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Religious Intelligencer.

SAINT JOHN, N. B., JULY 20, 1866.

THE GENERAL CONFERENCE.

The Free Baptist General Conference at Wakefield closed on Wednesday evening, last week. We reached home on Friday. This Conference was one of the most successful and best—if not the very best—that we ever attended. The spirit of union, liberality, and progressiveness prevailed throughout. The different Reports which were presented during the session, relative to the state and prospects of the cause in connection with the denomination, were interesting and encouraging.

THE CHURCHES.

The annual report of the churches showed an increase in numbers during the year, by baptism, of SIX HUNDRED. The Home Mission Society, by its labours, had contributed largely towards this increase; but several brethren who laboured as pastors had experienced unusual success, and several brethren who were voluntary itinerants had also seen gracious revivals. The churches are realizing more and more the necessity for regular ministerial care, and are becoming more and more anxious to secure efficient pastors. Experience has convinced them that revivals, without the subsequent care of the converts, [illegible] by weakness and de[illegible], and that working pastors are the great want of the churches, especially after revivals have been enenjoyed. An interesting Sabbath School Report was made by the brother appointed to that duty last year. The Sabbath, Temperance, and other subjects of interest to the State and progress of religion, were reported upon, and called out some earnest speaking.

FOREIGN AND HOME MISSIONS.

We referred in our "Correspondence" last week to the success of the Foreign Missionary Meeting on Monday evening. The Treasurer's report shows funds on hand to meet the salary of Brother Phillips up to July 1st, and a small balance over. The handsome pledges made at this meeting will, when paid, contribute largely toward meeting the present half year's salary. It is important that the friends of the Foreign Mission Society keep the subject before the public, and make all the efforts possible to increase its funds. On Tuesday evening, the Home Mission Society held its annual meeting. This was the most earnest and enthusiastic meeting of the whole session. The Report read by the Corresponding Secretary represented the success of the Society during the last year as unusually great; its reading was followed by speeches and addresses of a most stirring character. Several brethren pledged one dollar per minute for the time occupied by them in speaking, and the amount paid in cash during the meeting was about one hundred and seventy dollars, and nearly two hundred more were pledged to be paid in shortly.

EDUCATIONAL MOVEMENT.

The Education Society held its public meeting on Tuesday, at 1 o'clock, under rather unfavorable causes, owing to pressure for time, and other circumstances. The result, however, was satisfactory. This movement is, of course, only in embryo. Last year the Society was organized; nothing has been done since towards establishing a school, because we do not conceive that the time had fully come for such steps to be taken; but the leaven has been spreading, the preparatory element is impregnating the minds of the people, and permeating the whole body, and the denomination is steadily moving on to that important and final result. The suggestion made in our columns relative to raising an Educational Fund to aid young men, without means, who give evidence of piety, intellectual power, and a call to the ministry, was acted upon in our meetings. Resolutions were introduced by James R. Hartley, Esquire, and seconded by Rev. J. Noble, that such a Fund be immediately raised, to be employed in aiding students preparing for the ministry. These brethren and several others ably advocated the resolutions, which were unanimously adopted. Brother S. Whitney, of Nova Scotia, made a stirring appeal in behalf of the movement, and proposed to be one of ten to immediately raise FIVE HUNDRED DOLLARS for the object. Bro. W. handed fifty dollars over at once, and nearly three hundred dollars were raised before the meeting closed. The hearts of others are with us, and no lack of means will exist to aid worthy young men. A Committee of seven brethren was subsequently appointed by the Society, to whom is entrusted the management and disbursing of this Fund. It is intended to select such young men as give promise of usefulness in the ministry, but who are deficient in literary attainments, and without means to educate themselves, and to place them in some suitable school or institution for such a length of time as may be thought desirable. We very much regret that we have not an institution of our own to send these young men to; we shall therefore be obliged to avail ourselves of some of the schools or seminaries now in existence—but we hope that only a short time will elapse before we shall have one of our own. The large expense in attending the Freewill Baptist institutions in the States, prevent us from availing ourselves of their advantages at present. We regard this movement to aid our young men as the first practical step of a denominational character in the literary progress and intellectual elevation of the Free Baptist body of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. May the blessing of the great Head of the Church rest upon it!

A LIBERAL GIFT!

It is not often that any of the religious bodies in this Province are enabled to record special acts of liberality from any of their people. Occasionally such instances occur. Our denomination has been made the recipient of a noble gift. Brother GEORGE R. BOYER, of Wakefield, during the session on Tuesday, presented the handsome sum of ONE THOUSAND DOLLARS to the General Conference! This unexpected liberality called forth a unanimous vote of thanks to Bro. Boyer, and the whole Conference reverently knelt and spent a brief season in thanksgiving and prayer to God. This noble gift will be invested in good security, and the interest be a perpetual income to the Conference. We would propose that it be called the "BOYER ENDOWMENT." It is somewhat gratifying to reflect that eight years since the Conference was held in the same place as this year; that our liabilities then fell but little short of four thousand dollars; that since that time this whole debt has been paid, several thousand dollars have been expended in Missions and for other general purposes, the whole reaching about eight thousand dollars; and that now we are not only free from all debt, but have a small balance in the Treasurer's hands, in addition to the liberal gift of Bro. Boyer. During this period, also, several fine meeting houses have been built. Our people have shown themselves liberal, and God has blessed them.

