

American Presbyterian.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 13, 1866.

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SECOND PAGE—FAMILY CIRCLE: Who is My Saviour? The Scriptural Substratum—The Edge of the Cataract—The Man—The Little Seal—The Hour of Need—The Poor—The "Have-Alls" with "You"—A Protestant Dog—The Blind Man's Saviour.

OUR ROCHESTER CORRESPONDENT.

PRESBYTERY OF ONTARIO.

The annual meeting of this Presbytery was held in Mt. Morris on Tuesday and Wednesday last. Rev. E. R. Davis, of Avon, was elected Moderator, and Rev. G. P. Folsom, of Geneseo, Clerk.

CHURCH ERECTION.

Our readers will remember that next Sabbath is the day appointed by the General Assembly for a collection for church erection. They will bear with us while we reiterate our belief, that it is the most important act the denomination has been called to perform for years.

New subscribers, commencing with the present or remaining numbers of the year, and paying in advance, will be credited to the end of the year 1867.

RITUALISM.

Accounts of the condition of things in the Church of England grow worse and worse. The peril lately so imminent from the progress of sceptical theology in its pulpits and literature, seems to have lost its prominence, and the friends of vital religion stand appalled before the engulfing tide from the opposite direction.

ARGUMENTS OF THE ROMISH PRESS.

Our late and somewhat extended notice of the Romish-American Pastoral was clear in its specifications, particular in its authorities, and open to specific refutations if refutation was possible.

Gen. Butler—The Attorney-General of Massachusetts has decided that General B. F. Butler is entitled to a certificate of election to Congress, without regard to residence, because he received a plurality of the votes in the Fifth District of that State.

California. The repairs of which we have spoken being completed, an interesting and impressive service of re-dedication was held in the church on the 14th inst, sermon by Rev. Mr. Walsworth, and prayer of dedication by Rev. Dr. Barnard, of Lima.

And in this connection we are happy to add, that there is a decided manifestation of religious quickening in the parish. Some of those who were not Christians, but who have given so freely of their money to repair and beautify the house of God, are finding themselves more deeply interested in the welfare of Zion than they intended.

PARSONAGE AT GENESEE.

The good people of the Second Presbyterian Church of Geneseo, (G. P. Folsom's) have been for some time contemplating the erection or purchase of a parsonage for their esteemed pastor. The work is now happily accomplished.

Another matter of special interest was an application from Avon Springs, or West Avon, for the formation of a church at that point. The petition was signed by forty-three individuals, most of whom had taken letters from the church in East Avon for this purpose.

FESTIVALS.

This week several of these will occur in our city churches. The Western Church, corner of Seventh and Filbert streets, is holding one from Tuesday evening, proceeds for improvement of the Church edifice.

THE REVIVAL IN CALIFORNIA.

Our San Francisco exchanges have given us less definite accounts than we had expected, from the revival in that city in connection with the evangelistic labors of Rev. A. B. Earle. The Pacific, of the 8th ult. says:—

OF MR. EARLE THE SAME PAPER SAYS:—

"Most of the religious community of this city and its suburbs have listened to the earnest and awakening discourses of this evangelist. Probably a feeling of wonder has been very general among them, that so great effect should follow from such plain and simple means. With little of the learning of the schools, with no visible art in the construction of his addresses, with no tricks of style, no literary fashions in his forms of expression, the truth, nevertheless, comes from his lips with an earnestness, life and power, which seize and move the minds and consciences of his hearers."

AT A CAUCUS OF CONGRESSIONAL MEMBERS OF THE REPUBLICAN PARTY, DEC. 5.

It was voted 38 to 36 that Henry J. Raymond be recognized as a member of the party. Few men ever brought greater peril on a good cause, or a political party, than Mr. Raymond did by his course for eighteen months; and nothing but the October elections and his own devotion to expediency ever changed his course.

News of our Churches.

CITY CHURCHES.

SERVICES FOR "THE MASSES."—The opening of our city churches with seats free on Sabbath evenings, and with services, music, &c., adapted to a more miscellaneous congregation than that of the morning, is proving successful to an encouraging degree.

Staid, old, high-church St. Peter's, at Third and Pine streets, has instituted such a service with a very fair attendance. The First Church on Washington Square, and Clinton Street Church contemplate services of a similar character.

FIRST CHURCH.—A meeting of the congregation was held last week and largely attended, for considering the question of a sale of the church property, and a removal farther west.

THE MISSION SCHOOL OF Clinton Street Church including the parents and scholars, were highly entertained at their school-room a few evenings ago, by a stereopticon exhibition.

