cares of office. We mention these facts to

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MISCELLANEOUS NEWS.

(From the Toronto Globe.)

THE GERMAN-DANISH EMBROGLIO.

As the quarrel between Germany and Denmark has once more assumed an important position in European politics, we propose to give a short *resume* of the main features in a very intricate case. The death of the late King of Denmark has given prominence to a feature in the controversy which may lead to important results.

The Danish monarchy is composed of the Kingdom of Denmark and the Duchies of Schleswig, Holstein, and Lauenburg. The two latter only are included in the Germanic Confederations. They are represented in the Diet, and are liable to the same duties as other States, over which it has control. Schleswig was once a fief of the Danish Crown, but since 1721 it has been a Danish province. Never has it been a member of the confederations. From the days of Charlemagne downward, the river Eider, dividing Schleswig from Holstein, has been the geographical boundary between Germany and Denmark. It is otherwise with Holstein. Up to the dissolution of the German Empire by the conquests of Napoleon, the Kings of Denmark held it in fief of Germany. When in 1816 the Confederation was re-formed, the King of Denmark joined that Confederation as Duke of Holstein and Lauenburg, which latter was ceded to Denmark in lieu of Norway, then annexed to Sweden.

The Danish monarchy was long a despotism. In 1831 it was tempered by Provincial Assemblies, two in Denmark proper, one in Schleswig, and another in Holstein. But the sovereign was independent of them, in so far that he might lawfully disregard their votes and expressed wishes. In 1848, an era of insurrection, the now deceased monarch, Frederick the VII., ascended the throne. He then gave to each of the divisions of the monarchy full parliamentary representation. The concessions he made were great, and were received with joy by the Danes. Not so with the German populations of the Duchies. Schleswig had received so large an infusion, by emigration of the Germanic element, that the Danes were in the minority. A contest speedily arose. Holstein and Schleswig claimed a political and administrative separation from Denmark, a union of the two duchies, and the incorporation of Schleswig into the Germanic Confederation; and further, they claimed the right of the German Augustenburg family to the duchies, on the death of the King of Denmark, who happened to be the last remaining representative of his dynasty. King Frederick refused the demands thus made, and the Holsteiners rose in insurrection. The Danish part of the monarchy patriotically rushed to the rescue, and routed the insurgents. The business would soon have been settled, had not the Germanic Confederation sided with Holstein. At Danevirke the Danes 20,000 strong, gallantly fought 100,000 of their enemies, but were defeated. They retreated to the islands, and for nearly two years successfully and heroically bid defiance to the whole of Germany. Prussia—who had been acting as chief Federal executioner—at length concluded a peace for herself and Germany. Nothing was gained. No concession was made by the Danes. The Confederation, however, delayed the withdrawal of the army until the insurgents could organize and retreat from the rest of Germany. Once more the Danes gave them battle, defeated them, and drove them out of Schleswig into Holstein. There they again found safety under the protection of the Federal army.

Matters had reached this stage when the Confederate powers absolutely refused to withdraw until the King entered into a treaty with them, engaging to put in force a certain constitution. Frederick would not do this. He claimed that he was the ruler of his own people, and that he ought to be allowed to settle the affairs of his monarchy without outside interference; but such duties as he owed to the Confederation by virtue of his position as Duke of Holstein and Lauenburg, those he would discharge. The Confederates then asked what his intentions were. He replied by issuing a proclamation to his own subjects, announcing his purpose to organize a sort of Federal Parliament, elected on the basis of equal representation for the whole monarchy, with seperate "state" assemblies in each duchy and division of the kingdom, for the management of local affairs. He also promised that the two races in Schleswig—the Germans and Danes—should be placed upon a basis of perfect equality; but he refused to enter into any engagement with foreign powers. Germany professed herself well satisfied, her troops were withdrawn, and peace once more reigned.

The constitution the King had promised to his people was immediately put in force. But as soon as the Holsteiners found they could not have everything their own way under it, they again commenced an agitation. They complained that the representation in the central parliament was based on population, and asked that Denmark proper, Schleswig, Holstein, and the minute Duchy of Lauenburg should each be represented by an equal number of members, without any reference to the difference in population. The result would have been that the Danes, although the majority of the people, would have been in the minority in the Congress. Of course, the proposition was refused. But Germany again stepped in and demanded that Holstein and Lauenburg should be exempted from the operation of the constitution. With this the Danes complied. The two duchies were invested with the power granted by the old constitution. This did not suit them, and incited thereto by Prussia, they asked for separate assemblies in the different divisions of the monarchy, each of which should possess an absolute veto on all matters of common interest. This demand was also refused. And finally, they now ask that Holstein shall be herself endowed with an independent vote on all matters which concern the monarchy. If this were granted, the Holstein Assembly would have the power, and would in all probability at once exercise it, to stop the supplies for the Central Government. Such an absurdity cannot be entertained by the Danes, and they steadily refuse the required concession. The Frankfort Diet, however, insists upon it, and has ordered a "Federal execution." Saxony, and we believe Hanover, were each to furnish 6,000 men for the purpose, but, as usual with German proceedings, there was a quarrel about precedence, and nothing has yet been done.

