

For the Christian Messenger.

British American Book & Tract Society.

The Executive Committee of the British American Book and Tract Society, deeply sensible of the great importance of the work committed to them, and recognising the truth that God's blessing alone can make that work successful and effectual in the salvation of souls, do therefore Resolve;—

That God's people throughout our land be requested to offer up earnest prayer in behalf of the Society, in public and private on Sabbath, Dec. 1st,—that Divine guidance may be granted in all its counsels and operations, that the Holy Spirit may be poured out on its officers and laborers, and that the truth disseminated and the efforts put forth may be accompanied with saving influences.

Signed on behalf of the Executive Committee,

- M. B. Almon, President.
F. Almon,
R. Murray, Publication
J. McMurray, Committee.
J. E. Guicher, Committee.

Pastors are respectfully requested to read the above to their congregations and give it a place in the devotional exercises of the day.

Christian Messenger.

HALIFAX, NOVEMBER 20, 1867.

Day of Prayer.

The first Thursday in December has for several years past been observed by the Baptist Churches of these Provinces as a Day of Special Prayer for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. At the last session of the Convention the same observance was again recommended, and we doubt not it will be adopted and acted upon. If it be, we believe the united petitions of those who pray for Zion will be heard, and the blessing will descend, specially on them, and generally on all. The small additions to the churches, the crying necessity for ministerial labor, and the prevalence of error and formalism, present topics for very serious reflection. It is only by Divine interposition and gracious visitation that we may look for satisfactory results in the salvation of souls. Let there be a readiness to come before God and comply with the conditions, and the blessing will assuredly come.

Thursday the 18th inst.,—the public Day of Thanksgiving for temporal blessing—may very properly be made a precursor of the Day of Prayer, on the following Thursday, for spiritual blessings on the churches.

Educational Matters.

Money invested in education brings large returns. Often larger than the same amount employed in any other manner. The true economy is becoming more highly appreciated than it was formerly. It is unfortunate that there are still some in almost every district, who have not yet learned this. They have not arrived at the stage of enlightenment to distinguish the elements of real value in a community. Their want of appreciation of the blessings of education deprives their children, more or less, of these true riches. Although abundant provision is now made for all, and education is placed within the reach of all, these persons manifest little concern in this matter, and if they have children of their own, are careless about their regularity of attendance or the progress they make. The consequence is, the average attendance at the school is lower than it might be, and thereby the amount received from the Province in the Section is proportionally diminished, and their ability to obtain the services of good teachers is also diminished.

The admirable arrangements in our present School Law provide, that, only work performed shall be paid for, so that the provincial funds are not appropriated as a sort of premium on the indifference of the people as formerly, but as a reward for regularity of attendance and for efficiency in the instruction given.

The efforts of a good teacher in visiting parents, looking after the absent children, and encouraging the poor and weak lambs of the flock, improve the attendance, and are really of as much benefit to the section as labor performed in the School-room.

The machinery of the School Law demands continual activity and perseverance in its various agents—teachers, trustees, inspectors, and Superintendent.

It is highly gratifying to learn from time to time that so much is being effected in the various parts of the province for giving the best possible facilities for the education of the

people. Improved School-houses and furniture are appearing everywhere. Halifax, for several years past, has been behind several of our larger towns and villages in its school equipments. Since, however, Free Schools have been provided, and better arrangements made, the number attending the schools has greatly increased; and we presume the regularity in their attendance, which was formerly very defective, is improved.

The new School in Brunswick Street is now in full operation and although there are upwards of 500 pupils in the several departments, yet a large number of names are on the books as applicants to be received as soon as vacancies occur. We spent a few minutes in this school a week or two since, and were much pleased with the busy scene presented.

The staff of teachers consists of Messrs Parsons and Dakin, and Misses Layton, Barnaby, Shiels, Bennet, Sterns, and Ryan.

It has been found necessary to get further accommodation, and we understand that the basement of the Methodist Church has been hired for this purpose.

If all the youth of our city were enjoying equal advantages to those attending that excellent school, we might anticipate the most satisfactory results.

New Brunswick is crying out for a School Law, similar to ours. The following from the St. John Religious Intelligencer under the caption "Required—a new School Law" will show how our neighbours look across the Bay and admire this one of our institutions. Their present law is very much like ours was formerly:

What the Province now wants is a School Law embracing compulsory assessment for the part raised by the people; FREE SCHOOLS throughout the Province, with Graded Schools in all localities admitting them.

What the people of this Province now most need and must have, is FREE SCHOOLS. We, of course, would make the part to be raised by the people as light as the finances of the Province will admit; but we would not support the schools wholly by indirect means. The people should have a direct moneyed interest in their support, which would give them a greater care in their management.

