

Miscellaneous.

ON CREEDS.

I have no patience with this modern outcry against creeds. You hear people inveigh against them, without for a moment thinking what they are. They talk as if creeds were the head and front of human offending, the inflexible sign of bigotry and hypocrisy, incompatible alike with piety and wisdom. Do not these wise men know that the thinkers and doers of the earth, in overwhelming majority, have been creed men? Creeds may exist without religion, but neither religion nor philosophy, nor politics, nor society, can exist without creeds. There must be a creed in the heart. You must believe that Duty exists, before you can reverence Duty. You must believe in the fact of humanity, or you cannot love your fellow. A creed is but the concentration, the crystallization of belief. Truth is of little worth till it is so crystallized. Truth lying dissolved in oceans of error and nonsense and ignorance, makes but a feeble diluent. It swashes everywhere, but to deluge, not to benefit. Precipitate it, and you have the salt of the earth. Political opposition, inorganic, is but a blind, cumbersome, awkward, inefficient thing; but construct a platform, and immediately it becomes lithe, efficient, powerful. Even before they set foot on these rude shores, our forefathers made a compact, and a nation was born that day. It is on creeds that strong men are nourished, and that which nourishes the leaders into eminence, is necessary to keep the masses from sinking. A man who really thinks, will think his way into light. He may turn many a somersault, but he will come right side-up at last. But people in general do not think, and if they refuse to be walled in by other people's thoughts, they inevitably flop and flounder into pitiable prostration. So important is it, that a poor creed is better than none at all. Truth, even adulterated, as we get it, is a tonic. Bring forward something that is tangible, something positive, something that means something, and it will do. But this flowery, misty, dreary humanitarianism, this milk and watery muddle of dreary negations that reminds the world to its original fluidic state of chaos, I spew it out of my mouth. It was not such a pap our Cossacs fed on, that made them grow so great. I believe that the common people of early New England were such lusty men, because they strengthened themselves by gnawing at their tough old creeds. Give one something to believe, and he can get at it and believe it; but set out butting your heads against nothing, and the chances are that you will break your neck. —Gala-days.

INVISIBLE ARMOR.

GENERAL SCHUYLER was one of the American officers in the army which fought for our freedom. He figured largely in those stirring scenes which took place on the Hudson and Mohawk rivers, when the English Generals hired the Indians to come and fight on their side. General Schuyler had great influence with red men; they loved and feared him; so the English wished he was out of the way; and as he did not get shot on the field of battle, a plot was hatched to waylay and murder him.

Two men were picked out to do this bloody deed, an Englishman and an Indian. The day and time were set; they shouldered their rifles and took their stand behind a clump of trees which he had to pass by on his way home. After waiting and watching some time, the General here in sight. He was on horseback and alone. Now, or never! They took aim. In a minute more, the General would have been a dead man. At that instant the Indian knocked down the Englishman's gun, crying: "I cannot kill him; I have eaten his bread too often." The General rides on unharmed; he has buckled on an invisible armor stronger than brass, and he is safe. What was it? The armor of friendly actions. The General had often relieved the distresses of the poor red men; he had fed them when hungry, and clothed them when naked; and now British gold cannot buy up the grateful memory of his kindness, as it melts the murderer's heart.

"I can't kill him; I have eaten his bread too often!" Oh! what power there is in friendly actions! They not only make you friends, but disarm your enemies.

MINUTENESS OF THE IMAGE ON THE RETINA.

It would be a curious, and not uninteresting subject, as displaying in a very striking manner, the Wisdom and Power of God, in the mechanism of his creatures, to estimate the dimensions of the images of different objects, at various distances, on the retina, if indeed this could be done with any accuracy.

The expansion of the optic nerve which forms the seat of vision, is only about half an inch in diameter, and yet, on this space is painted with the most perfect accuracy the image of every object which the eye beholds. Now the eye in an elevated situation may look on the whole of a landscape to the distance of fifty miles; and without perceptibly moving the visual organs, include a lateral view of probably twenty-five miles; and yet the whole of this extent, must be pictured on the diameter of half an inch at the same instant, otherwise it could not be seen at the same view.

The Rev. Dr. Dick, in his "Christian Philosopher," has calculated that a portion of the Castle of Edinburgh, equal to 500 feet long, and 90 in height, occupies on the retina only the twelve hundred thousandth part of an inch, when seen at a certain distance, and yet every part was distinctly visible. What then might be the dimensions of the picture of a fixed star on the same organ?