The *City of New York* now brings us the information that Frederick VII. is dead. In accordance with a law passed in 1853 in anticipation of the contingency, the Crown Prince of Denmark, the father of the Princess of Wales, has been raised to the throne, under the title of Christian IX. As soon as the death of Frederick was announced, the Ducal Government of Gotha, as the telegraph reports, "recognised the present hereditary Prince of Augustenburg as Duke of Schleswig and Holstein, and informed the representative of Holstein at the Federal Diet that any other pretender to the succession for the Duchies would be met by a proposition to the Federal Diet, requesting it to protect the rights of the legitimate Prince by the necessary means, and in case of need to establish it by force." If the Duke of Gotha stood alone, the Danes would soon punish his impertinence; but he is protected by the Germanic powers, and it is probable will be supported by them. By the death of the King an impetus has thus been given to a quarrel which may lead to a speedy war. England has always sided with the Danes against Germany, considering that the position which they have taken is just and consonant with the true interests of nations. Certainly in the present juncture she is not likely to desert her ally. By her advice it is that the reported concessions by Denmark have been made. An implied agreement thus to some extent exists, that should Germany venture upon aggression, the Danes will obtain British aid. The marriage of the daughter of the present King with our future King, will give additional force to the mutual understanding. Here, then, is the pith of the whole matter. It is true there are other questions mixed up with it, but they are of minor importance, and mainly affect the internal administration of affairs in Schleswig, with which the Federal Diet has no more right to interfere than England has to interfere with the internal affairs of Prussia.

The patriotic desire which animates the people of Germany for a closer union, is one which England looks upon, and has always looked upon with great favour. It was mainly by her efforts that in 1816 the present Confederation was effected; and the propositions lately put forward by the Emperor of Austria met with her moral support. Every intelligent man in our mother country is in favour of German consolidation. The happiest day which has dawned upon Europe for many a long year will be that which shall witness Germany presenting a firm and unbroken front to France on the one hand, and to Russia on the other. But the way to achieve so desirable a consummation is not by trampling under foot the rights of the noble little kingdom of Denmark.

GOLD CURRENCY.—It is stated that all the oats purchased in Prince Edward Island, this season, for and on account of the Federal Government, have been paid for in gold, the coinage of either Great Britain or the United States. The large amounts of gold in circulation in the British North American Provinces, during the past few years, forms one of the distinguishing and most remarkable features of these Colonial times. In this Province gold coin has, to a very considerable extent, taken the place of Nova Scotia \$4 and \$5 notes, in carrying on the ordinary business of the city and country; and it is the subject of general remark, how unusually bare the currency market is of Provincial paper. Considering the rather large amounts of one pound and \$5 bills that have from time to time been set afloat by the Nova Scotia treasury, it is really remarkable how comparatively few of those attractive little pictures are to be met with. But the absence from circulation of our Provincial paper proves one great and gratifying fact, namely, that the credit of Nova Scotia and the ability of the Province to fulfil every engagement into which it has entered, and redeem to the letter all the pledges to which this country is a party, never stood so high in the estimation of capitalists at home and abroad, as at the present moment. One cannot help thinking, in view of the altogether unprecedented prosperity of this highly favored Province, how little she is indebted for her present proud position, on this North American continent, to the legislative ability of those who occupy seats on the red benches, or the administrative capacity of those who sit in the councils of the country.

The Quebec Mercury says that a Rock Salt Mine has been discovered in the county of Leeds, and a joint stock company, with a capital of \$500,000, in 10,000 shares of \$50 each, is about to be formed in Kingston for the purpose of working it.

Gold and silver bearing quartz veins have been found within nine miles of Victoria, Vancouver's Island, creating a great excitement in that colony.

It is reported that gold has been discovered in Victoria County, Cape Breton.

GOSSIP RESPECTING COUNTESS DANNER—MORALITY OF EUROPEANS IN INDIA.—With respect to gossip of various kinds, it seems that the death of Denmark's King has led some of our enterprising journalists to give us an insight into the family affairs of that Monarch; and they tell strange stories of his "Queen," who (a Dane by birth) was first a Governess in Norway, next an actress in Paris, subsequently a milliner in Copenhagen where she attracted the attention of the King, not then called to the throne. When crowned he contracted a left-hand alliance with this lady and made her a Baroness, and afterwards Countess Danner, gave her a palace for a residence, and surrounded her with all the grandeur and state of Royalty. "In 1850 the marriage of the King was re-celebrated in public in the church of Fredericksburg, and in 1851 and 1854 she accompanied his Majesty in his tours, and participated in all the popular ovations. She was possessed of a firm and intelligent mind, was as jealous of her rank as a veritable Queen, and is said to have had great influence in directing the line of policy which has of late years been pursued by Denmark towards the German Confederacy."

Cases of scandal of all descriptions are received here from India by every mail—of elopements, sometimes successful, at other times frustrated—of actions in which married ladies and married men are concerned. It really appears, says the *Herald*, as if in India peace were the great demoraliser instead of war. During the mutinies we heard of valor and purity going hand in hand; of gallant deeds being accompanied by the noblest acts of self-devotion and self-denial; of respect paid to the sex under temptations not often experienced; of a chivalrous sense of honour, indeed, which made heroes and heroines of all engaged in the struggle. But security once established, the finer feelings appear to be forgotten in too many instances. Now we hear nothing, mail after mail, but the old Anglo-Indian slang about balls and pic-nics; *burra knanas* and *burra beebes*; "spins," flirtation, and the rest of it. We have never been among those who looked upon Indian society as worse in point of morality than society at home; but it must be confessed that its scandals are more flagrant, and they are becoming more frequent, also, than they were.

The French Emperor's speech on the opening of the present session consisted of 2044 words. The transmission by telegraph from the central station in Paris commenced as soon as it was ascertained that the reading had been completed, which was about half-past one. The average time occupied in the transmission to the principal cities of France and Europe was an hour and a quarter. The capitals for which the longest time was required from a want of direct communication were Rome, St. Petersburg, Athens, and Lisbon. The speech was nevertheless received everywhere before the evening, and the journals of the whole of Europe produced it on the following morning, the same as those of Paris.

