

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

OTTAWA CORRESPONDENCE.

Mr. Editor,—

Sir,—The chief events connected with the action of Parliament since my last letter have been Mr. McKenzie's motion condemnatory of the North Shore Route for the Intercolonial Railway. It was discussed in the Commons at great length and called forth speeches from most of the leading men on both sides. But the fact that the road is already under contract, and that the route has the sanction of the British Government, and the B. guarantee being afforded on the basis of a North Shore Route, was an overwhelming argument, and one that could not be gainsayed. Had it remained an open question at this time of day, the result of the vote of the Commons would probably have been very different to what it was. The debate lasted all Monday night and till 2 A. M. of the next morning, and resulted in favour of an amendment moved by Mr. Cartright, virtually negating the motion, as follows: for the Amendment, 114; against, 28. The Nova Scotia members present, except Mr. Carmichael, voting with the majority.

On Tuesday Sir John A. McDonald introduced his new Election Bill, which obtained a first reading. Bills are usually introduced in Canada by merely reading the titles, and therefore no idea can be formed of their contents, except from verbal explanations offered at the time. The franchise of voters for members of the House of Commons, it is proposed to fix at \$200; or a tenancy of five years under a written Lease at not less than \$20 per annum, or an annual income of \$400. In cities owners of Real Estate valued at \$400, and tenants at a yearly rental of \$30. In towns and incorporated villages; owners of Real Estate worth \$300, and tenants paying \$20 are entitled to be voters. A Commission of three persons to be appointed in each Constituency, paid by Government, to prepare lists open to revision at a future day and the whole subject to appeal to a Judge of a County Court, or Circuit Court; except in Nova Scotia, and there to Revising Barristers. Qualifications of members to be \$2000. Such is the outline of the Bill. The reason given for it not being based on assessment is, that the machinery for securing assessments belongs exclusively to the Local Governments, and could not therefore by any possibility be made uniform in all the Provinces. The Elections are to be held on a given day, but not simultaneously as in Nova Scotia. This may be the English method but the Nova Scotia plan of holding them simultaneously, will by many be thought a decided improvement. Whether the new English Statute for trying contested Elections is to be introduced, does not yet appear. Probably not—as no reference was made to the subject. To a question if voting would be by ballot the answer was in the negative. But if the Australian method of the registered voter passing through a hall unattended and secretly depositing the ballot into a box, were arranged for, there are many persons who would prefer the voting by Ballot.

The evening of Tuesday the 18th, was occupied in the Commons, in a debate upon a Resolution introduced by Hon. Mr. Dorion, having for its object instructions to the Government to take measures for renewing a Reciprocity Treaty. The motion was opposed by McKenzie, and supported by Mr. Holton. Mr. Galt delivered a very animated speech covering a large area, by many supposed to be in whole, or in part the speech he intended to deliver a fortnight ago, when he moved for the correspondence touching the Fenian raids. He declared himself opposed to the motion, but took occasion to enlarge on the future of the Dominion, and to foreshadow the Independence of Canada as merely a question of time, but admitting of no uncertainty. He affected to deprecate the event, but those who heard the speech, hardly gave him credit for sincerity. Malcolm Cameron who followed him thought his remarks ill-timed, and ill-advised. He could see no practical benefits to result from this line of discussion. Canada was in no condition to claim or maintain a statute of independence, and such remarks as were indulged in by the member for Sherbrook, were, in his opinion, both unwise and untimely. The subject of retaliatory legislation was condemned by most of the speakers, and strongly by McKenzie, whilst Mr. Gibbs and others were willing to go in for a protective policy. The motion, it was proposed by Mr. Blake, should be withdrawn but Sir George Cartier refused to allow it and a division was pressed. The members stood

for the motion 111, against 10. The Nova Scotia members many of them voting in the minority. Considerable business is despatched in the Senate, for the most part in a quiet way. As yet there have been no evening sessions. The style of debate there is markedly different from that which characterizes the Commons. The speeches are short and the reasonings close, the speakers indulging in far less latitude by way of illustration. A good many Bills have been introduced this Session into the Senate, and have already been sent to the Commons for concurrence.

The most important subject before the Legislature, the one which seems to command the most attention, is that of BANKING. Mr. Rose, Finance Minister has laid upon the tables of the Commons, a series of Resolutions on the subject, and they are the order of the day for Friday, to-morrow, the 21st May. Groups may be seen in the halls of the Legislature, in the Committee Rooms, at Hotels and elsewhere in close and warm discussion, and if you approach, ten to one, but the subject, you will find is that of Rose's Bank Policy. It is very difficult to form any opinion at present, as to the success the measure is likely to meet with, but if I should hazard an opinion, it would be unfavorable. The Opposition is likely to prove formidable in both Houses. More petitions have poured in, denouncing the proposed change of Bank Legislation than upon all other subjects before Parliament. If the Bankers present an unbroken phalanx, the Bill to be introduced in accordance with the Resolutions cannot pass, nor indeed the Resolutions themselves. But the danger, if any, now seems to be, that the Government may so modify their measure as to win the Bankers over, or a large portion of them, to their side; and if so then the public may really be the sufferers. The "Toronto Globe" and "Leader," never before known, it is said, to be on the same side of a question, or rarely, are both arrayed against the Government Bill. This, of course, is not the place to discuss its merits, and yet your readers cannot fail to be interested in a matter so vitally touching the great interests of the Dominion.

