THE AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN
AND
GENESEE EVANGELIST.
A Religious and Family Newspaper,
IN THE INTEREST OF THE
Constitutional Presbyterian Church.
PUBLISHED EVERY THURSDAY,
AT THE PRESBYTERIAN HOUSE,
1334 Chestnut Street, (2d story,) Philadelphia.
Rev. John W. Mears, Editor and Publisher.

American Presbyterian.

THURSDAY, MAY 17, 1866.

DIVISION AND REUNION IN THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

LESSONS OF HISTORY.

In considering measures for a reunion of Presbyterians, the past experience of the body should not be overlooked. We have already tried both separation and reunion, and we are not altogether in the dark as to their nature and tendency. Indeed, it will be our own fault, if, from the severe teachings of the past, we have not gathered some lessons of the deepest significance and value. Let us attempt to put some of these lessons on record:—

1. Presbyterians do not place organization above principle. Visible unity is their ecclesiastical ideal; but not their idol. For truth's sake, they do not hesitate to risk all which is merely external. There are far greater calamities with them than disruption of the mere outward body of the Church. A greater calamity with them is ecclesiastical oppression—is consent to false doctrine on essential points—is silence upon great moral questions with which the whole community is agitated. A greater calamity than disruption would it have been for Scotland, if the independence of the Church had been tamely surrendered in 1843, and if the glorious quarter century of the Free Church had been wanting in her annals. A greater calamity by far than disruption is even now upon the Church of England, whose evangelical members remain in organic connection with, and so practically endorse, the rampant infidelity which they cannot discipline and control. A far greater calamity would it have been in 1861, for the Assembly of the other branch to withhold their testimony and their moral support from the National cause, than to suffer the consequences in the withdrawal of the Southern churches.

2. Organization is, next to a desire for truth, a leading instinct, an essential feature of Presbyterianism. Disrupted Presbyterian bodies do not fly into fragments or degenerate into independency. Isolation is abhorrent to their nature, as it is to Christianity itself. When divisions are effected, immediately the fragments, with perfect ease, become complete wholes again. And, sooner or later, tendencies to reunion are almost certain to appear. The breach of 1741–58, in this country, was filled up through almost its entire length with negotiations for reunion. And our branch of the Church demonstrated its Presbyterian instincts by a reluctance, which it took twenty years entirely to efface, to accept the situation thrust upon it by Providence, of an independent Church. Ten years more have passed, and now we see the instincts of our brethren of the other branch, sharpened by some peculiar circumstances, asserting themselves in a similar manner, and calling quite emphatically for a restoration of the old ties. In Scotland and through all the British colonies, the tendencies to reunion are universal and powerful, leading to union-movements on the greatest scale that has been witnessed in Christendom since the Reformation.

3. In the course of these movements there have been developed in this country, two pretty clearly marked branches, or schools of thought and habits of action, in the Presbyterian Church. The one is rigid; the other, free. The one lays stress upon the particulars of a creed; the other, upon the essential parts of a system. The one makes human philosophy a test of orthodoxy; the other is unwilling to go beyond a simple and unstrained interpretation of Scripture, in which the great principles of Calvinism are found. The one is more Calvinistic than Calvin; the other, more Pauline than Calvinistic. The one teaches limited atonement, absolute inability, and literal responsibility for Adam's sin; the other offers a free Gospel, teaches natural ability, and denies authority to all mere theories of the mode of our connection with Adam. The one limits the relations of the Church to the world; the other expands them so as to bring the influence of the Church to bear upon every moral and religious interest of man. The one is austere, lofty, settling upon precedents, satisfied with old things and suspicious of new; the other is liberal, genial, prepared for something better than the past, which shall confirm and elucidate God's word, and be an advance upon all our present systems.