The following singular paragraph appears in a Parisian journal:—"The origin of whist does not go back further than 80 years. Lord Lyndhurst, born in 1772, was one of the most devoted adepts of this game. It is to him that is owing that manner of playing, namely, when a person holds a single card of a suit that he at once plays it out, and which is known by the name of "Singleton." this name is derived from its inventor, Sir John Singleton Copley. His public services will be forgotten, but his name will survive at the whist table."

ATTEMPTED ELOPEMENT OF AN OLD MAN OF FIFTY WITH A SCHOOL GIRL.—A man fifty years of age, the proprietor of a rag shop, attempted on Thursday, (Thanksgiving day), to elope with a young miss of thirteen years, the daughter of a wealthy resident of Chicago, with whom, in various ways, he had established an intimacy, unknown to the family. He made her acquaintance at a pic-nic, subsequently lavished presents upon her, and finally it seems, actually succeeded in forming a marriage engagement. On Thanksgiving day the rascal called at the house and took the girl out to ride, and in a short time brought up in front of a Catholic church, where arrangements had been made for performing the marriage ceremony. Just as they alighted a brother of the young girl, whose suspicions had been aroused, and who had followed the carriage, appeared on the scene, armed with a pistol, and stepping in front of the old villain told him if he did not return his sister to her home at once, he would blow him through. The old man tried to argue the case, but in vain. The trio got into the carriage and the girl was speedily restored to her parents. On reaching the girl's home the old man took from his anticipated bride some of the articles of dress which he had presented to her and made tracks for his rag shop. Such is the story of the Chicago *Tribune*.

BEGINNING TO WALK.

He's not got his sea-legs, the darling;
He's been in our ship but a year;
He is'nt yet versed in our lingo—
Knows nothing of sailing, I fear.

But he soon will hear more of the billows,
And learn the salt taste of the wave;
One voyage, though it's short, is sufficient,
When our ports are the Cradle and Grave.

CORRESPONDENCE.

"GOD IS LOVE."

"Let gratitude in acts of goodness flow;
Our love to God, in love to man below."

[To such as believe this to be their duty, the following Verses are, with a view to the benefit of the poor, most respectfully and humbly inscribed by the Author.]

"I am all that is, was, or ever shall be: and no mortal has been able to raise the veil which covers my face."—*Inscription on the facade of an ancient Egyptian Temple.*

"All that has ever been I AM,
That is or e'er will be,
Unchanging, through unceasing change,
I AM eternally!

In clouds and darkness, flame and light,
Mysteriously I dwell;
And of my nature none aright
Can or conceive or tell!

For though in all man's active mind
My power may surely trace,
Yet has he ne'er attain'd to raise
The veil that shrouds my face!"

'Twas thus of God Egyptia wrote,
When glory fill'd her land;
And kings, in search of wisdom, sought
Old Nilus' letter'd strand.

When her swart race, all men beside,
In arts and arms excell'd;
And she, to tribute, all the East
Triumphantly compell'd.

When cities, temples, palaces,
All skill and mystic lore,
Made her, of arts and sciences,
The treasure house and store:

Ev'n then, when her illumin'd mind
Knew God was ever nigh,
Pervading, filling, moulding all,
In ocean, earth and sky;—

And great this knowledge was indeed—
Great, wonderful and true;—
Yet, of God's *nature*, she no more
Than mindless matter knew.

She knew that HE was all in all,
Around, beneath, above;
Yet knew she not this glorious truth,
"The great I AM is LOVE!"

This great, this everlasting truth
By Christ to man was taught,
In deeds of mercy, and in words,
With love and wisdom fraught.

And ev'ry heart, where it has found
A sanctified abode,
A living temple it has made,
"*Not built with hands*," to God.

And man, so bless'd, and none but such
Are "*men of God*" indeed,
Who, by their love to all mankind,
Prove "GOD IS LOVE," their creed.

They are not His who fondly think
That they are His alone,
And deem, to Him, all men besides
Are aliens, and unknown.

They are not HIS, who by the hand
The sinner cannot take,
And aid, by words and deeds of Love,
His cruel bonds to break!

They are not HIS, who, all unmov'd,
The shivering wretch can see;—
Unmov'd by Love,—can hear the cry
Of famish'd agony!

Now, at this time, when thy free Love
Redemption sent mankind,
God grant we each, by Love subdued,
May turn, with heavenly mind,

To wife or husband, child or friend,
To parent, sister, brother;
And, knowing that we all have sinned,
Forgive and bless each other!

And now, when at this season here,
Stark Winter's horrors reign,
And Sin and Sorrow, Shame and Want,
In sordid huts complain;

O may thy love, the hearts of those,
Whose stores thyself hath bless'd,
Constrain to seek, where'er they lie,
And succour the distressed:

So shall "th' unrighteous mammon" yield
A blessing to the poor,
And everlasting homes in Heaven
The donors shall secure.

R. B. IRVING.

Charlottetown, 20th Dec., 1863.

N. B.—Copies of the above, neatly printed on fine hot-pressed paper, will be left at the Book and Drug Stores, and at the other principal Stores in Town, to be sold at 9d. each, for the benefit of the poor. R. B. I.

FOR THE PUBLIC.

(No. 3.)

"Justum ac tenaceum proponti virum,
Non civium ardor prava jubentium,
Non vultus instantis tyranni
Mente quatit solida."—HORAT.