Mr. Roget in his "Animal and Vegetable Physiology," speaking of this organ, says, "few spectacles are more calculated to raise our admiration than this delicate picture, which nature has, with such exquisite art, and with the finest touches of

her pencil, spread over the smooth canvass of this subtle nerve; a picture, which though scarcely occupying a space of half an inch in diameter, contains the delineation of a boundless scene of earth and sky, full of all kinds of objects, some at rest, others in motion, yet all accurately represented, as to their forms, colors, and positions, and followed in all their changes, without the least interference, irregularity, or confusion. Every one of those countless and stupendous orbs of fire, whose light, after traversing immeasurable regions of space, at length reaches our eye, is collected on its narrow curtain into a luminous focus of inconceivable minuteness; and yet this almost infinitesimal point shall be sufficient to convey to the mind, through the medium of the optic nerve, and brain, a knowledge of the existence and position of a far distant luminary, from which the light has emanated. How infinitely surpassing all the limits of our conception, must be the intelligence, and power of that Being, who planned and executed an instrument comprising within such limited dimensions, such vast powers as the eye, of which the perceptions comprehend alike the nearest, and most distant objects; and take cognizance at once of the most minute portions of matter, and of bodies of the largest magnitude!" —Bridgewater Treatise, vol. 2. p. 476.

Religious Intelligence.

Presbyterian.

The Second Church, Nashville, is the only one south of Kentucky which has sought a connection with the O. S. General Assembly of the United States since the rebellion. It stands upon the broad basis of supporting the government, and the deliverance of the General Assembly.

Danville Seminary has been much interrupted by the war. The building was used as a military hospital until last April. Thirteen students came last fall, and the four professors are in their places.

Westminster College, Missouri. This College, the institution of the Synod of Missouri, is passing through severe trials, but is still in operation, with five Professors and 65 students.

Methodist. —The N. W. Christian Advocate, in an article on "Extension of Time," says: "There is a widespread desire that the restriction upon the bishops forbidding the appointment of a pastor more than two years in succession to the same church, shall be modified, so far, at least, as to add one year to the term of possible service." —McKendree College at Lebanon, Ill., reports 197 students, including 127 in the preparatory and 4 in the law department. —The wife of Rev. Edward Thomson, editor of the N. Y. Advocate and Journal, died of paralysis Dec. 31st. On the evening of the same day informal services were held, and by the side of his mother's coffin, horses at his own request was received by his pastor into the church in full connection.

The Maine Conference having voted against Lay Representation by a decided majority, records, without dissent, adopted a paper in favor of the reform. —A late number of The Northwestern Christian Advocate compiles from the "General Minutes" the statistics of Methodism in the Northwest, from which it appears that there are on this ground fifteen conferences that have an average membership of 14,362, (215,439 in all), 2,793 local preachers, and 1,870 traveling preachers. Including probationers, these figures, it is said, embrace nearly one-fourth of the entire membership of the church! It is also shown that many of these conferences outnumber in members several of those in the Middle and Eastern States. There are 2,186 meetings-houses, valued at \$3,984,409, and 684 parsonages, valued \$466,215, numbering one-third as many as the church-edifices. The editor presents these figures to show that the Northwest is no longer "a strip of back settlements." To us it is simply astounding that such a development has followed so rapidly upon the recession of the savagery of the wilderness. When we take into connection with these figures of Methodism its facility in occupying the earliest frontier settlements "in advance of all others," its enthusiasm in educational institutions, its sympathy with progress, its grand uprising for the Union and for freedom, we bless God for what it has done in evangelizing the Northwest, and in saving it to our country. —Independent. —A new church-edifice, to be worth \$35,000 when completed, is in progress in Virginia City, Nevada Terr. —Three new Methodist churches have recently been built in France, one each, at Brest, Augustin and Codogan. —Progress of Methodism. —The following statistics will show the growth of Methodism in Baltimore:

Table with 4 columns: Year, Members, Population, Proportion. Data for 1800, 1810, 1820, 1830, 1840, 1850, 1860.

It will be seen that Methodism attained its highest proportion of the population in 1840. Doubtless the subsequent falling off is due largely to the foreign emigration that swelled the population, but added nothing to the membership of the church. The number and value of the churches has increased in much larger proportion than the membership.

Congregational. —The total contributions of the fourteen orthodox churches of Boston to the American Board for 1863, including some miscellaneous items, is \$31,216. Essex Street Church leads the list with the noble sum of \$6,801. —The South Congregational Church in New Haven, Conn., having recognized a Mr. Carroll as their pastor by the vote of female members, in opposition to a majority of the brethren of the church, and without the intervention of a Council, an expert Council recently assembled, and there decided that the proceedings, including the outvoting of the men by the women, were contrary to the prin-

ciples and usages of the New England churches. The Society of the church will not be recognized so long as it continues to retain the services of Mr. Carroll, he not having exhibited adequate proof of regular standing and being charged with disloyalty.

