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ASSOCIATED WITH

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FORMATION AND VALUE OF CHRISTIAN CHARACTER.

It costs much to form the character of a mature and experienced Christian. To estimate aright what has gone into such a character, and what constitutes its true worth, it would be necessary to understand fully the plans of the Eternal Father; the work of the Redeemer; the agency of the Holy Spirit; the influences which have been brought to bear on the intellect, the will, the imagination, and the heart; and the conflicts and struggles of perhaps a long and troubled life. Into every such character there enters, as an essential element in its formation, and, in the result, the purpose of God, laid far back in the depths of eternity, to provide a plan of salvation, and the purpose that that plan should be developed in reference to that particular member of our fallen race to whom it is in fact thus applied. Into the formation of that character there has entered, as an element, all that the Saviour has done in becoming incarnate, in his trials, his teachings, and his sufferings on earth; in his agony in the garden, and in the great sacrifice made for sin on the cross; for the result of that work is seen on earth only in the formation of the character of a Christian. In a formation of that character there has entered, as an element, all that the Holy Spirit does for man; in enlightening the mind, in arresting the attention, in arousing the conscience, in converting the heart, and in sanctifying the soul; for the formation of such a character is the main work of the Holy Spirit on the earth. In the formation of such a character there enters all that is done by parental counsel; by the slow process of training up a child for God; by the admonitions and efforts of pious friends, and all that occurs under those providential events by which the attention is arrested and the mind turned to the subject of religion. And into the formation of such a character there enter the struggles and conflicts of the Christian himself; all that has been done by him to gain a just knowledge of God, to overcome his own easily besetting sins, to learn his duty, to resist temptation, to become conformed to the example of his Master, to be prepared for death and for heaven. It is no light thing, therefore, to form a mature Christian character; it is no unimportant event when such a character is formed. In such a character we see the result of the eternal purposes of God, and the result of a process that has awakened the deepest interest in heaven, earth and hell.

Such a character is usually, perhaps always, of slow growth; and it is of the more value because it *is* of slow growth. The mushroom starts up in a night, porous and spongy and valueless; the germ of the oak requires centuries to develop itself, to send out its great boughs, to form the stately trunk that shall defy the tempest, and to strike its roots deep in the earth, and its value is measured by the years that have rolled away in its slow formation. The ferns of the old geological periods of the earth, when the crust of the earth was still heated, shot up in a gigantic growth, adapting them to the purpose for which they were intended, when, imbedded in vast masses, they were to be converted into coal, to form the fuel for a future world; but that which is to form the ribs, and the beams, and the masts of the vessel that is to plough the deeps of ocean, and stand firm amid heaving billows, and resist the rude shocks of war, is the result of slow accretions, and is the growth of many years.

Every such mature Christian character has an individual history, and there is not a trait of that character which is not the result of something in that history which has made the result what it is. There is no more of chance in the formation of a Christian character than there is in the growth of the lofty Norwegian pine, from which the mast of the "great Admiral" is hewn, or the live oak of the ever-glades of Florida, which furnishes the keel and the ribs of "the man-of-war." A few of the struggles which have gone into the formation of mature Christian characters have been recorded, and but a few only. We know something, but after all very little, of what made Paul such a man as he was, and of what entered as forming elements into the character of Augustine, of Luther, of Edwards. But the struggles, the conflicts, the victories, the defeats, the hinderances, the triumphs of the mature Christian, in lives less known than theirs, are, for the most part, unrecorded on earth. Yet it is as true that such struggles have entered into the formation of every mature Christian character, as it was in the case of Paul, Augustine, Luther, Edwards; and it is as true that when the process shall come to be disclosed in heaven, it will be found that there has been no trait of Christian character developed that is not the result of a distinct struggle, and which is not itself a victory.

Such a character is of inestimable value in a community. Considered merely in reference to its influence on this world apart from all reference to the world to come, it is worth all which it has cost. On this more than on most other things, the welfare of the world, the cause of sound morals, the preservation and diffusion of true religion, depend. The hearts of men may be insensible to the power of abstract truth, however valuable in itself, but they are never insensible to the power of a pure and holy life. Men may cavil at argument, they cannot cavil at that which is pure, and kind, and benevolent in the life. The Bible may be a neglected book, but men cannot neglect the influence which springs from a pure heart, from kindness shown in times of trial, and from sympathy in the day of adversity. It is easy to allege of a preacher of the gospel, however earnest and eloquent he may be, that it is his "business" to be earnest and eloquent, that he is "paid for it," and that it constitutes his very "living;" but it is not possible to allege this of the pure virtue of a Christian father, and the tender sympathies of a Christian mother. The mass of men obtain their ideas of religion, not from the pulpit, or from treatises on theology, but from the examples in connexion with a Christian profession which they see around them in daily life. It is not from Grotius, and Butler and Paley, that they are impressed with the truth of religion, for the mass of men never have even heard of their names; it is not so much from the Bible, for the mass of men do not read the Bible; it is not from the pulpit, for there are multitudes who enter no place of public worship; it is from what they *see* in the lives of the professed friends of God. There is no power of a perverted logic which can beat down the argument drawn from "a meek and quiet spirit;" there is no sophistry which can turn aside the conclusion in favor of religion furnished by a devout and holy life.