History teaches us that these two tendencies, have from the beginning, existed in our American Church; that though they may be latent for a time, circumstances are sure to bring them, sooner or later, into conscious antagonism, and that it is hard, if not impossible, for them to dwell together under the roof of a single organization. Twice the attempt has been made. Once the union endured but twelve years, with a period of seventeen years of disruption; the second time it lasted eighty years, and now nearly thirty years of division have passed. And each of these tendencies is, in our day, strong enough to rally about it numbers, influence, wealth, and talent sufficient to constitute a vigorous, independent, useful Church.

4. The softening influences, which, at different epochs, led men in both of these schools to meditate union, are not permanent, do not affect the main tendencies themselves, and cannot guarantee the stability, the peace, the homogeneousness of the united body. The truth is, the liberal school has never schemed for disunion, has never needed softening influences, but has always been the first to think of repairing the breach, when a rupture has occurred. The New York brethren were incessant for reunion from 1741 and onwards; and the "New School" of 1837–38 persisted in their reunion movements until their own sense of Christian manliness protested. On the contrary, both in 1758 and in 1866, outward circumstances of the most powerful character have been required to act upon the more rigid organization, and make them, for the time being, insensible to the characteristic differences of the bodies, and thus dispose them for union. Let the truth be told: *misfortune softened them* in both instances, and gave room for an unwonted development of charity.

Gillett tells us (Hist. I., chap. v.) that almost from the consummation of the division in 1741, the New Brunswick, or liberal party, gained vastly upon the Philadelphians. In the numbers and talents of its ministry, and in the extent of the field opened to their labors, the advantage was altogether with the New side. The Old side lacked vigor and spirituality; the tide of emigration from Ireland, so important to them, began to ebb. The increase of membership in the New side was to that of the Old side, nearly as eight to one. The New Brunswick party started with but eight or ten ministers, including licentiates; in the seventeen years, they had so increased that the Synod of New York numbered seventy ministers at the Reunion. In 1742 the Synod of Philadelphia, (the Old side,) numbered twenty-six ministers. At the time of the Reunion, they numbered twenty-two. No doubt some, at least, of the Old side, regarded reunion as a "corollary" from these facts. Gillett says, "In these circumstances, they became less and less indisposed to reunion."

We would speak with the utmost kindness of our brethren of the other branch, and would most cheerfully recognize a substantial unity of spirit between many of them and ourselves; but is it not true, and ought it not to be declared, that the strength of the reunion movement in their body, to-day, is due to like causes with those which we saw at work in the "Old Side" from 1741–58? Does any one suppose that, if the Old School Church had maintained its organization entire, and to-day numbered, as it did in 1860, its three hundred thousand members and nearly 3700 churches, with a General Assembly of over three hundred Commissioners, we should hear of any great pressure for reunion in its ranks? Has it not been candidly avowed, that the corollary from the failure to reunite the Northern and Southern fragments of the Old School Church is reunion with the New School? Say we not truly, that the rigor of the Old School has been softened by extraordinary circumstances—the loss of nearly one-third of her strength and the rise of portentous elements of discord in her thinned ranks? Are not our brethren passing through the same process which the Old side experienced over a century ago, in which, for the time, they forgot and ignored their characteristic tendencies, but did not fail to bequeath them to their ecclesiastical posterity, to reappear after eighty years? Surely the utmost friendliness of feeling should not hinder our searching this matter to the foundation, and pouring upon it all the light which God has providentially given to us, in over a century and a half of Presbyterian history in America.

5. Our own deductions from the past history and present status of our branch of the Church, render us decidedly adverse to breaking up its outlines and destroying its identity. We reiterate our often expressed conviction of the unspeakable value, to the Church and the world, of liberal Presbyterianism as represented in our body. To any movements which will really strengthen those wholesome principles, we are favorable, of course. But any attempt to merge once more the two great tendencies of Presbyterianism into one organization, under the influence of mere kindly feeling, or of a temporary suspension of the rigidity of the Old side, it seems to us would be a blind disregard of the teachings of history; it would be to walk in a treadmill; to return upon our own track. Unity is desirable; but attempts at unity in a line twice rebuked of Providence, cannot easily be shown to be the duty of Christian men and ministers.

