

Correspondence.

London Correspondence.

[From our Special Correspondent.]

London, July 17, 1857.

(Continued from last No.)

PASSION AND POISON.

A year has elapsed since the details of Palmer's iniquities roused public attention to a furore of excitement. Now we have had a somewhat similar case; but in this instance, the accused was a young lady, moving in the first circles of Glasgow, and daughter of a distinguished architect.

Madeleine Smith, aged seventeen only, became acquainted with a young Frenchman called L'Angelier, who appears to have been handsome, vain, and a very Don Juan in his sentiments, if not in habits. He was much inferior to her in position, being only a clerk, and the lady's parents, disapproved of the connection, which was carried on clandestinely. Voluminous packets of letters proved that the lady's passion was all-absorbing, and wholly forgetful of womanly reserve. She doted with maudlin idolatry on her paramour. Time went on. She received addresses from a rich merchant—her passion abated and she wished to become rid of her poor lover. But he held her letters, those all-conquering, all-revealing documents; and, hearing of her engagement, refused to give them up, and threatened exposure. He is supposed to have received cocoa, bread, and coffee, from her—becomes sick and dies: suspicion is excited from a letter of hers found in his pocket: a post mortem examination is held, and considerable quantities of arsenic are found in his stomach. The lady has openly purchased arsenic, "as a cosmetic," and affirms she only used it as such. But suspicions are still more strongly excited; all her letters are taken possession of, and she is tried. Nearly 100 witnesses were examined, and the trial lasted nine days. All throughout it she remained calm, self-possessed, and apparently least interested of the thousands who watched the case. Of three charges in the indictment, a verdict of not guilty was brought in on two: the third is "not proven." This is a peculiarity of Scottish law, bringing acquittal, but leaving the accused open to a fresh trial if further evidence be brought at a future time.

It was not witnessed that she gave him poison, all was circumstantial. The deceased is also said to have frequently talked of suicide, and that too by arsenic. These two grounds influenced the verdict. The man dies from large quantities of arsenic found in his remains: but proof failed that she gave it. God only knows the truth: Madeleine Smith is allowed to leave the country; and till the day of judgment, in all probability, the secret will be untold. But conscience—is that nothing, if guilty? is there no other tribunal than Glasgow? no hereafter of reflection in this life, and—beyond it? Madeleine Smith must settle the matter with her conscience and the terrible unseen. If innocent, she need not fear, if guilty, God have mercy upon her, and lead her to repentance! "Not proven!" we re-echo with the jury; and think, but say no more.

"THE REAPER" AMONG CORONETS.

Humanity, whether decked in ducal robes or the rags of Lazarus, obeys one common law—each resolves its earthly casket into common clay. The Duke of Marlborough and the Earl of Mornington are dead.

Of the former we need only say, that he was descended from that Marlborough whose victories were rewarded by a grateful nation with the magnificent domains of Woodstock and Blenheim, and a goodly purse to maintain it. He died at 64, and his life presents no remarkable features. The successor to the title was known, as the Marquis of Blandford, for a good writer on ecclesiastical subjects, and his elevation will give increased weight to his opinions.

More noteworthy was the career of the Earl of Mornington. Virtual head of a dukely house, he yet died in a "mean lodging in a shabby street; in poverty, solitude, and disrepute; in age unrevered, with a Coronet tarnished by misuse, with ermine besmirched with evil carriage." And yet, years ago, he was known as the star of fashion, gaiety, and luxury; the courted and lauded, the envied and flattered. But then he had one hundred thousand pounds per annum: and for what became of it, let the history of the prodigal, vice and unbounded animalism tell. It went—all: the Dives, Cressus, and Apollo Belvidere became a beggar and an outcast, a miserable old man. £10 a week was given him by the Duke of Wellington; and on that charity alone he subsisted. His life was insured for about

£200,000; but not one policy was his own, and the amount will go to creditors. William Pole Tilney Long Wellesley, fourth Earl of Mornington, has lived and died. And after looking on the whole history, we turn from it with sadness and wonder, thankful that his likes have nearly disappeared, and that the aristocracy has progressed with purified times. We hear but rarely now, if at all, of such as the Duke of Queensbury ("old Q"), whose "Tokay cost 30 guineas a dozen; who maintained the rosiness of his cheeks by the application of raw beefsteaks; and whom very old people still remember to have seen, sitting in his balcony outside his mansion in Piccadilly, under an umbrella, watching the female pedestrians as they passed."

EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCES.

I have not space to consider in detail the recent Conferences; but Prince Albert's speech is so very good, that it seems a pity not to let your readers know just what he said on the Education question of the present day, so I send some extracts. By the way, the Prince has recently received, by patent and in due form, the title of "Prince Consort": but as, to plain people, he was so before, it is only like a man's taking off his coat and putting it on again for a change of suit.

