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NEW PREMIUMS.

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THE STIMULUS OF WAR.

Amid all the horrors and sacrifices of war, we need not close our eyes to the palpable benefits which flow from a just conflict, waged with a good degree of success. Such a war communicates a great impulse to the ideas and active principles of men. It expands, invigorates, accelerates, gives momentum. Some lives it takes away, but it quickens and enlarges many more. The entire national character undergoes a change. A new stadium, a new epoch in history is reached. When a nation has been crowned with victory in a struggle involving the principles of its existence, it frequently breaks out into an era of unparalleled splendor and glory. The victories of David over the heathen tribes in and around Palestine were followed by the golden age of Solomon. The victories of Marathon, of Salamis, and of Platea, were followed by the golden age of Pericles. The victories of Cesar, by the Augustan age of Rome. After the revolution of 1688, in England, came the golden age of Queen Anne.

Whether we shall be crowned with victory, and in the glorious peace that follows, shall

"See golden days fruitful of golden deeds."

it is not for short-sighted men to say. But we are now, without doubt, experiencing the stimulus of a great and, in the main, successful war—a war of ideas. There is a marvellous quickening and brightening of the nation's ideas and convictions; an unwonted impulse is given to business enterprise, to benevolence, to Christian zeal and effort, to ingenuity in devising ways and means for meeting the great emergencies which are upon us.

Never were right opinions so rapidly developed, never were wrong ones so effectually silenced or so extensively and rapidly transformed into right, as have been those entertained by this people on the subject of slavery, under the stimulus of war. Before the war, correct opinions on this subject advanced but gradually; high ground against American Slavery could not be taken anywhere without exciting ill feeling. "Abolition" was a word spoken with bated breath. The friends of the slave were denounced and dreaded as agitators. And at the South, the slave masters were growing more and more arrogant, and the prospects of emancipation were more remote than ever. In three years, the change is well nigh miraculous. The thunders of war have roused the national conscience. Our duty to the slave has become a military necessity. The rebellion has unmasked all the hidden and incurable wickedness of slavery. Its essential and

implacable antagonism to republicanism has melted into one fiery stream of indignation all the patriotic and loyal feelings of the people. The dangerous power and the obstinate resistance manifested by the pro-slavery rebellion has, in less than three years, educated the nation to such a measure of decided anti-slavery conviction, as would scarcely have been reached in a century of peaceful development. The former slavemasters of the Border States are among the foremost and most radical emancipationists of to-day. West Virginia and Missouri have passed Emancipation acts. In Maryland and Louisiana the only question waiting to be settled, is between immediate and gradual emancipation. In Arkansas there seems to be a unanimous feeling among loyal people, now re-organizing the government, in favor of an immediately free State. Conservative men, like Postmaster Blair, now strongly advise emancipation. The army is one grand Abolition Society; no general would now forbid the singing of anti-slavery songs in the camps. Negroes, slave and free, are mustered into our army with the eager assent of the nation, and the colored regiments are accepted and respected as inferior to no branch of the service. The counter-demonstration of last summer in New York city, was only the despairing throes of the exorcised and departing demon; and has been followed by such a reaction, that negro soldiers move unmolested through the streets of that city, and the grand organ of that entire phase of debased and cruel public sentiment, the *New York Herald*, has actually abandoned the pro-slavery cause as past the power of its Mephistophelean arts, longer to sustain or manage.

In little more than two years, the war has made us an anti-slavery nation, a truly free people.

