

text. "Why," saith he, "I am engrossed by my favorite study; it quite enthalls me; I cannot resist its charms, it holds me beneath its spell." Is the man any the less free? If a man gives himself up to a science, or to some other object of pursuit, though he is perfectly free to leave it whenever he likes, he will commonly declare that he cannot leave it; it has such a hold upon him that he must addict himself to it. You must not think, therefore when we speak of being under constraint from the love of Christ, we mean by it that we have ceased to exercise our wills, or to be voluntary agents in our service. Far from it, we own that we are never so free as when we are under bonds to Christ. No, our God does not constrain us by physical force; his cords are those of love, and his bands are those of a man. The constraint is that which we are glad to feel; we give a full assent to its pressure, and therein lies its power. We rejoice to admit that "the love of Christ constraineth us;" we only wish the constraint would increase every day.

A Mr. Davis has been establishing libraries in the Annapolis Valley, professing to hold connection with the Harper Bros., of New York. In the face of the absurdity that such a rich and flourishing House could descend to run a circulating library business, the man actually succeeds in carrying away some hundreds of dollars. Harpers have written in answer to applications, saying they know nothing of this man or his business, and employ no agents. There is immense credulity in these Provinces for plausible cash theories.—*Wesleyan.*

Advantages of a Religious Newspaper.

A minister's power of usefulness is greatly augmented if his people are religiously intelligent. They know better how to appreciate the truth preached, for the seed of the kingdom will not fall on stony ground, but in a genial soil, where it will quickly germinate, grow, and bear abundant fruit. A Christian's worth depends largely on his intelligence, sympathy, and activity and these are all enhanced by the weekly visits of a good paper.

We may well then ask, What responsibility or duty has the pastor or stated supply in seeing that his flock is not suffering for the lack of good religious papers? The pastoral relation is of divine appointment—not human—and his duties are two-fold: to feed the flock with knowledge and understanding, and care for it "over which the Holy Ghost has made him an overseer."

We have been led to put a higher estimation on the religious press, from what we have seen and experienced. Other things being equal, beyond a question those congregations well supplied with our church papers are the most useful and prosperous, and it is a marked feature in them that their pastors have taken it upon themselves, in the pulpit and in private ways, to encourage their circulation. The interests of the pastor and flock are inseparable in this. The truth is ministers cannot afford to be indifferent toward a subject of such vital importance to themselves and their congregations.

We are familiar with churches and families that are suffering for this kind of culture. They know but little what their church is doing, and the wants of our benevolent schemes. Their spiritual sympathies are withering for proper nutriment.

By a little effort a good paper may be placed in a household, that may continue its weekly visits for a generation, freighted with blessings to parents and children. For such efforts this is a most favorable time.

For the Christian Messenger.
From Rev. T. H. Porter.

The Temple church having failed to secure a pastor this fall, at their request I have decided to remain with them till Spring. I have done it, however, only with the distinct understanding, that this engagement is in no way to be allowed to hinder their securing as soon as possible a permanent pastor. This people have treated me with a great deal of kindness and generosity, and my heart has been much drawn out toward them. They deserve and need the best man that can be got, and I earnestly hope they may succeed in obtaining the right one. I have been engaged up to the present in giving lessons in Elocution, but

will confine myself to the work of the winter during the remainder of my stay, expecting if spared to resume my usual work in the Spring.

My correspondents will please address me as below.

T. H. PORTER,
Yarmouth.

Dec. 20, 1878.

P. S.—A letter addressed to me recently at Fredericton was lost. Should any one who has written fail to get a reply, he may guess the reason.

T. H. P.

For the Christian Messenger.
Infants' Home.

Rev. H. Eagles, of St. Marys, sends us two dollars as the result of a collection taken on Thanksgiving day, and says "I hope you will have a general response to your appeal so that you may be able to care for many more of the poor little infants." We would also thankfully acknowledge a parcel of clothing from Mrs. F. D. Higgins, Wolfville.

MRS. E. M. SAUNDERS,
Secretary.

For the Christian Messenger.
From Queens County.

LIVERPOOL, Dec. 26th, 1878.