MR. EDITOR:

The topic which I have now resolved to analyze is one which in the existing state of promiscuous feeling in this country, requires to be handled not only with delicacy, but also with firmness and decision. The object of this letter, is, as announced in my last, an impartial effort to bring out in their true bearings the real merits of that particular question which has now for such a length of time, and withal so very 'injudiciously' agitated the moral, intellectual, and social equilibrium of this little Island under the well known contour of the Bible controversy. This controversy, as I also intimated, is that especial 'bone of contention' which, belonging more properly in its endorsed value to the present Tory consociation of the land, leads us back to their more distinctive organization into that peculiar aspect which, as a political party, they now present to the common eye of the general public. They, as a body, will not of course themselves pretend to deny that the eccentric course of action which they have hitherto pursued in regard to this veritable question is the main status on which they profess to build their political fame, as well as the most prominent grounds on which they still rest their chief claim to popular favor and current support. At certain times, it is true, as for instance at some of their open canvassing meetings during the recent General Election, I am indeed aware, they have shown a temporary disposition to keep this particular fact clandestinely in the back ground, while again in their every day, more private electioneering incursive movements, which they were ever, for their own credit, but too unwearied in prosecuting, with a zeal greatly deserving of a better cause, they were seldom silent about its vast importance in securing what they please to designate "the Protestant independence of this youthful country." This, however, is simply in keeping with the rest of their mysterious conduct as a general rule, under that signally complex character which we have already remarked as belonging pre-eminently to themselves, in contradistinction to almost every other political faction perhaps ever heard or read of in this world before.

Consistency, indeed, throughout the whole current of their preceding history, in no perceptive respect whatever, has formed any trait in their known practical experience. They have systematically ignored it as a necessary ingredient of public life. Why they should thus scruple so very remarkably at times of stated publicity, and under such contingently distinguishable circumstances as those just instanced, to profess some of their own well understood and most markedly characteristic principles, seems a little difficult to understand. One would certainly infer that they can hardly be extremely certain in their own minds of the abstract propriety of many of their own more fundamental and self-assumed positions. This is more than probably the strict fact of the case. It is always very justly regarded as an imminently bad sign in an individual or body of men, the world ever, to find them thus at any time liable to hesitate about incurring the full responsibility of boldly advancing their own principles. Surely such men must occasionally experience some slight consciousness of shame at their own actions. But fear, we surmise, had very likely more to do with thus preventing our present Goverament candidates at the late election from openly assuming the responsibility of consistently maintaining their true position in this respect before a mixed constituency than anything else. Yes verily—before a mixed constituency! We have, perchance, just hit on something here. Who knows but this may have been the real clue after all to much of their so universally remarked strange inconsistency of conduct in this very respect? This one fact is at all events notoriously certain, that they all alike seemed to labor under no small amount of secret dread, lest this long ridden religious hobby of theirs might be gradually assuming a somewhat different color in the popular mind, and in the special apprehension we do not, to tell the honest truth, think they were far astray. And this may also perhaps be quite sufficient in itself to account for the corresponding fact equally notorious to the universal observation of the whole colony, that they preferred employing other agents of a somewhat peculiar stamp, as temporary coadjutors, to strike through the pulpit and press, this for themselves personally considered, increasingly delicate cord of their comparatively worn out political Fiddle, while they, in the meantime, contented themselves with harping on some other cords of less apparent hazard to the open ear of our mixed population. This was, no doubt, for the time not altogether in one sense a wholly unclever dodge of theirs. It did not fail of procuring them a goodly number of the more credulous sort, or rather of the more easily entrapped description among certain grades of Liberal Protestants. I use the term *grades* here in a purely intellectual sense. We all know that no class of men is often without its own quota of just such soft or supple minded people, who are ever liable to be played upon by just such freaks, and caught by just such straws. The stratagem in the present case was in itself, dear knows, clumsy enough. But the simpler the trap the more apt often such folk are to run blindfold into it. Such traps, however, seldom either work long, or result eventually in victimizing any so completely as the very parties themselves by whom they are so disreputably gotten up. This will most assuredly turn out to be the ultimate result also, in all probability with our much respected Tory friends in the case immediately before us. They have already, we find, begun to manifest strong symptoms of dread at this very trap of their own clumsy manufacture. This same plainly growing feat of this special hobby of their own, we trust may not only still continue to increase day by day as both they and we grow alike in age and experience, but ere another general election shall have arrived, we hope to find them ready to abandon it altogether, even although, as heretofore, they should not succeed in securing anything in the form of a more useful *political steed*, on which to present themselves before the aggregate constituency of this same little Island. But, although like all other mortals, we allow them space for repentance, still we at the same time conceive that it can be nothing but just that they should up to the present moment at least be under the necessity of bearing their own burdens. And one of the very chiefest of these burdens, we feel ready to predict, will be yet found to resolve itself diametrically into nothing more nor less than this self same Bible Question, on which we now descant.

