real estate and twice over for some of their personal property, as I will prove. An appraiser goes round and appraises the stock: cows \$20, oxen \$75 or \$80, other stock in proportion. This takes place in the Fall, the fodder for the support of the stock through the winter, is appraised at

the same time, at a market value, say hay at \$8, wo tons at least to each cow, makes \$36; eight tollars more than the cow will sell for in the Spring, allowing the manure to pay the trouble of feeding.

Could the framers of that Bill think that it would be received with favour by the Farmers, however much they may prize education, when they see others with incomes of thousands of dollars and rich in Bank Stock exempted? They should have known the temper of the people better. There will of course be individual cases of hardship when the best has been done, particularly in poor and scattered districts but let the Bill be amended so as to make it equitable and I feel satisfied three fourths of the people will hail it with delight.

Respectfully yours,
A COLCHESTER FARMER.

SUPREME COURT.

The Case of John C. Douglass, the mate of the "Zero."

We have had another step taken in this difficult and perplexing case. On Wednesday last the Judges gave judgment in open court. The differences existing in the views taken by the several Judges do not remove any of the difficulties by which it is surrounded. The judgments all indicated a vast amount of labor and research in endeavouring to come to a correct legal decision. The citation of precedents and reference to the books occupied much time. To give them in detail would not only occupy too large an amount of space for our columns, but would have very little interest for the general reader. There were five Judges present, His Honor the Chief Justice, the Judge in Equity Johnston, Judges Dodd, DesBarres, and Wilkins. The following summary of the judgments given is from the Chronicle:—

His Honor the Chief Justice decided that there had been sufficient evidence against the mate to warrant his conviction by the jury, and therefore held that the finding of the verdict ought not to be disturbed. Judges Dodd and DesBarres took the same view, and pursued much the same line of argument as did the Chief Justice. Judge Johnston, while concurring generally with His Honor the Chief Justice and Judges Dodd and DesBarres, observed, that in his opinion the finding of the jury, as regards the mate, was a mistaken one, but they being judges of the facts, and having passed upon them, it was not competent for the court to quash the verdict. Judge Wilkins dissented, and read a lengthy opinion in course of which he reviewed the evidence adduced at the trial, and commented upon the same very extensively. He argued that the verdict was not sustained by the evidence, and consequently ought to be set aside. He maintained that there was nothing in the testimony, or in the conduct of the mate, prior or subsequent to the homicide, inconsistent with his innocence.

After the delivery of these judgments the Chief Justice directed that Douglass should be brought into court on Thursday at eleven o'clock for the purpose of receiving his sentence.

On Thursday morning the court-house was densely crowded long before the hour named; on the stairs and in the halls were hundreds who failed to get admission to the court room.

At the hour named Douglas was placed in the dock; the Judges were in their place on the Bench. The prothonotary proceeded to put the usual question to the prisoner, asking him if he had anything to say why sentence of Death should not be passed upon him. In reply to which Douglass made a statement, of which the following, as given in the Reporter, is as nearly as possible a verbatim report:

THE MATE'S STATEMENT.

I have a just and truthful cause why sentence of death should not be passed upon me, because I am perfectly innocent of the crime, of which I have been wrongfully accused. On that calm Sabbath morning when the horrid deed was committed I was in my bed asleep, and had no knowledge of it whatever, until I was called by the German Bill, who said to me, "Get up, mate, the cook has killed the captain." I got up, and in excitement said, "What, have they been fighting?" He made me no reply; went away, returned a few minutes after, and said, "The steward wants you in the cabin." I went there, and heard the whistling noise. (Here the mate imitated the noise.) I saw the body of the captain in his berth stretched between the logs of the steward, his eyes glaring in his head. I was paralyzed at the sight and did not know what to do. I went to my room, and went on my knees. I had not been long there, when the steward came, and demanded of me to help him to throw the body overboard. I said I would do nothing of the kind; I said how could you commit such a murder? He said he was determined to do it. He thrust in his hand, which was covered with blood, to clutch at me, but its fearful appearance appalled me, and caused me to tremble still more. Before the German had called me, a dreadful fear came over me, on account of the great stillness which prevailed. I refused to assist the cook, when he went on deck. I,