The present relations of the two branches as distinct Churches are harmonious, honorable, and to mutual edification. They may be rendered still closer, doubtless, with increase of benefit. Possibly the mass of the two bodies may, by further intercourse, find themselves alike upon the platform of a wise, safe, scriptural, Liberal Presbyterianism. They have not found it so yet. Until they do, we shall go simply for cultivating our present friendly and courteous relations, and for presenting a substantially even front to the enemies of truth in the world. But we can never give our consent to a union, which does not honor that liberality, and blazon it as a star upon the forehead of the new organization.

WHAT SHOULD COME OF THE REVIVALS?

There are frequent expressions of interest, not to say of anxiety, beginning to be heard as to the fruits and tests of the revival which has been so generally enjoyed by the churches during the past six months. We do not add our voice to this inquiry out of fear; we see no reason to question the genuineness or preciousness of the work. But we think it meet to express the very reasonable expectation, that the Church shall show a large increase of efficiency and shall be a more decided power among men than before.

1. We expect to see a nearer approximation to that condition of permanent revival, which we regard as the only normal condition of the Church, and the one quite indispensable to her final triumph. In not a few instances reported in this revival, the work has taken this steady, enduring character, going on for months, or even a year, without sensible abatement. Frequently the means used have varied almost in nothing from the regular exercises of the Church. All of which seems to point to the time, when religion will be recognized as the highest concern of the Church at all times; when a fresh and lively interest will be taken by Christians in the work of the Lord the year round; when conversions will be looked for, as the result of the regular services of the Church. The week of prayer, prolonged into nineteen weeks of daily united prayer among Christians of this city, is an indication of like significance. In proportion to the results of the late revivals, we do not believe the pressure upon pastors has been exhaustive. Hence, it will be natural for them to direct their revived and strengthened flocks to this view of the subject.

2. We look for a higher state of piety and efficiency among the individual members of our churches. We expect Sabbath-schools to be reinforced with teachers; we expect Mission-schools to spring up among the destitute, and every form of effort for a dying world, and especially for the neglected and perishing masses, to be reinforced with zealous, self-denying laborers. In Boston, a cultivated layman, a man of leisure and of decided abilities, H. F. Durant, Esq., has been moved to devote himself to evangelical labors. And so acceptable has he proved himself in this capacity, that Rev. Dr. Adams has shared his own pulpit with him, thus wisely endorsing and encouraging one who was so manifestly an instrument of God for this work. Men and women will be found working for the salvation of souls, not as something out of their line, but as the simple and natural result of a humble, believing, earnest, prayerful spirit. There are certainly neighborhoods, where the people of the world will feel themselves in close quarters under the zealous labors of their converted companions, and amid the multiplied numbers and the victorious spirit of the revived people of God.

3. We look for a concentration of efforts against prevailing social evils. A revived Church will be followed by a raised moral tone that will be felt in the community. We expect a new and more vigorous assault upon intemperance than has been made for a dozen years. The recent powerful movements in defence of the Christian Sabbath have been part of the revival. And a revived Christianity will appear in a bold stand against mere partisanship in politics; in the reinforcement of every effort to keep the vile and corrupt from places of power; and in a strengthened public sentiment in favor of equal justice to all races, and of the wholesome execution of law upon those guilty of the highest offences known to human government. We have the utmost confidence that the results of these revivals will be counted in the ballot boxes; and they will strengthen the party described Senator Wilson in his speech in the United States Senate, May 9:

I believe it to be a liberty-loving and patriotic organization, to be composed of the noblest, truest, and best men of our country; that an overwhelming majority of the thoughtful, reflecting, conscientious, Bible reading, God fearing men of the country are in its ranks. Every breath that that organization has breathed has been a breath for liberty, for patriotism, for justice, for humanity, for the elevation of every being that breathes God's air and walks his earth.