We shall look for action in this matter during the first session of our local legislature. No doubt the Government will turn its attention to this subject, and be prepared with a measure equal to the present necessity. It is not our intention at present to discuss the details of the required School Bill; but we shall not be satisfied with anything less than Compulsory Assessment and Free Schools. All will admit that the native talent of the Province is quite equal to that of any other part of Her Majesty's dominions, and that we have the means to support a sufficient number of schools and institutions to educate thoroughly the children of the Province. Why then should we any longer continue a system which, while we are spending a sufficient amount—or nearly so—to educate all, yet not more than half the children in the country are receiving an education? The School Laws of this Province remind us of the old method of constructing roads and bridges. The roads were carried over the highest hills and through the deepest valleys, while the money then granted, if judiciously and wisely expended, would have built them on an almost perfect plain. A similar remark might be made with regard to the unwise and expensive method of constructing bridges. The same amount now expended will build bridges lasting, in some cases five and six times as long as those built in former times. So, to a very great extent, it is with our present school system; we pay nearly enough, with a proper school law, to educate all; yet we come far short of that result.

We do not wish, for a moment, to cheapen our school system by a reduction of teachers' salaries; on the contrary, we would rather wish to see them raised. But while we would pay teachers well for their labors—for certainly none are more deserving than the faithful, competent teachers—they should have plenty to do; thus giving them an opportunity to earn their money. Give us a school system then, which, instead of keeping teachers in a sleepy, listless mood over some ten or twelve pupils, they shall have from twenty to thirty, thereby giving life and animation to their work. We repeat, give our teachers plenty to do, and pay them well for their labor.

We rejoice that this Province is to be accommodated so extensively by the "iron horse," that mines and minerals are fast becoming a source of profit to the Province; that, in a word, we have every where signs of progress and prosperity. But notwithstanding all these, a far greater blessing would have been conferred upon the people of this Province had there been prepared and introduced, say twenty years ago, a good school system based on direct assessment and free schools.

We hope that not only will the members of the Legislature take this matter up in earnest, but that they will be "backed up" by both press and people; so that ere long we will have a School Law, by the aid of which we will be found making equal, if not superior progress, scholastically, to that of any of the neighboring States or Provinces.

The following document appeared first in the Morning Chronicle. Although it was published without signatures, yet it is regarded as genuine. We give it a place in

our columns as a piece of N. S. political history. Our doing so will not be taken as any endorsement, or otherwise, of the sentiments it contains:

At a meeting of the Members of the House of Assembly, in the Assembly Room, in the Provincial Building at Halifax, on the 7th day of November, 1867, the following DECLARATION was unanimously agreed to and ordered to be published:—

We, the representatives of Nova Scotia having assembled for the purpose of constructing an Administration, and having effected that object, cannot separate without making known to our constituents our unanimous and unalterable determination to use every lawful and constitutional means to extricate the Province from the operation of the BRITISH NORTH AMERICA ACT, the passage of which, in the Imperial Legislature, was obtained by falsehood, fraud and deception.

We shall take the earliest opportunity of informing the Queen and her Parliament that the people of Nova Scotia were systematically and perseveringly prevented from expressing their will of Confederation until after the Imperial statute was on the subject enacted, and we shall respectfully insist that the Act is invalid as to this Province, because it subjects her people, without their consent and against their will, to a Legislature on which it assumes to confer a power of taxation which the Imperial Parliament itself does not constitutionally possess.

We shall, in the name and on behalf of the people, firmly reject Confederation, and entertain no apprehension that the Imperial authorities will attempt, or even desire, to coerce the loyal people of Nova Scotia into a political alliance to which they have manifested an invincible repugnance.

We have observed with indignation the insult offered to the people, by the ex-Lieutenant Governor, Sir W. F. Williams, with a Council who never possessed the confidence of the people whose policy was emphatically condemned at the recent elections, whose enforced resignations had been tendered, and were simply holding office until the nomination of their successors, in having gazetted a number of appointments to the Legislative Council, as the pretended testamentary, or posthumous work, of a former defunct Administration. This extraordinary step must have been taken under the authority of the Canadian Executive, as the moribund Administration of Nova Scotia would not have dared, on their own responsibility, to perpetrate such an outrage on the rights of the people. We consider these irregular and insulting appointments an act of tyranny, and an earnest of the kind of respect that would be paid to the wishes and feelings of Nova Scotia, were they weak enough to suffer themselves to be defrauded of their constitutional rights, forced into an unjust Confederation, and subjected to the oligarchical despotism of an irresponsible Executive Council in Canada.

It is our desire that the new Administration shall immediately communicate to the Imperial authorities, the facts and details of their offensive proceeding, and respectfully demand its reversal, and the dismissal from the Council of men who have obviously been selected for the express purpose of obstructing the People's House in their efforts to reject Confederation, by creating discord between the upper and Lower Branches of the Legislature.

We in no way impeach the prudence or patriotism of the members elect in having resolved to attend in the Dominion Parliament; but while we have confidence that they will not designedly compromise the rights of the people of Nova Scotia, we nevertheless feel bound to protest against their acceptance of their seats, or any action they may take, in that Legislature, being in any manner construed into an acquiescence, on the part of this Province, in the obligatory force of the BRITISH NORTH AMERICA ACT, as regards the rights of the people.

