

American Presbyterian.

New Series, Vol. II, No. 23.

Genesee Evangelist, No. 994.

PHILADELPHIA, THURSDAY, JUNE 8, 1865.

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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN THE RETROSPECT.

Looking at the Assembly from the calmer elevation of the editorial sanctum, it presents itself in some aspects which are new, or which did not appear so clearly when actually mingling with its business, or which may be gathered into a more satisfactory form, now that it is among the things that are past. We note,

1. It was the conscious embodiment of a powerful ecclesiastical community. The constituent elements of the Assembly were not individually powerful, at least not to a very great degree of visible power. Few powerful speeches were made. No prolonged discussions between contending parties were possible in an Assembly so harmonious; and these are the occasions which bring out wit, logic and intellectual strength. One or two points in *these*, of a judicial and constitutional character, were mooted, and brought out decided evidences of ability both in laymen and clergymen; but the Assembly, as a body, regarded the discussions as scarcely relevant, and turned eagerly from them to dispatch the proper business of the church. But there was a consciousness of strength in each member's bosom, as he looked upon the two hundred and thirty-six representatives of a Church not expected to dissolve in the presence of the two attractive forces of "Old School" Presbyterianism and Congregationalism,—to be ground to powder between the upper and nether millstone,—which was pointed out, and given a bad name as a dog about to be hanged—called a *tertium quid*—its right to live challenged—summoned, almost in express terms, to commit *felo de se*, to rise above the world of its superfluous presence.

Here it still was, in the providence of God, living, active, growing, liberal church, with armor on, full of energy, and moving with zeal and hope, and with a consciousness to the times and the emergency, to do its full share in the work of conquering the world for Christ. The members of the body felt that they represented a powerful and noble constituency, felt that they represented the people, the middle and the moderately wealthy classes of the country, the educated, practical, stirring, large-minded, evangelical, and actively pious mind of a large part of the country, and that this constituency had learned to love their branch of the church, and had made up their mind effectually to sustain it. They saw as never before, their denominational enterprises sustained, their colleges and seminaries endowed, and the religious press recognized. A feeling that to be connected with our branch of the Church was to have the best possible position from which to work for the evangelization of the world for the good of our race, sprung up in many minds and gained a decided increase of strength in that Assembly.

The body was manifestly in harmony with the most advanced spirit of the times. It was felt to occupy a position most favorable to general acceptance and wide usefulness, in the age of reconstruction and recognition of human rights on which we have just entered. A long struggle is just over, in which with all the emphasis of a bloody and decisive war, a judgment has been rendered to the world upon the side where our church, as a martyr church, has stood since 1818. Our loss by the secession of the southern element at Cleveland, four years before the war began, was a positive gain. It put our ship in trim for the storm; we rode safely with it and on it. The triumph of the nation and of the principles of freedom is our triumph. The position God has enabled the nation to reach and to secure by a bloody and victorious struggle, is our position. The presence of two colored delegates on the

floor, and the courtesy freely awarded them by the Assembly—to say nothing of the impression made by their own judicious department and able addresses, the emphatic and unanimous declaration of the Assembly for the extension of the right of suffrage to the freedmen, showed that the future course of the national movement in the line of justice and humanity was clearly apprehended by the body; and it was made certain where, in any future controversy on human rights, the friends of man would find our church.

The press of Brooklyn and New York recognized the fact of this advanced attitude of our body. The *Brooklyn Union*, a paper which gave the fullest reports of the proceedings, and to which the Assembly accorded an express vote of thanks, said, in a leader, introductory to the report, after mentioning the difficulty of distinguishing between the two branches:—

