

Communications.

REFLECTIONS ON THE NEW YEAR.

"And Joseph died and all his brethren, and all that generation."—Exodus 1st Ch., 6th v.

The forcible comprehensiveness, of this remarkable passage of Scripture, had never occurred to us, until within the last few months, when accidentally perusing the eloquent address delivered by James Montgomery, Esq., as Chairman of the Anniversary Meeting of the Wesleyan Missionary District Society, held at Bristol on the 8th May, 1839. "This," observes Mr Montgomery, is the most comprehensive record of mortality in the annals of the human race. "Joseph," an individual, "all his brethren"—a family through every one of its branches, "and all that generation," the whole co-existent inhabitants of the globe.

"Not one remained alive, the whole was swept away, without an exception; and with regard to them that had been contemporaries, the world was utterly unpeopled. Nor is the awfulness of this single fact in the smallest degree diminished, but fearfully aggravated, by the reflection, that, from any given day to another, which may be easily calculated, a similar destruction is accomplished by the tide of time, in its perpetually extinguishing, and perpetually renovating course, among the ever-living and ever-dying race of man as a species."

Such was the forcible and impressive language of the talented and christian speaker.—And, to what "given day" can this passage be more applicable, than on this, the first of a New Year. A whole generation may be said to have passed away—young and old rich and poor, Kings and Queens—all have returned to their Mother Earth. A thousand millions of the human race have been swept away from the surface of the globe! What a stupendous mass of mortality! And yet the path of the destroying angel is scarcely perceptible, except when viewed in this light. New regions which were comparatively unknown at the commencement of this century, are becoming peopled by the nations of Europe—and successive generations are destined to form mighty States, having as yet no real existence but in imagination.

It is a common saying—"That the day of miracles is passed." But, is not this a miracle! Could such wonderful results be brought about without the guiding hand of an Omnipotent and Omniscient Lord of All! How different is the impression on the human mind, when we mark the result in the abstract. Death steals silently along and plucks a victim here and there. Friend after friend, departs. They were here yesterday. To-day—they are gone. To-morrow—Forgotten! Forgotten! ay! Forgotten! Why should our memory be burthened with the thought of those, who, whatever may be the numberless acts of kindness we have received at their hands, are now numbered with the dust, and can no longer serve us! We need the living—not the dead!

No man, we admit, is likely to avow such principles. None will plead guilty to such mercenary feelings—such baseness of heart. But we need no plea. We need not the false assertions of deceitful tongues. Nine-tenths of our species prove by their acts that such are their secret thoughts and feelings.

The world's a school
Of wrong; and what proficients swarm around!
We must or imitate or disapprove;
Must list as their accomplices or foes.

Few are the faults we flatter when alone.

The sun of another year has set. The shades of evening have set in—and we can quietly contemplate the past. Let us again refer to our muster-roll, and see how many blanks appear. How many friends and relations have been struck off in the brief space of one year. Eight blanks stand prominently forth—eight from a portion of the generation that has passed away. And among these, our departed friends, are some with whom we have spent many a happy hour, and at whose hands we have received numerous acts of kindness—Peace to their souls! And if from another and better world they are permitted to look down, and read the thoughts of those who still survive them, they will at least have the satisfaction to know that there is one who still cherishes the memory of the past.

The brief period of one year has glided rapidly past, has added another to the years of our pilgrimage, and consequently ought to remind us that the hour is at hand, when we in our turn shall form a part of a generation that shall have passed away.

This is a season of festivity, of friendly congratulation. But, how many of us would tremble like caitiff cowards if we knew that "the hand writing was being traced upon the wall," which sealed our doom, and that we should sleep the icy sleep of death ere the return of a similar period. Hence then is it

Greatly wise to talk with our past hours;
And ask them what report they bore to Heav'n.
For If there's an hereafter—

And that there is, Conscience uninfluenc'd,
And suffer'd to speak out, tells every man;
Then must it be an awful thing to die.