PRIVATE BUSINESS SESSIONS.

Several private sessions of the Conference were held, and various matters of local and general interest were discussed, and harmonious action was agreed upon. The examination of licentiates was committed to a committee of ministers, and several were recommended for license on trial. It is not understood that persons receiving license to preach have any claims for subsequent ordination, unless they approve themselves pious, faithful, and useful men, apt to teach, and devote themselves to the work of the ministry. No candidate is licensed for more than one year at a time, and unless they are found worthy, the license is not renewed for a longer term. Applicants for license are generally placed on trial awhile, unless some special reasons prevent. Several brethren were licensed on trial at the Conference.

DELEGATIONS TO NEXT CONFERENCE.

Elders E. McLeod and Wm. Downey were appointed delegates to the General Conference, of F. C. Baptists in Nova Scotia, to commence in Cornwallis the third Saturday in September next. Our next Conference was appointed to meet with the Church at the South Branch of Oromocto, in July, 1867.

ORDINATIONS.

The last and closing public meeting was held on Wednesday evening, for the purpose of ordaining Brother Jarvis Shaw of Simonds, and Arthur B. Marsh of Fredericton, to the work of the ministry. These brethren having labored successfully for some time, and having undergone a careful examination, it was decided to set them apart in the usual form for the work to which they professed to be called. A large congregation was in attendance. The order of the services was as follows: Singing by congregation; reading of Scriptures by Elder E. McLeod; prayer by Elder Hartt; sermon from 2d Tim. ii. 15, "Study to shew thyself approved unto God" &c. After the sermon the candidates gave a brief relation of their experience and call to the ministry, [illegible] them by Elder McLeod, and which they answered satisfactorily. Then the reading of the Treatise of Faith by Elder McLeod, followed by the candidates solemnly avowing their belief therein, and promising as far as God should give them grace to preach and teach no contrary doctrine. Then the laying on of hands by Elders McLeod, Hartt, and Hartley; prayer by the two first; charge by Elder Hartley; presenting a Bible to each; right hand of fellowship by Elder McLeod; then doxology by congregation, and benediction by Elder Parsons.

CONCLUSION.

The General Conference of 1866 will, without doubt, be long remembered. It was one of the most pleasant religious gatherings we ever attended. The hospitality evinced by the people of Wakefield was beyond praise, and although taxed by great numbers, and also by the length of the session, yet each seemed to vie with the other in making their guests feel comfortable and at home. We feel under great obligations to the kind family who so hospitably entertained us during our stay.

The heat during several of the days was intense, and was a serious drawback to physical comfort; but no abatement of business was allowed, and all seemed to work with a desire to mutual good, and the speedy termination of the session.

A LETTER.

The following note has just reached us, and we are gratified at such testimony:—

Wakefield, July 16, 1866.

REV. AND DEAR SIR—I am happy to inform you that your recent Conference, held at this place, has resulted in a wide-spread favourable influence, and has removed antagonistic feelings which were previously entertained by some persons in our section of the country. I was pleased with forming the acquaintance of the members of the Conference and denomination. Excuse this hasty note, * * * and believe me, dear Sir, yours truly. RUFUS SHAW.

We cannot expect that those who have but little or no interest in the prosperity of the Free Baptist body will sympathize with our feelings or views relative to the denomination. After long years of toil and anxiety, and prayer for its prosperity, we cannot but hail the dawn of increased usefulness with unfeigned joy and devout thankfulness to God. We trust there will be a great increase of sanctified effort during the present year, that the encouragement will stir up renewed energy and power, and that the race for usefulness which the Free Baptist body of this Province has started upon may be as successful as it is promising.

Other matters connected with our recent Conference we shall refer to again.

LETTER FROM A MISSIONARY IN GEORGIA.

ST. SIMON'S, GA., July 3, 1866.

MY DEAR BRO. MCLEOD—The steady onward rush of events, usually so crowd every moment with its cares and duties, that little time is left for calm reflection. Hence, little time to concentrate and condense thoughts suitable for publication.

I have long been hoping that the rushing stream of cares would land me safe in some sly little eddy, long enough to breathe a few moments freely, and to pen a few lines to you.

But no such prospect appears in view; so amid the labours and cares of every day life, I will snatch a few moments, and devote them in part to discharge the deep obligations under which you have placed me.