This question, at all events, in every proper political point of view, is one which almost exclusively belongs to them. What I distinctly mean is—and I wish to be distinctly understood—they alone have as yet taken, as a dominant party,—or, more specifically still—they in reality constitute the only party, in any sense, who have even as yet taken any legislative action upon it. This is strictly and indisputably true. It must, therefore, without the slightest room for discussion, belong, as I have already stated, unmistakeably belong in its only properly endorsed value to them. Now, this is even in itself one positive fact which must not be forgotten. No Government can ever be held amenable to any people for anything whatever in which, as a public body—the highest in the land—they have never taken, in their own constituent capacity as a Government, any direct public action. This is a mere truism in political economy. The late Liberal Government never, in so far as I am aware, initiated any such action whatever in their corporate capacity. They can never, therefore, in strict justice, be held amenable to the people for anything relating to this particular subject. They never actually legislated on the question. It is no matter what the country may either, in an outside way, have said or done. The fact still remains the same, and nothing can ever alter it. I am not here, by any means, intending to insert a plea in behalf of the Liberal party in preference to the present: but I merely want to assert a particular fact which in this country is too apt to be overlooked in the uniform political experience of all party legislation alike. As a dominant Governmental party, then, I say public legislation in this particular Bible question first began, and has ever since been confined to our present Tory administration in this Province. Nor even simply so. Not merely in absolute truth have they thus politically adopted it, but they have avowedly gone much further: they have professedly made it the grand central plank, so to speak, in so far as theory goes, of their entire political platform. By it, therefore, as such of course we must expect that they are yet resolved consistently to abide. We have indeed affirmed that they do not appear very much disposed to exhibit very long this peculiar element of consistency in thus abiding conscientiously by it, which the necessity of their case requires. To it, however, whether willing or not, they have no alternative now left them but thus fairly to adhere. They have gone too far at this hour to retrace their steps; they need not even dream of attempting it. In the exact position in which they have voluntarily placed themselves before the country they must henceforward be prepared to stand. What this position unequivocally is, we shall presently see. What we here say is, on it in all honesty, be it what it may, they as a party, in so far as it is concerned, must now be prepared either to stand or fall. But they must stand or fall only, be it manifestly remembered, not as it may in itself be contemplated as forming an open abstract question of prominent interest to every mixed community possessing religious conditions similar to our own, but they must stand or fall on it, considered exclusively in that precise light which it assumes when viewed under the express treatment which it has received from their own own hands. We must take it just as they have given it to us, and they must abide by it, just as it amounts to *that*, precisely *that*, and nothing but *that*, whatever *that* may be which they themselves have made it. And what have we said they did make it: *the grand central plank of their entire political platform?* No; but we have said that they have made it such, *in so far as theory goes*, and only in so far as theory goes are we prepared to prove have they actually made anything of it, whatever. For this fundamental plank of theirs, be it here essentially noted, reveals itself to many of the most intelligent minds in our midst as being, after all, one which is involved in the deepest obscurity, and positively enveloped in the utmost suspicion. The main point to be desiderated, be it remembered, is not, by any means, whether the Bible in itself is a good work or not. This we all at least profess to acknowledge; and if this were the real problem at issue, those of whom we now speak as having endorsed it theoretically as their special political platform in this country would have nothing to fear. But this—alas for human hopes and the security of modern Toryism in Prince Edward Island—is in no sense whatever the real problem at issue. Nor is even the question whether the Bible, thus universally esteemed as in itself incomparably the best of all books, is proper to be used in our common schools, the query at present requiring solution. There are many, no doubt, still labouring under the impression that this is the true point now actually in dispute. Were it really so, however, we are again free to admit that our Tory friends at the present juncture in this Colony would not, perhaps, have quite so much reason to apprehend any great changes to their prospective destiny as a permanent power in the land. But that even this is in any positive degree the actual gist of the question involving thus so much of their public credit as a party, we are not merely in the very outset ready to deny, but in the sequel most emphatically and manifestly prepared to disprove. This can furnish them, we shall duly show, no tenable ground on which to assume any defensible position. Indeed! This, some will doubtless conceive, if once clearly defined and conclusively maintained, is at least making an aggressive movement on our part, which must, in no inconsiderable degree, throw the whole controversy, from beginning to end, into a new garb entirely. Yes, and so it unquestionably does. But, nevertheless, this is the only genuine garb, which we hope before long to demonstrate, it either ever could or ever shall be rightfully capable of assuming. And if we shall only be able fully to satisfy the public mind as to the absolute correctness of this primary thesis on our part, on whose shoulders must the great burden of the whole altercation then self-evidently fall? What will the exact merits of the entire case then in very truth turn out to be? Will it not have simply to hinge itself into the great door of human knowledge, by which all true light has from time immemorial been admitted into the common mind, as comprising in reality nothing more or less than this plain blunt interrogative: whether or not the Bible after all has ever constituted, in any virtual sense, a real plank at all in any political platform whatever which any party, Tory or otherwise, have ever yet adopted in the legislative history of this Province? To say that it has not will most probably sound like a rather startling asseveration to many; but still I do say—and what I say I say most advisedly and, at the same time, most deliberately—it has not. But whether or not, in making this blunt assertion, I am now giving utterance to any more than the strictest truth, the public shall presently be the judges.

W. KEIR.

Malpeque, Dec. 23, 1863.

The Examiner.

Charlottetown, December 28, 1863.

A LULL IN THE POLITICAL ATMOSPHERE.

VERY little or no interest at present attaches to questions connected with our local politics—hence the silence with which we have regarded them for the last two or three weeks. The political sky, though calm, is very far from being clear; but if the people are content with it, we have no desire to get up a tempest on our own account. The Land Commission Humbug has long since been brought to a close. The Government journals are ashamed to say anything about it, and we are tired of laughing at it. For the Delegation Humbug not being brought also to an ignominious close, there is a trifling excuse left—and we use the word trifling in a double sense: Mr. W. H. Pope, one of the Delegates, has not returned from his travels; and from all we hear, we believe that Mr. Pope will not be forced to hurry himself in coming back. The Government, therefore, will have considerable breathing time until the Legislature shall meet, which they will, no doubt, put off as long as they decently can; and by the time that event comes round, some new dodge or humbug in the religious line will be started, to pander to the self interests of the hypocrites in high places—to the prejudices and fanaticism of the bigots in high and low places—and to divert the attention of the general public from the legitimate action of the Administration. We suppose *we* must practise patience like the rest of the community, and wait, in all humility, for the "good time coming" that will develope new schemes of piety from the unctuous souls of our "God-fearing Government."

THE CONCERT TO-MORROW EVENING.