There is something most sad, so far as this world is concerned, when such influence is withdrawn from the earth; when the mature and ripe Christian, having gained his victories, and having placed himself on an eminence from which his light might shine afar, is taken away by death. For ourselves, we never see an aged tree cut down, valuable as may be the purposes to which it may be applied, without melancholy emotions. The axe-man, careless as to what he is about, destroys at a few strokes the life which has been the slow growth of scores of years, perhaps of centuries. We cannot but reflect how long and how patient has been that growth. We cannot but think of the little germ, and its struggles for life. We cannot but think of the winter's cold which endangered its early life, and the fury of the storm which raged as if on purpose to twist off its branches and to tear it from its roots; we cannot but think how bravely—how manfully—how heroically—that oak stood in the fury of the storm; and we cannot but think how calm and sublime it appears now that it is so strong that it may defy *any* storm: and yet, in a moment, all its glory is laid low. How we miss now its venerable form, its shade, its beauty! So we see the mature Christian fall. By long conflicts; by much prayer; by the favouring grace of God; by the results of many a struggle in life, he had reached a point where he seemed secure, and where his influence spread afar. Alas! in a moment all this is withdrawn from the world, and all that there was in his living virtue to sustain the cause of truth has been removed. What a thing is death! Death to the old oak! death to a Christian man—so useful, so needed in a world like this!

And yet there is that in a good man which does not die. "Abel being dead, yet speaketh;" and the influence that flows from the character of the mature Christian man does not die. His virtues, his example, his remembered worth, constitute a part of that vast inheritance in favor of religion which goes down from age to age, and which lays the foundation for the assurance that true religion will yet triumph in the earth. The argument for religion—the real influence which is keeping it up in the world—is derived from the accumulated examples of all the friends of God that have ever lived in the earth, though their individual names may have been forgotten, as the green islands that spring up in the waste of oceans are the results of the numberless animalcules that spent their little lives in piling up the coral reefs, while they themselves have passed away unknown. Yet they, in silently and noiselessly heaping up those coral reefs, laid foundations beneath the surface of the agitated ocean which shall not be moved by any heaving of its billows, and which shall be the basis of islands and continents,—the firm foundation on which forests shall grow, and cities shall rise, and lofty columns commemorating great events in the world's history, shall stand to the end of time. So past ages have sent down to us, for our example, and for the confirmation of religion in our times, the results of the lives of all who have lived and struggled for God and for virtue; so to all that has been accumulated in the past in favor of virtue, there shall be added soon all that there is in the lives of the friends of God in this generation; so the strength and the power of the argument shall be augmented by the virtues of all that are yet to live and to die until the argument shall become complete, and the world shall be filled with the knowledge of God. The old oak is put to a better use—it is *worth* more,—when it is converted into the keel and the ribs of the vessel that shall bear the productions of one land in commercial exchanges to another, or that shall bear the herald of salvation to the distant darkened shores of Paganism, than it was when it stood *merely* to show its own greatness, and to resist the storm and tempest; and the influence of a Christian man, valuable as it is, as that influence goes into the accumulated argument for religion in the world, and as he himself may be removed to other and higher employments in new worlds,—as the old oak now plays its part, not on the land, but on a new element, the ocean,—may be put to a better use, may be *worth* more, than it would be in any lengthening out of life, or in any victory that could be secured in future conflicts. Let the old oak then fall,—though we weep while it dies,—and under a new form move off in grandeur amidst new elements, to accomplish new and higher purposes: let the mature and aged Christian die—for it was a main part of his great struggle that he might be prepared to die, and the *real* work of his existence,—the great, the grand, the noble end for which he was made, may then begin.

RELIGIOUS INFLUENCE OF OUR ASSEMBLY.

A Pittsburgh correspondent of the *Sunday School Times* of this city, gives the following delightful account of the impression made by the recent meeting of our Assembly in that city:

I must write a word from the "Smoky City," to let your Christian readers know what a refreshing season we have lately enjoyed, of religious awakening and activity among the Lord's people. This is consequent, in great part, upon the meetings of the church body which has just closed its deliberations here. The lovers of Zion look upon their departure from us with feelings of regret; although it is a sad admission that we should be so dependent upon extraneous influences, and that our lamps should need the borrowed oil of our brethren from abroad. But it is the peculiar blessedness of our Christianity that we may "exhort one another," "bear each other's burdens," and "strengthen them who are weak in the faith."