The past has been an eventful year in the history of the world, as well as in that of this portion of the British Empire. The New Year found us engaged in war. The proud banners of England and France floated in bold defiance before the strong-hold of the Russian Autocrat. Our cause was a just and noble one. We

fought in defence of the liberties, both religious and civil, of the whole civilized world—of the weak against the strong. God was with us—and the haughty Muscovite, and his enslaved and barbarous hordes, have learned a lesson they will not easily forget. The blessing of Peace have again been mercifully restored to us. May they be long continued! And may a bitter and withering curse rest upon the head of that man, or set of men, who shall by word or deed, again seek to embroil us in the horrors of war.

Canada has much to be thankful for to the Great Giver of all good. A bountiful harvest has rewarded the labours of her hardy husbandmen—and that awful scourge of our race—the cholera, has not been permitted to decimate her population. Much to be proud of—First, so far as regards the proud position she occupies among the Nations of the earth when competing with them at the Paris Exhibition. Secondly—Of her Rail Road Festival in Montreal. The Iron Horse is now snorting through the primeval forest of yesterday. His Iron Track is being mapped over the broad expanse of her empire territory, and will soon stretch its huge arms into the Far West. Huron and Quebec will by his magic power be brought as it were together—and a few hours will suffice to transport you from the sea-board to the extreme verge of civilization. A new era is before us. Our boundless resources will now be developed. The ploughshare will convert the dark forest into luxuriant cornfields, and the song of the husbandman and merry laugh of his happy children, will echo amid the recent haunts of the Bear, Wolf, and Lynx. The tide of Immigration will be turned to this vast field for enterprise. Commerce and science will unite to second the efforts of the husbandman, to bring forth the hidden treasures from beneath the surface of the earth.

And this mighty combination will give birth to a state of prosperity which a few only have foreseen, but the multitude denied the possibility of, and looked upon as Utopian.

Let the Grand Trunk Railway be extended across the Black North of New Brunswick to Halifax, as the sea-board terminus, thus uniting the three Provinces by the most potent of all bonds—those of self-interest—cemented by a natural and yearly increasing combination of commercial intercourse and prosperity. That once accomplished the federal union of the three into one gigantic Province must follow. A glorious future is then before us, and British N. America may justly claim to be ranked as the first of England's Colonial possessions—as the brightest and peerless jewel in Victoria's Diadem.

MERCATOR.
New Carlisle, 1st January, 1857.

Editor's Department.

MIRAMICHI:

CHATHAM, SATURDAY, JANUARY 17, 1857.

TERMS.—New Subscribers Twelve Shillings and Six Pence, per annum, in all cases in advance. Old Subscribers 12s. 6d. in advance, or 17s. 6d. at the end of the year. We prefer the advance price, and as it effects a large saving, we hope soon to see all our subscribers avail themselves of it. To Clubs of five and upwards, to one address, Ten Shillings a year in advance.

CENTRAL BANK AGENCY, CHATHAM.

Discount days TUESDAYS and FRIDAYS, Hours for business from 10 to 3 o'clock. Notes for Discount to be lodged at the Bank before 3 o'clock, on the day immediately preceding the discount day.

This paper is filed, and may be seen free of charge, at Holloway's Pills and Ointment Establishment, 244 Strand, London, where Advertisements and Subscriptions will be received for this Periodical.

SAVINGS' BANK.

Deposited 5th January, 1857, £569 5 5
Withdrawn 6th January, 1857 £211 1 7

WEEKLY CALENDAR.

New Moon 25th, 7 1/2 3m P. M.—HIGH WATER.

18 S.	2nd Sunday aft. Epiphany	10 43	11 19
19 M.		11 53	
20 Tu		0 33	1 13
21 W	Louis 16th beheaded 1793	1 55	2 37
22 Th		3 11	3 53
23 F.	William Pitt died 1806	4 14	4 35
24 S.		4 58	5 22

The above Tides having been calculated with regard to the moon's horizontal parallax and angular distance from the sun, will be found to be correct, due allowance being made at times for high winds and freshets. For Richibucto, subtract, 2430m.—Bathurst, 2445m.—Dalhousie, 2450m from the above.

