

# American Presbyterian.

New Series, Vol. III, No. 43.

Genesee Evangelist, No. 1066.

PHILADELPHIA, THURSDAY, OCTOBER 25, 1866.

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## STRONG IN FAITH.

It must be confessed that many who in the judgment of charity are true Christians, show very little of the power of faith. Many, too many, are compelled to say in the same breath, "Lord, I believe," and "Help thou my unbelief." Too many have just such a contradictory experience; now believing, now unbelieving; and the best evidence of belief they have is, that they find themselves applying to Christ for deliverance from their unbelief: "Help thou mine unbelief."

Only to believe, is to live; but merely as the feeble, wailing infant; that must be nursed and carried, and fed with milk, and borne with in its thousand infirmities; but to be strong in faith is to be grown into vigorous manhood, to be a power instead of a care in the family, the Church, and the community; to be able to digest the strong meat of the word. The weak believer dwells in a kind of twilight. It is as if the shining light which had broken the darkness of his night, stood still before quite reaching the horizon, and left him amid half-dissipated shadows, scarcely enabling him to distinguish between friendly and hostile objects; scarcely revealing to him the way of truth and rectitude. He that is strong in the faith has a fully risen sun shining upon him. He plants his foot firmly in the well-marked path of duty. He grapples unhesitatingly with his foe; he recognizes and allies himself heartily with his own friends and God's.

To be strong in faith is to take a firm hold of the offers of mercy in the Gospel. It is to be most heartily convinced of the all-sufficiency of the merits of Christ and the sincerity and freeness of his offers, and to put implicit trust in them. It is to lay hold on them as our only and yet complete salvation. It is to yield them our highest confidence, to depend upon them as we do not depend on the best earthly friend or earthly substance. It is to feel them as an immovable rock beneath our feet, as an anchor to the soul, sure and steadfast, entering into that within the veil. It is to see in Christ our complete salvation. It is to feel satisfied, safe, assured in Him, to transfer all our fears to Him, to rest in his arms of mercy as a place beyond peril from all the assaults of hell, and sin, and Satan. It is to feel that his grace is full enough, his merits rich enough, his satisfaction broad enough, to warrant all who accept them, in the exercise of an humble but positive and comforting assurance of salvation.

To be strong in faith, is to grasp firmly those unseen truths and facts revealed in the Scriptures. Materialism has no Bible, and could never have originated the sacred books or traditions of the most debased of heathen tribes. A strong faith is a nature divinely endowed or trained, quite beyond the meagre limits with which materialism would fetter thought. Materialism ignores and would crush the capacity of faith in man. The man of strong faith asserts his prerogative as a spiritual being. He has in himself the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. The existence of God, and of the other world as a place of rewards and punishments, the duty and value of prayer, and all the grand facts and principles involved in the Christian religion are practical realities to him. He walks with God. He worships and obeys him. He accepts of his great love in Christ Jesus, and takes it as an unspeakable consolation to his heart. He shortly expects to meet his God in judgment, and afterward to dwell with Him forever. These things exert a constant perceptible influence on his every-day life and conduct. They are the rule of his life. He walks by faith, not by sight.

The strong in faith grasps the great, strong doctrines of the Bible with a firm hand. He admits them unwaveringly into his mind, because he has already given them a cordial admission into his heart. Not by dint of laborious self-persuasion does the belief in the inspiration of the Scriptures, in the divinity of the Christian religion, and the reality of the miracles of the Bible, hold its uncertain tenure in his convictions. No chill, negative criticism can send quaking into his steadfast soul. He feels a deep harmony between his soul and the glorious doctrines of the Gospel. Glowing in the calm majesty of undoubted divine truth, they communicate their own stability to his mind; his faculties, his energies, all the movements of his being fall into beautiful order, and keep time to their inspiring celestial music. Healthful vigor animates his inward life; hope beams like a star in his eyes; his brow is like a

for truth and for God have more than mortal energy. While skepticism knows nothing better than to ask questions, to raise cold suspicions, to discover difficulties and obstacles, to chill the heart, to shatter the will and to mope helpless and bewildered in the mist she herself has raised. The highest enterprise of the doubter is criticism of the grounds of his neighbor's faith; and all he undertakes is

"Sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought."

