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THE OLD YEAR AND THE NEW.

Another of our papers reaches our eyes, an old year will have run its course, and a new one, with a new round of weeks and days and hours, and opportunities and unfolding of scenes and cares and enjoyments, will be commenced. A solemn time is this of the year. We have done with it and cannot recall it. We have put a stamp of our deeds and our characters upon the past. No power can annul it; the God of truth will establish it. Such as it left our hands, it will remain. Nature herself will preserve and perpetuate the records of our lives. The air and the etherial spaces are God's whispering gallery, where our names will still be heard by the exquisite of superior beings. Upon walls and rocks and road-sides, each separate page of our lives is photographed, and endless galleries await the summons of the Judge to start, in vivid freshness, to universal view. Yet how imperfect and how egotistic were a review of a year of our lives which contemplated only our own deeds. There is One in whose hands our breath is, and whose are all our ways. Our lives are chiefly interesting and important for the part God has in them. We cannot spend more profitably than in a review of the Providences toward us. Even if they have been in the form of afflictions, yet to be able to put our finger upon this and that great of our lives, and to say, "Here the great God, by his providence, broke through the routine and the common place in which we were living, and indicated His Own Will concerning us; here we seemed to come into contact with the broad, immovable outlines of his purposes; here our way was led up, and here again, as by an unseen hand, a mysterious opening was made out of all our difficulties," is a great privilege and a great consolation. It is, indeed, delightful to see God in all parts of our lives, in every morning's light and in every season's return; but what miracles are to the ordinary course of nature, such are the marked interpositions of Providence in our lives, compared with his regular and ordinary government of events. Foolish and short of heart is he who, on looking back for the space of a year, can see nothing in the form of life or death, of prosperity or adversity, of accident, of sickness or of health; nothing in peculiar and unforeseen combinations of events, on which the most serious results depended; nothing in mysterious, inexplicable disappointments, which testified of the peculiar nearness of that God who is never absent from human affairs. Most momentous is this season to such as have allowed another year to roll by, without accepting the Gospel. The number of their years, of their past privileges, of their Sabbaths, sermons, strivings of the Spirit, struggles of conscience, warnings of Providence has increased; the number of those that come is diminished. At the close of it, as of former years, they stand without God and without hope in the world. Life hastens away, but life's great business is not undone. Judgment draws near, but they have no Saviour's merits to plead and to advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous. The enthroned Messiah waits on the ages to accomplish his purposes, but they have no part nor lot in the great redemption. But we are not putting the season to flight use if we merely spend it in regrets. Dark, indeed, would be the reflections which a review of the past alone would suggest. After a profitable use of the past we must dismiss it. Under the smile of the Divine forgiveness, we forget the things that are behind and reach forth unto those which are before. The opening of a new year is a token of the Divine forbearance and long-suffering. If the past is irrevocable, the future we may make, in all its essential features, what we will. The records of the past are filled—the pages of the future are blank. If our past has known nothing of Christ, our future may be humbly dedicated to him. With wonder at the Divine patience, which still bears with the rejecters of the Saviour, let us seize the new and unmerited opportunity of the present, to accept his offers before they are finally withdrawn. This may be—this will be—to many impatient, their last new year. Christian! is God opening before you another of these years of high significance of blessed privilege? Gird yourself, then, afresh for the Master's work. Renew your humble, simple faith in the merits of the Saviour. Examine and correct your

motives. Let knowledge join with zeal in new devotion to the cause of Christ. Live and give by system. Enlarge your liberality with the enlargement of your means. Seek to conform your character, your Christian activity and your prayers to the demands of this "age on ages telling." This is no period, if ever there was one in the Church's history, for a listless, cold, covetous type of Christianity. Shake off all remains of it that cling to you, in this new year of the wonderful period through which God is leading his Church and the world.

THE BALANCES HUNG OUT IN HEAVEN.