We all feel that these conferences of the talent and heart of the New School body of the Presbyterian church, which have been had in such kindness of spirit, and in which so many fraternal and Christian concessions of opinion have been made, have exerted an influence for good upon our whole community. Much of your Philadelphia piety and talent has been exercised amongst us; and as brethren in the Lord we would record our indebtedness for the presence and counsels of the Rev. Dr. Brainerd, Dr. Wallace, of the *Presbyterian Review*, the Rev. Mr. Wilder, who is soon to return to his former missionary field in India, and to your well known and long esteemed Christian brother, Isaac Ashmead, Esq. The proceedings of the Assembly are no doubt by this time spread broad-cast over our land, and I only make this allusion because no letter from the "Iron City" would be complete just now without it.

Our Young Men's Christian Association held its regular monthly meeting in the Second Presbyterian church, on the evening of the 28th instant. Able addresses were delivered by the Rev. Messrs. McLeod and Brainerd, of Philadelphia. The first speaker loved the Association chiefly because he saw in it a most important means of "*producing a consciousness of the unity of the Church of Christ on earth.*" The address of Dr. Brainerd abounded in beauty of thought and eloquence of expression, although, as he remarked, his labors had been so constant and severe, that he could only render us the tribute of the "end of a weary day." We were delighted. We all felt that we should have been glad to have heard him in the freshness and vigor of the morning, if that was but a specimen of his "worn-out" efforts.

THE CHURCH MILITANT.

To a careless observer, even, it must be manifest that unwonted activity prevails in the Christian world. The Church has been revived, and the revival is permanent. Not merely because daily prayer meetings are persisted in here and there in our large cities, but because the Church in all its branches has experienced a new development of healthful and determined energy. There is an enlarged consciousness of the greatness of the work—the open door set before her. There is a girding on of armour for the final struggle and triumph, felt to be nearer than ever before. The Spirit of God, dovelike and flamelike, has made the entire circuit of Christendom, pervading whole nations at once and converting men by hundreds of thousands. We have beheld in our day the peaceable removal of the most obstinate barriers to the entrance of the Gospel among heathen nations. The millions of mankind are open everywhere to missionary effort. And the heart of the church is stirred, her views are enlarged, and her bosom is expanded with uncommon hopes.

The numerous Assemblies, Conventions, Synods, and Anniversary Celebrations recently held, and covering pretty much the whole ground of Evangelical effort in this country and in England, bear concurrent testimony to this view. They show decided progress with scarcely an exception. They reveal a consciousness of increased vigour in these bodies. Their tone is animated, hopeful, resolved. Even measures which at first sight appear divisory and weakening, are but intended to disentangle and consolidate the separate forces, so that the charge of each upon the enemy may be more effective and overwhelming.

It is needful that the Church should exhibit such activity. The age itself is pervaded with intense life and vigor. The world is active. Worldly enterprises and interests are pushed with surprising energy. They claim a largely increased share and degree of man's regard. Commerce is pushing into new tracks of trade, and bringing the ambassadors of the most exclusive of heathen nations to our shores for the purposes of business. Science is sending her exploring agents into the tropic wilds of Africa; even the death of Kane, the result of exposure in Arctic regions, cannot damp the ardour of an adventurous Hayes in his quest after an open polar sea. While wave after wave of an emigration unparalleled in the history of civilized man rolls Westward—a grand, solemn and continuous march of the European race to the Rocky Mountains and the Golden Gate—"a deluge of men rising unabatedly, and daily driven onward by the hand of God."

The Church must needs be watchful and active at such a time as this. It is true her aims are intrinsically and unchangeably exalted, and would ever of themselves be a sufficient motive for zeal; but when she beholds an unwonted earnestness—the enlistment of all the energies of the soul—in the struggle for the meat that perisheth, how much more emphatic must the claim for activity in her own sphere appear; what a cutting reproof for negligence in laboring for the meat which endureth unto eternal life! Yes, the Church must sympathize in this great throb of the quickened pulse of humanity. She cannot remain unmoved when everything around her is in motion. She is no grand and stately mausoleum of stone, whose perfect proportions look coldly down on the tide of life that sways tumultuously around it. She is a spiritual house, reared up of lively stones, with the very centre and fountain of life welling up in her courts. She may not and she will not be left out in any quickening of the circulation of that social body of which she is so important a member; her part is to lead on, and shape and spiritualize these movements, transforming the world in this its plastic state, to the image of her own great author and prototype.

The Church cannot suffer the world to ravish away the soul of man. She must match its activity to destroy with her zeal to save. Amid all the pomp and pride of modern improvement, like the faithful monitor at the ear of the Roman Emperor, when enjoying the intoxication of a public triumph, she must whisper indefatigably in his ear: Remember that thou art mortal: what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul? She must announce to this self-complacent heir of the spoils of all time, that only by renouncing himself at his best estate, and becoming a suppliant for sovereign mercy at the foot of the cross, can he hope to attain the true good, or to be anything but a miserable self-deceiver, feeding upon ashes, unable to deliver his soul, or say, Have I not a lie in my right hand?