We could not believe a revival genuine, which did not add strength to the sound political tendencies, elements, and organizations of a free and intelligent people.

4. Once more, we look for an accession of strength to the benevolent enterprises, and to all the departments of labor in the Church. Have Christians grown in grace; is the Church active and aroused; has the Holy Spirit communicated himself, so that her whole character is greatly elevated? Then we may use the language of Paul, in soliciting aid for the poor saints from the Corinthians:—"Therefore, as ye abound in everything, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, *see that ye abound in this grace also.*" It will be wrong, and we think difficult, for any man to believe himself converted unless his substance is truly consecrated to the Lord. At least a general revival should lessen the proportion of those inexplicable monsters, those *lusus naturæ* (we cannot say *gratiæ*) in the Church—penurious Christians. We expect a wider circulation to Bibles, to pure literature, and religious newspapers by a revival. The religious paper, representing all the interests of the Church and of Christ's kingdom, should follow every revival as a supplementary instructor and guide to enlightened action for Christ, and as an anchor to the position of the new converts. We count, too, on reinforcements to the ranks of candidates for the ministry. The blessings upon our colleges lead us to look early for such results. If they do not follow, then may we question the Divine origin of these movements. By their fruits we shall know them.

5. We regard it as one of the most hopeful signs of the Revival, that no one seems disposed to view it as ended. For ourselves, we trust we see but the beginning. And we counsel churches and neighborhoods that have not been visited, or that have had but a partial blessing, to hope on and pray on, and wait for the promise of the Father, and "ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." The prophetic expectations that have clung about our year, make us look for far greater things than the truly great already vouchsafed. Why may not the latter half of the year transcend unspeakably the former, in spiritual glory and fruitfulness?

REUNION A PRACTICAL FAILURE.

It will be remembered that at former meetings of the Dayton (N. S.) and Miami (O. S.) Presbyteries, a plan for harmonious action upon the overlapping parts of their field was adopted. Feeble churches on either side were to unite, and the resultant churches to ally themselves in a fair proportion to the two Presbyteries. As usual in such arrangements, the more liberal party fulfilled so much of the arrangement as depended upon themselves, and the consequence was the accession to the Miami Presbytery of one of these united churches. But when it came to the turn of the other branch a hitch took place, and the proposed union failed. At the last meeting of the Dayton Presbytery the *Herald* says:—

Considerable time was spent at both the regular and adjourned meetings in considering the practical working of the plan of union agreed upon between the two Presbyteries of Dayton and Miami one year ago. It was hoped then that good would grow out of the proposed union; but the past year's experience has hardly warranted the expectation. A protest was read from our members of the Second Church at Greenville, against the union, and the commissioner heard from the United Church. A conference was also had with a committee from the Miami Presbytery, after which Presbytery substantially resolved:—

1. To decline giving their sanction to the union of our church at Greenville with the O. S. at that place; and

2. Expressed the opinion that our sense of self-respect, and the obligations we owe to the N. S. Presbyterian Church that has, under God, accomplished so noble a work since the great rupture of '38, suggest to us the propriety of discontinuing any further efforts in this direction, until we have practical evidence that our O. S. brethren are able and willing to co-operate with us on the general principle of equivalent exchanges; or, which the Presbytery think still better, until the two Assemblies shall initiate some just and feasible plan of organic union.

A NEW VICTIM WANTED.

The slave spirit in Russia, perhaps encouraged by the success of its expedient of assassination in this country, has prompted a similar attempt upon the great leader of emancipation in the Old World, the Czar of Russia. Happily the same success did not follow the copy as was mysteriously allowed to the original. Had the aim been as true, or had watchful friends been, for the moment, as remote as in the case of our lamented Lincoln, the Czar would have perished within two days of a year of the former—on the 16th instead of the 14th of April. Is not slavery the same everywhere? Can it be safe, or wise, or just speedily to restore to power those who fought a bloody civil war to perpetuate it? Is the nation in haste to bring back to our Congressional halls its plantation tone, its bully and menace, its bowie knives and pistols, and canes, its ungovernable passions; its last resort in brute force?