STEAMER IN THE GULF.

LAST week we copied an article relative to the exertions making in the Bend, to place a Steamer on the route between Shediac and Quebec. It would appear that the people throughout the County of Westmorland, is fully alive to the importance of the measure. The Borderer, published at Sackville, con-

tains a notice of the efforts making at that place to accomplish this object, as well as a copy of the Petition to the Legislature now in the course of signature. We copy them below. We presume the Petition is a transcript of the one alluded to by the Editor of the Westmorland Times, who stated that it was to be forwarded to this County. The sooner it is sent along the better. Our Legislature will speedily be in session, and there is no time to lose.

"A Petition, for signature, of which the subjoined is a copy, has been left at this office by a gentleman who takes a deep interest in all matters connected with the progress of our country. The necessity of directing Trade into this channel is so obvious to all, and in Westmorland particularly, that it would seem a work of supererogation to set forth the necessity of doing all in our power to secure the advantages that the establishment of such a direct communication with Canada will necessarily produce.

PETITION.

"To the Honorable John Henry Thomas Manners Sutton, Lieut. Governor of the Province of New Brunswick. The Honorable the Legislative Council. The Honorable the House of Assembly:

"The Petition of the undersigned Humbly Sheweth:—

"That your Petitioners would beg leave to call the attention of your Honorable House to the great advantages that would be derived by our Province, and its interests materially advanced, commercially and socially, by a more close connection with our Sister Province of Canada, than at present exists, and in order more effectually to accomplish an object so desirable, your Petitioners humbly suggest the propriety of liberally subsidizing an efficient sea-going Steamer to ply weekly between Montreal, Quebec, and the Railway terminus at Point du Chene, Shediac. The intermediate Ports between Gaspé and Point du Chene to be connected by a tri-weekly Steamer touching at Point du Chene, thus placing the sea Ports on the Gulf of St. Lawrence in weekly communication with Canada, and tri-weekly with St. John.

"Your Petitioners, therefore, without entering into detailed statistics, feel satisfied in calling upon your Honorable House to make such liberal appropriations as you, in your collective wisdom, may deem right, for the aiding and fostering a scheme, the advantages of which are so apparent, forming as it will an unbroken link between our commercial capital and Canada West, including all the intermediate Ports in the Gulf of St. Lawrence."

FREE SCHOOLS.

"In Prince Edward's Island the Public Schools are Free, and are supported by a tax of one half penny per acre on all the lands in the island. The number of schools in operation and the number of pupils in attendance have each increased about 300 per cent in five years. A Normal and Model School has been recently inaugurated."

THE above paragraph is copied from one of our exchanges. It contains some facts that are well worthy the serious attention of the people of New Brunswick.

The subject of Education is now claiming a large share of public attention in this County, and we have no doubt in other parts of the Province. The present system is universally admitted to be defective, entailing a large expenditure with comparative slight benefits resulting therefrom.

That it is surrounded with difficulties, we believe; but if Statesmen in other Provinces have succeeded in devising means to accomplish so important a measure, surely, some plan can be devised by our Legislators to effect so great a good in ours.

There is much talk about politics: the party in power is very naturally exerting its influence to maintain its position; and the other wanting office, is busily employed marshalling its forces, and exerting its ingenuity to win over to their ranks all doubtful politicians. Thus the game proceeds—much valuable time is frittered away—and the real business of the Province suffers. If the same zeal were manifested, and the same exertions used, to devise a more advantageous and comprehensive scheme of Education than at present exists, the object would be obtained, and the benefits that would flow therefore to the rising generation, too many of whom are growing up in ignorance, it is impossible to enumerate.

It would be a matter of thankfulness if some member at the approaching session of the Legislature, would bring in some comprehensive scheme for consideration. The mere agitation of the question, and the debates thereon, would effect some good, but we trust something more tangible than talk will emanate from the Legislature on this vital question.

COUNTY BONAVENTURE.