It would be no high evidence of activity on the part of the Church simply to denounce and disparage the worldly interests and pursuits of men, and to labor to withdraw men from them. She does not prove her energy by insisting on idleness or indifference to worldly affairs. She contemplates with interest and with studious care the phases of secular activity presented by our age, and she labors not to suppress them, but to purify them of their dishonorable features, and to guide them into channels of real usefulness. She does not aim to silence the whirr of spindles, to tie up the fleets of merchantmen by rotting piers, to check the flight of the steam-car, or to recall the explorer from Central Africa, or from the ice-bound inlets of the North. A very drowsy church might preach and practise such a doctrine. The Church of to-day shows her vitality by aiming to regulate and subordinate these grand secular movements to her own principles and purposes. She seeks to expel selfishness, and to impart charity and devotedness in its place, and under the guidance of these high principles so far from discouraging the merchant, the explorer, the man of science, she cheers him on. She boldly seizes upon the highest results of science and of art, and presses them into her service in her work of defending and extending the kingdom of Christ. Nay, it is she herself that sends the intrepid Livingstone in advance of all explorers into the heart of Africa; it is she that constructs written languages, reduces heathen jargons to order, writes Tamil lexicons and Mpongwe grammars, prompts a Hugh Miller to a triumphant vindication of the footsteps of the Creator on ancient rocks, and gives an impulse to art and science in their highest stages, that they may be made yet more effectually tributary to her high purposes.

It is by observation and meditation on the faults of others, that wise men correct their own.

WEST PHILADELPHIA.

We are happy to oblige our friends in the Walnut Street Presbyterian Church of West Philadelphia, (Mr. Butler's) by giving our readers notice that they are about to hold a Fancy and Floral Fair for the benefit of the church. The little company who compose that church are doing a good work. Few in numbers, they have undertaken to erect a large and handsome yet economical edifice, which will cost about $17,000. Their former house of worship was small, and not worth the repairs it needed. In building, it was seen that such a church ought to be erected as would be adapted to the rapidly increasing population of that part of the city. They deserve great credit for the courage and the generosity with which they have assumed this responsibility; and they deserve as truly the co-operation of their friends on the hither side of the Schuylkill. The new church is nearly completed. The Fair will be held next week, by the Ladies in the Lecture Room. It is in Walnut Street, between William and Till Streets, (or 39th and 40th,) and is readily reached by the Market street cars. Those of our readers who are not familiar with this beautiful suburb, would much enjoy a walk up and down Chestnut, Walnut, South, Spruce and other streets in this vicinity. We risk nothing in saying that they will be surprised at the improvements made within a few years. We trust that the good ladies of the West Philadelphia Church will have a successful fair.

ARE THE JAPANESE VISITING A CHRISTIAN COUNTRY?

While it seems that the authorities in Washington took all due care to have a room fitted up where the Japanese might conduct their heathen worship, special care has been taken to keep them ignorant of the religion of this land. Those who are acquainted with the history of our people cannot but know that our greatness is chiefly attributable to our religion. "Happy is the people whose God is JEHOVAH," said the Psalmist. The saying explains the prosperity of this country. But unless the public have been misinformed, our Japanese visitors have been carefully prevented from learning anything about our religion, or its influence upon the nation. How strikingly this contrasts with the conduct of Victoria in a similar case! An African prince sends an ambassador to the queen of England to inquire what is the secret of Britain's happiness and glory, when the noble woman sends back a Bible as the true answer.

We find in the *National Intelligencer* a communication on this subject, which we understand is from the pen of our esteemed brother, Rev. T. H. Stockton, Chaplain of the House of Representatives. The whole article might be read with profit, but we can only give the following:

"When Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the East to Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him. When Herod the king heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him." Herod and his dependents had no notion of losing their gains.

Eighteen centuries have gone by, and lo! "wise men from the east" come to our Jerusalem, saying, virtually if not formally, "Where is he who is acknowledged as the common Lord of the Christians? for we have seen his thirty stars in the east, and are come to worship him." And what now? Alas! Commerce, our king, is troubled; and all the infidels of his court, and his selfish retainers throughout the city and country are troubled with him! But Commerce, less generous than Herod, gives the inquirers no directions.