The minds of men are so quickened under the excitement of the times, that a score of topics involving the most important truths, are seen in a light, and grasped with a conviction never before experienced. How dear is nationality now, since so many, many, precious lives have been given for it; how sacred and majestic is law since it has been so bitterly assailed; how foul and damnable is unjustifiable rebellion since it has spilt the best blood of our country, brought our name and the name of republicanism into disrepute all over the world, and shaken to its foundations the free and wise government under which we live, and threatened to plunge into a bottomless gulf of anarchy the millions of happy homes of America, scornfully tossing off the only security for permanence which, under God, a republic can enjoy, acquiescence in the legally expressed will of the majority. How glorious, how mournfully hallowed, that flag whose folds have floated over so many new battle-fields; have received so many rents and gashes from rebel weapons; have been upheld by so many brave martyrs; have shone in the dying gaze of so many fallen heroes; have wrapped the bloody or wasted corpses of a Lyon, a Baker, an Ellet, a Kearney, a Reynolds and a Mitchell! How necessary is a strong and firm government, how absurd is law without a penalty, how invigorating to the nation is an example of devoted and uncompromising loyalty in high places,—did this generation ever see the reality of these things as in the contrasts presented between the preceding and the existing administrations?

The transition from such thoughts to the higher sphere of the divine government is natural and easy. We will not pursue it; but we are much mistaken if ministers of the gospel have not found their own minds clearer, and those of their people more susceptible than ever upon the great truths involved in that system of theology which regards God as a moral governor, the moral universe as his empire in which our earth is a revolted province, under a dispensation of grace. The strongest views of doctrine have been sustained and justified in the light of this struggle to preserve the authority of a human government.

We might speak of the stimulus which the war has given to trade and business; not merely in its military branches, but in every legitimate direction; of our cities thronged with an

active and increasing population; of our suburbs extending; of workshops and factories in operation day and night; of busy streets; of thronged arteries of trade and travel; of high prices easily reached by the well-paid laborer, mechanic, and sewing-woman; of emigration from foreign lands unchecked, and of general prosperity among high and low. We might speak in this connection of the stimulus of the war upon the business capacity of our public men, and of the wise, comprehensive, and beneficent scheme of finance which it is giving to the country; of the cheerful promptness with which the unassisted people of the country came forward and loaned the government, on its well-devised plan, five hundred millions of money, at par, in less than a year; of the vast resources in men, in means, in skill, and in patriotism which the stimulus of war has brought to the surface.

But we are interrupted with the inquiry: Has not the war likewise proved a great stimulus to the evil propensities of the people? Are not our camps schools of vice and profanity and recklessness, and will they not send back their irresistible tide of corruption and godlessness among the people? Are not Sabbath-breaking and intemperance, are not profuseness and extravagance and vulgar amusements vastly on the increase among us? Does not a horrible and unwonted degree of corruption prevail in official circles, and is there not an inflated and restless spirit of speculation abroad, utterly destructive of the principles of legitimate traffic? We cannot blind ourselves to the fact that the present war is no exception to wars generally, in the horde of baser characters which it summons into publicity or the increased activity of Satan and his agents which it encourages. Wherever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together.

Yet who can overlook the equally palpable fact that the friends of God and of the spiritual interests of their countrymen have been aroused by these very emergencies to an unparalleled degree of activity, of liberality, and of Home Missionary zeal? War, with its dangerous tendencies, has stimulated the good to exceed themselves in the vastness of their enterprises to counteract the evils. For keeping up the morale of the army, for supplying the soldiers with healthful and profitable food for the mind, for meeting the spiritual wants and keeping alive the spiritual natures of the men, away from home and from church, they have poured out money in unsolicited gifts like water, they have commissioned able and earnest men to aid or supply the want of chaplains, and to preach the gospel to the soldiers. All denominations have joined heartily in the work. War has stimulated their catholic feelings far more than peace can do. And the minds of the soldiers themselves have in many, very many instances, been quickened by their critical and uncertain position, by wounds and sickness, to receive with joy and to grasp with unusual simplicity and energy, the consoling, purifying truths of the gospel. The intensity of apprehension, the fervor of feeling, the spiritual exaltation of revivals now going on in the army are such as belong to the peculiar position of the soldier, when he is brought under the power of the Holy Spirit. Men familiar with revivals speak of these scenes as nearer to heaven than anything in their experience.

