

Communications.

[For the Gleaner.]

Mr Editor,

Sir,—I have to request the favor of you to give this, and the accompanying petition, a place in the columns of your valuable Journal. I have neither the ability nor the inclination to write anything for the public prints, but for the vindication of my own character, and those who signed the petition, and maintain the same principle, I beg to make a few statements to the members and heads of families connected with St. John's Church, and others that may take an interest in the matter; that the petition is neither unconstitutional, nor based upon false statements, for the following reasons—First, that the late Rev. James Thomson, and a majority of his Session and Church members, held it as a fundamental principle, that not only members, but any good christian minister, coming from the established Church of Scotland, as well as coming from the other Presbyterian churches in the mother country, might not only co-operate in the vineyard of Christ, but even join in communion, when an opportunity offered, in the providence of God; and that principle was not only acknowledged, but carried out in many instances to the end of his useful life. And further, the Session, with the concurrence of a majority of the church members, acted upon the same principle in the interval between the death of the late Mr Thomson, and the settlement of the present incumbent. And further, it was publicly given out by the late Rev. John McLean, at the request of the Session, in St. John's Church, that no change of principle had taken place; and further, I am prepared to prove, that the present Minister and Session have received into communion in many instances, and even at a recent date, members of other churches, separate and distinct from the Presbyterian Church in Nova Scotia. Christian brethren, you know that these are incontrovertible facts; how then, I ask, can you account for the Minister and Session acting upon the above principle, and yet passing sentence upon me, (I leave you to judge what alarmed those who wished their names withdrawn from the petition that they had signed) for circulating a petition through the congregation based upon a resolution of their own making, not to incorporate, but to co-operate and exchange services with one another. It is said by some that the Presbyterian Church in Nova Scotia will not allow such principles as those wished for in the petition to be acted upon in any congregation under their charge. I answer, I have a document in my possession (any one wishing to see it may call and judge for themselves) that convinces me, and all that have seen it, that it is their own principle that we were carrying out; and as far as I know, none has been by them called upon to answer for maintaining such. Synod acts of recent date shew that they have not changed their principle, but are the same as they have been for the last thirty years. One word to those that belong to the congregation, holding the same principles, that had not an opportunity of signing the petition. As soon as I found Mr McCurdy, who has never yet seen the petition, going from house to house, and declaring the petition both unconstitutional and false, and one of the members of session, who had examined the petition, and acknowledged before me, in the presence of another, that he believed every one connected with the congregation would sign it, if no ministerial influence was used to prevent them, and that same person declaring it to be false, when I was not present to refute the charge; I then considered that shewing the minds of the members and heads of families to the Minister, was not going to have the desired effect, that might have been expected, I at once stopped going further. I hope the signers of the petition will pardon me for publishing what I think neither they nor I need be ashamed of. Church courts and a christian community may either justify or condemn me, I can only say that I acted from no selfish motives, having the glory of God and the interest of the church at heart.

I remain, Sir, yours respectfully,

DAVID JOHNSTONE.

MIRAMICHI, February 19, 1847.

REV. JOHN MCCURDY,

Dear Sir,—We, the heads of families and members of St. John's Church, Chatham, having learned from a source that we can depend upon, that at a meeting of session held last October, or about that time, a unanimous resolution by the other members of session (Mr Perley absent) was passed, requesting you to

make arrangements with Mr Turnbull, or some other of the ministers in connection with the Free Church, to exchange services with you, and you to have one of them to preach in St. John's Church on the Fast Day before the dispensation of the Lord's Supper;—We respectfully request you to carry fully out that resolution at the approaching solemnity, for many weighty reasons; but at present we shall only mention three,—1st, it is our duty as christians, taking the word of God for our guide. 2nd—it is a preparatory step, and shewing our willingness to co-operate with the Church in Nova Scotia, which we stand connected with, in using every constitutional means to bring about a union with these Presbyterian churches, having the same faith, and observing the same form of worship and government. 3rd—it is a carrying out a principle that we all are much in favour of, and not a few of us have made considerable sacrifices to maintain, and are still ready to make further sacrifices when required so to do. We are, Reverend Sir, yours, &c. &c.,