Hark! Stop with the strangers at Fort Monroe, salute them from its batteries, and show them its munitions, even though it be on the Sabbath day. Salute them again as they land at the metropolis, escort them to their hotel with all possible honor, and install them there in the midst of all comforts and luxuries. Conduct them to the State Department for official recognition and the more private transaction of preliminary business. Then, in the east room of the Presidential Mansion, give them the most brilliant and impressive diplomatic reception ever witnessed there. Take them to the Patent Office. Take them to the Smithsonian Institution. Take them to the Navy Yard. Take them to the Capitol, while the Senate and House of Representatives are both in session. Take them to the southern portico of the White House, that they may hear the music of the marine band, see the people in their holyday attire, and marvel at his "Majesty" the President moving among them as an equal and friend. Take them to gay domestic parties, for feasting, drinking and dancing. Next, being less annoyed than at first, and all at ease themselves, give them the freedom of the city. Let them glide along our streets in separate groups, repose in the shade of our public grounds, examine the agents, instruments and products of art in all places of manufacture and sale, and return to their headquarters at their will. Take them, or let them go, anywhere and everywhere—except to the hallowed scenes of Christian worship! Make them presents of anything and everything—except the Bible, the New Testament, or any other religious book! Let the physicians have access to them—for some of them are doctors; but beware of the clergy—for no priests are among them. Their religion is dead—and so is ours! Christianity is no more; the Bible is a fiction; the Church, a superstition; the Ministry a mere profession; and the Sabbath a grievous imposition. Commerce is king! and Commerce requires that these "wise men from the east" should fall down and worship him, and open "their treasures" in his presence, and strew at his feet their "gifts, of gold, of frankincense, and myrrh." In a word, Commerce decrees that this expensive entertainment must and shall pay!

Astonishing! Are we indeed living in the high noon of the nineteenth century of our Holy Religion? Do we occupy the summit regions of Christian faith, power and glory? Have we the good work in our hands, the sure promise in our minds, and the glad hope in our hearts, of speedily evangelizing the world? In particular, has God just glorified His providence, by opening before us the long-closed door of Japan, and saying unto us "Enter! in, the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ!" And have these, the princely ambassadors of that Imperial Government, by the very treaty just ratified, echoed that Divine command—Enter! "in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ!" Why, then, this sad abeyance of the truth?

A Philadelphia paper reports that the Japanese were invited "to attend the services in the capitol last Sabbath, but it is doubtful whether the naval authorities permitted them to receive the invitation, fearing something prejudicial to Christianity." Is this correct? If so, why not permit such an invitation to reach them? And why fear anything prejudicial to Christianity? Is it not the invariable practice of intelligent travellers, official or unofficial, to pay special attention to the religions of the countries they visit? Has it not been so in Japan itself, from the days of Kœmpfer to the recent missions of Perry and Elgin? And will not the Japanese Government expect some account of American Christianity? And, if so, shall its Ambassadors be compelled to report, "The Americans have no religion; or if they have any, they were afraid, or ashamed, or for some reason unwilling to let us see it."

As soon as our guests were settled, a brief, modest and respectful note was addressed to the officer in charge, stating, simply, that if it were designed to conduct them to any place of public worship, and no other arrangement had been made or was preferred, the chaplain of the House of Representatives would be happy to see them at the Capitol. There seemed to be a special propriety in this invitation. It was supposed, as a matter of course, that it would be agreeable to them to be taken to some place of worship; and, if taken to any, where in all the land more appropriately, or even so appropriately as to the Hall of the House of Representatives—where our holy religion appears, not as denominational, but as national; not in the form of a union of church and state, but as allied to both, and yet independent of both, being, by common consent, far above both, exhibited only in Biblical and therefore Divine simplicity and purity, the gracious and glorious inheritance of the whole world, and especially of all who are inspired with the Spirit of Christ, and love his name and cause. In all probability they would have been most favorably impressed.

CORRECTION OF A REPORT.

To the Editors of the American Presbyterian.

DEAR BRETHREN: The report copied into your columns has unintentionally misrepresented my views in the statement of some remarks which I made in the General Assembly, so as to convey an entirely erroneous impression upon what I regard *as a vital point.* If this report had appeared in another city than Philadelphia, and in another paper than the American Presbyterian, and had regarded a matter less than one which I consider of the greatest importance, I should probably have felt it best to pursue my ordinary course in all such cases—to let the matter die as a personal one of no consequence to the public. As no one is in the least degree responsible for this note but myself, you will allow me to state the matter in my own way.

You represent me as saying without any qualification, that I have no objection to the removal of the Church Extension Committee from Philadelphia. It seems to me that it would have been, for several reasons, very indelicate to have made such a statement.