To the strong in faith the doctrines and facts of revealed religion, with their mysteries, in their heaven-reaching height and depth, and in their all-embracing breadth, are the very pillars of the universe. Nothing is so real as they; nothing is real without them. Their very difficulties, instead of being objections, are to him but the incomprehensible majesty of their truth. He believes them the more and the better for their difficulties.

Once more, the strong in faith grasp and keep hold of the promises. They take God at his word. They have believed in Christ, and they know that in Him all the promises are Yea and Amen. With Christ, the greater gift, they know God, in his kingdom of grace, will freely give us all things. Resting on the promises they pray, and their prayers are deeds. They put God upon his faithfulness, and he honors it and answers them. They wrestle with him as if they actually had a hold upon Him. Rising up thus in a mighty energy of prayer to God, their souls have wrought with prayerful energy in the world, and their great works for God have marked the history of their race, and have changed its currents. Strong in faith were Luther and John Knox, mighty in prayer, mighty in deeds. Strong in faith was Abraham, the father of the faithful, who, a friendless stranger, took possession in Jehovah's name of the promised land, then the abode of powerful idolatrous tribes; who dwelt in tents with the second and third generations of the heirs of the promise, and died in the faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and was persuaded of them and embraced them. The childless old man, a hundred years old, received the promise that he should be heir of the world, that in his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed; he believed in the God that quickeneth the dead and calleth those things which be not as though they were; against hope, he believed in hope and staggered not at the promise, but was strong in the faith, being fully persuaded that what God had promised He was able also to perform.

Of like invincible quality was the faith of Wichern and Harms and Gosner in Germany, and George Mueller of Bristol, England. The lives of these men were scenes of constant, believing importunity and wrestling with God. Out of poverty and obscurity they raised up great and beneficent institutions, and became almoners of vast sums from the treasury of the Lord. No brighter proofs of the power of faith as a working principle are to be found in the history of the Church, than those given in the labors of these men. They, too, with Abraham, believed in the God who calls those things which be not as though they were. They faced indescribable difficulties, and bore mountain weights of discouragement, and clung prayerfully to God through all and succeeded. Men of strong faith make their mark. They work with more than human strength and guidance. They are positive powers in the world. Their foolishness is wiser than men, their weakness is stronger than men.

## SYNOD OF PENNSYLVANIA.

This body held its annual session last week in the First Church, Carlisle. The place itself is one of much interest to Presbyterians, on account of the antiquity of the church—a century and a quarter having elapsed since its organization—and as being the scene of the earlier labors of the distinguished and venerable Duffield, and the centre of some of the most intense and exciting struggles of the times of the division. Here was written one of the books which brought down and deepened the once fearful cry of heresy, and which helped to draw more clearly the lines between the parties then unfortunately dividing the church.

This place and the entire vicinity in the broad and fertile valley of the Cumberland, were open to the advance of the rebel army, and were held by them in undisturbed possession for a few days in 1863. There is scarcely a more fertile or magnificent belt of country to be found in all the agricultural regions of the land than this valley, bounded by lofty wooded ridges on either hand. One who has beheld it in the glow of summer, with its waving

harvests and loaded fruit-trees, can well understand how, in the words of the poet, it must have appeared:—

"Fair as a garden of the Lord,  
In the eyes of the famished rebel horde."

The good people of Carlisle still speak with deep disgust, of the four days in which they were under the rule, of Jefferson Davis, entirely cut off from the rest of the world. True, the rebel soldiers were kept for that brief period in excellent control; and only here and there a slight taste of what might be expected, in the event of the defeat of Gen. Meade, was experienced. Fat cattle were driven off, and serviceable horses seized without hesitation; and a peculiar wrinkle of the eye attends the narrative of the plunder of certain sympathizers with the rebellion, who, during the invasion, confidently retained their stock about the farm, but who were compelled to see it pass, without remuneration, into the hands of their needy Southern "friends."