Baptist. —Union of Churches. —An arrangement has been consummated in Boston which unites the Tremont Temple and the Union churches in one organization, to be called "The Union Temple Church," and which, in commencement, will be composed of ten male and ten female members of each of these churches. —The First Baptist Church of Leavenworth, Kansas, is endeavoring to raise funds in the West to build a church-edifice. There are fifteen thousand people in Leavenworth. —Shawnee College, at Alton, Ill., says the Examiner, is enjoying a high degree of prosperity. Over one hundred students are now connected with it, between thirty and forty of whom are ministerial students. The College is substantially free from debt, and has a clear property in buildings and endowments estimated at over \$75,000. Besides this, the Theological Department has an endowment for one professorship partly completed, and a fine class of young ministers in process of training under Prof. Mitchell. Arrangements are now making to erect additional college-edifices to meet the increasing wants of the institution, which are estimated to cost about seventy thousand dollars.

Revolutions. —Our Northern exchanges bring cheering news of revivals in various localities. The Congregationalist mentions the church at Gilmanston, N. H., in which twenty persons are reported as happily converted. Also the Payson Church at East Hampton, Mass., Rev. Dr. Seelye's, where, on the first Sabbath of the year, only seven persons were admitted by profession. Several heads of families who have never prayed before, now bow daily with their families before the mercy seat. All the pews of Payson Church have been sold at auction at 50 per cent advance over last year's prices. —A cheering revival is reported in the Boston Recorder from Montgomery, the weakest church in Hampden County; and thirty or more are hoping in Christ. —Rev. W. C. Foster was sent there by the County Conference, and found that the Lord had gone before him. —The revival in the Congregational Church at Mt. Vernon, Ohio, has resulted in the hopeful conversion of three or four score souls. —An interesting revival of religion has recently been enjoyed by the Congregational Church in Wakeman, Ohio. Some twenty-five or thirty are reported. —In the Baptist Church of Newark, Ct., over thirty have professed conversions, and twenty-three have united with the church within three or four weeks. Thirty or forty hopeful conversions are also reported in Dr. Hiscox's Baptist Church, New York. —A revival has been enjoyed at Otsego, Mich. Evening meetings have been held, at which fifteen or more professed conversions. Five were baptized. —C. S. Wolf, writing to the Christian Herald, says: "One of these, in her seven years, has for near a year given evidence of a renewed heart, but now more clearly. —Rev. G. Y. King, who was recently ordained pastor of the Baptist Church at Brandywine, Pa., has been permitted to baptize twenty-nine converts into the fellowship of the church. —A revival at Seward Valley, Schoharie, Co., has resulted in the conversion of 150 persons. Of these but thirty-seven have been baptized. —The Pittsburg Advocate of January 9th, gives the following reports of conversions and accessions in the Pittsburg, Erie, and Western Virginia Conferences: Palatine, 13; Ferrysburg, 13; Jamestown, 100; Deersville, 50; Latrobe, 65; Luthersburg, 50; Richmond, 12; Woodfield, 44; Fetterman and Grafton, 26; Circleville, 40; North Street, Wheeling, 36; Punxsutawney, 50.

Further instances of Church Liberty. —Rev. Cyrus Brewster was released from his pastorate at Haydenville, Mass., on the 22d of December. His people made him a parting present of \$300, cash, and decided to continue his salary, and give him the use of the parsonage for three months to come. He has been appointed post chaplain at Readville. —Rev. Mr. Drown of New Haven, Conn., received a Christmas present of \$500; and Rev. Dr. Bacon had a present of \$600, besides having his salary increased to \$3,000. —Besides the gift of four hundred dollars to Rev. J. B. Simmons, Baptist, Philadelphia, Christmas week, his church, at a meeting less than a week after, surprised him again by increasing his year's salary three hundred dollars from January 1st. —Rev. Dr. Fuller, pastor of the Seventh Baptist Church, Baltimore, Md., has been presented with a purse containing five hundred dollars by some of the members of his church. —The Strong Place Baptist Church, Brooklyn, raised in the year 1863, the sum of \$40,000. Of this sum \$6,000 is to be devoted to building a missionary chapel in South Brooklyn. A gift of \$1,000 was presented to their pastor, Dr. Taylor. —The Sabbath school of the Baptist Church, Palmyra, set up a Christmas tree, the topmost bough of which produced a purse of one hundred and sixty-two dollars for the pastor, Mr. Adsit. —The Thirtieth St. M. E. Church, New York, presented the pastor, Dr. True, with \$300, and his wife with a sewing machine, during the holidays. —Rev. W. B. Wood of Tarrytown, N. Y., and Rev. Dr. Nadal of New Haven, have each received a purse of \$300 from their people. —The Madison Avenue Church, N. Y., (Baptist) have added \$600 to Dr. Weston's salary, making it \$3,600. Leading members of the church speak in the most encouraging terms of the present state and future hopes of the church. —The friends of the Rev. I. Dudley, of Rose, N. Y., have been mindful of the high price of living, and have given him \$140 in a "donation visit." —Bethel M. E. Church, Staten Island, presented the pastor, Rev. N. Vansant, with \$300. The M. E. Church at New Rochelle, N. Y., presented \$150; Hackensack, N. J., over \$200; South