In the eight years that I have lived here, I have been treated with very great kindness, and have been sustained in all my plans for the good of the Church with remarkable liberality. Then, again, in all plans for building up our Church institutions, and sustaining our Committees, Philadelphia has generally taken the lead, and has never shrunk from any claim upon her enterprise or generosity. Why should I volunteer a statement that a Committee of which I have been Secretary from the beginning, and of which Philadelphia has been the breath of life, might as well be removed from this city? And removed whither, Messrs. Editors? No other project as is well known, is seriously planned, than a removal to New York. I should then have been implicitly expressing an opinion that an undue amount of centralizing influence is located here. I can hardly conceive of anything so improper. At New York, are the Trustees of our Church Erection Fund, with $110,000 already to disburse, and a prospect of indefinite increase; the Union Theological Seminary with an endowment of nearly $400,000; the Assembly's Permanent Committees for Education and Foreign Missions. Our brethren of the other branch of our Church already expend for this last interest through their Board upwards of $200,000 per annum. Only two of these central powers are at Philadelphia, *two, out of six.* They are the Church Extension Committee, which will probably be changed to the Home Mission Committee and the Publication Committee. Philadelphians mainly, have purchased the Presbyterian House at an expense of upwards of $50,000, to accommodate these Committees. Now if I had expressed the opinion on the floor of the General Assembly, that I saw no objection, on grounds of general policy, to add a fifth of these central powers to New York, and take it from Philadelphia, I should have felt that I was acting with extreme indelicacy. And I wish to say, Messrs. Editors, that I expressed no such opinion.

What I did say, or meant to say, on this point, was entirely in self-defence. A Commissioner from one of the Western Presbyteries, made an attack on Philadelphia, and upon the Secretary of Church Extension. What he intimated was that Philadelphia was too much taken up with local ideas, that she did not look out over the whole Church and see what its home missionary wants are, and that the Secretary was not conducting the affairs of the Committee efficiently and comprehensively. This Commissioner, both in public and private, disclaimed any discourteous intention in his remarks, and I wish to give him the full benefit of this disclaimer, which was made several times. But the statement was public, and my reply was this: I said—not as you have reported that Dr. Bullard had recommended my appointment as Secretary, with which he had nothing whatever to do—but that Dr. Bullard and myself were Chairman and Secretary of the Committee that brought in the report establishing the Church Extension Committee in 1855; that I pressed another person as Secretary of the Committee, whom they did not think it best to appoint; that I was appointed in my absence, and at the same meeting at which I had earnestly pressed another person; that two years afterwards I had stated the necessity of enlargement in the operations of the Committee, and offered to resign, if the Committee should think it best, but instead of accepting that offer, the Committee had enlarged my powers, and doubled my salary. I then went on to say, speaking still of matters purely personal, that no man's individual interests, or those of any locality, ought to stand in the way of great Church movements, and that,—speaking with reference to the attack of the Western Commissioner,—I was ready then and always, to put the interests of the Committee into any other hands that could conduct them better than I, and that *so far as my private and personal interests* were concerned, the General Assembly might put the Committee at New York, Buffalo, Chicago, St. Louis, or any other point they thought proper. As to efficiency, I asked the Assembly instead of taking up vague notions, simply to look at the figures of my report, and I then said that it might be well to consider, before taking any such step as the removal of the Committee, all that Philadelphia had done for the Church; how Philadelphians had stood firmly by every Presbyterian interest in the darkest moments; and that so far from taking narrow views, they had poured out their money freely for every part of the Church. And I think that I pledged Philadelphia as so unselfish and liberal, and comprehensive in her views, that she would stand by every Committee of the Church wherever located.

My sole object was to repel what I considered an improper charge against myself, and against the city whose unselfish liberality and broad comprehensiveness for the Church has been most conspicuous ever since the division of our body.

Of the remarks of Dr. Brainerd I will not trust myself to speak. I hope, some day to have an opportunity of doing something to testify my sense of such noble generosity.

BENJ. J. WALLACE.

"ANNALS OF THE POOR."

IT IS NOT A BOTTOMLESS PIT.

It may be supposed by some that our mission to the Poor is a work requiring superhuman power and resources to accomplish any good. That it is like casting pebbles into a bottomless abyss, to contribute to their wants and preach the Gospel to these. When Jesus was upon the earth preaching, he taught the poor repentance, and although we cannot see his shape, still he is here and calls aloud to us saying—"deal thy bread to the hungry, and see that thou bring the *poor* that are cast out to thy house." Our mission does require the mighty hand of God to carry it forward, and we know he has been, and is with us now, for we can see his foot prints, and we will still trust that his mighty resources, held by his stewards, will be used in his vineyard. Our district is not a sponge absorbing all and showing no fruit. Go with me, dear reader, again to that old man's room, lift his latch and hear his welcome; that old Christian there behind the loom is he who some few months ago would rise with the dawn and throw his shuttle until his disease would cause him to cease and throw himself upon that bed racked with pain—it was he whose face was haggard and whose brow was sunken in despondency, and whose form was scarce hidden by the rags he wore—remember it was he who at threescore years lived upon bread and water, earning but a few pennies a day. But look at his cheerful face now, see that smile of thankfulness as he bids us welcome, and hear him say "God be thanked, for it was he sent you here, and had you not come I dont know what would have become of me." He has more flesh upon his face—the brow is lifted, and he with his loom can now earn twenty-five instead of 10 cents per day; hope now fills his heart (thanks to our contributors) and while he remains in this world his only care is to get his boy to a good place in the country away from the evils which now surround him.

THE WILD GIRL.