Dear Brother Selden,—

During the greater part of the year now closing, this portion of the Province has enjoyed but little Baptist preaching; your correspondent for some time being the only settled pastor in this county. At present there is ample room for work—churches pastorless, and congregations enquiring for the "Bread of Life." Milton is once more supplied, Rev. I. J. DeWolf is pastor and his earnest labors will without doubt be owned by God, both in the building up of the church and the conversion of the unsaved.

Port Medway and Mill Village churches enjoy the preaching of the Bridgewater pastor part of his time. Liverpool has still regular preaching; both church and pastor are praying for brighter days.

Beside the churches above named we have several others without pastors, viz., Middlefield, Greenfield and Chelsea (the last in Lunenburg Co.) which generally unite in one man's support, and would, I know, gladly hail the presence of a good worker among them. Also, there are the churches of North Queens, North Brookfield, Caledonia, Kempt, &c. The northern district is as able to well support an earnest worker as in any time of its history. There are larger congregations, richer farms, better roads, than in the days when Rev. James Parker, of fragrant memory ministered there in holy things. In those churches there are some of our most talented and devoted Christians—members with lives that tell they have been with Jesus. Who is called of God to labor with the Churches of North Queens? It has been my privilege of late to spend a week with the North Brookfield Church, holding meetings each day of my stay. On Sabbath morning 15th ult., a large number gathered beside one of the most picturesque lakes of the Province, and after singing and prayer I baptized two happy believers in the Lord Jesus. I remained until the 20th, preaching each evening. God was in our midst and blessed us. Wanderers returned and confessed their sins. Some unconverted were led to seek the Saviour and ere I left were happy in his love. I hope to return for a few days ere long and baptize again.

Let us pray that the good work may extend.

Truly yours,
GEO. O. GATES.

The Christian Messenger.
Halifax, N. S., January 1, 1879.

NEW YEAR'S DAY.

New Year's Day was not always on the first day of January. In the early ages of the world this was necessarily a very variable point of Time. It is not known how the ancients at first computed the months so as to make them into a year. The year consisting of more than twelve moons, or 354 days, it was a difficult matter to make up exactly the year of 365 days, 5 hours, 48 minutes, 48 seconds, and the lunar month being an unequal number of days and hours, its division into weeks did not lessen the difficulty. It was therefore found

necessary to have months of unequal length.

In consequence of the loss of eleven days, each year by this calculation, it was found necessary at first to have an additional month every few years. This of course caused great irregularity in the commencement of the year. The antediluvian year was therefore calculated as near probably as could be done, by observing the course of the sun and the return of the seasons, but this would be unsatisfactory for exact calculation.

From references in the Pentateuch we learn that the Hebrews were directed from time to time as to the year's commencement.

When the world was but six hundred years old, according to our Bible record of the creation, New Year's Day was to Noah and his family a marked day and one not to be forgotten. On that day he and his sons were busily engaged in taking off the roofing of the ark in which they had been preserved, and again they breathed the pure air of heaven. He looked forth and saw that the water had returned to its natural depths, leaving the great ship in which he and his vast collection of zoological specimens had been for about a year, stranded on the side of Mount Ararat.

About eight hundred and fifty years later, on the preparations for the return of the Jews from Egypt, Moses gave direction that the month Nisan, corresponding about with our month of March was to be reckoned as the first of the year. (Exodus xiii. 2, Esther iii. 7.) This was bringing it back again so as to make up for what had been lost in computation.

New Year's Day, too, was a busy time when in the wilderness. That day was chosen as the most appropriate one on which to set up the Tabernacle.

In the computation of Time since the commencement of the Roman period, there has been more exactness, but it has been found necessary several times, even since then, to change the time for New Year's Day, so as to make up a perfect year, corresponding exactly with the length of time the earth occupies in completing its orbit or path around the sun. Now the addition of one day to February every four years—making Leap Year—nearly accomplishes this object, and only requires a variation from this order once in a hundred years. Then on the last year of the century, there being no added day, and no Leap Year for the last four of the hundred years, brings back the year to almost the exact length required, so that, according to this calculation and arrangement, there will be no need that New Year's Day will ever be on any other date than the first of January, and no variation for about 4000 years.