They, indeed, very generally offered to pay in rebel currency, and for the most part, they treated the farmers and their families with civility; even asking permission, like school-boys, to climb the cherry trees on the road. It is needless to say that the permission was granted with equal civility. A hardware merchant in Carlisle was stripped of \$1500 of stock, but was asked to make out a bill of items; and after the bill had been duly examined, was given the choice of a quartermaster's certificate, or of rebel currency in payment. He coolly answered that, as a certificate would serve only to light a single cigar, while with the currency he could light a good many, he had a slight preference for the latter; and he got it.

Besides burning the Government barracks, which have since been substantially rebuilt, and destroying the Cumberland Valley Railroad bridge, over Le Tort creek, the rebels, it will be remembered, shelled the town, before fairly commencing their retreat to Gettysburg. They planted their cannon on an eminence just east of the creek, and sent their shells into the centre of the town, where our militia were stationed. Here, too, is the edifice of the First Church, in which the Synod held its sessions, the front of which bears more than one mark of these rebel missiles; and as no material damage was done by them, the shattered stones are left, as they should be, faithfully to tell to strangers, and, as we hope, to coming generations, the story.

By far the most important and interesting part of the proceedings of Synod was the cordial and fraternal interchange of speech and action between ourselves and the Synod of Baltimore, which was providentially in session at the same time in the Second Church. The movement was initiated by our brethren of the other branch, who showed the utmost cordiality and frankness in all their acts, and whose speech and conduct made upon our brethren the happiest impression. The negotiations resulted in an invitation to the Synod of Baltimore from our side, to unite with us in the Synodical Communion on Wednesday evening, which was accepted. A more remarkable and impressive service surely was never held in that building. At seven in the evening, before a thronged congregation, the members from the other Synod, considerably outnumbering ours, poured into the middle aisle of the church, and were received by our brethren standing; each pew, so far as practicable, receiving brethren from each Synod. The two Moderators presided jointly. Rev. A. B. Cross, of Baltimore, Moderator of the other Synod, opened the services, by reading part of the 17th chapter of John. He remarked in his address, that he and his brother Moore, the Moderator of our Synod, had toiled together for the soldiers in the lines before Petersburg, and he eloquently compared our two divided churches to the two armies of Sherman and of Meade, separated in appearance only, but both under one leader; both of us holding tenaciously to the same form of government and doctrine.

Mr. Moore, in his address, declared that he did not believe the doctrinal contests of the generation gone by had been in vain. He hoped for the time when we might be one in name as well as one in heart; and though, perhaps, that time had not yet come, he hoped it would come at an early day.

After prayer and reading the words of institution, the bread was distributed by Mr. Barnes, who made a full and lucid doctrinal statement, in which he held up the vicarious offering of Christ as the central fact of Christianity, which this supper was designated to celebrate. He was followed by Dr. Thomas Creigh, of Mercersburg, a man of venerable appearance, who

alluded to Calvin's coat of arms—a heart enveloped in flame and lifted up by a hand toward heaven. Dr. Creigh referred to the interesting fact, that nearly forty years before, he had made his public profession of religion, and had first received the sacred bread and wine in this very church, from the hands of Dr. Duffield, of whom he spoke with the deepest reverence. He said he did not care to hear the old disputes brought up again. They were family quarrels, that ought to be forgotten.

The cup was dispensed by Dr. March, whose remarks deepened the tenderness of the occasion. He briefly recalled the story of Tigranes and his grateful wife receiving their lives from the Roman conqueror, Pompey. Dr. March could not enter personally into the ecclesiastical difficulties which divided the Synod. He saw before him only brethren.