Some months ago several ladies sent us quite a number of girls' dresses—thus contributing so much to help fill up our well—one at least found a bottom and has filled up a great space. We had, in pursuit of our daily visiting, entered a yard by the back way and was about to visit one of the residents when we met a ragged girl; her hair uncombed floated upon the breeze, and while we talked with her, her naked foot drew marks upon the ground—and her body was covered as we thought but by one ragged frock—her all—and winter was come. She did not wish to go to Sabbath school nor have any connection with us—but in a pleasant way she gave us her name and we passed on. Again we met and entered into conversation. Now she was willing to go to school only her clothes were not such as the rest wore; this was soon remedied—she came and we feared that she was *too wild* for us—she would spoil the school. Months passed and with them passed away much of her boisterous laugh and disobedience, and our hopeless case was gradually assuming a new character. But at home she saw naught but evil, and it was with trembling we looked forth to her future life—with her parents' consent we got her into one of the neighboring homes, and promised to bring her out once a month to see them. Since she has been there (but a few weeks) she has knitted for us three very useful little articles, and is fast learning to sew, read, write and do general housework. A home, away from evil associates, is preparing for her, and our hearts fill with joy, as we hear her old neighbors say—"how well she looks," "how well behaved she is." Look to the future now—see our wild girl enter upon this journey of life with a *fair* prospect of entering in at the wicket gate. B.

N. B. Our mission is now in debt for provisions to the amount of $13½ (our rent is paid by the teachers) we would like that you, dear reader, would "feed the hungry" by assisting us to pay this bill. Send us word where we may call upon you, and we will do so to talk about our mission, or to receive any donation you may contribute in money or clothing.

COLLEGIATE AND THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION SOCIETY.

The attention of the friends of liberal education is respectfully invited to the important facts and reasonings of the last annual report of this Society. Attention is thus solicited in the full belief that it will be amply repaid, and the interests of an important work be promoted. If a copy is not at hand, your address sent to Rev. T. Baldwin, cor. sec., &c., 80 Wall St., New York, will secure one.

At the late meeting of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, at Pittsburgh, the following resolutions were unanimously adopted, viz.:

Resolved, 1. That the great good already accomplished by the Society for promoting Collegiate and Theological Education at the West, in sustaining and encouraging valuable institutions in times of commercial embarrassment until they could be placed on permanent foundations, is entitled to the grateful acknowledgments of this Assembly; while its unfinished work is worthy of the hearty sympathy and generous aid of all the friends of sound learning and enlightened piety—especially in regard to completing the endowment of the institutions now under its patronage.

Resolved, 2. That the efforts of our brethren on the Pacific coast to establish the institutions of education and religion among them, and especially to endow the colleges of California and Oregon, are worthy of the confidence and patronage of our churches.

J. SPAULDING,
Rec. Secretary.

WHO SHALL DO IT?

A minister in western New York, in a business letter says:—

"By this time some of our people must be awaking to the consciousness that we are *certainly* to have a Presbyterian Literature. And if it is not furnished by our branch of the church, at least in part, the other branch of the church will only have the more to do, and reap larger results. It is certainly best for us to do our share. The action at Pittsburgh was in the right direction. I presume it will give general satisfaction in western New York."

We will only remark that if the "action at Pittsburgh" (the resolution to raise $25,000 this year for Publication) becomes *the action of the people*, it will give great satisfaction to the members of our Publication Committee. We hope to hear that the stream has commenced to flow into the Treasury for this important enterprise. It certainly is time that we establish it on a firm basis, and enable it to do the work designed. If *we* do not give our people a Denominational Literature, others will. Not only our Old School friends, but Baptists, Episcopalians, and some Universalists are generously bestowing their tracts upon them.

Baptists in England.—The reported increase to the Baptist denomination during the year was 10,005 members.

EDITOR'S TABLE.

THE BOBBIN BOY; or How Nat got his Learning. An Example for Youths. By Wm. M. Thayer, Author of the "Poor Boy and Merchant Prince," etc etc. Boston: J. E. Tilton & Co. For sale by W. S. & A. Martien, Philadelphia.

J. E. Tilton & Co., of Boston, are issuing some valuable books for lads, from the age of ten to sixteen, written in an interesting and entertaining style, designed and adapted to excite a laudable ambition in the young reader, and to exhibit to him the great value of truthfulness, industry and integrity. This volume is one of that character, and in which NAT is described and his success as growing out of his uniform virtuous character and industry. It is supposed that the present Governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts is the personage, whose boyhood is portrayed here with incidents more true than fictitious. Let the boys read, remember and practise. The motto will always prove true, that there is no great excellence without great labor and a virtuous character.

THE LITTLE BEAUTY. By Mrs. Grey. Three volumes in one. Philadelphia: T. B. Peterson & Bros.