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|---------------------|-------------------|
| George Johnstone, | James Dickson, |
| James Kerr, | John Dickson, |
| Adam McLean, | John Graham, |
| James Gillis, | James Graham, |
| Joseph Jardine, | Samuel McKnight, |
| John Jardine, | Thomas Johnstone, |
| John Bryce, | A. Marshall, |
| John McLean, | David Grewar, |
| Archibald Campbell, | Alex. Fenton, |
| George Jardine, | John Fenton, |
| Thomas McLean, | David Fenton, |
| Alex. Gillis, | John Wakem, |
| Wm Gray, | James Anderson, |
| William Little, | William Dickson, |
| James Nisbet, | John Alexander, |
| Alexander Jessiman, | John Stephens, |
| Thomas Alexander, | John Sunderland. |

Editor's Department.

MIRAMICHI:

CHATHAM, TUESDAY, MARCH 23, 1847.

The Subscriber having been compelled to consume a large amount of time, and incur considerable expense, in his too often fruitless endeavours to collect his far-spread Outstanding Debts, hereby notifies all persons to whom he is not indebted, and with whom he has not a running account, that orders for advertising in the Gleaner, and for Printing, in future, must be accompanied with the CASH, otherwise they will not meet with attention.

JAMES A. PIERCE.

MAMMOTH TEA PARTY

ON ST. PATRICK'S DAY.

It was publicly announced for some weeks past, that the Hon. Joseph Cunard would give a Tea Party, at the Moulding Loft of the Chatham Shipyard, on the afternoon of St. Patrick's Day, the proceeds of which would be given towards the relief of the destitute population of Ireland.

The moulding loft is 98 feet long and 36 wide. This large room was fitted up with tables, covered with canvass, and the walls and ceilings decorated with flags of different nations, tastefully arranged, together with the beautiful silk and satin Banners of the Catholic Total Abstinence Society. On the right side of the entrance door, was placed the Banner representing Father Mathew, administering the pledge to a large concourse of individuals; and on the left a large handsome new banner painted for the occasion by Messrs Miller & Bell, of an Irish Harp, with the motto 'Erin go bragh'. The interstices were filled up with green boughs. On the left side of the room, about mid-way, was arranged a kind of alcove, tastefully fitted up, for the convenience of the members of the Committee, and other Gentlemen; and immediately opposite, a platform was built, with seats, &c. for the accommodation of the Amateur Band, which was also covered with flags, and various appropriate devices. The arrangements of the room were most admirable, and the taste displayed in its fittings, reflected the greatest credit on the parties who were engaged on the work.

The weather for some days previous was very fine, though cold for the season, and many anxious eyes were turned towards the horizon the previous night to ascertain, if possible, what the morrow would bring forth, before they retired to rest. Immediately after midnight, the slumbers and dreams of many were disturbed, by the strains of music, the Amateur Band having previously

agreed to wait up to the appointed time, to usher in the day with Ireland's National air, 'St. Patrick's Day,' and they were prevailed on to add several others, by a large party of persons who had congregated around them.

Early in the morning, vehicles of all kinds, from the Lumberers' large double sled, drawn by a span of horses, to the single riding sleigh, were seen entering the town from all quarters of the compass, crowded with passengers, dressed in their best attire.

About two o'clock, the building was surrounded by a dense throng; and soon after the door was opened, when the room was speedily filled to overflowing. At the appointed hour, refreshments were served up, consisting of tea and coffee, hot rolls, sandwiches, &c. &c., and notwithstanding the crowded state of the building, the greatest order was maintained; and as they partook of their repast, they were cheered and enlivened by the music of the band, which comprised eighteen performers. Their exertions to please, and add to the enjoyment of the scene, elicited high encomiums.

After the refreshments were got through, the company were addressed by the Rev. Messrs. Egan and Sweeney, the Hon. Joseph Cunard, and several other gentlemen. The best feeling pervaded the meeting—the laugh and joke sped rapidly along, and every one seemed determined to enjoy himself, and to contribute to the happiness of his neighbour.