In 1582, the Julian year, comprising 365 1/4 days, and which commenced to be used when Julius Caesar was Emperor of Rome, was superseded by the Gregorian, under Pope Gregory XIII. which provided, as mentioned above, that amongst other things Leap Year—of 366 days—should be every fourth year except the last year of each century.

One would think that our year being called Anno Domini (the year of our Lord) the year would begin at the date fixed upon as the anniversary of the birth of our Saviour, but it will be seen that the inaccuracy of that date and the matter of the commencement of the Calendar is a very complicated subject; and we therefore accept the present arrangement of dates overlooking the incongruities of the past.

This reckoning of time exists in all the nations that have sprung from the Latin race.

The foregoing may have some items of information, but what about

THIS NEW YEAR'S DAY?

Here we are on the threshold of another cycle, and it is for us to look forward from this day, and take observations, as far as we can, of the distance we have proceeded on the voyage of life, and see if we can, whether we are on the course which will eventually lead to the Haven of Rest. Our review of the past will doubtless lead us to regrets that we have not employed our opportunities to better advantage.

Divine strength is needed by the strongest, and this may also be obtained by even the weakest. Indeed the weakest and the strongest Christians are on a par in this respect. In entering on the New Year this need will be felt more than ever before. With this preparation we shall be armed to meet duties and trials, foes and friends.

We know not that we shall be spared to see another New Year's Day. When we think of the uncertainty of our mortal life, we feel that it is a far more serious matter to live than to die. We may, as we suppose, be ready for the latter, yet of that we are not the best judges, but to be ready for the former, and prepared to cope with all its duties and obligations is far more appalling. With the presence of Christ we may go forward with confidence. Without him we dare not live or die. If assured that we are in Christ, then may we close the Old and begin the New Year, feeling safe and happy.

N. P. KEMP.

Mr. Nathaniel P. Kemp, formerly manager in Boston of the American Tract Society, and well known by the Baptists of these provinces in connection with the cause of Sabbath Schools, died on Saturday, Dec. 21st, 1878, at his residence in Jamaica Plain, near Boston, aged 64 years. Mr. K. was a devoted Christian man, full of active zeal in all matters relating to Sabbath School and other religious and benevolent work. During the war he was actively engaged in the Christian Commission and by his labors then probably shortened his days. His health has been impaired, we believe, ever since.

THE INTERNATIONAL SERIES OF BIBLE LESSONS for 1879 will be found in another column. Although they take up the lessons from the return of the Israelites and the rebuilding of the Temple yet they do not proceed in exact chronological order. The first three lessons of the second Quarter belong to a much earlier period. With this exception we think the lessons very good and such as will deeply interest both teachers and scholars.

What a blessing it would be if there were no wine used on New Year's Day. There has doubtless been great progress made within the last few years. It was formerly said by one of the New York dailies on the 2nd of Jan., "Yesterday New York was drunk." The same might have been said of many other places. Young men who have discarded intoxicating drinks have sometimes made an exception of New Year's Day, and the cases are not a few in which the whole work of ruin has been effected by that one day. Being thrown in the company of ladies who would feel it a compliment to have a glass taken from their hands, they were unable to resist the invitation, and so, after the first glass had been taken, the road was as easy as going down hill, and they continued on and on till the degradation was complete. Ladies, as you value the friendship of your friends, let them not have to charge on you their fall. Let there be no wine on New Year's Day. "Look not upon the wine when it is red," for "at the last it biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder."

"PARSON BROWN, his talk" is a pamphlet published in Charlottetown, P. E. I., written by some young man who evidently has but little control of his own thoughts. He 'talks' more than he thinks. He endeavours to bring out the theory that Adam when first created comprised both man and woman but on the woman being taken from him she was "made," but her soul—her personality existed in the man Adam before. Such books that have no good object might well be preserved in manuscript. The world would not be worse off and men's minds might be occupied on other far more important matters.

