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JOHN W. MEARS, Editor.

PROVIDENTIAL CONTROL OVER SIN.

While God has seen fit to permit men to sin, he by no means abandons even the impenitent to the full sway of their sinful natures. Sin is as much under restriction as are the waves of the ocean to which it is said: "Hitherto shalt thou come but no further; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed!" Neither sin nor its agents on earth or in hell are outside the limits of the divine government. "The Almighty power, unsearchable wisdom, and infinite goodness of God, so far manifest themselves in his Providence, that it extendeth itself even to the first fall, and all other sins of angels and men, and that not by a bare permission, but such as hath joined with it the most wise and powerful bounding, and otherwise ordering and governing of them, in a manifold dispensation to his own holy ends; yet so as the sinfulness thereof proceeded only from the creature." etc. Conf. of Faith V. IV.

It is easy to see that if God did not so control and obstruct the sins of men, the whole earth would become uninhabitable; it would be converted into an outlying suburb of hell. Men in the unrestrained exercise of passion and lust and wrong would visit upon each other far severer punishment than any of God's temporal interpositions have ever done. His chastisements are great mercies to the race. Far better sweep away all the families of the earth but one, with a deluge, and start anew, than leave that piety one to be overwhelmed, and the whole world to be possessed by an ungodly and irreclaimable seed. Such merciful interferences on a smaller scale are taking place every day in the minds and the outward circumstances of wicked men. God makes the wrath of man to praise him and the remainder of wrath he restrains. Sometimes we find ourselves amazed and disposed to cavil at the power and success of evil in the world. To compare the view, we ought to consider how much worse it might be, what wise and powerful arrangements are made to circumscribe, and obstruct the motions of sin; what great schemes of Satan's cunning and malignity have actually been thwarted by these providential arrangements.

The external obstructions which God puts in the way of sin are such as remove the agents themselves, as the deluge, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, the death which overtakes the individual sinner before his plans of mischief are matured. In the height of his wicked undertakings, and when seemingly on the point of executing them, he sometimes arrests him as he did Pharaoh in the Red Sea. Of such the Psalmist writes: "I have seen the wicked in great power and spreading himself like a green bay-tree; yet he passed away and he was not; yea; I sought him, but he could not be found." Or, he destroys his resources and dependencies and defeats his plans. So he slow the vast army of Sennacherib before the walls of Jerusalem. So he scattered the "Invincible Armada" of the Spanish Emperor on the waves and rocky shores of the North Sea. It is one of the chief functions of History to record the wrecking of the plots of the wicked upon the obstructions which Providence continually puts in their way.

Some of the divine obstructions to sin are less striking but more steady and efficacious. Such is the ordinance of civil government. It is from a divine prompting, to stay the violence of sin, that men frame laws and penalties, and send abroad the minister of justice, bearing not the sword in vain, to be a terror to evil doers. It is a dyke raised up against the raging waves of sin that would engulf every thing in anarchy and barbarism for its own selfish, short-lived pleasures. It is for that that God surrounds the very idea of government with majesty, and clothes it, in its proper exercise, with the very sanctity of religion. Wisely framed and justly administered, it is our great defence, our best earthly possession, our daily peace and security. It claims our honor and allegiance next to God. To disturb it carelessly, is to strike a comprehensive blow at every earthly good. It is to lend oneself to the service of the devil in some of his worst demonstrations. It is to assail the most powerful temporal barrier against sin and to encourage its unrestrained outbreak in every sphere of life. No earthly duty is so sacred, no service to man in his temporal relations so beneficial, as that of rallying around and maintaining such an assailed Government. It is upholding one of God's own appointed and chief obstructions against sin.

At this crisis God is giving such a work to our nation; a work the more sacred, as the government to be upheld is more excellent, more suitable, more manifestly one of God's own appointment on earth. In this war, our may well be called a holy war. It is a war for the obstruction of sin. It is one of the great providential, historic, movements, of which the world has been full, the upshot of which is to cross and frustrate the wicked purposes of men and to prevent sin from having its own wild way with the best interests of men.

Of this one thing let us be sure; God has the entire control of the powers of sin in the world. All their raging and their seeming success will but advance his plans and promote the cause of truth. The triumph of the wicked is short. By their apparent successes they are lured on to more certain downfall. Unrestrained power to work mischief is given to none in earth or hell. There are limits to it, as there are to the sea which may not swallow up the land with all its rampages; as there are to the sweep of the tornado, lest man and his works be hurled in mid air; as there are to the water-floods which shall not more destroy all flesh. Great mischief may be inflicted by them all, and by the wicked, upon mankind, but never can they get the mastery. God is above, holding the reins of government. He will see to it that the issue of every struggle shall be to the discomfort and further obstruction of sin.

