

LEGISLATION IN ENGLAND ON EDUCATION.

The first statute concerning education is one of 1405, which condemns to agricultural labour for life all who have been brought up therein until twelve years of age, but permits everyone to place son or daughter at school. The whole statute deserves perusal as a relic of the days of bondage. It is 7 Hen. 4, cap. 17:—

And whereas in the statutes made at Canterbury among other articles it is contained that he or she that useth to labour at the plough or cart, or other labour or service of husbandry, till he be of the age of twelve years, that from the same time forth he shall abide at the same labour, without being put to any mystery or handicraft; and if any covenant or bond be made from that time forth to the contrary, it shall be holden for none: Notwithstanding which article, and the good statutes afore made through all parts of the realm, the infants born within the towns and seignories of Upland, whose fathers and mothers have no land nor rent nor other living, but only their service or mystery, be put by their said fathers and mothers and other their friends to serve, and bound apprentices, to divers crafts within the cities and boroughs of the said realm sometime at the age of twelve years, sometime within the said age, and that for the pride of clothing and other evil customs that servants do use in the same; so that there is so great scarcity of labourers and other servants of husbandry that the gentlemen and other people of the realm be greatly impoverished for the cause aforesaid: our Sovereign Lord the King, considering the said mischief, and willing thereupon to provide remedy, by the advice & assent of the Lords spiritual and temporal, and at the request of the said Commons, hath ordained and established, that no man nor woman, of what estate or condition they be, shall put their son or daughter, of whatsoever age he or she be, to serve as apprentice to no craft nor other labour within any city or borough in the realm, except he have land or rent to the value of twenty shillings by the year at the least, but they shall be put to other labours as their estates doth require, upon pain of one year's imprisonment, and to make fine and ransom at the King's will. And if any covenant be made of any such infant, of what estate that he be, to the contrary, it shall be holden for none. Provided always, that every man and woman, of what estate or condition that he be, shall be free to set their son or daughter to take learning at any manner school that pleaseth them within the realm.

The Protector's Parliament, in 1654, authorised commissioners in each county to find out and remove "scandalous, ignorant, and insufficient schoolmasters." The overt acts which should be considered to bring pedagogues within this description were not only negligence in their calling, blasphemy, atheism, drunkenness, &c., but having "publicly read or used the Common Prayer-book," or such as "profanely scoff at or revile the strict profession or professors of religion or godliness, or do encourage or countenance by word or practise any Whitsun ales, wakes, morris-dances, maypole, stage-plays, or such like, or declare their disaffection to the present Government." The Parlian legislation in New England in the early part of the seventeenth century was, "that none of the brethren should suffer so much barbarism in their families as not to teach their children and apprentices so much learning as may enable them perfectly to read the English tongue, to the end that learning may not be buried in the graves of our forefathers." It was ordered "that every township, after the Lord had increased them to the number of fifty householders, shall appoint one to teach all children to write and read; and when any town shall increase to the number of one hundred families, they shall set up a grammar-school, the master thereof being obliged to instruct youth so far as they may be fitted for the university." The Government first constituted by order in council a Board of Education in 1829, in the face of great unwillingness amongst the ruling classes. The majority in the Commons in support of the order was only 275 to 273 votes. How far we have progressed in the forty years which have passed since those days! The first grant was for £30,000. When this had been thus carried in the House of Commons, it is almost incredible to read in the history of those times that the House of Peers, on the motion of an archbishop, supported by the speeches of two bishops, carried an address to the throne, praying that the order might be rescinded! The Government was enlightened and firm, the action of the peers and bishops was ignored, and education took its place among the recognised objects of public policy. When we read these facts we are astonished that in spite of such obstacles the cause of liberty and progress had made the advances which have now been realised.

—London Freeman.

He only is on "the wrong side of fifty" who has offered his years at his own shrine; and he is on the wrong side then simply because he was never on the right one; for the shadow of self has spread over it all; and, yet, it is in his own power, God helping him, to get out of the shade, and make this side less "shady" than that.

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger

NEW SOUTH WALES CORRESPONDENCE.

WELLINGTON STREET,
KINGSTON ESTATE, Dec. 1, 1869.

Dear Sir and Brother,—

We anticipate during the ensuing year to pay a short visit to America, now that the facilities for travel are so great, especially as we can come via San Francisco in so short a time—say a fortnight, accidents excepted, by the Pacific Railroad, which is truly one of the wonders of the age.

