

—On Monday evening of last week, in the city of London, Ont., a terrible catastrophe occurred by the breaking down of the floor of the large City Hall, in which some 2,000 persons were assembled at a meeting held in connection with the close of the municipal elections. A considerable number of those present were precipitated into what is described as "a funnel-shaped death trap," a large safe and a heavy coil of heating pipes falling with or on top of them. As a result twenty persons were taken out dead or in a dying condition, and a large number more suffered more or less serious injuries. The accident resulted from the timbers on which the floor was laid, being weak or insufficiently supported. It appears from statements made since the disaster that the floor was known not to be so strong as it should have been. When such an accident occurs there is of course much discussion and criticism, suits for damages, &c., but that does not restore the lives sacrificed. The time to lock the stable door is before the horse has been stolen. It will be well if the London disaster shall lead to careful inspection of public buildings in other cities and the timely strengthening of structures which are found to be in an unsafe condition.

—The men who are likely to do most good as preachers of the gospel are not those who gravitate to the ministry because that is the way of least resistance and they seem to have no particular taste or ability for anything else. The chosen vessels are rather the men who are succeeding, or have good prospect of success, in other work to which they would gladly devote their energies, but that they hear an imperative voice calling them to a higher and a harder service. Jesus found his chief apostles among busy men, eagerly engaged in the honest and arduous toil of fishermen. They had left their work long enough to go away to the Jordan to hear John, and no doubt had received baptism at his hands. They had seen Jesus then, and a great hope had sprung up in their hearts as they came near to him and felt the influence of his wonderful personality. No doubt he had been thereafter constantly in their thoughts, and often they must have spoken of him with one another. But they had not given themselves up to any idle enthusiasm, and they had not run before they were called. They had gone back to Capernaum and to their hard, honest toil upon the Lake, resuming their wonted duties in connection with their families and as industrious citizens. It was there that Jesus found them plying their trade as fishermen, and called them to be fishers of men.

—The St. John branch of the British and Foreign Bible Society held its annual meeting on Thursday evening of last week, in the Brussels Street Baptist church, as one of the services of the week of prayer. A large congregation was present. The president of the society, Mr. John E. Irvine, presided. In his opening remarks the president made some interesting comparisons touching the work of the Bible Society at the present time, and in 1837 at the beginning of Queen Victoria's reign. The translations of the Bible then numbered 135, they now number 339. The cheapest edition of the New Testament then cost eleven cents, now it is two cents. In respect also to the work of colporteurs and Bible women, there has been a marked development. The president also alluded feelingly to the death, during the year, of four highly esteemed members of the St. John society. These were Messrs. T. B. Barker, Robert Cruikshank, Robert W. Cruikshank and James E. Barnes. From Secretary, Clawson's report, it is learned that the 93rd report of the parent society shows the income for 1896-7 to be £128,500, an increase of £2,000 over the previous year. The sales of Scriptures have amounted to £87,600. Bibles, Testaments and portions of Scripture have been issued to the number of 3,776,133. The ordinary income of the New Brunswick Auxiliary for the year was \$1,384.68, a decrease of \$97 as compared with the previous year. Items of special income include \$70 from Dr. Rotaford's estate, and \$660 on account of legacy, from Mrs. Stephenson, for Bible women work. Miss Wesley, employed as Bible woman in this city, has diligently prosecuted her work. She has been welcomed in all homes visited, and has sold a large number of Bibles and Testaments. Excellent addresses in support of the Society's work were delivered by Rev. Mr. Read, of the Centenary Methodist church, and Rev. Mr. Fraser, of St. Stephen Presbyterian church.

—In the execution of W. H. T. Durrant, which occurred in San Francisco on Friday last, the final scene was reached in a highly sensational and remarkable murder case. The crime of which Durrant was convicted was one of the most atrocious on record. Two young ladies mysteriously disappeared and their bodies were found in the Emanuel Baptist church, of San Francisco, of which both the young women and Durrant were attendants. The evidence upon which the man was convicted was wholly circumstantial, but the chain of evidence was strong, and to the jury as well as the public generally it seemed conclusive. Durrant was tried for the murder of one only of the victims, but it is beyond a doubt that both died by the same hand. He was

found guilty, and condemned. And after all the ingenuity of counsel in connection with the flexible machinery of the law had been exhausted on his behalf, he finally went to the gallows. The man seems to have been one of those strange contradictions which human history occasionally reveals. He was respectfully connected, professedly pious and until the crime for which he has been condemned and executed, was charged upon him, his outward conduct seems to have been without reproach. During his last hours, he read the Bible and spent much time in prayer, and having embraced Roman Catholicism, received from the hands of a priest, the last rites of that church. He went to the scaffold declaring that he was innocent of the crime for which he was to die. Of this remarkable character The Montreal Witness says:

