

The Christian Messenger.

Halifax, N. S., March 29, 1882.

The subject the Rev. W. H. Warren has brought before us is one of vital importance. If we would be worthy of our honored name and of our ancestry we must not neglect the opportunities we now have of rendering aid to the institutions committed to us. What has been done in the past will not suffice. The future should be an advance on all previous effort. A little consideration and properly directed labor now will bring results which may give us no small satisfaction, but if now neglected we shall be filled with regret and unavailing sorrow, when, perhaps, too late to recover ourselves.

Our Convention Funds.

Dear Editor,—

It seems to be highly desirable that our churches should not only adopt a uniform plan of raising funds for the objects embraced by our Convention, but should also act simultaneously in carrying that plan into operation.

The advantages of thus working together in our attempts to raise funds for benevolent purposes must be obvious. Special notice could be given in our religious papers, calling the attention of the churches to the approach of each date at which contributions to the Convention Fund should be taken. Similar notices could also be given by pastors from their pulpits. Stirring editorials and appropriate discourses on missionary and educational topics would do much to make these regular contributions increasingly liberal. Much inspiration would be given by a consideration of the fact that all the churches were engaged in this benevolent work at the same time. The treasurers of our different institutions would, in this way, know when to expect regular remittances, and many anxieties and financial difficulties might thus be avoided.

It is generally conceded that the best financial results are secured for our benevolent objects by quarterly collections. Once in three months every Baptist church should take a collection or gather subscriptions for missionary, educational and other Convention purposes. The most natural dates at which to do this work would be the first weeks in January, April, July and October. On the first Sunday of each of these months, notices might be given from the different pulpits, directing the attention of the people to this matter. During the week following collectors might call upon the different members of the respective churches, and on the second Sunday special collections might be taken for benevolent purposes.

Why may we not at once adopt this reasonable plan? Permit me respectfully to request that the pastors of all our churches shall refer to this matter on the first Sunday in April, urging their congregations to hand in their quarterly contributions for the Convention either to the collectors through the week, or on the plate on the Sunday following.

We must immediately and vigorously bestir ourselves, if our missionary and educational institutions are to be saved from financial ruin. There is real danger of such a crisis, and in the name of all that is good let us rise to the rescue without further delay.

W. H. WARREN, Financial Agent. Bridgetown, March 26, 1882.

HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.

The poet Longfellow, is dead! Our republican neighbours mourn his departure. They were justly proud of the man and of his writings. Perhaps we in Nova Scotia have no less reason to feel his loss, seeing that he has, perhaps more than any other man, made a portion of our country classic ground. His first and greatest poem, "Evangeline," has given a world-wide fame to the valley of Cornwallis, and more particularly to the Grand Pré at Horton. Thousands of visitors have been led by the pathetic story to visit the localities referred to in the central part of our Province.

The fact of his having laid the scene of his touching narrative, told in exquisite poetry, in a land outside of his own nation, and in a country which he never visited, shows not only his high attainments as a poet, but his freedom from the narrowness often indulged in

where loyalty is the prominent idea cherished. He wrote for the world, and the literary world have made their submission, and acknowledged his genius as a delineator of character, and his truthfulness of statement in the authenticity of his facts. His other poems are all beautiful in their way "The Song of Hiawatha," "Courtship of Miles Standish," "Village Blacksmith," "Building of the Ship," are some of the best known. Volumes of his poems were published near a quarter of a century ago. There will probably be some others of his later writings brought before the public of a still more mature character. The public will wait with anxiety to learn what of literary remains he has left for publication and for their delectation.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow died at Cambridge, aged 75 years. He was born at Portland, Me., February 27, 1807. He graduated at Bowdoin College in 1825. He entered upon the professorship of modern languages and literature, at Harvard College, which position he held seventeen years. Many of his best poems were published during this time.

MANHOOD SUFFRAGE.

Meddling with the elective franchise is confessedly a delicate business, especially in a country governed by a legislature elected by the voice of the people. As an illustration of this we have lately seen in France a ministry led by M. Gambetta, one of the most able men in that country, completely swept out of existence by the recoil which his first attempt to alter the elective franchise received when launched upon the troubled waters of the Corps Legislatif. The effort made to force the measure known as the "scrutin de liste" upon that country, decided the fate of the Government most summarily and effectually.

THE ITALIAN FRANCHISE.