The closing remarks were made by Dr. Gurley, of Washington. Dr. Gurley described to the breathless audience the scene at the death-bed of Mr. Lincoln, and referred to his own prayer on that solemn occasion, in which he expressed the desire that the nation might, by that dreadful event, be led to consecrate themselves anew to the cause for which Mr. Lincoln had died. That prayer, said Dr. Gurley, was answered. And should not we, around this memorial of our crucified Lord, reconsecrate ourselves to the cause for which he died?

The elements were distributed by eight elders, four from each Synod. At the conclusion, the whole audience rose and sung the doxology, "From all that dwell below the skies," and the benediction was pronounced by Mr. Cross. Many were the introductions and many more the mutual greetings without any formality among the brethren which followed. And so ended this remarkable celebration, in the midst of the battle-grounds of thirty years ago; no place more thoroughly impregnated with associations and reminiscences tending to cherish ecclesiastical hostilities could well have been found; and yet here, in the providence of God, the triumph of Christian charity and brotherly kindness at the Master's feet was celebrated; and the world again had occasion to say: "Behold how these Christians love one another!"

## HON. HENRY WILSON.

It may not be exactly in the best taste to parade the fact of any man's conversion or public profession of religion. Yet when the heart of the country is so pained by an exhibition of shameful profanity and recreancy to principle in the highest seat of national authority, we feel justified in publishing a fact so cheering as that of the humble and doubtless sincere profession of the Christian faith, under Evangelical associations, by the distinguished Senator from Massachusetts, Henry Wilson.

Many of our eminent men, like Jackson, Clay, Polk, and Clayton, have made similar professions toward the close of their political career, or on their death-beds. Mr. Wilson has consecrated himself to his Master's service in the very meridian of his usefulness, and at a time in his country's history when men are needed in public life whose devotion to the right rests on broader grounds than partisanism, political expediency, patriotism, or even the elevated personal character which distinguishes not a few of our non-professing public men. We need men with a high sense of responsibility to God; men rooted and grounded in the Christian faith; men sustained by a Divine power, which will enable them to make great sacrifices, if demanded, in the line of duty.

We earnestly hope that the Legislature of our State, if it cannot find a true Christian man among the candidates for the Senatorial vacancy to be filled at the coming session, will at least save us from the disgrace of being represented by a tricky politician, or an open opponent of the institutions of the Christian religion, in the highest council of the nation.

## THE OPENING OF ANOTHER REVIVAL SEASON.—As such we fervently trust we may characterize the state of feeling de-

scribed in the following paragraph from the Chicago correspondent of the *Evangelist*. He writes under date of Oct. 1:—  
"I am glad to be able to write you of very decided religious interest which has followed the late Sabbath-school Conventions. In Princeton, Peoria county; Delevan, Tazewell county; Champaign county; Roshville, Schuyler county; Onawka, Hudson county; and especially in Pontiac, Livingston county, very deep and earnest work of grace has begun. The children's meetings are held by speakers from the county and neighboring towns, and are generally under the charge of some experienced Sabbath-school laborer, who bends all the force of his addresses into the great work of saving souls."

## THE ECONOMIC ASPECT.

Among the various parties and interests to be considered in the Sunday Car Question—the churches, the people, the card-drivers and conductors, etc.—we should not quite overlook the interests of the companies themselves. We know that fully one-half of the companies of the city took no part in the recent crusade against the Sabbath, and we have no doubt they were restrained, in part at least, by economic reasons from so doing. In Boston, where the act of incorporation, singularly enough, requires them to run on Sunday, there has been and is a very strong opposition to the practice on the part of some of the stockholders, because in their judgment it does not pay.

In regard to one of our city companies which had run for a few Sabbaths, we are informed by an intelligent employee, that if this company had continued to run two Sundays longer, they would have been compelled to renew half of their stock of horses; they were giving out and breaking down so rapidly from the increased service. This would have been the harder to bear, as the proceeds were only about half as much per car on Sunday as on week-days. Moreover, the drivers were becoming dissatisfied, and could not probably have been retained without a considerable advance in pay for the Sunday work, above the rate for the week-day.