Observation teaches us that the New School Presbyterians are rather more in harmony with that indefinable and irresistible thing which we call the spirit of the age. They have been a little more "advanced" in their views on the questions which have agitated and divided thinking minds in these latter days. They have insisted on the sinfulness of slavery, and they have been determined and unyielding in treating it as all other sins. They have borne unflinching and unflinching testimony to the duty of unqualified and unquestionable patriotism, and have felt a livelier interest in the salvation of their country and of their individual souls than in that of any institution, prejudice, connection, or influence, however precious. We would say, generally—with all desire to avoid invidious distinctions, and recognizing the great value and the purity of many of the differing branches—that the New School men were more hearty, cheerful, sympathetic, and healthy; and that a child, a sinner, and a good story would be most likely to come to a good end in their hands. It is this body which has been called upon to speak the voice of the Church in reference to the national curse and sin of slavery, and to rebuke the crime of disloyalty, which has not failed to invade even the sacred confines of religious organizations.

Said the *New York Tribune* of May 20th:—

Among the Commissioners elected to the New School Presbyterian General Assembly, which met in Brooklyn the day before yesterday, are two colored ministers, one from Philadelphia and the other from Newark. The Philadelphia delegate, the Rev. John B. Reeve, was elected an alternate for the Rev. Dr. Brainerd, the moderator of the General Assembly of last year. Dr. Brainerd is of opinion that Mr. Reeve is the first colored man ever elected to any General Assembly, and he deems it eminently proper that the New School branch of the Presbyterian Church, having been the first to enunciate the principles of human freedom, should be the first to rise above the prejudices of caste. The New School Presbyterians, in welcoming the representatives of the colored race as members of the highest board of the Church, have set a noble example to the other religious denominations of the land, the general imitation of which would powerfully aid in the elevation of the negroes and the reconstruction of the Southern churches, Southern society and the Federal Union.

In another part of the paper, we copy the cordial, nay, enthusiastic outburst of admiration which the Assembly extorted from the hitherto depreciatory, unkind, almost sneering editorial columns of the *Independent*. We doubt whether any result or impression produced in any other quarter, is so significant a measure of the demonstration for "New School" Presbyterianism made by the Assembly, as this editorial. If this were not enough, we might refer to the respects paid to us and our proceedings by the disloyal press of Brooklyn, which more than once read us lectures on our course when we grew decisive and denunciatory of treason as a crime; and which headed its reports of our proceedings with sarcastic descriptive titles, in large type.

3. The Assembly will be ever memorable as the first national church council which actually commenced the work of ecclesiastical reconstruction. In the midst of the slowly dispersing cloud-wreath of civil war, and almost upon the smoking embers of its devastating course, it reared at once a large, vigorous, and orderly structure, rapidly assuming all the functions and relations of a time of profound peace, and undisturbed harmony. At one stroke, almost Sherman-like in its boldness, it reached out its arms from the banks of the Ohio, to the very borders of Northern Georgia. The war which seemed destined but to intensify sectionalism, and which at its beginning found ours a sectional church geographically, has made our Assembly national, continental, if not ecumenical. By this act we recognize a portion of the church where we once had over eighty churches, half of whom may be safely numbered as with us to-day. We set up our standard in a district reaching from New

River, Virginia, eighty miles southwest of Lynchburg, through the whole of East Tennessee, to Spring Place in Whitefield County, Georgia, in every part of which we have good prospect of reinstating it at an early day. We have, in fact, taken a position from which to reach the entire body of Southern Presbyteries and Synods, which clung to us so long that some spirit of liberty must have been infused into them from the contact—a spirit which it may not, under the changed circumstances, be very difficult to rekindle in the minds of the laity, however hopeless a task it may be with the most of the clergy.