You will see by my address that I am still in Georgia. All is now very quiet. The fierce anger of the Southern mind appears to be slowly dying out, and a more reflective and reasonable ground being taken. Not a few appear to be cooling down to a more careful, yet no less vengeful policy; while the great body appear to be coming slowly to themselves; and give ground for hope, that ere long, they may like him of Gadara, be clothed and in their right mind.

The Freedmen are everywhere industrious, and hence prosperous. The great bugbear, that the slaves liberated would become idle vagabonds roaming about the country, has exploded, most of them so far as my knowledge extends, are laboring faithfully under contracts, besides making a good crop for themselves. They generally work on the "task" system, hence the time which they gain is their own; and is devoted to raising a separate crop.

Religiously the colored population are yet in slavery. The great sum of theology taught them, especially in the rural districts was obedience to massa. Hence such texts as; "servants obey your masters" were ever ringing in their ears. And admirably were their organizations calculated to enforce this requirement. In fact, the southern rural church is so organized that the whole power of the religious element was secured by the planter upon his rice, corn, and cotton fields. To make this appear, it is only necessary to state that upon each plantation the people were organized under a church functionary termed a "leader." Every one who joined the "gang" was bound to obey their leader in all things. To be disobedient was to be "turned" out, and to be turned out was to be lost; hence the fear of missing heaven made them most careful in their obedience. But the key of strength to the Master, lay in the fact, that no one could be appointed to a leadership, or retain his office without his consent. Therefore, it ever followed that the leaders were men in their master's interest and confidence, and usually men of the most unscrupulous character. Master directed his leader, and the leader taught what massa directed. By this power the entire church was controlled, or should the Minister preaching to a parish be too liberal in his doctrines,—quote any of those very obnoxious sentiments of Our Lord Jesus Christ as, *break every band and let the oppressed go fre*[illegible] the leaders were at once notified to forbid their [illegible]gs going to hear that man, and he was at once [illegible]out a congregation. On the other hand, a man [illegible] the right stamp was ever flooded with hearers; [illegible] the leaders were ordered to bring out their entire [illegible]ng, and they have often been known to resort to [illegible]ows to bring them out.

Nothing was a barrier to church fellowsh[illegible] but insubordination—lying, stealing (if not from [illegible]ssa), adultery, profanity, Sabbath-breaking, all were [illegible]ked at. In fact, the Sabbath was generally assig[illegible] for securing wood, washing clothes, and repairin[illegible]uts. It is no very uncommon thing to find persons i[illegible] good standing in the church who know absolutely [illegible]thing of Jesus our Saviour. His character, His offi[illegible] His atonement are all unknown, and the delude[illegible] soul trusts in a corrupt church for salvation.

We have a class of heathen as difficult to b[illegible]ng to the light as many of those who tread on forei[illegible] soil. But the power of slavery being gone, there is hope. There are a few souls, even in Sardis, who ha[illegible]e not defiled their garments. Light, religious lig[illegible] must do the work, which nothing else can effect. The work is going on, teachers are striving to educ[illegible]te the young; missionaries are preaching the wh[illegible] gospel, and scattering religious books and papers, [illegible]nd we may safely hope that a brighter day is upon [illegible].

The terrible "Upas" of slavery, though [illegible]lled to the ground, is not wholly destroyed, for my[illegible]iads of poisonous roots interlace the religious and social soil. and are constantly sending to the surface little poisonous plants. These must be clipped by the keen blade of truth, or they will soon become rank enough to corrupt the surrounding air.

But the star of hope beams brightly in the horizon. [illegible] sombrous clouds appear through rifts in dark and [illegible] promise, ushering in the glorious day of Immanuel, which shall roll around the world, belting it with light and glory, until none shall say, Know the Lord, for all shall know Him from the least to the greatest.

Fraternally yours, W. S. EATON.

ORDINATION SERVICES.

Services in connection with the ordination of Bro. George McDonald, of the Free Baptist Conference, will be held in the Free Baptist Meeting-house near the mouth of Oromocto, on Sabbath next, commencing at 10 o'clock A. M. Elders McLeod, Downey, and Babcock, are invited to attend.

Services in connection with the ordination of Bro. John E. Reude, of the Free Baptist Conference, will be held in the Free Baptist Meeting-house at Hollerville, Long Reach, on Sabbath the 29th, commencing at 11 o'clock, A. M. Elders McLeod, Hartley, and Downey, are appointed to attend.

THE GREAT FIRE IN PORTLAND, MAINE.

MR. EDITOR—While you, brethren of the Provinces, have been on your way to your annual convocation, and enjoying the hallowed festivities thereof, a calamity has fallen upon our once fair city more formidable than your late Fenian invasion, at least in the destruction of property. It is said that our fire exceeds any thing that ever occurred on our continent before. Yet, strange to tell, so far as it has been ascertained, but two persons perished in the flames, though the hair-breadth escapes were innumerable. Some persons had their hands badly burned and their raiment scorched by going once too often into the burning buildings.