We trust that all or nearly all of these companies will be so persuaded of the inexpediency, in a financial point of view, of running their cars every day in the week, that they will refuse to join in any scheme to break down the existing legal hindrances to Sunday travel.

## TEST SUITS FOR IMPARTIAL SUFFRAGE.

It will be seen by the following card, that the respectable colored people of the North are determined to test the full extent of their right to suffrage under the existing laws of the land. One of the cases mentioned in the card printed below is that of an intelligent minister of our denomination in Newark, N. J. Members and visitors at the General Assembly, which met in Brooklyn last year, have not forgotten the exceedingly favorable impression made by Mr. Thompson, whose Presbytery had sent him as a Commissioner to that body. The very decided deliverance on the subject of impartial suffrage made by that Assembly, was due, in no small measure, to the convictions produced in the minds of the members, of the unquestionable fitness for every right of citizenship of a man of the culture, refinement and real power shown by Rev. Charles H. Thompson on that floor. We earnestly hope Mr. Thompson and his brethren may succeed, and to aid them in their effort we here republish their card:—

To the Friends of Impartial Suffrage:  
The undersigned were appointed and recognized, at several mass meetings of colored citizens of New Jersey, to contend on behalf of the colored citizens of New Jersey, and of all the States, "That any State that disfranchises any portion of its citizens on account of color is in that respect anti-republican and in violation of the Constitution of the United States, which guarantees a republican form of government to every State, and with full powers to enlist the press, raise money, employ counsel, and to institute legal proceedings in the Courts—State and National—for the immediate recognition and enforcement of the right of impartial suffrage, and to carry the question up to the Supreme Court of the United States in one or more National test suits, for final adjudication and decision, and to co-operate with and invite co-operation from other States." Numerous meetings, and the Committees appointed at those meetings, in the States of New York, Pennsylvania and Delaware have, by resolutions, requested us to act on their behalf, and other States are moving in the same direction for concert of action; so that we feel authorized to call ourselves a National Council, and to receive aid and co-operative action from all the States.

In discharge of its duties our Council have caused to be commenced three suits, to be regarded as test suits, two in the Supreme Court of New Jersey and one in the Circuit Court of the United States, including in its judicial circuit the State of Delaware. Two of the parties to these suits, the Rev. Chas. H. Thompson and Abraham Conover, are citizens of Newark, New Jersey, and commenced suits on account of the refusal by the Registers to register them as voters on the 16th instant. One of the parties, Peter S. Blake, is a citizen of Wilmington, Delaware, whose vote was refused at the election held in the City of Wilmington, on the 22d October instant. One of the complainants is a black, one a mulatto, and one an octo-clone. One is a freeman born; one is a clergyman, and one is a citizen soldier, has fought and bled for his country; all are men of education and refinement, tax-payers, possessed of property, and have all the qualifications of legal voters in their respective election precincts, unless color, merely, be a disqualification. The suits cover the whole ground, and will settle the legal status of the colored man under the Constitution and laws of the United States in all the States. The suits will be prosecuted with all diligence, and it is believed that one at least will have reached the Supreme Court of the United States at the next December Term.

The Solicitors and Counsel of Record are John Whitehead, Esq., and Joseph Bentley, LL.D., of Newark, New Jersey. The Hon. Benjamin F. Butler, of Massachusetts, has been retained and has consented to act as one of the counsel for the plaintiff in one of the suits.

Subscriptions and contributions for carrying on these exceedingly interesting and important suits may be sent to the order of the Council, Elias S. Ray, Newark, N. J., or made to the agents duly accredited under the autograph signatures of the President of the Council, Chas. H. Thompson, and the Recording Secretary, John H. O'Faire.

All papers friendly to the cause of Republican Government will please give this circular an insertion.