We are very much attached to this Island Continent, chiefly on account of its magnificent climate; perhaps there are few parts of the earth to compare with it in this respect. Having enjoyed such a perpetual summer, you may suppose how Nova Scotia appears to us with its rigorous winters and cloudy skies; yet notwithstanding we love it still, not for its climate, but on account of its inhabitants among whom are some of the excellent of the earth; many of these however have gone up to a better country and climate, since I left, ten years ago; but thank God, many more have been converted to occupy their places in the church. The accounts of which we read in the Messenger tend to rejoice our hearts. This country, although possessing the elements of physical greatness, is not a land of revivals of religion, from the fact that too many professors do not believe in revivals; which is not peculiar to one denomination only, but to all choosing to tread in the old paths; so we get along in a very quiet way as far as religion is concerned, too many having but a name to live while they are dead, dead. I had the pleasure a few days past, of baptizing twelve willing converts at Smithfield, a little town on the Railroad, some eighteen miles from Sydney, where I preach occasionally; they were all young men but four, and full of promise. Last Lord's day I had the pleasure of preaching twice on believer's baptism, and at the close of the evening service witnessing an interesting baptism by Rev. J. Voller, who has had to resign his charge on account of throat disease. John Bunyan McCure has tendered his resignation also to return to England.

Queensland, a most beautiful colony is open to the Baptists, had we the right men to occupy it. A Quaker-minister, and a Methodist Minister have been immersed there quite recently, at Brisbane, the metropolis of the Province. Ipswich, which is distant twenty-five miles by land, and fifty by water, is a large town where I preached for two weeks every night, in the Baptist chapel, and had the pleasure of seeing the work prosper. They are without a pastor. The great town of Towns on the Railroad line between Ipswich and New England is in the same destitute state, which is a specimen of many other towns, for instance, Rookhampton City, Marlborough City &c., at all of which there are many Baptist members scattered. The scenery and every thing is very beautiful in this Colony; the river banks to the waters edge lined with pine apples, bananas, and orange groves; in fact all the tropical fruits grow in profusion.

"Every prospect pleases, and only man is vile."

I did not find the climate too hot, although it was midsummer when I was there, but could and did preach in the open air under the shade of a spreading gum-tree without injury. The forest trees are like a beautiful park, as if they had been planted at certain distances, capable of driving a buggy between. Cattle, sheep and horses are very numerous, and now sugar-growing is all the talk, the land being well adapted and very productive, in this line of business, as it is in many parts of New South Wales, where the crops were never more abundant than this year, produce of every kind being plentiful and cheap; butter every summer is down to four pence and sixpence per pound, and beef one penny to two pence.

We are just now in the midst of a general Election, both for Parliament and for the different municipalities, so you may suppose we have exciting times, but having got quite satisfied during the last sitting, do not desire a second edition. My time is too fully occupied at home, and in addition, the strife for office and power is the one great object, and not the good of the country with many. Rev. Dr. Lang has bidden the Parliament farewell, but it is thought he will come out again notwithstanding.

Rev. A. F. Porter is doing well at Victoria, and has had quite an accession to his church.

Truly yours,

Wm. Hobbs.

P. S.—The special adaptation of this climate to the growth of the sugar-cane has aroused the attention of many persons—Doctors, Ministers and every class who are able to engage in the enterprise. The Colonial Refining Sugar Company has thrown its capital with great spirit into the concern, and looks to reduce, if not to extinguish in time its dependence on the Mauritius for supply of raw material. There is quite enough now to supply the wants of New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, New Zealand and Tasmania, and for exports also to England or elsewhere. There is to be ten tons a week for auction sales. During the past week eighteen tons of colonial sugar from Port Macquary were sold at £34 12s. 6d. The prospect is very encouraging both to sowers and manufacturers, and money is being taken from mining schemes and squatting ventures, to be vested in plantations and mills. There was great necessity for some new plant to take the place of grain, for which it was difficult to obtain a market, Sydney being always too full of the article, and the markets always too low; for instance beautiful corn at two and sixpence a bushel, often at a lower price; wheat at three or four shillings. But since attention has been turned to sugar-growing, corn has been not less than four shillings a bushel. The inhabitants of Clarence River, the Tweed, the Macleary and Richmond settlements are all busily engaged in sugar-growing, and many other parts also. There is quite a rush to Queensland for the same purpose, and plantations are being formed in various directions.

I have just discovered the way our pork is fattened for the Sydney market. Five or six hundred horses are driven into a yard, the owner takes his gun and shoots one, when all the hogs at the sound of the gun rush in; the skin is taken off, and the hogs then commence operations; this is repeated two or three times each week, until the horses are all devoured. Then to harden the flesh, they are turned into a cornfield for a time, after which they are sent to the City for market. This is one frightful source of sickness in connection with *Rum* and *Tobacco*, and makes plenty of business for the doctors, of whom there is not far from two hundred in the city and suburbs.

W. H.

For the Christian Messenger.

SAYINGS AND DOINGS AT OTTAWA.