REV. LEES K. BRIDGES has been appointed by the President, chaplain to the U. S. Hospitals in Philadelphia, in connection with Rev. Dr. West, and Rev. James H. McParland. There are now thirteen military hospitals in the limits of our city, and an ample field is open for usefulness in the line of chaplaincies.

OLIVET PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH corner of 22nd and Mount Vernon streets, will be open all summer on Sabbath mornings and evenings.

THE EVANGELICAL ARMENIAN CHURCH AT PERA.

Our readers will remember that we have several times called attention to a serious divisive movement among the Armenian converts under the care of the American Board at Constantinople. The late lamented Dr. Dwight, and a correspondent "W," both of whom had taken part in the organization of the Mission churches in that field; contributed articles to our columns in response to our own views of the subject, and representing the movement as unimportant and temporary. European journals had given the matter considerable attention. They quoted the complaints of the Armenians against the Board, and seemed inclined to sustain them as well founded. These turned upon the ecclesiastical arrangements of the Board, and constituted strong evidence to our minds that the method of the Board in this respect, were radically defective. Meanwhile, the Board in its published statements has observed a remarkable and almost unexampled silence on this serious movement in the very heart of its most important missionary enterprise. Our correspondent "W," in his communication of January 9th, rehearsed the few statements which, up to that time, had been given to the public; they did not cover as much as a quarter of one of our columns. And the drift of all that was said was to the depreciation of the movement as insignificant and temporary. According to one of the statements, the difficulty had actually been settled.

Judge that of our surprise at finding in the issue of the Berlin New-Berlin Kirchenspiegel for May 17th, which has recently come to hand, an appeal in behalf of the independent Evangelical church of Pera, which having forsaken the American Board entirely, has taken refuge in the church edifice erected for the Prussian Embassy in Constantinople, and is expelled, with its sister organization to some extent only by the fostering care of the Evangelical churches of Germany! We give the substance of the article which is the leading one of the number.

As early as the year 1860, an association had been formed in Berlin in aid of the Evangelical Armenian church in Pera, including such names as Gen. von Willenbruch, the former Prussian Ambassador at Constantinople, Superintendent Hoffmann, Dr. Krummacker, and many other distinguished persons. Its operations had been suspended by the Syrian rebellion. As the necessities occasioned by that event are removed, the case of the Evangelical Armenians again comes up for attention. The Armeno-Evangelical church in Constantinople, Asia Minor, Syria and Mesopotamia, is the result—as is well known—of the faithful and devoted labors of the missionaries sent out by the greatest of the American Missionary Societies (Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions). This Society is composed of Congregationalists, i. e., Independents who are descended from the original English settlers in North America, (chiefly in New England, so called) together with the Dutch Reformed, (etc.) In their extensive and successful labors in this part of the world, these missionaries did not aim at introducing any of the forms of church organization prevalent in the West, nor did they or the Armenian converts at first propose to form a new Armenian church, by the side of the old one. It was hoped that reformation might gradually be effected in the body of the Armenian organization. Persecution and excommunication however, compelled them to organize an independent church, which has since been recognized by the Turkish Government, and is entitled to protection equally with the old one.

The church in Constantinople with a thousand members, and perhaps a thousand more adherents, is without an edifice—a great want in any case, and especially so in a land where they are surrounded with Mohammedan mosques and the churches of the Greeks and Roman Catholics. A site for building has been secured by the church in Pera. But this is not by any means the only want of the new community. Its relations to the American Mission have essentially altered. Its preachers and teachers are sustained entirely from its own resources, and are actively engaged in the work of evangelization. They claim the right of self government, or at least of a participation in the councils and decisions of the Mission. This is denied them by the Mission, and they have complained, in two declarations addressed to all Evangelical Christians in their respective pulpits. As early as 1857, they held a church assembly in which they resolved "to henceforth to govern themselves as a church, according to the word of God, and to recognize Christ alone as their head; and, while thankfully receiving aid from any other church of corporation, not to subject themselves to their control."