OXFORD STREET CHAPEL.—The large and beautiful chapel at the corner of Broad and Oxford streets, erected during the past year at a cost of \$18,000, chiefly through the munificence of the late M. W. Baldwin, Esq., and Alexander Willdin, now in Europe, and the large lot on which it is erected, costing \$25,000, have been handed over by the committee having the enterprise in charge to the Green Hill Presbyterian Church, on Girard avenue.

DEATH OF A MINISTER.—Rev. John L. King, formerly an earnest home missionary in Indiana, died on the 10th ult. near Denver, Colorado, at the early age of thirty-one.

REVIVAL IN MENDHAM, N. J.—Our churches in Mendham (Rev. Messrs. Smith's and Feagle's) are rejoicing in the blessing of a revival. It came with but little outward observation, and grew up into a protracted meeting, resulting thus far in many hopeful conversions, and a daily accession to the number of inquirers.

INSTALLATIONS.—Rev. G. R. Alden, late of the Auburn Seminary, was ordained and installed over the church in Almond, N. Y., by the Genesee Valley Presbytery, on the 14th ult.

PASSEPPANY, N. J.—A precious revival is in progress in our church in this place. The church is thronged. About fifty have expressed a hope in Christ, and a deep religious interest pervades the whole community.

NEVADA.—We have in Virginia City a small but lively church, under the pastorate of Rev. Wm. W. Martin, and in connection with the Presbytery of Washoe. It is now engaged in the enterprise of erecting a church edifice, sixty by thirty-six feet, the corner-stone of which was laid on the 1st ult. The occasion secured a deep interest.

MITCHELL'S GENERAL ATLAS.—This, which has long been a standard work, has recently received valuable improvements. A fine map of Palestine, with both the ancient and modern names of places, has been added. The maps of the States have been thoroughly revised, and some of them much enlarged; that of Pennsylvania among the number.

A Strange Scientific Fact.—For some time past there has been a discussion of a theory that life is greatly prolonged by sleeping with the head to the North. This theory, according to the Gold Hill (California) News, finds confirmation in the strange fact that the most of those American politicians who for years past have had their heads to the South are now quite dead.

Brevity in Official Documents.—Our rulers, in the framing of proclamations or other official documents, should take example by the brevity of one of the early Governors of Connecticut. It is said the first proclamation for a Thanksgiving day in that State was issued in 1644, in the following style: "Is Ordered, there shall be a public day of thanksgiving through this Jurisdiction upon Wednesday com[ing] forth."

We are happy to state that, as a very natural accompaniment of the pleasing prosperity of this enterprise, particular attention has been paid to the denominational press. In few of the churches of our connection has the AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN obtained a larger circulation. This has been accomplished chiefly through the voluntary agency of the pastor.

TABOR CHURCH, Eighteenth and Christian streets, is still enjoying the divine favor in a marked degree. At the last Communion season eighteen were added, twelve by profession and six by certificates. The congregations are very good. The school and lecture-room adjoining the church is rapidly approaching completion.

GREAT WORK OF GRACE IN SIDNEY, N. J.—Rev. Jos. G. Williamson, the pastor, writes under date of Dec. 6th:—"Last Sabbath was our communion season. We had the pleasure of receiving twenty-seven persons on profession of their faith, besides two by certificate. These were the fruits of a special effort, commencing six weeks ago, and still in progress. I have been laboring nightly during that time, except on Saturday, when we had no service. Unfavorable weather has interrupted our meetings this week, but we expect to continue them, as there is still much seriousness. The church has been greatly revived. I have not seen so much interest manifested by members, and so much willingness to aid by prayer and personal effort, in any previous revival since I have been here."

EAST WHITELAND.—Among the tokens of progress in this portion of the pastoral charge of Rev. A. M. Stewart, we hear of the organization of a Young Men's Christian Association which is expected to take place on the 18th. Ex-Governor Pollock of this city has consented to be present on the occasion.

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THANKSGIVING SERMON.

BY REV. GEORGE F. WISWELL, D.D., CENTRAL CHURCH, WILMINGTON.

And they shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations.—ISAIAH LXI, 4.

Dr. Wiswell's topic was: "The True and False Methods of Reconstruction." After elucidating the text, he directed the thoughts of the people to a similar great work now before us. He remarked that "the American nation has never undertaken a work that it could not finish. It has always proved itself equal to its mission;" and then proceeded to the discussion of his topic as follows:—

But there are certain cardinal principles, vital to our integrity as a Christian Republic, which must be kept before the popular mind. As a citizen and public teacher, an inquirer to speak of these things—and there is no place more appropriate, and no time more natural than here and now. Let me speak freely yet briefly, first as to how this work of restoration cannot be done.