The death of one of Speaker Cauchon's children having called him home to Quebec, the chair of the Senate has been filled temporarily, in the meantime, by the Hon. John Ross formerly a speaker of the Legislative Council of Canada.

The Mayor of Ottawa died rather suddenly last Sunday morning. Mr. Friel was a Roman Catholic, and stood high in the estimation of his fellow citizens. He entertained a party at dinner on the previous Sunday, among whom was Archbishop Connolly, and other persons—and within a week he was no more. Mrs. Friel gave birth to a child the day after his death, and has been dangerously ill ever since and still remains, it is said, in a very critical condition.

Last evening the Wesleyan choir gave a Concert at the Skating Rink, proceeds to be devoted to a fund for providing an organ for their chapel. On Sunday morning the Rev. Mr. Punshon is expected to preach for them, and on Wednesday evening next he delivers his lecture on Macaulay. Five weeks have now transpired since the Session opened, and yet it seems as if Parliament was only on the threshold of business. The Banking Resolutions, the Bankruptcy, or Insolvency Bill as it is called, the Court of Appeal Bill, the Election Bill, the Nova Scotia subsidy, the Newfoundland admission scheme, not to speak of the North West Territory subject, are all yet undisposed of and untouched. It looks just now as if the Session must necessarily occupy the whole of the month of June. The Criminal Law Assimilation too is before Parliament, but little progress, however, has as yet been made with it.

A Bill to fix the maximum rate of interest at eight per cent has been introduced by Government, but making compulsory payment not more than six has been introduced by Mr. Rose the Finance Minister. This, by the Ontario section of members, is considered retrograde legislation. They have had the English Law on interest, or substantially so in operation and will show some resistance. But Lower Canada is prepared, it is said, to enforce Usury Laws in their most penal form. A good many persons will probably be found objecting to Banks taking as high as eight per cent.

The weather here has been dark, cold and wet for nearly a fortnight past, and vegetation is slow and backward.

OTTAWA.

May 20th, 1869.

Wherever Christ is a priest for redemption, he is a prince for dominion; wherever he is a saviour, there he is a ruler; where he is a fountain of happiness, there he is a fountain of holiness; where he is a redeemer, there he is a refiner; wherever he takes a burden from the back, he lays a yoke upon the neck.

For the Christian Messenger.

The following nicely-written School Essay, by Miss S. J. Campbell, one of the pupils of the Sydney Academy was read at the late Examination. It will awaken in many minds pleasing reminiscences of former days.

THE OLD SCHOOL BELL.

Oh! cloud of years, how ye roll back and let the bright scenes of long ago rise up and shine through the golden haze of memory, as the chimes of the old school bell are borne on the wild winds to my ear.

I seem again to hear, as in days gone by, those peals ringing out so cheerily in the still morning air and almost startling us, as we wended slowly along the road which lay checkered with golden patches by the sunlight that came slanting down through the trees.

Ah! those early, sunbright mornings in budding Spring,—can they ever be forgotten? Those mornings when the sun climbed the eastern hills in all his unclouded glory, and the first sweet notes of the robin caused us to linger forgetfully by the warning voice of the old school bell. What blithe, joyous spirits that old school bell gathered together on those mornings now long since past! Brows all unclouded by care, and bright with the golden gleam of the hopes of youth,—in fancy's magic glass I seem to see them now as I saw them then:

"Bright lips too bright to wither,—
Warm hearts too warm to die."

But alas! how swiftly those days glided on, as, one by one, faces were missed from their accustomed places, and voices wanting that were wont to make the play-ground ring with uproarious joy. And now all this has passed away like a dream, and naught but the remembrance is left. And sadly I ask: Where are all those familiar faces that the old school bell was wont to assemble on those diamond-like mornings of long ago? No answer comes: but as the wild winds of drear November howl through the leafless trees and in mockery toss the dead leaves that strew the withered grass, the sound of the old school bell is borne along with its rude blast, and its deep, monotonous voice seems to say:

"Gone! gone! forever gone are those who, in life's sunny morn, sported in careless glee or responded with bounding steps to my call. Some have wandered far away over the stormy seas to those bright lands of which they dreamed in their youth; but they faded beneath their brilliant skies and now the perfumed breath of those sunny climes wanders softly through the vines that, heavy with the purple vintage, throw a kindly shade over their quiet graves. Others, buoyant with hope and life, sought a home on the wide, pathless sea. But their gallant bark returned no more to gladden the weary eyes that vainly watched for their coming: for, deep amid the coral groves, they rest in a dreamless slumber, all unmindful of the wild storms that rave above their head. And near us, lying in the lonely churchyard, where the long grass waves in Summer and the wild birds first sing in Spring, are those who fell asleep among the flowers of June; and my loud peal may not break their peaceful slumber."