It was at about four, P. M., on our glorious Fourth, that the fire broke out, at a point but a short distance from the wharf where the steamers touch on their way from your city to Boston. A careless or vicious lad threw fire-crackers—that oriental nuisance—into shavings near a cooper's shop. The firemen were prompt, but could not save the shop from the devouring flames, which then laid greedy hold of the great sugar refinery. Owing to the bursting of hose or some other untoward event, that vast brick pile soon succumbed, and by that time an ocean of flame rolled forward, impelled by a high wind. Five hundred engines in a short time would have been fruitless, save to narrow the vast swath which the fire-king was mowing through our city. At first, the movement was slow; but it went on burning all before it in the direction of the wind, and spreading out like a fan. From the time the first spark took to the time all was devoured in the direct course was twelve hours; but three quarters of the course was swept over in the last three or four hours. Not till afternoon of the next day were all the fires along the northern side of the burnt district extinguished. The extreme length of the burnt district is a mile and a quarter.

Our "Forest City" is a forest still; but instead of forming the graceful and grateful gothic green arch over the streets, to shelter the traveller in these scorching July days, the elms are leafless and barkless and charred as if they had been taken from some vast coal-pit and stationed along the streets as curiosities, as rows of black witnesses of the mournful scene. These elms, in their weeds of woe, and the unseemly chimneys now form the "forest city."

One of the government officials tells me he has made an accurate measurement of the extent of the fire by the aid of the maps of the city survey. He finds it equal to one side of a street fifteen miles in length. Eighteen hundred structures of various kinds is the present lowest estimate of our loss in buildings, including the City Hall, the Marble Hotel, and many other of the best buildings. In dollars, our loss is over $12,000,000. The area of the burnt district is full 200 acres. Judging from my recollections of what is still known as the burnt district in London, our fire has been more extensive as to area than the great fire of 1666, a fire whose fame is so great after 200 years have passed away, and to whose memory one of the loftiest monuments was erected in the heart of London. Computed in houseless families, the extent is no less than 4,000, of which sad proof the acres of tents are a novel and striking expression.

Suppose, Mr. Editor, to bring the facts home to yourself, some morning as you were contemplating the effects of a fire in your parish in Fredericton, you should find that some twelve of your families had been burnt out, losing wearing apparel and furniture; eight or ten others had lost their places of business and at least half of their goods; suppose three or four others had lost both houses and business places; but in mercy your sanctuary had been spared. That, Sir, is just about a fair statement of the facts of my parish to-day. Yet how mercifully have we been dealt with! There is the old Payson Church in ashes, and over seventy families, who have been wont to visit it Sabbath after Sabbath, to-day are houseless, most of them without their former places of business, and their goods turned into smoke. The Federal street Baptist Church, just about the same. The Sweedenborgian Church suffered relatively more than either, as only five or six members escaped the loss of either home or business place—most of them lost both. But why these particular losses? Eight parishes have thus suffered the loss of sanctuaries, and similar afflictions to the membership, and as many pastors themselves burned out.

Eight sanctuaries gone; the City Hall and most of the Hotels; all the printing offices and book-stores; all the banks, law-offices, court-rooms, and several school houses; in short, so many dwellings, and all the business part of the city, except a part of Commercial street. One vast forest of ruins remains for us instead of all these. But details and general description utterly fail to make any adequate impression of the terrific calamity that has overtaken us.

But all is not gone. More than half our city stands in its beauty, which is rather enhanced by this terrific back-ground. The spirit of the people is unbroken. We are receiving encouragements from our neighbours in hundreds of thousands of dollars and tons of provisions, car loads of clothing, &c., for the sufferers who are most in need. Better still, at least in some points of view, it is ascertained that not less than $5,000,000 of the insurance will be paid. Streets are already cleared of rubbish. In many places the new foundations are already laid.

While the fire was so remorseless in the destruction of the homes and sanctuaries of the good, the wicked did not escape. I am told that about four hundred rum-shops perished, and about every den of infamy in the city. Would God that these cancers might never come to afflict the fair city that is so soon to spring up from the scene of ruin.

My own house was spared and I was glad to make it a refuge for half a dozen families that came with all they could snatch from the devouring flames. It was my further pleasure to work all night with my horse and carrriage in removing the sick, and the wearing apparel and other light goods from the burning dwellings of my parishioners and of others. Many hastened with their teams from the surrounding country to help their neighbours in distress. One teamster, a poor man, who worked all night without compensation, so overtasked his team that his horse died in the morning. Is it not painful to state in contrast, that some hastened to the city to steal by the cart-load? Some draymen of the city demanded and received all the way from $20 to $100 per load. But we rejoice to say that those *degraded creatures* were the exception, and they will probably lose their licenses and be disowned [illegible] that came to the rescue without *demanding* fee or reward.

[illegible] State street Church was struck by lightning, and a fire kindled in its tower; but the flames were extinguished before much damage was done. One man was caught in setting fire in another part of the city. "Roughs" are flocking for plunder. The sense of security has not returned. D. M. G.