WE trust that our fellow citizens will not forget the Grand Concert by the Choir of St. Dunstan's Cathedral, advertised for to-morrow evening. From all we can learn, there is every reason to expect that it will be quite a brilliant affair, and a crowded house to honor it—the tickets, though put at a good figure, having been readily sold. We are sorry to see that some narrow-souled persons in the *Monitor* and *Protestant* have laboured to throw the brands of religious discord into the path of this most praiseworthy object—yelling the "No-Popery" cry, and attempting to hound on Protestants against Catholics. Such persons falsely accuse the Catholics of keeping their children in ignorance; and now when the Catholics want to establish a school of a high order for the education and enlightenment of their youth, the Bigots won't let them do it, if they can help it. When did a Catholic writer ever advise his co-religiouists *not* to patronise the Bazaars and Pic Nics so often held for religious and educational purposes connected with the various sects of Protestantism? *Never*, we are happy to say—and *never*, we hope, will the like be witnessed. On the contrary, Catholic writers have recommended a liberal patronage to Bazaars and Pic Nics for Protestant purposes; and Catholic ladies, and gentlemen—lay and clerical—have given their money without stint to such objects; and will, we have no doubt, do so again. We have no desire to pursue this subject further now. We wish, indeed, to avoid everything having the least appearance of religious antagonism; and we confidently hope that there is good sense and liberality enough in the community to make the forthcoming Concert eminently successful, as regards the numbers in attendance, despite the envy and narrow-mindedness of a few unprincipled fellows who trade upon, and live by religious discord. The Choir will not disappoint, we feel assured, an audience of taste and intelligence, who do not consider that the maintenance of their religion depends upon abridging their rational, moral and highly intellectual enjoyments.

FIRES!

ON Saturday night last the alarm of fire was given a few minutes after seven o'clock. The fire proceeded from a schooner called the *Amagent*, belonging to Captain Nicholson, of Orwell. She was laying at the head of Queen's Wharf, having been put up for the winter. The fire originated in the cabin from sparks which came from a cooking stove. Had the fire department been in anything like working order, the fire in the schooner might have been put out in a short time; but the fire was observed raging in the cabin of the vessel for fully three quarters of an hour before a single engine made its appearance. A large crowd assembled on the wharf, and at length the new Fire Engine, under control of Capt. McKinnon, made its way to the head of Queen's Wharf. Then fiercer than the flames arose a din of tongues amongst the Engineers, Fire Wardens, Captains, and by-standers in getting the Engine ready. A quarter of an hour was spent in fixing on the suction hose; ten minutes more in getting the Engine in her proper place: then it was found that the valves were frozen, or that some screws were loose. The officers and men perseveringly fumed, fretted, and frittered away their time and patience, but the water would not come; and after fully an hour's labour they found it was useless to waste any more time with the Engine. Then, and not till then, did the Captain of Engine No. 2 order his men to bring down the little Engine, which at all our fires has proved the best of all the Engines. In the meantime, the cabin and upper deck of the schooner were consumed. Only that the night was very calm the vessel would certainly have been totally consumed. The heavy timbers prevented, for a time, the flames from spreading, until a stream of water from Engine No. 2 succeeded in putting out the fire.

The conviction could not but force itself upon every person who observed the proceedings on Saturday night, that there is no preparation here to allay the ravages that may arise any day from fire. We have a military organization, patronised by the Government and supported by the public funds, to keep off foreign invasion, which there is not the remotest probability of ever happening; but we have no competent organization to ward off the dangers of fire, an enemy that may attack us at any moment. We freely admit that every person connected with the fire department, on the occasion of fires, tries to do his best, but there is no system, no deference to order, and no readiness for emergencies. Many observations occur to us upon this subject, but it is almost useless to say anything about it. Every one for a few days will agree with us that something ought to be done, and that will be the end of the subject. The time and energies of our leading men are so occupied with Orange Lodges, Volunteer Corps, and similar institutions, that there is no hope of having them roused up to see the necessity of having an efficient Fire Department until one half of the town may be burned down. We would, however, advise the citizens who always turn out at fires with commendable alacrity, to make for the Engine House first, instead of to the fire, so as that when they reach the latter place they may be of some service.

Since writing the above, another fire has occurred in the City, affording a further illustration of the inefficiency of the Fire Department. At 2 o'clock this morning, the Fire Bell gave an alarm. This Bell is not sufficiently loud to be heard at any considerable distance from the Old Court House, and therefore, a larger one should be provided, or another Bell placed on the Prince of Wales College. The fire originated in a house in the occupation of Mr. John Quinn, at the western end of the City, generally called the Bog. It was said that a writ was about to be served by the Sheriff on the house for the amount of a mortgage on Saturday night last, and that Quinn requested the Sheriff not to seize the property till Monday. A smaller crowd than usually gather at fires were in attendance. A few persons exerted themselves to put out the fire, but the greater number skulked from their duty. In fact, many did not show the least sympathy, but appeared to be not sorry that the "Bog was burning." The Engines out of order, no water could be had, the people would not form lines, and the truckmen could not be found to carry the water casks, and nothing but confusion was the order of the day. A bitterly cold breeze from a northerly direction fanned the flames, which spread on all sides of the house in which the fire originated. The fire could not be stopped until four houses and a large stable were burned to the ground. The property belonged to a Mrs. Young, who is said to be an honest and industrious person. The houses were only partially insured.

THE NEW AMATEUR BAND.

DURING the past summer several of our city musical amateurs, unconnected with the Volunteer Band, sent to the United States for some new instruments, with which and other instruments, they formed themselves into an Amateur Band. It seems that the members have been diligently practising, for on Christmas-Day whilst playing the Irish Volunteers to and from St. Dunstan's Cathedral they made a very creditable turn out. Although they labored under great difficulties, the weather being cold and the walking slippery, the music was above mediocrity. The principal of the Quick Steps, and Marches were distinctly rendered whilst the other parts were well sustained. There is reason to hope that this Band, in the course of a short time, will reach high proficiency in the divine art of music. It stands a better chance of being a more permanent affair than the Volunteer Band, inasmuch as the members are chiefly old residents and are not so likely to remove as young men. The want of a good Band has often been felt in this place to enliven the proceedings of the gatherings of the people. It has been observed regarding lawyers and newspapers that a single one never thrives so well as two in a community. In like manner, it may happen that, whilst one Band could never exist in Charlottetown, for any length of time, like the "last rose of summer left blooming alone," the two Bands now in existence may benefit each other.