We are hoping daily to hear from quite a number of friends who have not yet sent on their subscriptions for 1878. We greatly need all amounts due and are put to serious inconvenience and loss for want of these sums. Please send at once. Those of our advance subscribers who have not sent already will also oblige by making an early remittance. Those who have sent will please accept our best thanks.

G. W. B.—The petition you take would lead us all back to Romanism. You forget that this is an age of free enquiry, and that we do not take the word of man or the decisions of councils to decide or to guide us as to what are the ordinances of the Church. 'The Word of God is our Great Church Directory.'

"A Student," will please send us his name.

UNIVERSITY OF HALIFAX.

The Senate of this institution held its annual session on Thursday and Friday of last week in the Legislative Council Chamber. Twenty-two Fellows were present.

On motion of Rev. R. McDonald, seconded by Prof. Lawson, the following resolution was passed unanimately:

"That when the Senate finds it expedient to appoint, as Examiners in Arts, any of the Professors of the affiliated Colleges, the Professors of all said Colleges shall, as far as practicable be represented at the Examining Board."

On the question of *ad eundem* degrees coming up for consideration a committee was appointed, consisting of the Chancellor, Hon. L. G. Power, Professor Higgins, Professor Lawson, Dr. A. P. Read and President Inch to consider and report upon the whole question of *ad eundem* degrees, and holding in abeyance, for the present, the power of granting degrees.

It was resolved to accept the matriculation examinations of the University of Toronto as equivalent to that of this University, and the Grade A license, from the Council of Public Instruction of Nova Scotia in lieu of the certificate of matriculation of this University.

It was resolved that in all cases where local examinations are held in places outside the city of Halifax, they shall be conducted by sub-examiners appointed by the Senate, not resident in the localities where the examinations are being held and not connected with the institutions whose students are being examined.

The Chancellor Rev. G. W. Hill, stated he would present a gold medal to the candidate obtaining the highest number of marks at the Matriculation examination for Arts, in September next.

Since the notice of last week of "Doings at Wolfville" we have seen a copy of the address presented to the Matron, by the Students and Teachers boarding at the Academy. It gives a pleasing picture of the domestic comfort at the Institution. A perusal of the address will afford pleasure to many of our readers, we therefore give it a place in our columns.

To Mrs. Keddy, Matron of Chipman Hall, Wolfville:

DEAR MADAM,—We the undersigned students and teachers boarding in the above Hall deeply sensible of our great indebtedness to you for your untiring kindness in promoting our comfort and happiness, would beg hereby to express, though not so adequately as we could wish, our sense of that indebtedness by the presentation of this small gift, the "angel of the household." If by it shall come to you any mitigation or abridgement of the toil which your care for us so greatly and continually multiplies, we shall be very glad.

Many of us are too far from our homes to receive the attention which our mothers and sisters have been wont to give us, but you have kindly taken their places, and like them, are ever, anticipating our wants.

We hope that the Establishment over which you preside may long enjoy the benefit of your presence and guidance, and that upon yourself and Mr. Keddy, whom we also most highly esteem, the richest blessings may ever rest.

Wolfville, Dec. 12th, 1878.

This was signed by all the teachers and students residents at the Academy.

THE PROVINCIAL TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION met on Thursday afternoon in the library of Dalhousie College. A discussion on a report respecting Text Books occupied the first sitting.

In the evening Dr. Allison, Superintendent of Education, delivered the opening address, on the character and qualifications of the teacher, and his right to recognition and fair remuneration. He recommended the formation of Teachers' Associations in every County.

Addresses were then invited. Professor D. F. Higgins made a few appropriate remarks. He believed that one of the great qualifications of a good teacher is that of being able to feel as the child feels. A love for the work is also an essential feature in an efficient teacher.

Dr. Inch, of Mount Allison College, congratulated the teachers present on the improvements made in the matter of teaching, and the great facilities they now enjoy to what they formerly did.

J. B. Calkin, Hon. L. G. Power, D. McDonald, J. F. L. Parsons and A. McN. Patterson also spoke briefly.

On Friday morning Professor Tufts delivered an excellent address on the best methods of Teaching History. The address was a very practical one re-