July 10, 1866.

HOME MISSION SOCIETY.

At a regular meeting of the Executive Committee of the Home Mission Society it was

Voted—That the thanks of the Committee be tendered to the Editor of the RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCER for publishing the reports of our missionaries during the past year. Also

Voted—That he be requested to open a list for Home Mission contributions in the INTELLIGENCER similar to that for the Foreign Mission Society.

G. A. H., *Cor. Sec.*

Wakefield, July 11th, 1866.

The Rev. Charles Chiniquy, of Kankakee, Illinois, is on a visit to the Maritime Provinces. He preached in the Congregattional Church on Sunday last, and addressed large congregations in Calvin Church and St. David's Church. He made a favorable and very deep impression. Mr. Chiniquy was formerly a priest, and stood very high in the Church of Rome, owing to his learning and zeal and his efforts in the cause of Temperance among the French Canadians. He is now in full standing in the Canada Presbyterian Church, with which his Mission and College are connected. Letters received in this City from the Rev. William Bennett and others bear testimony to Mr. Chiniquy's personal worth, labors and sacrifices. He has carried with him a large body of people. He has had many difficulties to contend with, and many persecutions to bear, but he is evidently a sincere, able man, who is likely to perform an important work. He is educating young men for the Ministry, in the College at Kankakee, as well as labouring among the people as their pastor. The settlement being one of recent date, the people are comparatively poor, and have suffered from loss of crops, &c. Mr. Chiniquy delivered an address in the Institute last evening on the subject of the Pope's "Last Encyclical against Liberty of Conscience."—*Telegraph.*

VALUE OF LITTLE THINGS.—We clip the following from a monthly report of the Bible Society, recently received:—

In the spring of the year 1862 a young gentleman planted a single potatoe in his aunt's field at Vronheulog, near Bala (a place well known to all our Deputations for more than forty years past), at the same time stating that the produce of that potatoe, at the end of four years, should be given to the Bible Society. It produced in that year thirteen, and these, in the following year one peck; this peck was planted, and in due time it produced three hobbets, or seven and a half bushels. Last spring the produce of the preceding year was again planted, and in October the quantity raised was twenty-eight hobbets, or seven bushels! The market value was £5 12s., and this sum was given me by Mrs. Davies, in the name of her nephew. In remitting the amount I have requested that it may be entered as *the produce of a single potatoe in four years.* The contribution being special in its character, it is to be devoted to the erection of the New Bible House and Warehouse."

THE GRAND DIVISION, Sons of Temperance, of New Brunswick, holds its next session at Moncton, on Wednesday, the 25th inst., at half-past seven o'clock. A full attendance of representatives is requested by the G. W. P.

THE NEWS and THE PRESS.

JULY 20, 1866.

A press of duties for the last month, of an exclusive religious nature, has prevented us from noticing, even in the briefest manner, several secular topics which have recently occupied the public attention. The recent session of the Legislature was as active and useful one for the country as any probably that ever preceded it, and was a wide contrast with the last session of the late House.

The delegates to England to arrange the scheme for Confederation, consist, we understand, of Hon. S. L. Tilley, Hon. R. D. Wilmot, Hon. C. Fisher, Hon. P. Mitchell and Hon. E. B. Chandler. Several of these gentlemen have proceeded to Halifax, it is supposed, *en route* for London.

Hon. Charles Connell has been gazetted Surveyor General, and the writ for his re-election has been issued. We learn that the 24th is appointed for nomination day. No opposition will be brought forward to Mr. Connell, unless it be for the purpose of extorting money, and giving the publicans a harvest. His return is, of course, certain.

John McAdam, Esq., M. P. P., for Charlotte, has been appointed a member of the Executive Council.

The political excitement of the country has passed away, the people breathe freely, and wherever we travel we find them expressing their satisfaction at the present state of political parties, and the prospects of Confederation and their country.

☞ We have received the Prospectus of the Baptist Seminary at Fredericton, N. B., for 1866–7. The following is the staff of teachers: Rev. Dr. Spurden, Professor of Theology and Hebrew; J. E. Hopper, B. A., Principal, Tutor in Classics and Mathematics. Calvin Goodspeed, B. A., Tutor in French and Natural Sciences; Samuel C. Wilber, English Master. Professor C. B. Bill, Teacher of Vocal and Instrumental Music. The tuition fees are: Common English, $2.50; Higher English, $4 00; Classics, $5.00; French, $2.00; Fuel, 50 cents a term for three terms. The Acedemic year for 1866–7 commences 30th August, and continues forty weeks without any intermission.

A telegram from Ottawa last night, states that the new Canadian Tariff passed the Assembly on Tuesday night, with a few modifications.

THE CROPS.—Every prospect exists at present of abundant crops this year. The season is one unusually favorable for grass and all vegetation. The hay crop will exceed last year in some place very largely. The St. John River farms, never appeared better we think. Carleton County is a perfect Egypt. The fruitfulness of the soil in that County is enriching the population rapidly. Wealth is pouring in upon them, and the immense harvest which is now in prospect there, and in all the upper country, is unprecedented. They are a hospitable and liberal people, and God is blessing them.