SUPPOSED CASE OF WILFUL MURDER.

During the week rumors have been afloat concerning the mysterious death of a man named McInnis, who resided on the road leading from Cardigan to Georgetown. One day last week he left home with a horse and cart with grain to be ground at the mill. His next door neighbour desired him to take a bag of grain to the mill, with which request McInnis complied. In the evening, McInnis was observed walking towards his home, preceded a short distance by his horse and cart. The horse and cart reached home, but the owner was found dead in the cart. It was supposed, at first, that he being an aged man, fell down in the cart in an epileptic fit, (he being subject to epilepsy), and was thereby killed. But it was observed on examination that the blood with which he was covered proceeded from wounds about his head, which had been apparently inflicted by some instrument like an axe. J. R. Bourke, Esq., summoned a jury to hold an inquest on the body, and the members of the jury—with the exception of the person who requested McInnis to take the bag of grain to the mill, who was one of the jurors—came to the conclusion that the deceased had been wilfully murdered. The person alluded to would not sign the verdict of wilful murder, and persistently declared that McInnis could not have met his death through foul means. Suspicion, therefore, fell upon him, and one of the jurors desired him to lay his hand on the body of McInnis, and declare he was not a murdered man. The person refused to do so; and McInnis's wife remarked that he need not be put to that test, as he was the last person who would injure her husband. Mr. Bourke dismissed the jury, but recorded a verdict of wilful murder against some unknown person. The body of the deceased was buried, but the neighbours had such a strong suspicion that the individual alluded to was guilty of his death, that they requested Mr. Bourke to summon the jury again. He did so, and they all attended, except the supposed murderer. Mr. Bourke sent the constable after him several times, but he refused to attend. At length a writ was issued for his apprehension, but he hid himself, and up to the time when we heard the above particulars, he was not taken.

NEWS BY THE MAILS.—RECAPTURE OF THE FEDERAL STEAMER CHESAPEAKE.

WE have had a large batch of Colonial and American Mails on Friday evening last, but no later dates than the 22d. The English Mail Steamer, as we learn by telegraph, arrived at Halifax on Wednesday, the 23d, but the Mails for this Island had not arrived here up to the time of going to press.

There is scarcely any news of much importance by the Colonial and American Mails, except an account of the recapture of the Steamer *Chesapeake*, whose seizure by Southern sympathisers was described at some length in a late No. of this paper. The recapture was effected near Halifax, and the vessel was brought into that port, where she was handed over to the Provincial authorities, who will deal with the question of her ownership. The Halifax papers are filled with sensation articles on the subject. The facts of the recapture are succinctly and clearly stated in the following short article, for which we are indebted to the *Halifax Citizen* of the 17th instant:—

At three P M. to-day the *Chesapeake*, which vessel had been recaptured this morning in Sambro, steamed up the harbor with a prize crew on board, followed by the *Ella & Annie*, and shortly afterwards by the *Dacotah*, another U. States gunboat. We learn that after the arrival of the Chespeake at Sambro yesterday evening, her commander came up to the city, and made arrangements for obtaining a supply of coal, which was sent down to Sambro in small vessels during the night.

This fact becoming known to the American Consul, was communicated by him to the commander of the *Ella & Annie*, who immediately started for Sambro, where he succeeded in getting possession of the Chesapeake this morning. The latter ship was busily engaged in taking in coal from small vessels alongside, and her crew were at breakfast, when seeing the gunboat entering the harbor, they made their escape to the shore, abandoning the ship without resistance to her captors.

Only four men remained on board, and of these two are believed to have been part of the original crew when she left New York. One of the others has been recognized as a notorious New York thief and blackleg. The *Ella & Annie* was proceeding to sea with her prize, when falling in with the *Dacotah*, the commander of that vessel, as senior officer, ordered them to bear up for Halifax. On arriving here the *Chesapeake* was handed over to the Provincial authorities, upon whom will rest the responsibility of deciding the merits of this most singular transaction.

The *Chesapeake* had a valuable cargo; but we learn that all her deck load has been sold by her temporary owners, at Shelburne and LaHave; a barrel of sugar being offered for a chaldron of coal, and other goods sacrificed in the same proportion.

It now transpires that Braine was not the commander. At Grand Manan, Captain Vernon Locke, of Ragged Island, who has been for some time in the Confederate service, joined the ship and assumed the command. Braine left the ship either at Shelburne or LaHave, and has not since been on board.—He was in this city one or two nights of this week. Some time last night, or early this morning, a warrant was issued for his apprehension, charging him with the crime of piracy and murder, and officers of justice are now in pursuit of him.

The character of the transaction in which Braine was the chief actor, being thus recognised by the legal authorities of the country. We presume warrants will be issued forthwith for the apprehension of his associates, who are now all within the Province, and it is not very probable that many of them will escape.

THE WAR IN THE STATES.

By Telegraph to the Examiner and Reading Room.

DECEMBER 21, a. m.

Schr. I. L. Gerety, from Matamoras with cotton for New York was captured when two days out by passengers on board, who hoisted Confederate flag. Pirates set captain and crew afloat in boat; they report four other parties in Matamoras waiting for like chances.

Stories afloat in Culpepper that Confederate army with President Davis in command about to make last desperate attempt on the North.

Magazine exploded in Yorktown, destroying nearly all the buildings in the town.

Federals captured Fort Sperance in Matagorda Bay, (on Texas coast) several thousand Confederate troops, hundred prisoners.

DECEMBER 22.