The House of Commons has recently been the scene of several stirring debates. The Banking question, has been a fruitful subject of controversy. Few if any outside the charmed circle of the Executive Council, the ministerial departments—appear to be entirely satisfied with the Government policy either as it was originally rough-hewn, or as it now is more or less modified by suggestions and amendments, the results of protracted debates. But having escaped from what seemed a greater and impending danger, or what was apprehended to be such, many of those who make Banking a speciality and talk learnedly on the subject, or affect so to do, seem disposed to congratulate each other and the public, that the promised legislation is at least no worse than they anticipated. But a good many people persist in maintaining, that the whole government policy is but a scheme for effecting a forced loan. That at best it is a process of anticipating the results of taxation, that would not be submitted to, if it were attempted directly. In other words under cover of pretending to protect the public against the indiscretions of professional Bankers, and parties selected by Capitalists themselves to manage their money matters, that it is an indirect method of borrowing a large proportion of their capital, and appropriating it to the payment of the public liabilities—Giving them instead, Dominion promises to pay—to redeem which the government propose to hold a certain fluctuating amount of specie, and their own debentures.

Then we have lately had a high debate on trade relations, the treaty making power and the desirability of having within the government of the Dominion, the powers of negotiating with Foreign Countries on matters of trade and commerce. There was some good debating on this subject, in which most of the leading members of the Commons took an active part. The discussion was called up under a Resolution of Hon. Mr. Huntington, who advocates Zolverley policy, and an amendment by Sir A. T. Galt, having for its object, the treating with Foreign powers directly, in reference to reciprocity or trade relations.

The government by Sir John A. McDonald in a speech admired for its eloquence and ability, opposed both phases of policy, and refused to adopt any new or modified scheme, at the hands

of the opposition. Sir A. T. Galt delivered a powerful speech which was much admired for its depth and breadth and grasp withal. Hon. Mr. Howe spoke on the same subject as did Dr. Tupper and others. But the man who towered above the rest on that occasion was Alexander McKenzie of Sarnia. By common consent, in a speech of about forty-five minutes, in which he never failed or flagged for one instant McKenzie held the House of Commons perfectly spell-bound. I have heard the ablest and best of living English orators, and I must admit that McKenzie's address on the evening of the 18th March, his manner, his matter and his style, would compare favorably with their first class efforts. His Scottish accent is not in his favour, but his manly independent utterances, without action of any kind, his quiet attitude, the intelligent eye beaming out from beneath a finely massive brow, which surmounts a face in no way prepossessing, more than make amends for his North Country peculiarities, and the hard lines of a bronzed countenance. McKenzie is a power in the House of Commons of Canada, and some day will exert a different kind of influence from that he even now wields in opposition.

The government defeated the efforts of their opponents by a large majority, and this was not to be wondered at, for the Knight of Kingston alarmed his followers and many others, by an able, adroit appeal to their loyalty, to rescue the Dominion from the insidious efforts of men, who sought to fix the thin end of a wedge, that was to sever the Dominion from the father land. Had the motion originated with McKenzie who is sound on the policy of maintaining our present relations with Great Britain, the result would in all probability have been very different. But Sir John lay bare with trenchant strokes what he described as the ulterior motives and policy of the movers of the Resolution and the amendment alike and he carried the House with him.

The election law is before the Commons, but until the Bill has passed through Committee it is scarcely worth while speculating as to what shape it may ultimately take, or what it will be when it becomes law. The one day policy for holding an election, may safely be reckoned upon. But the government do not yield the point of a simultaneous polling day for the Dominion. Nor do they favour the ballot, although the House of Commons in England appear disposed ere long, to put it upon the Statute Book there.

A Bill for granting Certificates to masters and mates, to rank with English Certificates, for like purpose is before the Senate and will probably pass and become Law.

The minister of Marine and Fisheries is bestowing a good deal of attention on Maritime matters and keeps the Senate pretty busy considering his measures. Com.

For the Christian Messenger.

IN MEMORIAM.

MRS. ELIZA FOYLE RICE,

wife of Mr. Abner Rice, of Little Bras D'Or, C. B., March 16th, of consumption, at the early age of twenty-six years, leaving two children, the youngest but a few weeks old.

A little more than four years ago she was married, and, with her husband, united with the North Sydney Church during the gracious work experienced in the Spring of 1867. She afterwards lived a consistent christian life, always manifesting a deep interest in, and a strong attachment to the church and all its interests and services. It was her dying request that \$20,00 out of an anticipated legacy should be devoted to Foreign Missions. To natural amiability of character and sweetness of manner, were added the refining and elevating graces of the Holy Spirit. Though, for the sake of her husband and children, she clung to life she was enabled with her last breath to sing—

"Jesus can make a dying bed
Feel soft as downy pillows are,
While on His breast I lean my head,
And breathe my life out sweetly there."
And thus she "fell asleep."

The occasion was improved the following Sabbath, by a discourse from Ps. 17: 15.—Com. by Rev. T. H. Porter.

Religious Intelligence.

FRENCH MISSIONS.—Rev. Lewis Auger, missionary to the French people in Kankakee County, Illinois, says that "sixty-nine have been baptized with the church at Sainte Anne; that the work at Kankakee is very rejoicing; seven have been lately baptized, and many more are inquiring for salvation. We have extraordinary cases of conversions. I spent one week in Chicago, where I visited many families; seven or eight persons have joined different churches by faith and baptism. There are French people enough in Chicago for one active missionary. I wish brother Williams could be employed there.