THE DELEGATION.—Messrs. Chandler and Johnson have proceeded to Halifax by land. Messrs. Tilley, Wilmot and Fisher left by the *Empress* on Wednesday morning. They leave Halifax to-night. Mr. Mitchell will probably proceed *via* New York, in case his business engagements permit him to leave.—*Tel.*

Mr. Connell's acceptance of the office of Surveyor General renders vacant his seat in the House. A new election will, therefore, be held in Carleton. The writs have already been issued. The 24th inst has been set apart for nomination; the 28th for polling; and the 31st for declaration. Mr. Connell will doubtless, be returned without opposition.

FIRE AT CHARLETOWN, P. E. I.—About one fourth of Charlottetown P. E. I. has been laid waste by the devouring element. The fire broke out on Sunday morning about half-past three, in an old house, known as Bagnall's Buildings, near the Head of Pownal Street Wharf, and before the ravages of the fury element were spent, four blocks were laid in ashes. Our readers may form an idea of the extent of the fire, when we state that all is burned from the East side of Pownal Street, from Murray, the Baker's, to Banard's opposite Lord's Corner, up to the West side of Great George Street, the Street on which the Catholic Chapel sides, save and except the Brick Building erected on the site of the old Victoria Hotel, the Brick Bonded Warehouse, 'Osborne House,' Mr. Currie's [illegible] on the Corner opposite the front of the Catholic Chapel. At one time it was feared nothing could save the Catholic Chapel, but fortunately it escaped.

MURDER.—The St. Croix *Courier* of last week, records a foul murder perpetrated at St. George, Charlotte County, the account of which is as follows:

A man named Ryan, a millman, at that place, had a quarrel with a fellow-workman named McCarty. On Friday morning they met each other, and some words passed between them, after which they separated. In the evening, however, Ryan came down again to the mill with an axe-handle in his hand, and told McCarty that he wanted to see him. When they had gone a short distance, Ryan raised the axe-handle and struck McCarty over the head, knocking him down. McCarty then rose to his knees, but being struck again on the back part of the neck fell back dead; while the villainous wretch who had killed him, not content with what he had done, continued battering his head. Ryan then fled and remained at large until arrested by Coroner's warrant. He is now safe in gaol.—*St. Stephen Courier.*

(From the Halifax Express.)

THE FINANCIAL POSITION OF CANADA.

It is of the greatest importance to the people of the Lower Provinces that they should understand clearly the financial condition of the Province with which, in all likelihood, they will at no distant period be confederated. We have all heard enough, and more than enough, of the debts of Canada, of her financial difficulties, her crushing taxation, her bankruptcy and ruin, echoed and re-echoed in every possible form by the opponents of Confederation. It may be well, therefore, to come down to ascertained facts, and by making use of the financial statistics of the year which has lately closed, to endeavor to come at a precise understanding of the prospects and the capabilities of the great colony of Canada. It must be kept in mind that during the year two exceptional difficulties had to be encountered, the abrogation of the Reciprocity Treaty, and the Fenian invasion. At present, however, we will briefly review the commercial statistics, as presented the other day to the House of Assembly by the Finance Minister, Mr. Galt. A country's prosperity is measured by its trade, its manufactures and agriculture. In 1865 the imports of Canada amounted in round numbers to $44,620,000. This year they reach $53,030,000, showing an excess of $8,000,000, which is nearly equal to the imports of Nova Scotia altogether. During the same periods the exports rose from $42,000,000 to nearly $50,000,000 while the corresponding increase of revenue exhibits a total of not less than $1,800,000. This remarkable expansion—most remarkable—when we consider the abrogation of the Reciprocity Treaty, and that it is not confined to particular departments of trade, but affects nearly all alike. The only article which shows a decrease, and that a small one, in imports, is iron, while the increase in free goods is more than ten-fold, rising from $1,200,000 to $13,000,000. In exports there is a small decrease in manufactures and in vessels; but in everything else the increase is as extraordinary as it is gratifying.

In order to show the bound which has taken place in the finances of Canada, it will only be necessary to state that between last year and 1864 there was a deficiency of not less than $1,000,000. Of course this caused some uneasiness, and which was made the most of by the defamers of that fine Province. What we have to look to now, however, is, what is actually before us. The income of Canada during the fiscal year just ended was $12,436,000, while her expenditure was $11,836,000 showing a surplus of $600,000. And it is to be remembered that out of this income was paid $1,150,000 on account of the Fenian invasion. So that notwithstanding this severe and unexpected drait upon her resources, Canada shows a fair balance in her own favour after clearing all liabilities. That so great a measure of prosperity was not calculated upon, is proved by the fact, that the actual exceeds the estimated revenue by $1,800,000.