CHARLES H. THOMPSON, WM. H. NEIL,  
ABRAHAM T. COOK, ADAM RAY,  
ELIAS S. RAY, JOHN LOWRY,  
JOHN H. O'FAIRE, MILLER ROGERS,  
PETER O'FAIRE, JOHN WHITEHEAD,  
CHARLES BROWN, SEN., CALVIN PEPPERS,  
ANTHONY MANDEVILLE,  
Executive Council.  
New Jersey, Oct. 16, 1866.

## COMPLIMENT TO PRESBYTERIANS.

The Roman Catholic (Fenian) organ of this city, in discussing Judge Strong's decision, pays a high compliment to the Presbyterians of our city and State, by making them principally responsible for the maintenance of our Sunday laws. It terms the decision of the Judge "an unadulterated piece of Presbyterianism from beginning to end," and calls the law under which the Judge decided the case "the ancient Presbyterian law."

In the name of the Presbyterian body we must modestly decline the honor, so indiscriminately not to say recklessly, heaped upon them. We must correct the utterly false statement of the writer, "that the whole opposition to the running of the cars, has been made by the Presbyterians alone; that all the applicants for the injunction he has granted, are leading Presbyterians."

The most careless reading of the documents presented by the complainants would have taught the writer better. At least five different denominations, counting the three branches of the Presbyterian church as one, were represented in the complaint and affidavits—Presbyterian, Reformed Dutch, Baptist, Methodist and Lutheran; and by far the most zealous, active and efficient man in the whole business happens to be a Baptist. The Presbyterians are prominent in the matter which is a natural result of the fact that they, taken together, constitute probably the most numerous, wealthy, and influential body of Christians in the city; and it so happens that the churches, whose worship is most seriously disturbed by the running of the cars of the Union line, are Presbyterian, including the two oldest churches of that denomination in the city. If Presbyterians are, from the situation of their churches, subjected to the greatest inconvenience, it is very natural that their complaint should be the loudest.

The object of the Fenian Catholic organ in this cry of Presbyterianism is plainly to excite odium against the Sunday law by representing it as a piece of sectarian bigotry. It is utterly false; it is at least just as far from true as if we should assert that the entire opposition to the Sunday laws in our community and State comes from Roman Catholics. The Sunday law originated with a man as far removed from bigotry as William Penn, and, as this reckless organ well knows, is sustained by the great mass of evangelical Christians and law-abiding citizens of our State and city. And if Presbyterians do distinguish themselves in zeal for its observance, we believe they have the gratitude of the good people of the country for it. We see no signs of the decline of their power and influence as upholders of the institutions of religion and good morals. The Fenian organ very sagely and complacently declares that the Presbyterian impress has commenced to vanish from the Commonwealth. And yet close beside this declaration, in the very next column of the paper, is a careful summary of the vote at the late election in this city, from which it appears that the largest vote given for any candidate by several hundreds was for a Presbyterian elder, Judge Allison, whose majority for the position of Presiding Judge is there put down as 6071, 683 greater than that of Gen. Geary. Judges Allison, too, had taken a prominent part last winter in resisting the proposed abrogation of the Sunday laws by the Legislature. It is not mentioned, but it is doubtless known in those quarters, that one of the Associate Judges elected at the same time and by a very complimentary vote, is of the same odious and "declining" faith. If the Fenian organ is satisfied with this rate of decline, surely we Presbyterians have no disposition to complain of it.

We are told that Archbishop Purcell, in his sermon at the close of the Second Plenary Council, stated that this Council was impressed with the necessity of reclaiming? to Catholicity the United States of America, and intimated this to be the grand object of its assembling. We should like to see them try it on sturdy old Pennsylvania. As intractable as the vast upturned ridges of conglomerate rock that line her coal basins, would they find the backbone of Presbyterianism that so largely underlies the wealth, the social influences, and the old-established institutions of the Keystone State.

WOMEN'S WORK IN THE WAR.—Frank Moore, author of the *Rebellion Record*, has issued a large and handsome illustrated octavo, exhibiting the share of our Christian women on the field, in the hospital and at home, in the work of alleviating the sufferings of our soldiers during the war. We