And the old school bell's voice dies away as it murmurs the sad refrain: Gone! gone! forever gone!

SYRUS J. CAMPBELL.

Sydney Academy, April 22nd, 1869.

For the Christian Messenger.

A NEW BAPTIST MEETING HOUSE IN MELVERN SQUARE, WILMOT.

was opened for public worship on Lord's day the 16th inst.

The Building is 45 feet in length, and 34 in width, with 20 feet posts, and a neat end gallery. It is computed to seat about 480 persons. It is finished in good style, without and within, with a tower, and at a cost of about \$2,344; and is furnished with a neat sofa, and other respectable furniture, and also with a fine Cabinet Organ.

The ladies deserve much credit for their zeal and energy in defraying a considerable portion of the expenses by a Knitting Circle and Tea Meetings. They would gratefully acknowledge the generosity of the Hon. Dr. Parker, of Halifax, in supplying the Pulpit with a superb Bible and Hymn Book.

Several Ministers who were invited, were, by various circumstances, prevented from attending.

The first prayer was offered by Rev. Obed Parker, suitable portions of Scripture were read by the Pastor, and, at his request, the opening or Dedictory Sermon—highly appropriate and impressive—was preached by Rev. W. H. Porter, from Psalm lxxii. 15, and the second prayer was offered by Rev. H. Saunders. An Address was then delivered to the Church and congregation by the Pastor.

Through the favor of Providence the weather was fine, and the attendance was large. Great seriousness prevailed throughout the services. The pews were furnished with small Hymn Books; and the music, which was good, was enlivened by congregational singing. Professor Gates very kindly officiated at the Organ.

There was service again in the afternoon, when the House was, as in the morning, well filled; and the exercises were solemn and interesting.

May this laudable and successful effort to provide suitable accommodation for the people in that region to attend the public worship of God, be graciously attended with rich, abundant, and lasting blessings!—Communicated by Rev. C. Tapper.

Aylesford, May 18th, 1869.

For the Christian Messenger.

COW BAY, CAPE BRETON.

MAY 18TH, 1869.

Dear Bro. Selden,—

Some three or four years ago, the Rev. J. F. Keimpton, who was then laboring here a part of the time, under the directions of the H. M. B., was the honored instrument in God's hand of establishing quite an interest in the cause of religion. He was the first minister to preach the Gospel at Cow Bay Mines. The people gladly received the message. Some, upon whose minds impressions of religion were made, at that time, have not to this day forgotten them. As a carpenter's shop was the only resort for preaching, Bro. K. put forth laudable efforts for securing a more suitable place in which to worship. After a site was obtained and partial arrangements made for building, Bro. K., in the providence of God, was called to labor with the Church at Margaree. There being but a few Baptists in this locality, nothing further was done, to carry into effect the plans of Bro. K., till last summer, when God in his wisdom, I trust, directed my footsteps hither. A part of my time has been spent, with this people. The small company of believers were revived. Some were added to our number. Happy in the Saviour's love we could say from the heart, "Salvation is of the Lord."

The hall in which we hold our meetings being used for almost every purpose, we felt the need of some place consecrated to God, where we might assemble, to raise our united cries for the return of the "Holy Dove." This was all the more necessary when taking into account the growing interest in religious matters. As times were hard, it seemed like fanaticism to undertake the erection and completion of an expensive building. Expecting, however, "great things from God," we attempted "great things for God."

And when all our own strength was expended, we naturally looked abroad for help. Our thoughts first centered upon the Metropolis and thither I went for this purpose. And now you will oblige, by allowing me in behalf of the people of Cow Bay, through the columns of your paper, to sincerely thank the friends of Halifax for the tangible proof of their kindness and generosity exhibited, in aiding us so largely, when greatly needed.

Owing to the depressed state of business, added to the facts that repairs and improvements, in the Granville Street Church, were in prospect; and that the members of the North Baptist Church were taxed to the utmost of their ability, endeavoring to cancel a large debt upon their new place of worship, we could not reasonably expect very much assistance.

In this, however, we were agreeably disappointed.

I returned to my people with a grateful heart, after having succeeded in raising something over two hundred dollars, in ready money and promises.

It would be just to state that the greater part of the amount received, was collected from a few members of Granville St. Church. Two of them gave their names for seventy dollars—one for fifty—the other for twenty. The subscriptions of most of the others, ranged from four to ten dollars, each.

We do pray that the donors may be made the happy recipients of many temporal blessings and that copious showers of grace may descend, filling their hearts with love, joy, and peace.

Our anticipated place for Divine Worship, which we intend commencing to build immediately, will prove, when finished, quite commodious—it being 38 x 50, with an entrance 8 x 20.

Your readers will also be glad to learn that God is still making bare His powerful arm amongst us. In our prayer-meeting last evening, some for the first time publicly declared their love to the Savior and attachment to His cause. To God be all the praise.

Yours, &c.,
E. C. SPINNEY.