Letter from Bealton Station reports rumor, Confederates reinforcing Lee to attack the army of the Potomac. Cumberland Gap despatch says, Longstreet divided his army, attacking two points with design to cut off Gens. Shackleford and Foster. Plan was frustrated.

Heavy firing heard on the 17th, between Tagwell and Chink River. Later advices report Longstreet returning Ball Gap. Confederate attack on outposts of Fort Gibson, Arkansas, was repulsed. Two-thirds of Kirby Smith's force preparing attack on Little Rock; balance to attack Fort Smith.

Roving bands of Guerillas swarming in West Tennessee. Captured ram "Atlanta" refitted, and will soon go to sea from Philadelphia.

The Union Virginia Legislature passed a bill calling Convention, for abolition of slavery.

DECEMBER 23.

Reported surrounding of Longstreet not confirmed. Times' Washington despatch says letter from Charleston fleet states, that as far as visible, the only obstructions were double lines of piles across the Channel, from Fort Pinkney to Middle Ground, and thence to Fort Johnston. There is a two hundred feet opening.

Cincinnatti despatch says General Kimball from Arkansas, reports immense Union meeting being held there, endorsing administration in suppressing rebellion, and recommends State Convention for re-organizing State Government.

Reported that Gen. Butler would leave Fort Monroe to-day for City Point with one thousand prisoners, for exchange, Baltimore Secessionists.

Reported Lee's army will winter at Hanover Court House. Also reported Confederates sent Commissioners to Ireland to obtain recruits.

Gold at New York on the 21st, 152.

DEC. 23, (a. m.)

Reported disaster to Federal iron-clads undoubtedly a *canard*. Reported death of Longstreet another *canard*.

World's despatch says Gen. Burnside is expected to take permanent leave of army and retire to private life.

Generals Sherman and Shackford, and staff, had arrived at Louisville last evening.

Fort Smith despatch says Confederate force crossing Arkansas River, going northward under Standwatt, Aider, and Quantrell, were routed by Captain Spillan with some Indiana troops, after an hour's fight at Banner Fork. Confederates will doubtless organize. Supposed they design concentrating on Kansas border.

Foreign arrival reports King whipped Heenan in twenty-five rounds, lasting thirty-one minutes. Tom Sayers was Heenan's second.

DEC. 24, 8, P. M.

Hilton Head arrival mentions Monitor "Rales" got aground, while on picket duty near Fort Johnston, she was got off and towed to Hilton Head for repairs.

Gen. Gilmore was shelling Charleston daily with hundred pounders. Charleston despatch mention the same but reports little damage.

Expected Arkansas will soon be represented in Congress, arrangements progressing for election in that state and believed state Government will soon be in harmony with the general Government.

Reported that all the Confederate rams in England have been offered to the English Government at certain price; proposition is before the Admiralty.

Federal navy department will build four casemated steamships to carry twenty inch guns.

DEC. 26, 8.30, P. M.

"Herald" has letter from Gunboat "Huron" in Soboy Sound, announcing the capture of Confederate blockade running Steamer "Cheathem" laden with cotton, tobacco, rosin, &c., prize estimated at a hundred and fifty thousand dollars. English bark "Circapium" was seized at New York under suspicious circumstances, and many arrests were made, of males and females—four revolvers were taken from one woman.

Government grows more rigid relative to passport system for vessels, all vessels of whatever nation will be subject to it.

Texas reports General Washburn with considerable body of troops, started for Indianola—believed that San Antonia will soon be in Federal possession.

Great number of Texans represented reinforced at the prospect of early redemption of the State.

SOUTHERN ITEMS.

President Davis' message is despondent over the loss of Vicksburg, Port Hudson and other points. No improvement in the relations of the Confederacy with Foreign powers; on the contrary greater divergence among them, assuming an attitude positively unfriendly. Accuses Great Britain of marked partiality. He says finances demand strict and earnest attention, and recommends taxation instead of further issues of bonds and treasury notes.

It is reported that the Georgia Senate has ordered the conscription of every able bodied citizen over 15 years.

Some peace resolutions recently introduced in the North Carolina House of Commons got only two votes.

A Newbern despatch says that immense quantities of goods have run the blockade into Wilmington, and are supplying the Confederate Army.

The number of steamers and vessels engaged in this business is stated at over two hundred.

The rebels have pleasant things in store for Burnside—should they capture him. The Petersburg Express, referring to Morgan's confinement in the Ohio Penitentiary says:

"Should a kind, just Providence so will it that Burnside should fall into our hands, we trust that a cell in some State prison, with a shaved head, coarse fare, prison garb, etc., will be instantly awarded him, as it was by his order that General Morgan was subjected to the outrages which he has endured.

The Charleston Mercury says that since last March the arsenal in that city has melted up nine hundred tons of iron, and cast more than sixteen thousand projectiles, exclusive of grape and canister.

The rebels say they captured Parson Brownlow's press, type and paper thirty miles from Knoxville.

The amount of cotton shipped from Wilmington between Jan. 1. and Sept. 30, 1863, was 30,842 bales.

The Alabama State salt works now produce over 300 bushels daily. Private establishments produce about 2600 bushels daily, and it is said the supply will exceed the amount.

HOW THE SOUTH SUFFERS.

[Private correspondence of a lady who has travelled in the South.]

"The desolation of the Southern States beggars description. Destitution and poverty have taken the place of opulence and prosperity. Men that were worth hundreds of thousands are reduced to utter poverty. As for the luxuries of life, formerly so abundant in the South, there are none. Who were formerly the wealthiest have nothing to sustain life but what the country affords, and not enough of that, for by impressment it is

October 26, 1863. Charlottetown, Aug. 24, 1863. tf Charlottetown, Sept. 28, 1863. 3m January 6, 1862. W. R. W. borough-street, near King-square. Price—1s per