PROGRESS AT ST. STEPHEN.—It is perfectly surprising to notice the progress which St. Stephen has made within the last three years. The stores have increased about three hundred per cent. within that time; they are all rented and doing well, and while the number of new erections has been very large, there is a great want of both houses and stores. Rents are going up very fast, and the trade area of the district is being daily extended. The importations at St. Stephen would do credit to respectable St. John firms, not, of course, of the largest class, but firms which do a profitable business. The St. Stephen firms send their goods to the upper St. John, and to many parts of Maine, (China and Delph ware and dry goods,) as well as throughout Charlotte and other adjacent counties. The retail business with Calais is injured in consequence of the strictness of the surveillance of the Calais Custom officials, but the wholesale business across the border is far in excess of former times. Several first class Calais firms have come over to St. Stephen to enjoy it. There is a concentration of business at Calais and St. Stephen, the firms formerly doing business in Milltown (on both sides of the St. Croix) finding it to their advantage to establish men exclusively in the largest commercial centre. The increase of population is visible in the several places of worship, which are much better filled than formerly, and in which (as in the streets,) many strange faces are seen. The Baptists, who have a few families in the place, are about to erect a church, and have, we were told, already secured a very eligible site. St. John, as well as Calais, has laid itself under contribution in making up the number of the new firms. "Young St. John" is full of heart and hope, and likely to do credit to the commercial metropolis. Indeed, we should not like to undertake that "young St. John," as now taking root at St. Stephen, would not ere long distance some of the older firms of the parent city in enterprise and progress.—*Morning Journal.*

General Grant is spoken of as the next Presidential Candidate. Some think he will not accept the nomination: but the probability is that he will, and that he will be elected by an overwhelming majority. He is the idol of the nation.

The weather in the American Cities has been unusually hot. Cholera is making progress in New York. George Peabody, the rich London Banker, but a native of Danvers, Massachusetts, has made another princely donation of *one hundred thousand dollars* to the Institute which he founded in South Danvers a few years ago. Such men are by no means numerous. Last year he gave five hundred thousand dollars to the London poor.

It is proposed to raise $50,000 for Mr. Garrison. He deserves it, and more. Some of those who are engaged in getting up the testimonial would willingly have helped lynch him a score of years ago. It is they who are changed, not Mr. Garrison.

BRITISH AND FOREIGN.

Lord Derby had returned with the Queen and submitted the following names, which were approved: Derby, Premier and Leader in the House of Lords; Disraeli, Chancellor of the Exchequer and Leader in the House of Commons; Stanley, Foreign Secretary; Walpole, Home Secretary; Gen. Peel, War Secretary; Sir John Packington, Admiralty; Northcote, Board of Trade; Duke of Buckingham, President of Council.

The London *Times* city article says, the news of the rapid progress of the Prussian army has created an impression on change as to the early possibility of negotiations for peace.

There was a great reform meeting in London on the night of the 2d inst. From 30,000 to 50,000 were present.

The Prince of Wales while riding along Rotten Row, on the 2d, was run against by a runaway horse. The Prince's horse was thrown down, rolling over and over; but the Prince escaped not much hurt.

The Paris *Moniteur*, of the 5th, makes the following announcement:—"An important event has just occurred. After having maintained the honor of his arms in Italy, the Emperor of Austria concurring in the ideas expressed in the Emperor Napoleon's letter of June 11, to his Minister of Foreign Affairs, cedes Venetia to the French Emperor, and accepts his meditation for the conclusion of a peace."

The Emperor Napoleon has hastened to respond to the summons, and immediately communicated with the kings of Prussia and Italy in order to obtain an armistice.

The Austrian Field Marshal Von Gablenz arrived at the Prussian head quarters at Horitz, near Gitzelein, on the evening of the 4th inst., with a flag of truce.

The battle of July 3rd was a great affair. It resulted in the complete defeat of the Austrians.

The Prussians were commanded by the King in person. They met the Austrians under Benedek, between Horitz and Koniggratz. The battle lasted 12 hours. Until 10 o'clock, A. M., the battle was favourable to the Austrians, but after that hour the advantages were with the Prussians. At 12 o'clock, after an obstinate defence, the Prussians carried by storm the strong positions, and by 7 o'clock, P. M., they were in full retreat to Koniggratz, pursued by the Prussian cavalry.

The Austrians were in a complete rout. The road was strewn with baggage which they had thrown away.

The number of killed and wounded on both sides was great; but owing to the extent of the battle-field it had not been ascertained.

The Prussians claim to have captured up to the evening of the 4th, 14,000 prisoners, 116 cannon and several flags.

Three Austrian archdukes are reported wounded.

Prince Sech'enstein and Prince Undischgaz were taken prisoners.

Gen. Eeshitres, commander of an Austrian corps, lost a leg.

Gen. Counthume was shot in the head, and Col. Rhenden and another staff officer killed.