It is true that the missionaries acknowledged this independence in words, yet not in actions, clearly because it was hard for them to let the child, which they had reared, go free from the paternal guardianship. They also expressed the fear that the young church might, in its childhood, fall away from the truth. The others retorted that the work of evangelization would proceed more effectually if a proper participation in it was allowed to their native pastors, and complained that the new church was denied this necessary and rightful independence, and that an attempt was made to force upon it a new form of character, which might be well enough in America, but would not cut in Turkey. Moreover they felt that government by the missionaries without any possible appeal to a higher court, and in the name of a Society from which they were separated by sea and ocean, which itself did not belong to a church at all, but to an indefinite number of congregations, was a despotism by no means corresponding to the free spirit of the Gospel, which does not crush out national peculiarities, but embraces them through the truth. They present, in ten articles, a thoroughly evangelical confession, in order to show that the errors of which they are accused by the missionaries, consist only of deviations from the Congregational forms of government.

As their more prominent members gradually became acquainted with the worship and order of other denominations, the bald forms of the Americans could no longer satisfy them, and they attached themselves one by one, to the preacher of the Prussian Embassy. Carefully as he avoided interfering with the affairs of others, his unsought influence upon the ecclesiastical views of the Armenians is nevertheless not to be overlooked. To a considerable extent, the Armenian Christians have the right of the controversy. If the Gospel is to be communicated by degrees to the entire Armenian church, the most extreme form of Protestantism (perhaps excepting Quakerism)

must not be required of them, or held up to them as a standing model. If the new community is to hold its own, against the power of Islam and the Greek church, it must not be divided into independent fragments, but must be a church binding together firmly the separated organization, in the German manner. If it is to have a future of victory, it must seek aid of well-organized vigorous churches, near at hand, and not have a mere nebula of congregations in remote America as its uncertain reliance. These necessities are too plain to be overlooked by any but the willfully blind. It is admitted however that in demanding a voice in the appropriation of funds contributed by Americans, or in directing the labors of missionaries coming from that country, these preachers were wrong.

With unimportant exceptions, the societies in Constantinople and Niomedia openly arrange themselves with the Pera Church; and all the Evangelical Armenian congregations would do so to once, if they could dispense with aid from America. As an expedient to meet the immediate necessities of the case, the church of the Prussian Embassy just completed, has been yielded by the trustees (Kirchenvorstande) to the Evangelical Armenians for purposes of worship. Yet this can only serve as a momentary assistance.

To aid, therefore, in building a house for the Pera Church, and still more, to assist in educating for preachers and teachers, several Armenians, youths, two of whom were left with us in 1860, by the pastor of the Pera church, Mr. Eutugiyan, we need help; and our purpose in this undertaking is to open the way for a growing intercourse between the Reformed Armenian church and the Evangelical churches of Germany, and thus to secure an influence on the spiritual life of Turkey as the time has arrived for the German nation to exercise it. [Wir erwirbt dem geschichtlichen Wege der Deutschen Nation Hely.]

The Evangelical Armenians earnestly ask our aid. They feel that all which they now need is a European training. What the Catholic Church is doing for the United Armenians in the Mechitarist Institutes at Venice, Padua, Vienna, and Paris, and the Protestant Armenians expect of Evangelical Germany. We have already received several contributions for these important objects, especially a royal gift from His Majesty, King William of Prussia, of two thousand Thalers.

Our bells in wide regions of Germany still ring the summons to the prayer, which centuries long, was offered for the removal of the danger of a Turkish invasion. May the "Turk alarm" now sound in many hearts the call to let the pure Gospel be heard among the adherents of Islam.

[Upon this remarkable document we reserve our comments until next week.]

PROTESTANT NATIONS.