In this work, the Assembly leads the churches of the land. Thus far, it has devolved upon the other branch rather to guard against the re-entrance of traitorous parties into the councils and the organizations which they once controlled so absolutely. We have heard of no Presbyteries, or representatives of bodies, organizing on a basis of loyalty and anti-slavery, reporting themselves to the Pittsburgh Assembly from the lately rebellious territory.* The field lies open to our brethren as to us, and they will enter it, but as yet the materials of reconstruction lie about them *disjecta membra*. They are ruins which must be built from the foundation. Congregationalism is too loose a thing to do much service in ecclesiastical reconstruction. The national councils of other leading denominations meet but once in three or four years. The first real, practical, extensive work in this grand and honorable field was left to our body to perform. Like the Waldensians in the woods and valleys of Northern Italy, preserved for efficient service in the evangelization of their country when the hour of its deliverance arrived, so these loyal mountaineers of East Tennessee kept their faith, "resisted unto blood striving against sin," waited while seven times the wave of war swept over their homes, until God sent Burnside, their deliverer, to plant the flag they loved immovably above their Mills, their forts, their homes, and their churches; and not less heartily have they hailed the return of the representatives of the church which preaches that Gospel of truth, purity, patriotism, and freedom for which they have suffered so bitterly. The enthusiastic welcome given to their representatives whom the Assembly never wearied of hearing, will touch the hearts of those brethren, and the solemn act which the great Assembly rising as one man, ratified with prayer and thanksgiving, by which their organization was effected and their Presbyteries and Synod incorporated into the Assembly, has made the session among the most memorable and striking ever held.

We intended to speak of the action on Church Extension, Home Missions, the Religious Press, &c., but are compelled to defer our remarks to another occasion.

* The Presbytery of Nashville sent a clerical and a lay delegate to Pittsburgh.

REV. S. SAWYER.

This zealous and energetic missionary among our churches in East Tennessee, whose statements thrilled the General Assembly at Brooklyn, and of whom the brethren there never seemed to hear or see enough, has been preaching or lecturing in our city since that meeting, with great acceptance, and with important practical results. Pine Street Church, and an individual in Calvary Church, have each pledged to supplement the salary of a missionary in that interesting region for a year; respectable contributions were also made on the spot, in both churches.

DR. BRAINERD'S SERMON.

Among the few typographical errors in our issue of Dr. Brainerd's Sermon before the General Assembly, we must notice one, as it respects a sentence which must become famous. Instead of saying that Southern slavery had "fostered a race half Christian and half savage," he said "half *Chesterfield* and half *savage*."

MINISTERIAL.—Among the recent changes made, or arranged for, in our church, we notice the following:—Rev. T. Dwight Hunt, for many years past the highly esteemed pastor of Waterville, New York, has accepted an invitation to the pastorate at Niles, Michigan. Rev. J. T. Hanning, lately of Gorham, New York, has accepted a call from the church at Springville in Western New York. The labors of Rev. H. Lawrence are transferred from Grafton, Ohio, to the churches in Peru and Olenia, in the same State. Rev. John A. Sailor, recently of Niles, Michigan, has removed to Allegan in the same State. We also learn that Rev. G. A. Howard, of Catskill, recently called to Ithaca, New York, elects to remain in his present pastorate.

OUR PAPER FOR EAST TENNESSEE.

A great help in the ecclesiastical reconstruction of the interesting region of East Tennessee will be the wide distribution of religious papers of the right tone and spirit. The people are already sending their names and subscriptions for such papers to a limited, yet encouraging, degree. But for the present and only for the present, they need help to fully supply the community with this and other means of instruction. We therefore propose to send *five hundred copies* of the AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN for six months to the churches of this region, at the average rate of twelve or thirteen to each church of the forty which have been restored to their relations with our Assembly.

We ask for contributions towards meeting the expenses of this undertaking.

In the absence of a settled ministry, the religious press with its weekly visits is the more imperatively needed by the people.

The churches of Philadelphia, and of the region which helped to sustain the *Christian Observer*, owe it to the loyal people of that region thus to neutralize, and to make amends for, the pestiferous influence of that sheet, so lamentably felt in East Tennessee. Let us show them what the spirit of our church in Philadelphia and the East really is, and let us freely scatter among them words of encouragement and sympathy as well as means of instruction and information such as the weekly religious press affords.