Italy, however, has quite recently made a most radical change in its elective franchise. The change has been so quietly and speedily effected that we almost wonder that an innovation so revolutionary in its character should have been so peacefully accomplished. It will be remembered that United Italy adopted a form of government similar to that of England. A constitutional monarchy, with a responsible ministry who represent a majority of the lower house of Parliament, which is elected by the popular vote, while the Senate is constituted of members appointed for life by the sovereign. The franchise, however, under which the members were elected to the Chamber of Deputies has hitherto been so restrictive that practically little more than one per cent. of the population have had any voice in the election of its members. As a consequence, there has been great discontent among the masses. It has also been notorious that the Government of the country has been badly administered, until matters have lately reached a crisis. In looking about him for some remedy for the accumulated difficulties of the situation, multiplied and aggravated by this farce of a representative Government, which has brought to the surface not two well defined parties, as obtains with us, but a disorganized system of various "groups," each and all struggling for supremacy, the present Premier had recourse to a most sweeping revolution of the franchise. He has persuaded Parliament to adopt what is virtually a universal manhood suffrage, together with a "scrutin de liste," or an improved system of selecting candidates, which it is expected will raise the standard of intelligence and character among the Deputies, as well as protect them from local interests and party jealousies.

The first Parliament elected under this law will be looked forward to with much general interest. Doubtless the clerical party, which has hitherto held aloof from political matters, will be induced by this turn of affairs to engage in the elections. The influence of a great clerical party, guided by an astute and "infallible" Pontiff, will be a new, if not a dangerous element in Italian politics.

United Italy has surprised the world by the moderation and wisdom with which she has managed the complicated problems involved in her emancipation.

It remains for the future to show that she can make good use of her emancipated franchise.

CANADIAN FRANCHISE.

The franchise under which the members of our Dominion House of Commons are elected is really a very complex affair. The matter is at present wholly under the control and management of the various provinces of the Confederation, and, as a result, it is very diversified, no two provinces having their franchise based upon the same conditions or principles. In British Columbia we have what amounts to universal suffrage, and in Prince Edward Island it is practically the same, the only exception in the Island is relating to persons over 60 years of age, in their case the voter must be assessed for property to the value of \$6.40 a year. In New Brunswick the franchise is \$100 real estate, or \$400 personal property or income; while in Nova Scotia we require \$150 of real estate and \$300 in personal property, or \$300 of personal estate alone will entitle a man to vote. In Quebec the franchise in cities is \$300 or a yearly rental of \$30; in other municipalities it is \$200, or a rental of \$20. While in Ontario we have a still greater diversity in the qualifications which admit to the privilege of the franchise. In cities real estate valued at \$400 is requisite; in towns to the extent of \$300; and in municipalities and villages to the extent of \$200; besides which there is an income franchise entitling the possessor of \$400 income per annum to vote. In addition to this we observe that in Ontario farmers' sons enjoy the privileges of the franchise under certain conditions without property qualifications.

Mr. Wallace, M. P. for Norfolk, an independent supporter of the Government, has lately introduced the question of manhood suffrage to the consideration of Parliament, and it is not unlikely that the matter may be discussed at length before the session is over. In moving for a Dominion franchise separate and distinct from that of the several provinces of Canada, Mr. Wallace made a capital speech, and we must say, he made a good prima facie case for manhood suffrage. There cannot be a doubt but that a participation in the Government of the country by every intelligent citizen tends to cultivate self-respect, and fosters the growth of patriotism, and that community of feeling and interest which elevate and strengthen society. We should be pleased to see our franchise extended so as to embrace a large class of our intelligent and educated young men, who are now debarred from voting for lack only of a property qualification. But we are quite unprepared for such a sweeping innovation as universal suffrage would produce. With us in Nova Scotia it cannot be considered in the light of an experiment, for we have had experience of the practical working of universal suffrage. Politics was probably debased by the experiment. The management of public affairs was brought too much under the control of the ignorant and vicious, and, after some twelve years' trial, we were quite ready to have our franchise again restricted.

The spectacle so often presented in the United States, where manhood suffrage reigns in all its glory, of "corruption in high places," of "rings" and "frauds" and "false ballots," shows infallibly that the conducting of public affairs has fallen too much into the hands of wire-pullers and unscrupulous demagogues, who can best manage the populace to further their own ends, and men of respectability have retired into private life. Men who regard their reputation avoid the strife where missiles fly thickly which they would not deign to use,—the sacrifice is too great for them.

We have evils enough already, in all conscience to contend with in public affairs. Manhood suffrage can furnish no remedy, but will rather, we fear, add to their number.

The temperance people of Lower Economy and Five Islands are actively engaged in seeking to carry on the Temperance Reform. Rev. G. F. Miles, Messrs. E. Thompson, D. P. Soley, and others are doing good service. If the fact that every people are as free as they deserve to be, apply to the temperance question, eternal vigilance must be observed to push out the accursed traffic and then to keep it out. Go on, brethren.

OUR PENITENTIARIES AND CRIMINAL POPULATION.