Amboy \$153, to the various pastors. At Morris Chapel, Cincinnati, \$154 was raised to be expended in the usual Christmas presents to the children, but they resolved to contribute the whole amount to the Sanitary Fair for the benefit of the sick and wounded soldiers. —The Reformed Dutch Church of Manhasset, L. I., gave the pastor \$300; that of Branchville, N. J., \$274; that of Rocky Hill, N. J., \$200; Rev. J. Elmendorf received \$376; Rev. E. Vanaken found an envelope in the pulpit Sabbath morning, containing \$110.

Army. —Rev. J. C. Payne of Gardner, has been commissioned chaplain of the Mass., 21st Reg. —Rev. T. Kidder of St. Johnsbury, Vt., has been appointed chaplain of the military post at Burlington. —Rev. Theodore J. Holmes, late of East Hartford, who resolutely adhered to his determination to enlist, has been appointed chaplain at Grapevine Point barracks, Conn., and now asks his Hartford friends for money to build a chapel there. —Rev. A. P. Johnson has left his charge to engage in a chaplaincy. —Another minister's son, Thomas Nadal, whose father is a prominent Methodist minister, has enlisted in the 1st Conn. Artillery. —Rev. Mr. Van Allen of Iowa, and his wife, killed on board the steamer Brazil, near Donaldson, Mississippi river, Dec. 11th, by a shot from a rebel battery on the shore, were going South as teachers to Freedmen. They were an estimable couple, and their sad death will be severely felt.

Movements of Missionaries. —Rev. Thos. Carter and family sailed from New York, Jan. 4th, to join the M. E. mission at Buenos Ayrs. —Rev. Allen Hazen and wife, returned missionaries, and Rev. W. W. Chapin and wife, for the first time sailed from Boston, Jan. 4th, for their field of labor in the Maharrat mission of the American Board.

Miscellaneous. —Rev. Dr. McIntock, who has supplied the American Chapel in Paris for the past four years, is to return to N. Y. city next spring. He will resume, it is supposed, the charge of St. Paul's Methodist Episcopal Church at 4th Avenue. His ministry in Paris has been successful and useful—acceptable to resident Americans and to the Foreign traveler. The chapel has been well attended, and its general influence salutary. —N. Y. Ob. Caroline W. Crane, late of New York, left by will \$1,000 to the American Tract Society, and \$6,816 to the Bible Society. —Rev. (P) Matthew Hale Smith, a gentleman of some notoriety as a temperance lecturer, chaplain to the celebrated New York Seventh Regiment, &c., is the topic of a recent article in the Boston Congregationalist, from which it appears that he left the Universalists in 1840; was ordained a Congregationalist minister in 1842, and deeded the ministry voluntarily in 1850, on the plea of ill health and as having entered a secular profession (the law). The Suffolk North Association, of which he was a member at the time, withdrew upon his own letter of formal withdrawal, and declared him no longer a member of the body. Subsequently he became editor of an anti-Maine Law paper, the Boston Chronicle, sought to enter the ministry of the Reformed Dutch Church, but failed, was a New York correspondent of the Boston Chronicle, in which relation he freely gossiped in theatre and opera matters, became a chaplain, turned Baptist, and recently made a strong but unavailing effort to enter the ministry of that church. The congregation to which Mr. Smith is now ministering have subscribed \$1,800 toward his support, and propose to organize an Independent Church.

Foreign. —The Russian Government has taken another step toward admitting the principle of religious toleration. The Directing Senate of Russia has put a stop to the long persecution of the Baptists in Poland and the Baltic provinces, by reversing a late decision of a district court in Courland. The imperial ukase issued on this occasion contains the remarkable clause, that the use of force is all the "more to be deprecated in a doctrine of religion which may later find acknowledgment." The Baptists of Germany are so much encouraged by this ukase, that Mr. Onken, the founder of the Baptist churches in Germany, has gone to St. Petersburg to turn it to the best account. —Methodist.

The Trial of Bishop Colenso. —This trial has commenced in South Africa, before a Synod of Bishops of the Episcopal Church. Bishop Colenso denies the authority of the tribunal. —Ibid. —In England Brother Ignatius continues his efforts for establishing in the Church of England a Benedictine brotherhood. It has attracted such attention, that one of the most high-church prelates, the aged Bishop of Exeter, has forbidden all the clergy of his diocese to allow Brother Ignatius to officiate in any of their churches. —Ibid.

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