If any of the churches in East Tennessee desire themselves to contribute towards supplying their families with the paper, they will send what money they are able to raise for the purpose, and mention the number of copies they can advantageously dispose of, and the papers will be sent, so far as the funds contributed at this office for the object will allow.

About \$600 will be needed in carrying out the enterprise.

AMERICAN SUNDAY-SCHOOL UNION.

On Tuesday evening of last week, was celebrated the forty-seventh anniversary of the American Sunday-School Union—why not *Sabbath*?—School Union. The exercises were held in the Musical Fund Hall, and were participated in by Rev. Messrs. Robert J. Parvin, Thomas Street, and Phillips Brooks, as speakers. Ambrose White, Esq., Vice President, was the presiding officer. The report of the year's work in the Missionary Department of the Union, was read by M. A. Wurts, Esq., Secretary of the Department. The following is a condensed statement of the statistics:—

Number of schools organized 1124, containing 7394 teachers, and 43,667 scholars. Schools visited and addressed 4112, with 30,341 teachers and 212,184 scholars. Making the whole number of schools organized and aided 5236, with 37,732 teachers and 253,851 scholars. Number of families visited 25,389, and Bibles and Testaments distributed 5661. Miles traveled, 180,676. Donations made, 2312, amounting to \$9,680 06. The receipts were, contributions and legacies, \$62,661 31. The excess of expenditures, in missionary work beyond receipts of previous year, \$2606 18. Amount of salaries paid missionaries, and expense of the department \$47,736 85. Amount expended by auxiliary Societies, \$2,941 87. Books and other Sunday-school requisites given to needy Sunday-schools, \$9,680 06. Total, \$62,964 96, being an excess of expenditures over receipts of \$303 45.

In the Publication Department, during the year some very valuable additions have been made to the list of publications, and a gratifying measure of success has attended this branch of the business. The books, periodicals, etc., circulated during the past year amount to \$203,149 14.

The report concludes with an earnest appeal for help to aid the Society in sending forth missionaries into the destitute places of our land to gather in the neglected ones of both races, and teach them what the "Lord their God would have them to do."

DEATH OF A MINISTER.—We are pained to notice the account of the death of Rev. John B. Shaw, late pastor of the Reformed Dutch church at Buskirk's Bridge, N. Y., but for the greater part of his ministerial life a member of our ecclesiastical connection. Many years ago a familiar personal acquaintance with Mr. Shaw impressed us deeply with his unusual devotedness, his unassuming, but highly evangelical mode of presenting truth, his good pastoral qualifications, and his Christian gentleness of spirit. His later life was one of severe trial, growing out of heavy domestic bereavements, including those upon whom he leaned for temporal support in his declining years. Under the weight of sorrow his health gave way, forcing a retirement from pastoral labor, and finally, in the mysterious providence of God, so far unsettling his reason that his comfort demanded his removal to the asylum which, as above recorded, became the place of his death. He died at the age of sixty-seven years.

FROM OUR CORRESPONDING EDITOR.

RETURN OF OUR SOLDIERS.

On Thursday of this week the remnant of the One-hundred-and-eighth Regiment New York State Volunteers, was welcomed back to our city with great rejoicing. This regiment was enlisted here, and went into the service in the summer of 1862, and has a record, perhaps, second to none other in all the gallant Union armies. They went out nearly one thousand strong, a good class of men, well officered; in less than four weeks from leaving home they plunged into the fight at Antietam, and they have been fighting ever since. They were in the battles of Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, Gettysburg, Bristoe Station, Mine Run, Morton's Ford, Wilderness, Po River, Spottsylvania, North Anna, Topotomoy, Coal Harbor, Petersburg, Strawberry Plains, Deep Bottom, Ream's Station, and Boydstown Road.