"It is the story of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde over again. We are full of horror at the possibility of such a double life. All the more so as we instinctively realize its possibility. Who will say that there is nothing in his observation of men and nothing in his own nature which answers to these strange contradictions? 'Je vois deux hommes en moi,' said a French king; 'I see two men in me.' The only way to keep the old man down, or, in modern phrase, to let the ape and tiger die, is to cultivate the new man, or rather give place to the indwelling God. Outside religion may throw safeguards around a man's outer life, but without inside religion will make the real life worse and not better."

### Day of Prayer for Colleges.

To the members of the Baptist churches of the Maritime Provinces:

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS.—According to the usage of former years the Day of Prayer for Colleges will be observed this year in connection with the educational work at Wolfville. For reasons of convenience, Thursday, January 20, has been appointed as the date of observance. At Wolfville appropriate exercises will be arranged for each of the Institutions, and at some time during the day a mass meeting of all the schools will be held.

As in other years, it is hoped that all the churches of the Convention will bear this day in mind, and unite in special prayer for this department of the denominational work. Pastors will wish to call attention to the matter on Sunday, the 16th, and may find that day an appropriate occasion for presenting the claims of the educational work to their people. The prayer meeting which comes nearest to the 20th inst. will doubtless, in most of the churches, be set apart to this special object. If this ministration of prayer is real and earnest we shall realize its blessed effects in many directions.

The great service which the institutions have rendered to the churches, and to the life of the people generally, will evoke thanksgiving from every devout and reflecting mind. Abundant occasion for earnest intercession, will also be apparent to those who realize the responsibilities which the governing bodies and the teachers carry, the peculiar temptations which beset student life, and the vast influence for good which these schools may continue to exert if God shall dwell in them and control them by His Spirit.

It would be a delightful feature of the mass meeting on the 20th inst., if we might be able to read before the schools, a number of brief messages, from former students, friends of the Institutions. An invitation is hereby extended to such persons to send brief greetings and messages, which may help us to realize our community of life with the churches and the public, and may stimulate us to the noblest living.

Wolfville, Jan. 7th.

T. TROTTER.

### About Toronto.

Can a more ideal city than Toronto be imagined, in which to spend the merry holiday season! Toronto, the Queen City, ever charming and delightful, is doubly attractive now, crowned with her diadem of snow, set with sparkling frosty jewels.

The stores resplendent in their Christmas attire, are thronged with gay and happy people, feasting their eyes on the many pleasing things in view, and all united in the wish to impart good Christmas cheer. Outside is heard the merry jingle of bells, and one cannot but be impressed by the number of beautiful turn-outs which are indicative of the comfort and wealth of the citizens. Even the coachmen, clad in their livery, surmounted by warm fur capes and astonishing caps, have a contented, happy appearance, and seem to say "good-will to all."

As the guest of Chancellor and Mrs. Wallace, the writer had the pleasure of renewing her acquaintance with many former Maritime Baptists, and of meeting others prominent in the educational work at McMaster. The closing exercises of the University, which took place Tuesday, December twenty-first, were particularly interesting owing to the fact that they commemorated Founder's Day. The spacious rooms and corridors of McMaster Hall, gayly decorated with evergreen and bunting, were thrown open, and filled with the well-wishers and friends of the Institution, presented a brilliant scene.

As a Nova Scotian it gave me great pleasure to see the

Maritime Baptists holding so prominent a place in the religious and educational circles of Toronto. Rev. Charles Eaton has gained for himself a strong place in the affections of his people and preaches weekly to a large and intellectual congregation. Rev. W. W. Weeks, by his eloquent discourses, delivered in his own inimitable earnest manner, and by the nobility of his life, has established for himself a far-reaching influence for good.

The work of Doctors Welton and Goodspeed in the theological department of McMaster is too well known to need comment. To them is indeed given the pleasure of seeing their efforts crowned with success.