A Correspondent or New Carlisle, writing to us on the 31st December, communicates the following local news:

"There is nothing new under the sun," is an old Proverb, and though correct in its more comprehensive view, it is certainly at fault when considered in the abstract. Here, for instance, we have had a great novelty of late. A something to astonish the natives, and which we are sure will equally astonish the good folks across the Bay. Even yourself friend Pierce, sitting in your Editorial Chair, and perusing this, will be disposed to doubt the truthfulness of our assertion, when we tell you that an Amateur Play has been performed in New Carlisle, and still more so when we add, that it was expressly got up for the purpose of creating a fund to relieve the poor at this inclement season. Of this both you and your readers may rest assured, that such is the case, and that the great novelty, is likely to become no novelty.

On Friday last the 26th inst., the Farce of "Love a la Mode," written by Charles Macklin, was performed for the benefit of the poor.—Reserved Seats 2s. 6d. others 1s. 3d. The house was what is termed a Bumper!

We congratulate our Amateurs on their success. Great credit is due them for having thus ventured before the public, in order to alleviate the wants of their fellow creatures. Let them continue their labours of charity. A nucleus is now formed, which will we trust be the means of providing a permanent fund for charitable purposes. It is high time something should be done, to meet the wants of our increasing population. Private charity is all very well in its way, but experience has proved that something more is required.

Ladies of New Carlisle, and its vicinity, what have you done? What are you doing? What do you propose to do in the great work of Charity.

"No radiant pearl which crested fortune wears,
No gem which twinkling hangs from Beauty's ears,
Not the bright stars which night's blue arch adorn,

Nor rising suns that gild the vernal morn.
Shine with such lustre as the the tear that breaks,

For others woe down virtue's manly cheeks."

TAX ON WILDERNESS LANDS.

We have much satisfaction in copying from the Woodstock Journal, the annexed paragraphs, to every word of which we heartily respond. We hope at the approaching session of our Legislature to see some honest member independent enough to advocate its adoption, and take the sense of the house on the question.

"Those who desire to promote the settlement of the country, should join in the attempt to secure the imposition of a tax on wilderness lands. The extensive tracts of unimproved land held throughout the Province by individuals and associations, contribute one of the principal drawbacks upon new settlements. These blocks are generally composed of the best land, and located in the most eligible situations for settlement. Through them the settler has to make roads; on every side of them his industry and enterprise make improvements which increase their value many fold; thus a large portion of his labor goes to directly benefit those who do not belong to his community, and render him nothing in return,—who, indeed, are an obstruction and hindrance to his prosperity. Some means should be taken to alter this state of things for the better. It is perhaps impossible wholly to prevent large tracts of land from being thus monopolised, and retained, to the detriment of the public interests; but a tax might be imposed upon such lands sufficient to make through them good roads, which would lighten to some extent the burdens which the struggling backwoodsman has to bear in his mission of opening up the country.

"Justice requires that wilderness lands should be thus taxed; but opposed to the influence of the land speculators justice has small chance of the victory. However, if the people were once to set about this matter with proper determination the Legislature could not long persist in refusing their request. Until the people do take it in hand it is too much to expect any individual politician, or even a party, to set about it. Nevertheless it should be kept constantly before the public. A little wholesome agitation would be of service."

CITY OF HERAT.

We clip the following brief notice of this city from a late paper. The information it conveys will be interesting, particularly at the present time.

"THE CITY OF HERAT, whose recent capture by the Persians threatens to involve England in a war with Persia, and perhaps with Russia, is a place of great antiquity and of commercial and military importance, situated in West Afghanistan. It was formerly a great central mart for the exchange of products from India, China, Tartary, Afghanistan and Persia. For a long time it was the capital of the empire of Tamerlane. Some of its mosques are as old as the 13th century. It was taken from the Afghans by the Persians in 1715—retaken by Nadir Shah in 1731—and recovered by the Afghans in 1749. It was besieged unsuccessfully by the Persians in 1838, at which time its population was estimated at 46,000."