It will be seen that it was a fighting regiment. It has done good service. It has materially helped in putting down the rebellion and saving the nation. It does honor to the city, and region from which it went; and we do not wonder that its return caused great excitement. The city turned out to greet the brave boys with a welcome of real respect and genuine cordiality.

But some "are not." "Only one hundred and seventy are in the company that return. True, the rest are not all dead. Some had previously obtained their discharge, and were here to welcome their former comrades in arms. But many sleep the sleep of the brave; and such has been the reputation of the regiment for fighting qualities, and for being always in the post of danger, that it has been impossible to recruit for it—it has received no additions; it has fought on, and wasted away; but it has done its work, and is now honorably discharged at the end of the strife. Western New York will always be proud of the One-hundred-and-eighth regiment.

THE PAST DAY.

This was observed in our city with considerable interest and general attention. Services were held in most of the churches, on one or both parts of the day, and in the afternoon a union meeting, of much interest and unquestionable profit, was held in the First Presbyterian Church. St. Peters, the Brick, the Central, and the Plymouth participated.

It was interesting to see how well united the pastors and representatives of these several churches were in these exercises. They were as one church; they mourned with one sorrow; made confession of sin with one speech; vied with each other in honoring our martyred President; and all spoke with great cheer and hope for the future of our disenthralled and free nation. Rev. Mr. Beadle, who led the meeting, happily expressed, we doubt not, in the closing address, the ardent desire and confident expectation of every one in the meeting, that the time is now at hand when "none but the free shall be in all this land."

Addresses were also made by Rev. Dr. Shaw, Rev. Messrs. Ellinwood and Bartlett. Though it was intended for a day of humiliation and prayer, it was, in fact, also a day of rejoicing. No one could speak without adverting to the bright side also of national matters—the war over, the country saved, the union stronger than ever, God honored and acknowledged more than ever before in our national history, the future bright with promises—how could we help keeping the fast with thanksgiving? We doubt if ever a day of humiliation and fasting was so happily observed as this.

A SERMON FOR THE TIMES.

Such an one Rev. Mr. Ellinwood preached last Sunday morning to his own people. It was founded upon a very suggestive passage, the first verse of the second chapter of Judges, which we wish some of our readers might thoughtfully study. The Jews were commanded to exterminate the Canaanites. Either through an easy indolence or false piety they failed to do the work which God had laid to their hands. They suffered many of those to live whom God had appointed to death for their crimes. An angel of the Lord was therefore sent to Bochim, a place of tears, to pass sentence upon Israel for their disobedience. As they had chosen to spare those sinners, they should have them "as thorns in their sides." And so they found them.

The inference and the warning, plainly deducible from this train of thought, were weighty and striking. Our government has a work to do in settling this land, in which it will not answer to be guided by our own ease alone, or by mere tenderness and pity. The element of justice must enter into our plans and calculations, or we shall fail of securing the blessing intended for us, as the Israelites did. There are some criminals that must be exterminated, or they will be a "thorn" in our sides. The will of God

TERMS. Per annum, in advance, By Carrier, \$3 50. Fifty cents additional, after three months. Clubs.—Ten or more papers sent to one address, payable strictly in advance and in one remittance: By Mail, \$2 50 per annum. By Carriers, \$3 per annum. Ministers and Ministers' Widows, \$2 in advance. Home Missionaries, \$1 50 in advance. Fifty cents additional, after three months. Resubscriptions by mail are at our risk. Postage.—Five cents quarterly, in advance, paid by subscribers at the office of delivery. Advertisements.—12½ cents per line for the first, and 10 cents for the second insertion. One square (one month).....\$3 00 " two months..... 5 00 " three..... 7 50 " six..... 12 00 " one year..... 18 00 The following discount on long advertisements, inserted for three months and upwards, is allowed:—Over 20 lines, 10 per cent off; over 50 lines, 20 per cent.; over 100 lines, 30 per cent. off.

must also be regarded, or we shall find him against us, even after he will give us the victory, and then what will our triumphs avail us? It was easy, natural in this connection, to make an earnest appeal for negro suffrage. As a mere matter of justice, how can we withhold the ballot from those who have done so much towards saving the land from destruction? Who are loyal, if not they? How can the Government get along at the South, without their aid at the polls? How else reconstruct loyal States?