The Report of the Minister of Justice concerning the Penitentiaries of Canada, is one of the most instructive Blue Books submitted to Parliament. We glean from this pamphlet the following interesting facts:

There are five of these institutions in the Dominion, situated as follows, at Kingston, for the Province of Ontario. Montreal (the St. Vincent de Paul) for the Province of Quebec. Dorchester, for Maritime Provinces. Stony Mountain, for Manitoba and N. W. Territory. New Westminister, for British Columbia.

The total number of convicts in all these Penitentiaries on the 30th of June last, was 1218, being 61 less than the number reported the previous year. Considering the fact that our population has been meanwhile steadily increasing by emigration and otherwise, this decrease during the year, certainly a change in the right direction, must be attributed to the returning prosperity which has furnished increased employment to the industrial classes, and thus saved many from crime—some people no doubt will feel warranted in placing this to the credit of the N. P. It is noteworthy that of this whole number in prison in June last, only 26 were women, certainly a very small percentage, and of them only two were at Dorchester, N. B.

We find that 70 convicts were pardoned during the year, rather larger than the per centage of the past ten years, of those who have enjoyed the clemency of the Executive. The reasons for this exercise of the prerogative of pardon are not given—it would be interesting to know in how many cases it was the reward of good conduct and re-established character.

The religious denominations to which the convicts who were imprisoned during the year, claimed to belong is thus given:

Table with 2 columns: Denomination and Number. Roman Catholic: 302, Church of England: 123, Methodists: 54, Presbyterian: 49, Baptists: 39, Protestants: 7, No Religion: 3, Lutheran, Congregationalist, and Jew, one each.

550 culprits were admitted into the three principal institutions during the year, and of this number 418 were single, and only 132 married persons—certainly this must furnish a good reason for urging people to place themselves under the reforming and elevating influences of conjugal felicity. We find also that of this number 93 were under the age of 20 years, and 16 were over 60 years of age.

Of 211 admitted at Kingston, only 54 were reported as total abstainers, and of 151 at St. Vincent de Paul, Montreal, only 13 could read and write fairly.

A large majority of the offences committed, have been against property, and nearly 90 per cent of the sentences have been for terms of from two to five years, while only 12 have been incarcerated for life.

PRISON DISCIPLINE.

Great and marvelous changes have taken place in the design and administration of prison discipline, since John Howard, the indefatigable christian philanthropist, devoted his life to the humane and self-denying mission of ameliorating the wretched condition of convict life in Great Britain and the countries of Continental Europe.

The one prevailing idea then was that the prison was a place where punishment only should be meted out, when the poor culprit should be afflicted in that due proportion to the enormity of his offence as outraged society should determine. "An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth" was the rule of thalay, and the eye and the tooth were extracted without the employment of sedatives to soothe or alleviate the pain. The less mercy and the more suffering inflicted the better, and more lasting would be the results. Hence the "kout" and the "cat" were in daily requisition—and so by the mere application of brute force the hardened criminal was made to feel such tortures and terrors as only tended to make him more cautious if the poor wretch was possessed of any spirit or strength of character. Thus there was implanted within him the one ruling desire for revenge, so that when he was released it was to become an outlaw and an im-

placable enemy of his race, again to prey upon society which had so cruelly wronged him.

The great aim of penal servitude, is now however acknowledged to be the reformation of the criminal. The maxims of the civilization of our age and country are the maxims of humanity. Their tendency is to repress cruelty and needless severity, even to felons; to pave the way to their improvement, to develop their better qualities, and hold their worse in abeyance, and to guard their morals and higher interests.

Experience shows that there is no greater mistake than to regard the imposition of personal degradation as an essential element in punishment. Its tendency is to destroy every better impulse, to extinguish every worthy aspiration. No doubt the convict must be made to feel "the disgrace of his crime and sentence. This is a fit part of his punishment ordained by the Creator himself. Beyond this there should be no degradation of his manhood. No wanton outrage should be offered to his self respect. But he should be made to understand and as far as possible to feel that he has a character to redeem a future of virtuous honest industry to create, and every means calculated to foster the growth of this sentiment should be employed.

For the accomplishment of this result with reformation as the supreme end to be kept in view, hope is a great regenerative force in prisons. Industrial labor and religion, education and training are vital forces employed to the same end. The will of the prisoner must be enlisted in the work of his moral regeneration, and he must be taught some useful trade to supply the means of honest support on his discharge.

With these not merely retributive but also benevolent aims in view, the convict must also be made to feel that "the way of the transgressor is hard." So we find that the punishment prescribed for disobedient and refractory criminals are of various grades comprising "bare cell, short rations, confinement in the dungeon," and as a last resort, "the cats are still held in reserve although they are seldom found necessary."

It is also essential that rascaldom should realize fully that the Penitentiary is not simply a "hotel" where he may sojourn for a time at the public expense, consequently there are provided instructors in the various trades, such as shoemaking, carpentering, masonry, tailoring, broom and bucket making, blacksmithing, &c., and workshops are there where the convict must labor with his hands, and so contribute towards his support.