The temper of the country is well represented in the joint resolution which was offered in the House by Mr. Stevens, and passed by a unanimous vote:

Resolved, By the Senate and House of Representatives in Congress assembled, That the Congress of the United States of America has learned with deep regret the attempt made upon the life of the Emperor of Russia by an enemy of emancipation. The Congress send their greetings to His Imperial Majesty and the Russian nation, and congratulates the twenty millions of serfs upon the providential escape from danger of the Sovereign, to whose head and heart they owe the blessings of their freedom.

PUBLICATION COMMITTEE'S TRACTS.

The minor issues of our Committee should not be overlooked while we are interested by the admirable quality and appearance of the greater ones. We have before us half a dozen tracts of their second series, every one of which has its separate excellence and adaptedness. One of them, by Dr. Duffield, upon the theme: "Every Christian a Home Missionary," is a very full and inspiring survey of the great field of labor stretching before us and within reach of every servant of Christ in the land. Another, on "The Family Altar," by the Rev. M. R. Vincent, effectively urges the duty of family worship, and gives practical directions for most successfully discharging it. "Poor Little Ellen" is a most touching and powerful temperance tract. "Poor yet Rich," shows the power of Divine grace to sustain the soul in extreme poverty, loneliness, and old age. For catechetical instruction, three little treatises have been provided: (1) "What we are to Believe," the doctrinal part of the Shorter Catechism, with proof texts. (2) Shorter Catechism, with proof texts. (3) Four Catechisms for the Young, with prayers and Divine Songs; three of them by Dr. Watts, and the fourth, the Shorter Catechism, with analyses and proof texts. We hope parents and Sabbath-schools will largely avail themselves of this series.

TOO BAD.

The guerilla who barbarously murdered General McCook, whom he meanly shot as he lay wounded and helpless in his ambulance, and whose barbarous act thrilled the whole people with intense indignation, has been liberated on his parole by the President, and straightway elected sheriff of his county in Alabama, by supporters of the President's policy.

There is a day of reckoning coming yet, both for the authors of such crimes and for those who would conciliate, tolerate, and applaud them.

TENNESSEE.

Andrew Johnson's own State gives little encouragement to her distinguished son in the course of extreme lenity to rebels, which he so rudely avows and persists in attempting to enforce. The Senate of that State, by a two-thirds vote, has passed a stringent bill for the disfranchisement of rebels, which Governor Brownlow endorses, and pledges himself to enforce by every means in his power.

NINETEENTH WEEK OF PRAYER.

Wednesday, United Presb. Church, Race near Sixteenth St.

Thursday, Salem Methodist, Lombard St. below Broad.

Friday, West Spruce St. Presbyterian, Seventeenth and Spruce Sts.

Saturday, Olivet Presbyterian, Twenty-second and Mount Vernon.

TABOR CHURCH.—This prosperous church still gives proof that the blessing of God is with its pastor and people. On last Sabbath it received an accession of thirty-eight members, seventeen by letter, and twenty-one by profession.

American Presbyterian.

New Series, Vol. III, No. 20. Genesee Evangelist, No. 1043.

PHILADELPHIA, THURSDAY, MAY 17, 1866.

TERMS.
Per annum, in advance:
By Mail, $2. By Carrier, $2 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 50 in advance.
Home Missionaries, $2 00 in advance.
Fifty cents additional after three months.
Remittances 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
" two months	5
" three "	7
" six "	12
" one year	18

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, 33⅓ per cent. off.

LAFAYETTE AVENUE CHURCH.

THE EXCISE LAW, ETC.

BROOKLYN, May 12, 1866.