INGHAM UNIVERSITY.

The Catalogue of this excellent institution has come to hand, and indicates a good degree of prosperity. The names of more than one hundred and fifty young ladies are enrolled as students. Mrs. Stanton, the accomplished Principal, is at her post. Rev. W. L. Parsons, a good man for those studies, is Professor of Mental and Moral Science; Mrs. Parsons is the Associate Principal; and other teachers fill other departments.

We like this school much, except its name—it is in no sense a "University"—it is only a first-class *Female Seminary*, and as such, well worthy of the constant and liberal patronage which it receives. The examination commences on Thursday, 15th June; meeting of the Board of Councillors (Trustees) on the Tuesday following, 20th, and Commencement on Wednesday, 21st. Address before the Literary Society on Wednesday afternoon, at 2 o'clock, by Rev. A. O. Pierson, of Waterford, N. Y.

FUNERAL OF REV. S. S. GOSS.

This was attended last Sabbath, from the Second Church, in Auburn, by an immense concourse of people, a significant testimony to the esteem in which this dear brother was generally held. An excellent address, which did justice to the character of the deceased, was made by the pastor, Rev. S. W. Boardman; and Rev. Dr. Hawley, of the First Church, and Rev. H. Fowler, of the Central Church, took part in the solemn service. A goodly number of the former parishioners of Mr. Goss, from Meridian, were also in attendance, and joined in the general sorrow. The Church in Meridian, had previously held a meeting, and written a letter of sympathy and condolence to the sorrowing family of the deceased, and appointed a committee to present it, and to attend the funeral. Mr. Goss was a man of pure and noble spirit, much beloved by all who knew him. He leaves a widow and three children to mourn for him.

PERSONAL.

We are sorry to learn that Rev. Horatio W. Brown, pastor of the Presbyterian Church of Lyons, is compelled by ill health to resign his charge. Never very strong, he is feeling worn down by constant work, and needs rest. We the more regret this, as we know him to be much beloved by his people, and his influence is beginning to be more and more widely felt. C. P. B. ROCHESTER, June 3, 1865.

INTERESTING ARRIVAL.—REV. LOWELL SMITH, D.D., with his wife, son and daughter, arrived at New York, from the Sandwich Islands, on the 26th ult.

They were accompanied by several children of missionaries in those islands. Dr. Smith went there in 1832 to engage in the service of the American Board. For several years he, with his family, lived in a grass hut, without door, window, or floor. He gathered the second church in Honolulu, and enjoyed with it a large refreshing from the most wonderful revival which soon after swept over the mission fields there. He now returns, after an absence of thirty-three years, to witness changes and progress in his native land, which can only be appreciated by those upon whose sight they burst in one bewildering view. While we have lived amid the unparalleled creations of human energy, he, in his far off seclusion, has been lifting the souls of the dying up the ladder which reaches from earth to heaven.

A REBEL CLERGYMAN KILLED IN BATTLE.—

If before published, we have failed to observe, until within the past week, a notice that Rev. James H. McNeill, editor of the North Carolina *Presbyterian*, was killed at the battle of Petersburg, while at the head of his regiment as Colonel of the Fifth North Carolina Cavalry. Mr. McNeill was formerly one of the secretaries of the American Bible Society. He was of Southern birth, and on the outbreak of the rebellion, abandoned the North to share the fortunes of that stupendous misadventure.

CORRECTIONS.—

In the notice of the death of Mr. Thomas C. Aitich, published last week, it was erroneously stated that he died at the residence of his brother-in-law. It should have been his son-in-law, Charles A. Besson. The Signature "Schex," on the correspondence page, should be SENEX.