(1.) It cannot be done by conceding anything to the spirit which aimed to destroy the Republic, which for years inwardly nursed rebellion upon a peaceful and peace-loving people. This would clearly be to open still wider the gates for the incoming of future desolations. It will not do to assume that the spirit of rebellion is extinct. It is not dead—it sleepeth, after being vanquished in fair contest on the battle-field. It is as defiant as ever in all the public places of the unreconstructed, rebellious States. Its habitation being swept and garnished—it has taken seven other spirits more fiendish than itself and returned, strutting and fretting and foaming up its insatiate rage. The original animus of the slave-oligarchs' rebellion was savage and hateful to the last degree of desperation. Its bloody record has been written over every inch of our soil and wide oceans of the world, through half a decade of years. No description can reach its more than Alpine heights, nor descend into its Tartarean and awful depths. After all the illustrations of barbarous and unrelenting cruelty, among the nations, for the space of six thousand years, it was reserved for a nominally civilized and boasting, religious people to show what refinements of torture, murder, starvation, rapine and slaughter, man can attain. I need not recite the shocking catalogue. Only the smallest part of it will ever be known until the revelations of the judgment day discover the whole. Locked up in the bosoms of a great multitude who heaved their last sighs, in the dark places of cruelty, are secrets of terror and butchery; of pleading helplessness and unheeding malice, that made the angels weep. I can only say that this spirit still lives in its former haunts—and waits its long-drawn opportunity.

And anything conceded to it by this government, is only just so long a step towards national suicide. The former desolations of many generations will never be repaired by courting the very "abomination of desolation" itself. Only as the roots of this national cancer are completely cut out, will the national health be insured.

(2.) Nor can this work of reconstruction be accomplished by forgetting or ignoring all distinction between treason and loyalty, between traitors and patriots. Between these, there is, in the very nature of man's relations to government, a necessary and radical difference. To recognize it and honor it while wholesome to the subject, is safe for the State. The man who, when called to the defence of his country's life and liberties, either on the sanguinary fields, in the nation's councils or at home, promptly responds and risks all, can never stand upon the same level with him who refuses, and by his refusal strikes hands with the common foe.

Think you that the noble man who stood in the serried ranks of his countrymen in defence of our common liberties, can ever come down to the miserable level of him who, in the darkest days of the Republic, stood on the steps of your Custom House and said: "Stop the war, call home your army, you have no right to be fighting our Southern brethren." Think you he can ever be the equal of the loyal man, white or black? I tell you nay, never!

And every effort to neutralize the distinction between them, is not only a national disgrace, but a peril. Yet what do we see all over the loyal States, but this very thing? For well nigh a year past has this unhalloved process gone forward, of putting into place and profit and power, the men who did all they could to kill the Republic—men who exulted at every triumph of rebellion, and wept in public as in secret places, when it suffered a defeat. The work of reconstruction has been carried forward by filling all the offices, in the gift of the President, with unreconstructed rebels and their sympathizers, until at length the shortest cut to office and favor, is to present the most disloyal record. To hate a negro and shout for his overthrow, and at the same time, whose hands are still wet with the precious blood of our loyal countrymen, to their former places in the Capitol, is a passport to patronage and smiles by the reigning administration. And the effect of this policy has thus far been to bring rebellion first from utter prostration in the dust to its knees, then to its feet, then to its old speech, and so it strides forth like Goliath of Gath, in front of the Philistine host, and bids defiance to the power that long since should have effectually silenced it. Now I suggest that the American nation has gone just about as far on this line as it can afford, and the sooner a gun is made, and the more rapidly our steps are retraced, the safer we shall be from future troubles.

(3.) The wastes cannot be built and the national integrity secured by letting down the sanctions of law, and bringing justice into contempt of men. In a recent decision by the Judge of the United States Court of this district, in the case of two or three murderers, it was truly affirmed, that "Our Government is a Government of laws, both national and State. This is its distinctive character, the element of its freedom, constituting its excellence and insuring its permanence." And by parity of reasoning, I aver that when law is dishonored by tearing away its sanctions, annulling all its penalties, and thus reducing it to mere advice, the "distinctive character" of the Government is gone, the "element of its freedom" its "excellence" and its "permanence," are destroyed. Law unsupported by penalty may be very good in the letter, but in the spirit it is a rope of sand. Transgressors would laugh it to scorn. Who can believe that a government of such temper would have any binding force, or be assured of its own existence a single day? In what a wretched and pitiable plight does it place the administrator, who really becomes the criminal, and must beg pardon of the culprit at the bar, for venturing to summon him there at all.

In no country," says De Toqueville, "are the people more personally interested in enforcing the obedience of the whole community to the law, than in the United States." Civil rulers and magistrates are in a very solemn and awful manner, the "ministers of God, a terror to evil doers." "In justice," says the great philosopher, "every virtue is summarily comprehended." But this can be only on the assumption that justice stands