Garibaldi, on the 3rd, attacked the Austrians at Monta Suello. The Austrians made a strong resistance.

The Volunteers finally fell back in good order.

Garabaldi was slightly wounded in the thigh.

The ammunition of the Volunteers was rendered useless by a heavy rain.

Intense enthusiasm prevailed at Berlin where the Prussian victories were announced by salutes of artillery.

For the first time the anniversary of American Independence was celebrated on the 4th of July, conjointly by British and American war vessels in an English port.

The second boat race between Hamill the American, and Kelly, the Englishman, on the Tyne, took place on the 5th, and again resulted in an easy victory for Kelly.

LONDON, 5th—The Prussian and Italian reply to the proposed armistice has not transpired.

There are rumors that the Prussian reply is not favorable.

The Morning *Post* thinks that a Congress will shortly assemble, and that the French Government will propose a general disarmament.

In the commercial circles of London peace is regarded as virtually concluded.

Prince Imperial was present at the Fete in Paris in celebration of American Independence.

Liverpool 5th.—A great battle took place on the 3rd, near Sudowa, resulting in the Prussians obtaining a great and complete victory.

The Prussian took 14,000 prisoners. There were great losses in killed and wounded, but no estimate is given of the numbers.

The Austrians sent in a flag of truce,

Austria has agreed to cede Venetia to the Emperor Napoleon and accept his mediation.

Napoleon immediately communicated with the belligerents.

Breadstuffs dull and declining. Provisions steady. Consols 87¼ @ ⅞. U. S. Five twenties 67¼ @ ¾.

The London *Times* of the 5th says:—"The suddenness and magnitude of the Austrian calamity are too overpowering for any man to speculate on the possible consequences on the destinies of the Austrian empire. With the exception of a few fortresses of no more avail in modern warfare to stay the triumphant progress of a victorious army then Josefstadt and Tannegratz have proved to be, Benedek has nothing in his rear but an open country, nothing between him and the capital but a smooth battle-field, where the cannon, the cavalry and the dread needle guns of the Prussians will have full play. The Austrians have done enough for the honor of their arms. They must now provide for the safety of the State, and this can hardly be done by prolonged resistance.

The most illustrious names in the empire are among the dead and wounded. The King of Prussia is in camp, and the Emperor of Austria is not very far from Benedek's headquarters. Let there be at Pardulitz or Olmutz such an interview as there was after Austerlitz and after Solferino. Better terms than Austria may obtain now will certainly not be granted to her after two or three months' protracted struggle has added to the exasperation of hostile passions.

ARRIVAL OF THE "AFRICA."

HALIFAX, July 18.

Africa, Cook, left Liverpool at Halifax 8 A. M., 18th. She has 53 Halifax and 78 Boston passengers. Helvetia reached Liverpool P. M., 5th. Scotia arrived at Queenstown at 10 evening of the 5th, and reached Liverpool 4 P. M., 6th.

Great Eastern arrived at Beerhaven early on the morning of the 5th. William Corry with shore end of the Cable, anchored at Valentia, morning 7th.

PEACE NEGOTIATIONS.—In commercial circles *Moniteur's* annoucement of cession of Venetia and mediation of Napoleon was accepted as conclusive evidence of peace.

Excitement in London Stock Exchange on 5th was great, especially with regard to Italian securities which largely advanced. English securities were kept down by maintenance of Bank rate at 10 per ct.

On Paris Bourse, rentes advanced four making total recovery 6½ per cent within a few days, while Italian stock advanced 17 per cent in two days.

On the 6th sanguine hopes not only not realized, but gradually melted away. Minister of Police at Berlin announced that proposals for armistic presented by General Gablenz had been declined.

Semi-official Nord Drutsche Teitung says the King, Bismarck, and other Ministers hold that no conditions can be acceded to which did not satisfy the claims of Prussia, and sacrifices made to sustain them.

Florence journals consider Austrian proposals as inadmissable, and regard the cession of Venetia as a stratagem to isolate Prussia, and then resume hostilities agains Italy. They declare Italy will not lend herself to such proceedings. A cession of Venetia to France with a view of subsequent cession to Italy would be violation of national rights and submission to foreigners. Italy will owe Venetia to her arms alone.

Patrie says the Prussian reply to proposal for an armistice is not yet received. Delay is said to have arisen from distance of head quarters in Bohemia, which were yesterday successively advanced several points.

Believed in official circles at Berlin that armistice can only be accepted after provisional settlement of principle basis negotiation for peace.

In regard to German question Prussia will also demand occupation of whole Bohemia, and evacuation by Austria of Fortresses of Koniggratz, Josephstadt and Theresienstadt.

King of Italy replied to Emperor of French thanking him, adding he was about to enter into immediate communication with the King of Prussia.

La France asserts that cession of Venetia will be made unconditionally.

Paris carrespondent of *Pall Mall Gazette* says it is quite a mistake to suppose Austria placed herself at mercy of France when proposing to cede Venetia.