

THE YEAR—HOME VIEW.

The review of the state of religion in our own country, for the entire year, must necessarily be very general in its character.

The events of the past three years and more have been working out a new problem concerning the religious condition of a people.

The question on trial has not been, what is the natural effect of war upon the state of religion in the nation where it is carried on?

But our case is without precedent in two respects. First, a war has been forced on us which in its issue involves the triumph or the defeat, for the time being, of some of the holiest principles of redemption.

In the second place, the whole ground occupied by our armies, has been converted into a missionary field. History has no parallel to this, that a great militant army should be closely followed in all its campings, marches and battles, by another army of Christian laborers, to outlink Satan on the field which he has hitherto claimed as indisputably his own, and send home from the war more spiritual influence than it bears away.

We do not say that all this has yet been accomplished. We only say that such is the effort, that it has been prayerfully and earnestly inaugurated, and that it has been pursued in constantly enlarging measure, and that God has set upon it his seal of approbation in glorious measures of success.

The problem which this nation is working out, is whether these unexampled features of war can so counteract its natural antagonism to religion, that religious progress may be reported during the months when the excitement and indignation of war are most intense.

The first few months following the outbreak of the war, were a time of lull in our religious prosperity. The eternal struggle between fanaticism and indignation. The storm had burst like a torrent from the clouds.

It has not been pre-eminently a year of revivals. The confession is humbling, but it is not made. We cannot in faithfulness appeal any cause for humiliation.

ing the enterprises of the church in following up this tide of emigration. We do not mean that these enterprises have met the necessities of the case, or come anywhere near meeting them.

Still we are able to record good things in this respect, of the past year. It has been a year of advance—an advance whose ratio will not be exceeded by that of any former year.

In this connection, the personal explorations of our very efficient Home Missionary Secretary, are worthy of special notice. It was a long and patient investigation of localities in detail, extending through six months, and conducted with reference to the remote influences, as well as present wants of the fields for which our committee reported to such a man, was greatly needed to enable the committee to act with the highest efficiency.

GERMAN TO THIS SUBJECT, is the restoration of portions of the territory reclaimed from the rebellion to their former ecclesiastical connections with the North.

NEW CHURCH EDIFICES have risen over all the loyal parts of the country, but not in an unusual number. The papers of the various denominations have recorded the dedication of churches with about the usual frequency.

Side by side with this we place another enterprise, one of the finest conceptions in the history of our church. We refer to the plan proposed last spring, to sweep off the entire church indebtedness of our denomination in Philadelphia.

We also notice it, as a feature of the year, that among all branches of the church, and in the country at large, great havoc has been made of church debts.

The most distinguished progress of the year has been in giving, yet increasing. The people of the nation seem to be growing rich under the enormous exactions which our national necessities lay upon them, and the church is growing rich upon its increased liberality to the cause of Christ, or in answer to the calls of humanity.

We should be glad, if it were in our power, to record that the ordinary enterprises of the church, in the receipt of their proportionate share of liberality. Not that we would have one cent less given to the extraordinary calls, but we are sorry that, in the midst of so great a revival of Christian benevolence, the treasures of our long-established benevolent institutions have felt so sparingly the expansion.

Not that they are of minor importance, but because this article is already long, we pass over Sabbath-Schools, Temperance, and Christian Catholicity, as separate topics for review.

advance. The ecclesiastical meetings of the year have furnished abundant testimony that churches mainly homogeneous are longing for closer union, while denominations too untime to come, organic union, are adopting such inter-denominational fraternity as secures beforehand some of the most valuable results of formal union.

Taking as a whole the elements of religious prosperity, we should be ungrateful to characterize the year which has just closed as less than prosperous. In many particulars the advance has been marked, and of such kind as gives promise of permanence.

UNITED STATES CHRISTIAN COMMISSION. Meeting of the churches of Hyde Park, Pa., per O. P. Clark, 87 31

Rev. F. W. Conrad, Scotland, Franklin Co. Pa., 10 00. Sab. Sch. St. James' P. E. ch., Eckley, Luzerne Co. Pa., per Rev. P. E. Russell, 10 00

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES. Church, Haverhill, N. Y., per A. Hazel, 51 74. Church, Haverhill, N. Y., per Mrs. Jane M. Dowell, 25 00

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCHES. German congregation, Fort Madison, Iowa, per Rev. W. F. Fowler, 5 00. Church, McAllisterville, Pa., per T. N. Robinson, 11 00

REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES. Church, Harrington, N. J., per George Kershaw, 40 40. Church, Harlingen, N. J., per George Kershaw, 40 40

GENERAL CONTRIBUTIONS. Ladies' Christian Commission, Cohoes, N. Y., per H. S. Stillman, 217 25. Mr. Bodeheffer, Company O, Sixth Virginia Regiment, 4 00

UNITED STATES CHRISTIAN COMMISSION. Meeting of Reformed Dutch and Presb. churches, Matuchon, N. J., per Rev. John B. Thompson, 33 00. Meth. Epis. and Presb. churches, Maumee City, Ohio, per P. C. Holt, 40 45

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Meeting of the churches of Hyde Park, Pa., per O. P. Clark, 87 31. First Ward Meth. and Presb. churches, Syracuse, N. Y., per T. R. Porter, 50 21

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES. Ladies' Chris. Com. of Cedar street Church, Philadelphia, 6 00. Church, Groveland, N. Y., per Mrs. J. E. White, 18 10

METHODIST CHURCHES. Union meeting of churches, Pottsville, N. Y., add'l, 27 50. Sabbath school, Weston's Mills, 16 00

BAPTIST CHURCHES. Free church Harrisburg, Pa., per R. N. Lambertson, 13 25. Church, Peekskill, N. Y., per Rev. Mr. Towmley, 14 50

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES. Church, Jameson, N. Y., per A. Hazel, 51 74. Church, Haverhill, N. Y., per Mrs. Jane M. Dowell, 25 00

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THANKSGIVING COLLECTIONS. New York Avenue Presb. church, 266 58. Wesley Chapel, 53 43. McKendree Chapel, 5 00

AMOUNT PREVIOUSLY ACKNOWLEDGED, 23,815 44. Total, \$79,876 85. JOSEPH PATTERSON, Treasurer.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF STORES RECEIVED BY THE U. S. CHRISTIAN COMMISSION, FOR TWO WEEKS, ENDING DECEMBER 22, 1864. PHILADELPHIA—Spring Garden Presb. ch., 1 box. Fifth St. M. E. ch., 5 shirts. St. Stephen's M. E. ch., 1 box. Mrs. Stoddard, 12 pads, 4 pillow-cases.

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CONNECTICUT. New Preston Hill—Aid Society, 1 box. Hartford—Aid Association, per Mrs. S. S. Cowan, 5 boxes, 3 barrels, 1 keg.

RHODE ISLAND. Bristol—Soldier's Friend Society, 1 box. Pawtucket—Aid Association, 2 boxes, per J. W. King, of Providence.

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