The alienation of feeling which has taken place between ourselves and Great Britain is the more deplorable because it estranges the leading Protestant powers of the world from each other. If we could say that only the prelatical elements of English society had misunderstood us in the present crisis, and exalted in the prospect of our overthrow, the case would not be so bad. But it is not so. No attacks upon us have surpassed in grossness those from the organs of the Free Church of Scotland; such as the North British Review and the Edinburgh Witness. It is a monstrous spectacle and holds out to the world, when dismemberment and overthrow are thus wished by one Protestant nation to befall the other. Great Britain forgets the Cause which is greater even than herself, the supremacy of which in the world is essential to her own greatness, while with an indeliberately narrow and selfish policy she wishes the only other great Protestant nation in the world to be forever shorn of its power, that her own aggrandizement may be complete. It pains and amazes us to find the religious, the Protestant people of that country completely oblivious to this serious view of the case, of which one would think no Christian man could rid himself. As Protestants, we have been accustomed to regard ourselves and England as natural allies. No other nation has seemed so dear to the Christian people of America. We have almost familiarized ourselves with the prospect of one day fighting side by side with England, the last great conflict between the masses, and a time of pure Christianity and the deities and sins of the Man of Sin. We believe the time is coming when Great Britain will find her self beleaguered and sorely pressed by the foes of civil and religious liberty who cherish bitter remembrances of her powerful interposition in former times for these high interests. Even now her condition is one of chronic alarm, requiring immense armaments in the face of a neighbor as unscrupulous as he is powerful, and jealous. The mother country may yet live to see the nation she has so wantonly and deeply alienated, more prosperous, happy, and powerful than ever; while she is vainly struggling against a combination of unprincipled and malignant despots in a conflict which American interposition alone might turn decisively in her favor. We fear she would seek that interposition in vain. The alienation which has recently been caused, involves an element of deep distrust in the essentials of English character, which threatens forever to dissipate the sympathies of Christian men, and inclines us at least for the present, to turn away from those favorite interpretations of prophecy which placed England and America in the same line of battle for the cause of truth, freedom and evangelical religion, in the world.

Dr. Hengstenberg, the celebrated Lutheran divine and Professor of Berlin, is bitterly against us. He is an Imperialist, a High-Churchman, and a defender of the Pope's temporal sovereignty.

VERACITY.

This golden quality of speech and action is rare and seems to be growing rarer in these times. Coolness and judgment have not a little to do with it. And we may pardon the exaggerations which fly abroad on the wings of rumor, about losses, and casualties, and advantages, on the field of battle. The witnesses have often been in such a terrible state of excitement, as actually not to know what was passing under their own observation. They are incompetent to testify; veracity is out of the question. There are cowardly stragglers, too, and panic-stricken men in every battle-line, who are sure to run away and report their own imaginations utterly destroyed. Such matters are used to, and are not deceived by them.

Yet there are other influences at work which cool our reports, and leave us at the mercy of the prejudices under which they are framed. There is the positive intention to pervert, to extenuate, or to exaggerate; to gratify pride, or jealousy, or favoritism; to make an impression upon the enemy, upon our own people, or abroad. This sometimes betrays itself in a manner as most cunningly to attack our confidence, and create skepticism in all we hear. The exaggerations of a senseless panic pass away; but these intentional perversions invade themselves with the original sources of our knowledge; they are met by perversions in the opposite interest, and truth is the last thing that is thought of. Even the people, in the indulgence of their partisan feelings, cease to wish for truth, so much as for a construction of events most favorable to their own prejudices. They say to the "reporters": speak unto us smooth things; prophesy unto us deceit. They wish to be deceived and they are deceived.

The Northern public has not been clear of this vice by any means. For example, the representations of the recent movements before Richmond are so widely different that such a care simply to know the truth are perplexed beyond measure. Was the movement a great piece of strategy sure to lead to the early capture of Richmond; was it a compulsory retreat, necessary to the salvation of the army, and successfully executed; or was it a disaster more melancholy than Bull Run? Each of these views is held by different classes of loyal men; while the rebels exult in a series of "victories" resulting in crowding off the "broken remnant" of the Army of the Potomac to a distance of two days' march from their capital. Our General tells us that in every engagement the enemy were beaten back with immense slaughter; yet at Gaines' Mills on Friday the 28th of June we lost twenty five pieces of artillery, and were according to general opinion, decidedly worsted.

It is utterly impossible for us to attempt an enumeration, even, of the notorious instances in which, during this war, the credulity of the people has been imposed upon. At the South the game has been carried on, on a scale of enormity to which the North, guilty as it is, can furnish no parallel. The desperate condition of their cause and the greater ignorance of their people, furnish the temptation, and the facility for the work. Even the leading men of the South, their high officials, their clergy, are carried away by the fury of the excitement and give utterance to the most palpable falsehoods and the vilest calumnies against the North. The latest and most extraordinary example is that of Lieut. Maury, the distinguished seaman, who would never have gained his scientific laurels, but for the liberality and confidence of the government which he is now seeking to overthrow. The character he has acquired, he is now relying upon to authenticate, before the world, the most audacious and malignant falsehoods against us. 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