Mrs. Grey has for twenty years been before the public, as a writer of fiction. Her books are by no means uniform in character; but in the main, are popular both in Europe and America. This, her last issue, is published simultaneously by Peterson of this city, and the London publishers. It is said to be one of Mrs. Grey's best novels, and is put up in the best style of the American publishers. It contains 626 pages, and is sold for $1.25.

THE HOME BOOK OF HEALTH AND MEDICINE; or the Laws and Means of Physical Culture, Adapted to Practical Use, embracing Laws of Digestion, Breathing, Ventilation, Use of the Lungs, Circulation and Renovation, Laws and Diseases of the Skin, Bathing, How to Prevent Consumption, Clothing and Temperature, Food and Cooking, Poisons, Exercise and Rest, The Right Use of Physicians, &c., &c., &c. By W. A. Alcott, M. D. With thirty-one Illustrations. Philadelphia: G. G. Evans, No. 439 Chestnut Street.

This is a valuable treatise on the preservation and culture of health. It contains the substance of the course of popular lectures, prepared by Dr. W. A. Alcott. It is measurably free from all hobbies and extravagances. It teaches us how we may avoid the too constant use of medicines and nostrums, and when it may be proper to consult and employ a physician. It contains very many valuable and practical suggestions on the various subjects spoken of in the title page, and may prove a very useful book in all families, not so much to teach how to cure diseases, as to prevent their occurrence.

A MOTHER'S TRIALS. By the Author of "My Lady." New York: Harper & Brothers. For sale by Lindsay & Blakiston: Philadelphia.

We like an author who writes with a purpose. One who has a thought or principle in his mind which he desires to express or illustrate. For stories merely as such, we have but little relish. But when a story is so told as to illustrate a principle, or is made the medium through which to convey some great thought, then we at once become interested in it. It is this feature of his writings, that gives to Hawthorne his wondrous popularity and power as an author. In themselves, his stories possess but little interest. They are, for the most part, extravagant and unnatural. But behind or beneath the story, lies ever some great or beautiful thought, which the gifted writer desires to impress upon the reader. The book before us is of this class. It is not a love story, but an excellent illustration of the certainty of retribution in after life for the follies and wrong doing in the outset. The delineation of character is very good indeed, and the moral unexceptionable. We have read it with increasing interest to the end.

FORTY YEARS' FAMILIAR LETTERS OF JAMES W. ALEXANDER, D. D., constituting with the Notes a Memoir of his Life. Edited by the surviving correspondent, John Hall, D. D. In two volumes. New York: Charles Scribner.

It would perhaps be impossible to present a more correct idea of the character of a man, than by publishing his private correspondence with an intimate personal friend.

We have, in the two handsomely bound volumes before us, some eight hundred letters, written by Dr. Alexander, to his friend, Dr. Hall, of Trenton. The correspondence commenced when the author of these letters was but fifteen years old. They embrace an almost endless variety of subjects, and were penned in a great variety of circumstances. But from first to last they mirror forth a purity and loveliness of character but rarely met. He speaks in the most unconstrained manner of all the most important changes and events in the history of our country as they appeared to him at the time, giving to these incidents a very pleasing freshness. These letters show too, that while he was educated a Presbyterian, and ever remained true to the faith of his church, he yet had a heart too large, and views of Christian life too expansive, to confine his sympathies to any one branch of the church of Christ. We have ourselves perused this correspondence with great pleasure, and we think that its publication will elicit the grateful acknowledgment of a very wide circle of readers of the work, especially among the personal admirers of the man.

CICERO ON ORATORY AND ORATORS. Translated or Edited by J. S. Watson. Harper & Brothers: New York. For sale by Lindsay & Blakiston: Philadelphia.

This is another new addition to Harpers' classical library. The translation is from those who have long been approved for accuracy. The version of George Barnes is adopted with some amendments. The translation of Cicero's Brutus is by E. Jones. There are many valuable foot notes in both English and Latin. These valuable criticisms of Cicero, are made accessible to the English as well as the classical scholar.

DANESBURY HOUSE. By Mrs. Henry Wood. Harper & Brothers: New York. For sale by Lindsay & Blakiston: Philadelphia.

This is a prize tale on the subject of temperance, designed to explain the injurious effects of intoxicating drinks, the advantages of total abstinence, and the demoralizing operations of the liquor traffic.

The authoress received a prize of one hundred pounds, awarded by a committee of distinguished clergymen and others appointed for that purpose. It abounds with graphic and thrilling descriptions of the effects of intemperance. We commend it to general circulation, as a preventive to this widespread evil.

SELF-SUPPORTING MISSIONS.—Rev. Jas. Hay, who left Canada last year for Natal, South Africa, mentions the interesting fact, that all the stations of the London Missionary Society in South Africa, are now self-supporting.

MRS. DR. CAMPBELL, who, with her children returned from the Reformed Presbyterian Mission in Northern India, two years ago, and has since resided in Philadelphia, proposes to return to her mission field during the ensuing summer.