"Since the beginning of the century, while the population has doubled itself, the number of schools both public and private, has been multiplied fourteen times. There were in England and Wales of public schools, 2,876; of private schools, 487; making a total of 3,363. In 1851 (the year of the census) there were in England and Wales—of public schools, 15,518; of private schools, 30,524; making a total of 46,042, giving instruction in all to 2,144,378 scholars of whom 1,422,982 belong to public schools, and 721,396 to the private schools. The rate of progress is further illustrated by statistics, which show that in 1818 the proportion of day-scholars to the population was 1 in 17; in 1833, 1 in 11; and in 1851, 1 in 8. These are great results although I hope they may only be received as instalments of what has yet to be done. But what must be your feelings when you reflect upon the fact, the inquiry into which has brought us together, that this great boon, thus obtained for the mass of the people, and which is freely offered to them, should have been only partially accepted, and upon the whole, so insufficiently applied as to render its use almost valueless? We are told that the total population in England and Wales of children between the ages of 3 and 15, being estimated at 4,908,696, only 2,046,848 attend school at all, whilst 2,861,848 receive no instruction whatever. At the same time an analysis of the scholars with reference to the time allowed for their school tuition, shows that 42 per cent. of them have been at school less than one year, 22 per cent. during one year, 15 per cent. two years, 9 per cent. three years, 5 per cent. four years, 4 per cent. five years. Therefore, out of the two million of scholars alluded to, more than one and a half million remain only two years at school. I leave it to you to judge what the results of such an education can be. I find further, that of these two millions of children attending school, only about 600,000 are above the age of nine. Gentlemen, these are startling facts, which render it evident that no extension of the means of education will be of any avail unless the evil, which lies at the root of the whole question, be removed.

"What measures can be brought to bear upon it, is a delicate question, and will require the nicest care in handling, for there you cut into the very quick of the working man's condition. His children are not only his offspring, to be reared for a future independent position, but they constitute part of his productive power, and work with him for the staff of life. The daughters, especially, are the handmaids of the house, the assistants of the mother, the nurses of the younger children, the aged, and the sick. To deprive the labouring family of their help would be almost to paralyse its domestic existence. On the other hand, carefully collected statistics reveal to us the fact, that while almost 600,000 children between the ages of three and fifteen are absent from school, but known to be employed, no less than 2,200,000 are not at school, whose absence cannot be traced to any ascertained employment, or other legitimate cause. You will have to work, then, upon the minds and hearts of the parents, to place before them the irreparable mischief which they inflict upon those who are entrusted to their care, by keeping them from the light of knowledge—to bring home to their conviction that it is their duty to exert themselves for their children's education, bearing in mind at the same time that it is not only their most sacred duty, but also their highest privilege. Unless they work with you, your work, our work, will be vain; but you will not fail, I feel sure, in obtaining their co-operation if you remind them of their duty to their God and their Creator. Our Heavenly Father, in his boundless goodness, has so made his creatures that they should be happy, and in his wisdom has fitted his means to his ends, giving to all of them different qualities and faculties, in using and developing which they fulfil their destiny, and running their uniform course according to his prescription they find that happiness which he has intended for them. Man alone is born into this world with faculties far nobler than the other creatures, reflecting the image of Him who has willed that there should be beings on earth to know and worship Him, but endowed with the power of self-determination, having reason given him for his guide. He can develop his faculties and obtain that happiness which is offered to him on earth to be com-

pleted hereafter in entire union with Him through the mercy of Christ. But he can also leave these faculties unimproved, and miss his mission on earth. He will then sink to the level of the lower animals, forfeit happiness, and separate from his God, whom he did not know how to find. Gentlemen, I say man has no right to do this. He has no right to throw off the task which is laid upon him for his happiness. It is his duty to fulfil his mission to the utmost of his power, but if *his duty*, the duty of those whom Providence has removed from this awful struggle, and placed beyond the fearful danger, manfully, unceasingly, and untiringly, to aid by advice, assistance, and example the great bulk of the people, who without such aid must almost inevitably succumb to the difficulty of their task. They will not cast from them any aiding hand, and the Almighty will bless the labours of those who work in his cause." (His Royal Highness sat down amidst loud applause.)

"A report was then read, stating that since 1830, more than £2,000,000 had been expended on the establishment of new buildings, furnishing the means of education to more than half a million more children than could before that time have been educated. A sum of more than a million and a quarter was usually expended for educating the children of the working classes, and many schools had been erected from purely private sources. The amount thus expended could not therefore be ascertained."

YOUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.

For the Christian Messenger.

DEAR BROTHER,

I have been requested by the Church in this place to forward the enclosed for the pages of the *Christian Messenger*. The delay has been caused by my leaving home for Boston immediately after it was presented.

The church and congregation of Port Medway severely feel the loss of Bro. Skinner's services. He was universally beloved. The all-wise God knows best how to direct his servants for the advancement of his kingdom.

Truly yours,

Z. P. ARMSTRONG.

East Port Medway, July 28th, '57.

ADDRESS

From the Baptist Church at Port Medway to the REV. ISAAC J. SKINNER.

DEAR BROTHER,

Having taken your leave of us and bid us an affectionate farewell, we desire to express to you the unfeigned sorrow and regret we feel at having that tie severed which has unitedly bound us together in christian fellowship as Pastor and people. Our mingled joys and sorrows have only strengthened our attachment. We can rejoice with you although you have laboured with us under many discouragements. The church has been enlarged and sinners have been made to rejoice in the liberty of the gospel. It will only be known in that day when the secrets of all men shall be revealed, how much good has been done.