As leader of the educational work among the Baptists of Ontario, Chancellor Wallace is doing a grand work, the magnitude of which can only be realized by those who come in daily contact with him. His wonderful executive ability so apparent in the regime of the University, his stern application to work, combined with the facile use of the pen, make him a strong factor in the results McMaster is accomplishing.

Though energetic and faithful in the work of their adopted province, the Maritime Baptists of Toronto, are loyal to their first love, and ever revere and honor our Alma Mater, Acadia.

FAYE M. COLDWELL.

Demill College, St. Catherines, Ont.

### New England News and Notes.

#### The New Year.

The going out of the Old Year and the coming in of the new was made memorable and helpful in New England by appropriate and impressive services held in the churches of all denominations, even some of the Episcopal churches of the low church wing, held watch meetings, and according to reports from all parts of New England, there must have been hundreds of the Lord's people on their knees in prayer, when the new year took the place of the old. On the second day of the new year the week of prayer began which is being generally observed in city and country and the result must be a harvest of good and the salvation of many souls.

In Boston, at Tremont Temple, Dorchester Temple, Dudley Street, Ruggles St., Harvard St., Bowdoin Square and many other churches, some special meetings are being held and the work of reaping has already begun. The churches in Portland, Me., Portsmouth and Manchester, N. H., the cities and towns of Vermont and Connecticut, are redoubling their diligence and are planning to push their work with great unanimity and vigor.

The problems of Romanism and the influences of an increasing foreign population can be met here only by the gospel and a united church in deed earnest, just as the question of paganism was met and its gigantic evils overthrown, during the first three centuries.

Never it seems to me, were the pulpits of N. E. occupied by more able, consecrated and earnest men than now and they do not mean to fail. Newton Theological Seminary, like Acadia, owing to some losses, the stringency of the times, and especially to heavy losses through the permanent reduction in rates of interest, Newton is in need of funds for its current expenses. Last June two very efficient members of its faculty were dismissed and the expenses cut down to hard-pan, but the expenses still exceed the income by many hundreds of dollars. An effort is now being made by Rev. G. A. Rees, the financial secretary and others, to raise the deficiency and all provide for an enlarged endowment with every prospect of ultimate success. New England must take care of Newton.

#### CHURCH EDIFICES REMODELED.

To cleanse and beautify the Lord's house ought to help cleanse and beautify the hearts of the people, and all material improvements, should be followed by corresponding spiritual blessings. Hence we are glad to record that here in Rhode Island some of this work is being done.

The Pearl St. Baptist Church, Providence, Rev. F. E. Tower pastor, having recently spent about \$4,000 in improving their excellent house of worship in order to meet the tastes, and needs of their growing congregations, and Sunday School. The Sunday School has numbered as high as 300, at some of its sessions recently, and under the efficient labors of pastor Tower, and superintendent W. H. Waite, this phenomenal growth, is likely to continue.

The First Church, Allenton, Rev. F. C. Gleason pastor, have also made extensive repairs upon their house of worship. Among other improvements new oak pews have been put in, on circular form, making the auditory very neat, beautiful and attractive. A course of six lectures will soon be given in the church, by six different speakers, among them Rev. W. A. Brady of Narragansett Pier and the writer.

#### OUR FRENCH WORK.

Rev. E. Ramette, who has charge of the French work in our state, is a wise, efficient leader and worker. Like General Grant he knows how to push things, and the work is growing under his leadership. On the 27 of Dec. he organized a French Sunday School at the Stewart St. Baptist Church, their place of meeting, with 4 officers, 4 teachers, and 33 classes. Many others will doubtless unite in the near future. Their Christmas festival was a great success. Addresses were made by Rev. H. M. King, D. D., and Rev. J. V. Osterhaut.

#### BAPTISMS.

Rev. E. Holyoke dedicated the new baptistry of the Calvary church in a very appropriate way by baptizing two candidates on Dec. 26. On the same day Rev. W. H. Lane baptized two candidates at Shawomet, Warwick.

#### GONE TO THEIR REWARD.

Deacon Robert J. Donnelly, of the Allenton church, and Sarah J. Driscoll, of the Warren church, and Mrs. Cardelia E. Green, of the First church, Providence, have recently passed to their reward, and to higher spheres of life and action. Two of them went suddenly, but to the faithful, sudden death is sudden glory. They will be greatly missed, for they were noted for purity of life, strong faith, earnest labors and large gifts. "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am there ye may be also."

J. V. O.

Providence, Jan. 6.