These revivals are connected with the aroused and prayerful attitude of the church at home. The war has greatly quickened the spirit of prayer among our Christian people. Never was there so much prayer for the country or for its rulers. Night and morning, from millions of closets and family altars, and Sabbath after Sabbath, from scores of thousands of pulpits and consenting congregations, the waves of earnest entreaty swell up, like a vast tide, to the throne, for our national interests, for our rulers and for our army and navy. And oh! what anxious longing and ardent desires of pious parents and wives and children and brothers and sisters, flow in incessant supplication for the safety and salvation of relatives in the field. The people of God and the nation at large

are led to see the necessity of trusting in God. They are learning how contrary often to their views, and yet how wise, are the workings of his Providence; how completely the affairs of nations are in his hands, and how well it is that they are. They are learning to recognize Him as the Supreme Ruler and absolute Disposer of Events.

The whole nation is breathing in a stimulating medium. We live fast. Our mental processes are almost intuitions. We are undergoing a revolution. The pulpit and the religious press have a high duty to perform in such a time. They must guide these lately liberated elements of opinion to a sound and settled issue. They must warn christian people not to be insensible to the extraordinary responsibilities of our times. They must see that the nation in its palinogenesis does not stop at humanitarian or temporal results. Our golden age must not be one of mere luxury or even of literary, scholastic, or artistic perfection; but one of political honor and purity, one of deeper reverence for law and devotion to country, one of active home evangelization among white and black, one of tearful and sincere gratitude for the sacrifices made by the martyrs of this struggle, one of overwhelming joy at the gratitude and loyalty of four millions of fellow creatures for the act that changed them from chattels into freemen; a golden age of acknowledged influence among the nations for the rights of the oppressed, for the honor of republican government, and for the advancement of mankind according to the principles of the Gospel.

PLAN OF PRESBYTERIAL ACTION.

EDITOR AM. PRESBYTERIAN:—In connection with the subjoined report prepared by the Rev. Messrs. Hotchkiss and Darling as a committee of Philada. Third Presbytery, permit me to call the attention of secretaries, stated clerks, and others interested in ascertaining the most effective methods of Presbyterial working, to the plan outlined in the report, together with the suggestions for its improvement.

The adoption and faithful execution of such a plan with the amendments proposed, cannot fail largely to augment the zeal and efficiency of Presbyterial action, as well as to deepen the interest and augment the contributions of our churches in behalf of the four great charities now incorporated, as leading elements in the organic working of our noble church.

J. G. B.

REPORT.

The Committee on the Minutes of the General Assembly, report the following items as demanding the special notice of Presbytery:

1st. On page 235, it is recommended by the Committee on Foreign Missions, that the amount contributed by each church to that object, be annually reported both to the Presbytery and to the General Assembly's Permanent Committee on Foreign Missions.

In this Presbytery, as will be directly noticed, provision already exists, and is regularly carried out, for fulfilling the first part of this recommendation. Inasmuch as under the peculiar structure of our Foreign Missionary work, the second part constitutes the only existing plan for making up a report of the benefactions of our church to this cause, it is recommended that the Presbytery direct its Presbyterial Standing Committee on Foreign Missions to report annually to the Assembly's Permanent Committee, as above mentioned.

2d. On page 249, the recommendation of the Committee on Education, that the question, "Has the Education Collection been taken up in your church within the past year?" be placed on the docket for each meeting of Presbytery next preceding a meeting of the General Assembly, to be asked of the pastor or representative of each church.

Your Committee recommend the adoption of this proposal.

3d. On page 253, the recommendation of the Committee on Publication, that each Presbytery appoint a Presbyterial agent to promote within its bounds, the circulation of the issues of the Assembly's Publication Committee, and to procure contributions to its funds.

Your Committee recommend that the Presbyterial Standing Committee on this subject, be directed to take this matter into consideration, and make whatever arrangements will, in their judgment, best carry out the intent of the above action of the Assembly. Most especially do they recommend that the said Presbyterial Standing Committee take upon itself the responsibility of obtaining from this Presbytery its full share toward the present effort for procuring for the Publication, a

permanent working capital of Fifty Thousand Dollars.