We would still crave an interest in your prayers and sympathies wherever you may be called to labour. We hope that the divine blessing may crown your labours with abundant success.

In taking our leave of you we pray that Heaven's best blessings may rest upon you and Mrs. Skinner.

Signed, in behalf of the Church,

Z. P. ARMSTRONG.

May, 1857.

REPLY.

DEAR BRETHREN,

For the space of nearly two years we have been associated as Pastor and people; during which time there have been many occurrences, the remembrance of which at this time is calculated to stir the deepest emotions of our hearts.

We have hailed with joy the return of the wanderer, watched with prayerful anxiety the struggles of the sin-burdened penitent, and witnessed with inexpressible delight the raptures of the liberated believer. We have unitedly enjoyed the presence of our Saviour in the Conference, at the baptismal waters, and at the Lord's table. We have also experienced mutual sorrow as we have gathered around the tomb and deposited in their cold resting-place some of our number, whose spirits, we trust, had gone to be with Christ. Whatever of good has been accomplished through the instrumentality of our united endeavours for the promotion of the Redeemer's cause, it is God who has done it, and to him we would ascribe the glory.

"But the time has come when we must experience the pain of separation, and though we part for a season, yet I trust there is a union of spirit and feeling that will continue to the end of time, and be perpetuated in Heaven where no parting tear shall be shed or parting word uttered.

I thank you, dear brethren and friends, for the

many tokens of your kindness, for the address now presented, and for the kind and brotherly feeling which it breathes towards my companion and myself. Be assured that the expressions it contains are duly appreciated and reciprocated by us.

My prayer is that the Great Head of the Church may speedily send you an under-shepherd to go in and out before you, and above all, that the Great Shepherd himself may be with you.

And now brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.

I. J. SKINNER.

Port Medway, May, 1857.

For the Christian Messenger.

Letter from Rev. Dr. Cramp.

MONTREAL, July 25, 1857.

DEAR BROTHER,

An event of great significance has just occurred in Canada West. I allude to the election of a bishop for the London District. By a recent Act of the Legislature, to which the royal assent has been given, the appointment of bishops, whenever vacancies occur, is vested in the people, that is, in the Synod, which is composed of the representatives of the people, duly chosen in each parish, from both clergy and laity. In the present instance, seventy-five representatives were assembled, upwards of thirty of whom were laymen. There were two candidates for the bishopric, viz, Dr. Bethune, said to be an advocate of high church principles, and Dr. Cronyn, an evangelical clergyman. The latter was elected by a majority of fifteen, of which majority two were clergymen, and thirteen laymen. This result is hailed with great joy by the friends of evangelical truth.

But will free election of bishops be confined to the colonies? Is not this the insertion of the thin end of the wedge? Will the royal *conge d'elire* be long submitted to in England, and an appointment be received there, while a choice is granted here? I trow not. Surely the episcopal church may see the dawning of freedom, and hope, ere many years elapse, to regain the right of managing her own affairs.

I observe that our friends at Brantford, whose Meeting-house was burned down some time ago, are about to erect another, 87 feet by 54, at a cost of £4000. This betokens energy and enterprise.

Nothing of importance has occurred since I last wrote. We purpose leaving for Niagara Falls next week.

Yours truly,

J. M. CRAMP.

For the Christian Messenger.

Obituary Notice.

DEACON STEPHEN FOSTER.

When Brother Foster was about 24 years of age, during a revival of religion under Rev. Mr. Rideout's ministry, he became greatly alarmed in view of his entire sinfulness. The conflict through which he passed in being brought from darkness to light was a severe one, but the light that shined into his soul was clear—giving peace and joy to his troubled spirit. He was baptized and united with the Church. It soon became apparent that God had designed him for a position of usefulness among his people. After a suitable time he was chosen by his brethren to fill the important office of Deacon, which, after mature deliberation, he accepted,—and truly he used it well, and "purchased to himself a good degree, and great boldness in the faith." The principles of truth and righteousness shone forth in all his various pursuits in life. He enjoyed the confidence of the people, and filled a large place in their affections. In the midst of his usefulness the summons came for him to depart. It found him occupied in the Sabbath school and prayer meeting, and by his prayers, tears and exhortations, stimulating his brethren to greater activity in the Redeemer's cause, and in warning sinners to flee from "the wrath to come." After some two weeks illness he closed his eyes to this world, to open them on the glories of the Lamb, who was slain and rose again that he might bring him to enjoy his presence forever.

The Church has sustained a great loss, in less than a year three of its most active members have been removed by death; yet our hope is in Christ our Head.

Brother Foster leaves a wife and a large circle of relatives and other friends to mourn his removal. He died at Chute's Cove, July 11th, of typhoid fever, aged 39 years. "Mark the perfect man and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace."

Ignorance and conceit, are two of the worst qualities to combat. It is easier to dispute with a statesman than with a block-head.

Do I know what God and my own conscience would have me do? That let me do then, though the whole world should be against me.