It being publicly announced by placards, that the party would break up about five o'clock, when all those who felt disposed could enter, and partake gratuitously of the sumptuous fare which had been so liberally supplied by the generous donor; the greater part of the company retired about that time; but their seats were speedily occupied by eager expectants, together with the tables on the lower flat of the premises, which had been fitted up in case of emergency. When the second company had completed their repast, the benches were removed from the centre of the room, and the Band striking up a lively air, several dozens of couples of both sexes tripped it on the light fantastic toe. Tune succeeded tune—dance succeeded dance—and couple succeeded couple, till the hour of darkness put a period to the festivities; and the company separated in the greatest order and good-will, highly pleased with the entertainment and sports of the day; and it gives us much satisfaction to be able to add, that not the slightest accident occurred, or the least disturbance took place, to mar the harmony of the scene, or to detract from the pleasure of its contemplation.

As the philanthropic provider of the feast was leaving the premises, he was surrounded by a dense crowd of persons, and conveyed to a Chair, which had been hastily attached to a platform placed on two long poles (all covered with a Union Jack) and carried on the shoulders of the people, through several of the principal streets of the town, and then to his place of residence. There could not have been present less than 1000 persons who formed in procession, headed by the band, who played as long as the weather would admit of their so doing.

On halting at his own door, Mr. Cunard spoke at considerable length. He turned the attention of the people assembled, to the happy and prosperous state in which they were at present. While an All-wise Providence was visiting the land of their forefathers with famine and disease, health and plenty reigned within their dwellings. He therefore trusted they were thankful for this marked manifestation of His goodness, and that they would still continue to manifest those praiseworthy feelings of benevolence and philanthropy which they had so recently manifested towards their fellow men; and he felt assured that

should any of them be cast upon our shore, they would be cheered and supported by their countrymen.

He also said, we ought to be thankful that our lot has been cast in this country—that we have the happiness to live under the protection of British laws, which recognizes no distinction of persons, rich or poor, that upholds no distinction of parties or sects, for to use the emphatic language of scripture, we can Worship our Maker under our own vine and fig-tree, none daring to make us afraid. He then strenuously urged on the bye-standers the duty they owed to the society in which they lived, to use their best exertions to maintain its peace, by aiding the public authorities in the discharge of their arduous duties, and strengthening their hands by a ready obedience; and urged them to inculcate feeling of attachment and veneration to the mother country, and to the person of our gracious Sovereign. He also stated, he wished to see all party and local differences set aside—for while such was the case, we would never arrive at that prosperity we should enjoy, or our great internal resources be cultivated advantageously. He then proposed three cheers for the Queen. These were given after the Band performed the National Anthem, with three times three added thereto.

The company then retired, and by ten o'clock the town was as quiet and peaceable as if nothing extraordinary had occurred.

When we look back a few years, and bring to recollection the manner in which the anniversary of the tutelar Saint of Erin's Isle was celebrated, and contrast it with the festivities of later years, since that great and good man, Father Mathew, promulgated his total-abstinence principles, the contrast is so striking that it elicits the wonder and thanks of men of all grades of society, and of different religious sentiments.

It is impossible to state correctly the number of persons present at this extraordinary TEA PARTY, but we think it could not fall short of 1,500, including those who gratuitously partook of the banquet. We noticed several Indians in the lower portion of the building, and the manner in which they "bolted" the delicacies, and the close way in which they stowed away the same in bags and kettles for future consumption was "a caution" not allow them again the privileges of "liberty Hall."

It must be a source of great gratification to the Hon. Gentleman, that his philanthropic endeavours to relieve the destitute and distressed, met with such a spirited and liberal response from the people of Northumberland; and the marks of commendation and tokens of public approbation he receives on every side, must have convinced him that his praiseworthy exertions were properly appreciated by his fellow men. Any remarks, therefore, from us on this head would be superfluous.

The members of the Amateur Band deserved much credit—and their labours were duly appreciated by the public. Thanks are due particularly to those gentlemen who volunteered their services and left their homes at Kouchibouguac—their assistance was of great service to their musical friends here, and will be long remembered by them as well as by the community of Miramichi.

To give our readers some idea of the "materiel" employed, and the copious provision made for "the comfort of the inner man," we furnish a few "statistics" below.

190 Tea Pots, 30 Coffee Pots, 1500 Cups and Saucers, 49 doz Plates; most extraordinary to relate the only articles broken were two Cups and Saucers.

1500 Rolls, 1500 Tarts, 3 barrels flour baked into Ginger bread and Loaf Cake, 2½ Cwt Cheese, 80 lbs Loaf Sugar, 30 doz Tea, 6 barrels Crackers and Soda Biscuit, 40 loaves bread, 20 lbs ground Coffee.