Thus with plenty of work and healthful exercise, good wholesome, but plain diet, correct habits and due attention to all proper sanitary requirements we are not surprised to find that surgeons report the health of the Penitentiaries to be highly satisfactory. The inspector says of the institution at Kingston, "only two deaths—one from suicide, the other by drowning—occurred in the course of the year, out of an average daily population of 704, it is an extraordinary circumstance that not one death from natural causes happened.

DORCHESTER PENITENTIARY.

This institution designed to accommodate the vicious and refractory classes of the three Maritime Provinces, is beautifully situated upon a commanding site near the village of Dorchester, N. B. The building is of brown freestone, and its architectural proportions present an imposing aspect as the establishment is viewed from the Intercolonial Railway, which runs a short distance below it. The extensive panorama spread out to the view is of unusual variety and beauty, embracing forest and fields, undulating hills and expanding marshes, the winding Memramook with its muddy banks stretches far up the vale, while in the distance glimpses are obtained of the turbulent tides of the stormy Bay of Fundy.

The establishment was opened in July, 1880, and was immediately occupied by 164 law-breakers, of this number St. John, N. B., contributed 64, Halifax 61, and Charlottetown, P. E. I. 39. During the year 20 recruits were taken there from the common jails, 30 were transferred to Kingston, and 57 were discharged, 44 by expiration of sentence, and 13 pardoned, while one who had been suffering a long

time from consumption died, leaving 96 still in "durance vile," the 30th of last June.

In addition to the workshops, where all are made to labour under the care of competent trade instructors, there is a schoolmaster who requires all to become familiar with elementary education—reading, writing and arithmetic. There is also a general library containing 700 volumes, and in addition a Catholic library, containing 229 books, with which to while away the weary hours, and chaplains, both Protestant and Catholic are there, with also a good Physician to attend to both their spiritual and temporal diseases, so that when discharged they may be restored to society, fully prepared by the discipline to become good and useful citizens.

We have not referred to the action, or rather inaction, of the Government and the Legislature in its late session on the matter of College Grants. We understand that the Committee of Governors of Acadia College had an interview with members of the government, and laid before them the position of the College question, shewing the injustice of leaving it in its present state—the Presbyterians having in possession Dalhousie College and all the public funds, whilst Kings, Hants and some other counties are deprived, not only of grants in aid of the colleges, but also of the Academy grant, whilst Pictou and Yarmouth Academies are receiving large grants for their Academies, but are doing far less of educational work. The government concluded to make no provision for dealing fairly with the other denominations in the matter of education.

We shall have something more to say on this matter. If Presbyterians are alone to enjoy public aid to the educational institutions of which they avail themselves, the people should know it; and they will doubtless govern themselves accordingly.

We have received a copy of the invitation to the fourth General Union for prayer for the entire sanctification of the Sabbath day, from the 9th till the 16th of April, 1882. The following subjects for prayer are suggested:—

I. That the advantages of One Day of Rest in Seven may be duly and gratefully appreciated by all classes of society.

II. That Rulers and others in high places may set an example of Sabbath observance to the nations which they govern.

III. That all engaged in Post-office labor on Sabbath may soon have the rest as is enjoyed in the General Post-Office, London.

The fact of a city of about Four millions of people neither obtaining nor asking for the delivery of a single letter on the Sabbath, is a standing protest in the providence of God, against the great amount of labor entailed on those employed in many towns and districts in the delivery of letters, either at the offices, or from house to house on the Lord's day.

IV. That the Spirit of God may be largely poured out on the ministers of the Gospel, that they may be faithful in proclaiming the truth, and may be the means of drawing the people from habits of Sabbath desecration, and from every way of sin, into the way of life.

There is a loud call to prayer, that the Lord would visit both pastors and people of every land, and so shed down His Spirit, as that the Divine glory may be advanced in the conversion, and sanctification of multitudes, which is the highest end of the holy keeping of the Sabbath Day.

This is a matter which all christians may profitably consider and join in offering petitions to the Most High.

EARLY SPRINGS AND RAINY SEASONS.—We find the following in one of our exchanges. Our readers may please themselves about believing it:—

One of our prominent attorneys, who is at the same time one of the leading fishermen of the valley, claims that the weather invariably repeats itself, and gives the following as the result of his observations, viz:

All years ending in 0, or 1 are extremely dry.

Those ending in 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 are extremely wet.

Those ending in 7 and 8 are ordinarily well balanced.

Those ending in 6 have extremely cold winters.

Those ending in 2 have an early spring.

Those ending in 1 have a late spring. Those ending in 3 and 4 are subject to great floods.—Lebanon Times.