In conclusion we recommend the Executive Council to advise an early meeting of the Legislature, in order that no time may be lost in disposing of Confederation, and restoring the constitution of the Province to its former efficiency.

By order of the meeting.

Musical.

The New York Musical Gazette—one of the most progressive of the musical periodicals, and an authority deserving of consideration, gives a very decided opinion against the mode of conducting the singing in churches which has so much prevailed of late in the United States. It says:

"In one respect we have made an 'advance backwards' during the past few years. So much attention is being paid to private instruction that there is danger of losing sight of that which is really the most valuable characteristic of music—its social nature. The introduction of fancy quartette choirs, making the congregation listeners instead of singers, has the same effect. Now this tendency is a very injurious one, and it should speedily be averted. To this end there should be a general reviving of our old friend the Singing School. Churches should interest themselves to see that their young people have opportunities for the practice of music socially."

"This important cause cannot be expected to prosper until influential people, who are not especially musical, show more interest in it. The leading men in a church are apt to suppose that this matter will take care of itself, and if the young people want a Singing School they will raise one. This is not sufficient. Neither is it enough to merely be willing to contribute their dollars to the fund when there is a deficiency,

Something is wanted besides dollars. Sympathy is wanted. An appreciation of the necessity of the work is wanted, so that if the singers themselves become indifferent and neglectful of their own improvement, the ministers and other leaders of society shall take hold and say "This thing must not go by default; singing schools and singing societies must be maintained, for the good of the people and of the church."

It is pleasing to find first class musicians returning to more correct views in relation to church music. In all our congregations we want more singing. All the people should join heartily with the choir or the organ or both as the case may be. It is folly to say they cannot. We know they can, and they will if proper preliminary steps are taken, to enable them to sing with the spirit and with the understanding.

Ritualistic Follies.

Jordan water is highly esteemed by certain ecclesiastics for church purposes, but a greater absurdity than that is said to have been recently perpetrated in London. The following notice of it is from one of our exchanges:

SACRED CORN AND GRAPES.—The Pan-Anglican Synod has capped the climax of its folly by an act that calls for the ridicule of all sensible men. In order to add solemnity to their communion service, the bread was made of Bethlehem corn, and the wine from Jerusalem grapes! We are not aware that any peculiar sacredness attaches to the corn and grapes of Palestine; and yet this is the only inference to be drawn from the action of the Bishops. What right have English Christians to sneer at the "sacred cow" of the Hindoos, if their own bishops display such folly as this?"

Y. M. C. A. LECTURES AT TEMPERANCE HALL.—The first Lecture of the Fifteenth Course before the Young Men's Christian Association will be delivered (D. V.) on Tuesday evening next, Nov. 26th, at Temperance Hall, by the Rev. Dr. Cramp. Subject, "Fifty years ago. Reminiscences and Contrasts."

Chair to be taken at Eight o'clock. Season Tickets are ready, price to Members 25 cents, non-Members 30 cents.

NEWS SUMMARY.

Among the matters of chief moment, which occupy the attention of the Parliament of the New Dominion, now in session at Ottawa, are two, which although probably not of deeper interest than some others, are nevertheless deserving of special notice.—The one is the Great Intercolonial Railway between Halifax and Quebec, and which under the Imperial Act of Union requires to be commenced without delay. It has indeed been already begun on this Eastern end, and the work is now progressing on the Nova Scotia and New Brunswick part of the line. The question is yet to be decided by the General Government, under the sanction of Parliament, what is to be the exact location of the line from its point of junction with the St. John and Shediac Railroad, until it reaches the Quebec line on the southern side of the St. Lawrence. The choice lies between what is called the centre route, up the valley of the St. John River, and the northern or what is usually called Major Robinson's line. The first of them is, we believe, considerably the shortest, and will better accommodate the southern parts of New Brunswick, but it would bring the road in certain parts, much nearer to the borders of the State of Maine, and leave the route much more exposed to interruption under certain contingencies. The northern line would of course be much more acceptable to the towns and settlements on the Gulf shores and on the Bay of Chaleur. It appears also that the city of Quebec is most favorable to this line. In a military point of view it is no doubt clearly preferable. The government will no doubt exercise their best judgment and decide accordingly. The other matter to which we referred, is one that deeply concerns the future of the New Dominion, namely, the admission of New Colonies and Territories into the general Confederation. It is said that both Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island are gradually becoming reconciled to the Union. Both British Columbia and the Red River settlement on Lake Winnipeg, are, it appears, desirous of joining the new Government. The chief difficulty at present lies in the monopoly enjoyed by the Great Hudson's Bay Fur Company, who are proprietors under English grants of long standing, of the vast territories, called Ruperts Land, extending westward from Lake Superior to the Rocky Mountains, and northward to the frozen ocean. In this huge area of thousands of square miles, are contained the growing settlement of Red River, and the great and fertile valley of the Saskatchewan River at present totally uninhabited, except by a few tribes of wander-

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