DEAR BROTHER:—Next Sabbath will be our second communion-season since the commencement of the revival; we expect to receive one hundred and eight into Lafayette Avenue Church. The whole number received during the revival is *two hundred and sixty*. Our membership has now gone beyond one thousand. God be praised for such a band of workers as this young church! They are establishing a new mission-chapel as a memorial of this precious season of grace.

The new "Excise Law" shut up our grog-shops in these twin cities last Sabbath, and the new broom sweeps clean. If the Christian community will only keep hold of the broom-handle, we shall exorcise some evil spirits therewith. Last Sunday the Scripture scene was reversed. The *Lots* remained in *Sodom*, while the "lewd fellows of the baser sort" fled over to Hoboken and Jersey City, because Sodom was quite too respectable and Sabbatical for them.

The first anniversary of the new "National Temperance Society" was a superb success. Three thousand persons were present, including many leading clergymen. Brother Beecher and Gen. Howard (our Havelock) spoke admirably.

Yours ever, THEO. L. CUYLER.

ANOTHER PLAN.—The *Northwestern Presbyterian*, despairing of any revocation or modification of the recent acts of the Old School General Assembly concerning the South, now comes out with a new suggestion. The men who are to compose the Assembly are not likely to be much impressed with suggestions from that quarter. We copy them, not because they have any immediate interest for our readers generally, or because they are any foreshadowing of the doings of the Assembly concerned, but simply to show the tact of the champions of retrogression in sliding out from a position which the Christianity of the North will overwhelmingly repudiate. The plan is as follows:

"All that is now asked is, that the Assembly will take action in accordance with the *present state of affairs*, changed as it is since last May. The 'situation' is wholly altered. *Then* the churches South were a schismatical portion of our own Church: *now*, they are a distinct and regularly organized body. *Then*, the Church South was pledged to the Southern Confederacy; *now*, it acknowledges the United States Government and Constitution as having rightful authority. *Then*, there was in one of its public acts a declaration that its mission was the conservation of slavery; *now*, it publicly and unanimously repudiates the obnoxious sentiment. Changes so important as these demand from us, not annulling or repudiating acts, but a new act. And what should that act be?

"1. Recognize the change, with gratitude to Him who rules.

"2. Strike from our rolls the Synods, Presbyteries, ministers and churches, who have constituted themselves a distinct Church and thus become a foreign body.

"Declare the sisterhood of the new Church as belonging to the Evangelical family, and that ministers and members will be received from her just as from the New School, the Methodist, and others—that is, upon a personal examination as to their knowledge, faith and Christian experience.

"Declare that by this recognition we do not contract our limits, we being still 'The Presbyterian Church in the United States of America;' and that we will, as heretofore, send missionaries, organize churches, form Presbyteries, and constitute Synods, in the Southern and South-western States, as we do elsewhere.

"We throw out this thought very briefly; we may recur to it to elucidate, defend, or modify. We think that the substance of it may be so put by the next Assembly as to be perfectly satisfactory to the Synods named above and to the great body of our ministers and people, the land over."

PHILADELPHIA SABBATH ASSOCIATION.—The Twenty-fifth Annual Report of this Society has been laid upon our table. The field of operations of this society is confined pretty much to the boatmen on our canals, the mission centres being Easton, Lewisburg, Pa., New Brunswick, &c. The work seems to be faithfully done by tract distribution, personal conversation, and open-air services with boatmen, with the manifest blessing of God. The Corresponding Secretary, Rev. Jeremiah Miller, has, however, given a wider range to his labors, having traveled considerably through the State and addressed Sunday-schools, preached on the Sabbath, and labored at Harrisburg, and in this city, with good results, for the maintenance of our Sabbath laws. The receipts and payments of the year were $3300. John A. Brown is President.

It seems to us that an enlargement of the field of the Society's operations, so as to include efforts to reach the neglectful and Sabbath-breaking masses of the city, especially during the warmer part of the year just commenced, would be a good work. The imperilled interests of the Sabbath demand a more general rally and more comprehensive efforts and steady reliance on the part of the friends of the day.