4th. On page 260, the recommendation of the Committee of Home Missions, exhorting Synods, Presbyteries, Pastors and Churches to co-operate with the Assembly's Permanent Committee on Home Missions, "With zeal, purpose and liberality equal to the exigencies of our position, and to our high calling in the kingdom of God."

Your Committee recommend that Presbytery solemnly charge its Presbyterial Standing Committee on this subject, to use all available efforts, by securing the spread of knowledge respecting the operations, the field, and the loud crying needs of the Assembly's Committee, by personal appeals, and by correspondence, to bring this cause as near home as possible, to each conscience and heart in our congregations.

Concerning all the above mentioned matters, your Committee respectfully refer Presbytery to its already existing plan of effort; to the satisfaction which has attended the working of that plan; and to the much greater good which may yet be accomplished through an enlargement of the zeal of the Committee.

For some years past, there has been in existence a Presbyterial Standing Committee on each of the four great Christian enterprises to which the Assembly calls our attention. The present members of these Committees are as follows:

On Foreign Missions.—Rev. B. B. Hotchkiss, Rev. J. W. Dulles and Mr. Alexander Whilidin.

On Home Missions.—Rev. E. E. Adams, Rev. Daniel March and Mr. M. W. Baldwin.

On Education.—Rev. John Patton, D. D., Rev. Frank L. Robbins and Mr. J. W. Boyd.

On Publication.—Rev. Wm. E. Moore, Rev. Henry A. Smith and Mr. Isaac Ashmead.

It has been customary for each Committee to report at each meeting of Presbytery, the amount contributed during the year by each individual church, toward the cause which it has in charge, sometimes also stating the average of the contributions for each member of said church, and particularly naming the churches from which nothing has been received. For reasons easily understood, the effect of this has been salutary, and particularly observed in a steady decrease of the last named class. It is true these tables are not a perfect exhibit of the comparative liberality of the churches, because of the vast disproportion between the wealth of one and another of them. But within the bounds of the Presbytery, all the facts in the case are sufficiently understood to furnish data through which our people can form a tolerable estimate of the comparative faithfulness of each church to its responsibility of occupying our Lord's money until he come.

Your Committee believe however, that the good which such annual statements are adapted to accomplish, has been limited by the obscurity into which they have immediately fallen. Hitherto they have simply been read in Presbytery, received, and put on file. They are not placed upon the minutes, nor in any way brought to the notice of absent members, or the people of our congregations. The facts which they contain are brought into contact with only a very small fraction of the great number of hearts on which they should lie with burning force.

It is a gospel rule that we should provoke one another to love and good works. Hence your Committee believe that higher efficiency should be given to these annual statements, by giving them wider publication and more enduring form. And they recommend that Presbytery should take some order to this effect.

Your Committee further recommend that Presbytery give a more definite expression of the duties of these Presbyterial Committees, as consisting not only in gathering the material for making out statistical tables, but in becoming the agents of Presbytery to stir up pastors, sessions and congregations and promote general activity in the enterprises which they have respectively in charge. They believe that, for a proper fulfilling of the intent of their appointment, these Committees should each hold frequent meetings for consultation, carefully devise plans of effort, and as far as possible, superintend the execution of such plans. In laying out these enterprises, the Assembly has only been just to the church which it represents, and our Presbytery could not, without injustice to itself, fall behind any other, in doing its full share in these labors of love toward Christ.

Published by order of Presbytery,

J. G. BUTLER, Stated Clerk.

GREEN CASTLE, IND.—The new edifice of the First Presbyterian Church in this place, was dedicated on the 24th ult. Sermon by Rev. Dr. Tuttle, President of Wabash College. The pastor says: "Last year, by a united and most vigorous effort we paid off a floating debt of eight years' standing. This year, (now just expired,) by using our own best endeavors, together with some donations from friends in Cincinnati and Marietta, O., we have expended about \$2,200 in finishing and furnishing our church."—*Evangelist*.

News of our Churches.

CALIFORNIA.—The *Pacific* of January 14th says:—"The Howard Street Presbyterian Church having been repaired, will be open on next Sabbath, should their pastor elect, Rev. Abbott E. Kittredge, arrive by Saturday. He will be here on the next steamer, which will be due by that time." This important church was formerly under the charge of Rev. S. H. Willey, now Vice-President of Oakland College. Mr. Kittredge was dismissed from Winthrop Church, Charlestown, Mass., Dec. 2d, to take charge of the Howard St. church as above. A social gathering, at which 700 children were present, was held to give him a farewell, and he carries with him to California the warm affection of his people.—The *Pacific* also says:

"The Presbyterian Church in Sonora have unanimously called Rev. W. W. Martin, their present acting pastor, and increased his salary." During the five months of Mr. Martin's residence at Sonora the congregation has grown rapidly, and that which is especially gratifying, it has been augmented largely from those who have not been in the habit of attending any Church service. The Sabbath school has trebled. "Our Eastern brethren are pretty much amazed when they read that the New School Presbyterian Church in Virginia City 'proposes to raise \$500 a month to pay expenses, especially when they think that those dollars are all in gold. We would caution our brethren of Nevada against sending home these large gold figures, lest our Home Missionary Secretaries should fail to send us any funds."

DONATIONS.—Rev. Jas. D. Wilson, of Spring St. Church, N. Y., has received a liberal donation in cash; Rev. G. W. Cleveland, of Moorheadville, Pa., has received \$200; Rev. Josiah Leonard, of the Home Missionary Church at Fulton, Ill., has received \$100; Rev. S. M. Keeler, of Guilford Centre, has received \$90. The 2d Church, Lafayette, Ind., have added \$300 to the salary of their pastor, Rev. Daniel Rice. His people abound also in generous tokens of personal friendship and esteem. His Library has received a complete set of Irving's *Life and Works*, in 25 vols.; Appleton's *New American Encyclopedia*, so far as published; Dr. Draper's *Intellectual Development of Europe*; Stanley's *History of the Eastern Church*; Westcott's *Introduction to the study of the Gospel*, and several other valuable additions. His home has received individual donations of equal value. The *Herald* says: "The rent of slips from this church for the coming year amounts to about \$2,400. The contributions of the church to objects of benevolence during the past year have exceeded those of any previous year by more than fifty per cent."

PRESBYTERY OF CARUGA.—The late meeting was held in Central Church, Auburn.

Eight candidates for the ministry were taken under the care of Presbytery; and Mr. Charles A. Conant, a recent graduate of the Auburn Seminary, was licensed to preach the gospel. Rev. Thos. B. Hudson, who has accepted a call from the Church of Northeast, Penn., was dismissed to the Presbytery of Erie; and Rev. Robert Procter, who has recently entered upon his labors as Stated Supply of the Church at Jordan, was received from the Central Presbytery of Philadelphia. It was voted that licentiates have no ecclesiastical authority to perform the marriage ceremony.

Commissioners to General Assembly:—Rev. S. W. Boardman, and Tertius S. Clark, D. D.; Elders—Henry Willard and James Henderson.

VACANCIES IN THE NORTH-WEST.—"Ambrose" in a recent letter to the *Evangelist*, says:

Waukegan, Rockford, and Bloomington are all without pastors. They are all points of importance; all have good edifices; are all so far free of debt as to fear no inconvenience on account of it; and all paying liberal salaries. Bloomington is an educational and agricultural centre for a considerable region; has a good deal of capital centered in it, and is a point of importance. The Church is a leading one of the place; which is a city of eight to ten thousand people. Rockford is also a city, and a city of churches. It is perhaps the most beautiful town in Illinois; a place of intelligence and enterprise, and has a first class Female Seminary, and superior public schools. Waukegan is a fine Lake Shore town, forty miles from Chicago.