If the saying is true, that God does not settle up his accounts every October, there do come times in the lapse of years when the clouds and darkness which are round about him break away, and when justice and judgment are revealed as the habitation of his throne. It is in such a time, precisely, that we are living now. And since the fall of Jerusalem, we doubt whether the Divine hand has been so openly manifested in human affairs, or the Divine attribute of justice as broadly stamped upon the history of nations, as now. When we look at our own country, we behold justice, long withheld by men, executed on a grand scale by the Almighty. A race which, for three centuries, had been denied the commonest rights of men, and which politicians and apostate churches, proud planters and abject whites, had combined to seal over to perpetual, hopeless bondage, has been made free at a blow. The work, which to philanthropists seemed practicable only in the lapse of generations, is done in a moment before our eyes. The very moment and the very method used by the powerful foes of the African to forge his chains anew, and to deepen into blackest night his prospects, is chosen by the Almighty to vindicate his own justice, and to make his own interposition most conspicuous and unmistakable. It is as if the very words were spoken from heaven: For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I rise, saith the Lord; I will set him in safety from him that puffeth at him. And, step by step, he is advancing to the enjoyment of all his rights as an American citizen; from a mere chattel, he is becoming a freeman. A marvellous act of Providence, this elevation of a race of four millions from civil and political nonentity, from degradation and contempt, to the honors and responsibilities of citizenship; that by the single jewel of loyalty is seen to outweigh and outnumber the wealth and pretensions of the race that once so insolently lorded it over him. Remarkable is the retribution now seen, in the call that comes most earnestly from the remotest regions of the South, for the elective franchise to the negro, as the only measure that can counteract the ingrained traitorous tendencies of his former masters. The crimes of the slave-owners work for the positive elevation, instead of, as formerly, the further degradation of the negro. And the last grand enterprise of the slaveocracy of the South, to fortify and perpetuate their position, how marvellous and overwhelming has been its failure. What a second tower-of-Babel project was their new nation, based on the corner-stone of slavery. Not only was their idol slavery shattered, but themselves were stripped of wealth, despoiled of their leaders and of their youth, their entire military force held as prisoners of war, their churches, which had become apologists for slavery, dismantled and disorganized, and their political status has become one of suzerainty only. It is, in fact, the slaves who are free and the masters who are in bondage now. Their rebellion for slavery has laid them prostrate at the feet of the North, and radical Republicans are the very ones whose feet are upon their necks. And that great political party, which anticipated and nurtured the rebellion, by making subserviency to the slaveocracy the corner-stone of its policy, how even the Executive and Cabinet, exerted in the most extraordinary manner, have been in vain to save it from abandonment by the loyal, intelligent, and the good of the land, and from crushing defeat in every Northern State; so that its only hope of regaining lost power is in the votes of men who have crowned the horrors of Fort Pillow, Lawrence, Chambersburg, Andersonville and Libby Prison, by those of Memphis and New Orleans, and in the denial of votes to the loyal masses of the South. Leading organs of the once powerful Democracy, in the certain prospect of the failure of these desperate calculations, have actually urged the adoption of principles in advance of their opponents' platforms, to save their

party from utter extinction. The great party of expediency is to be converted into one of justice. Expediency itself demands it. It is, in fact, an enthroning of conscience which we witness in the political affairs of the nation. That party, it is seen, is bound to succeed in the long run—indeed, latterly, in a very short run—which is closest to the conscience of the nation in its policy. And those men who have been most regardless of this great fact, and most conspicuous in their effort to weaken and pervert the national conscience, are the most signally defeated and universally despised men in the whole country to-day. If we turn to other countries, we find the same character of retribution stamped upon passing events. The nations which exulted in our troubles, and insulted us in what they thought our death agonies, which trumpeted all over the world the bursting of the bubble of Democracy, which denied our right to deal with the South as rebels, which returned to Parliament men that built and equipped rebel cruisers to prey upon our commerce, or which took advantage of our hour of weakness to plant imperial institutions on our borders, have been rebuked for their ungodly sympathy with a rebellion in the interest of slavery. Scarcely had our own rebellion ceased as a military movement, when England found herself involved in exactly similar troubles in her own dominions, and compelled to act upon the very principles she had denied to be applicable to our case, or humane, or consistent with liberty in any case. Jamaica, Canada and Ireland, with singular promptness, have commended to the lips of the British people a chalice, if not so large, yet as full of bitter ingredients as the one they so self-complacently beheld us drink. And now they are shaken with a reform movement of such dimensions and such formidable strength, that it must send terror to the hearts of the oligarchy and the worshippers of prerogative in that country. And as for the foreign relations of Great Britain, the November number of *Blackwood* gloomily declares, "We have not one cordial friend or ally in the world;" confesses, that for the unsatisfactory state of their relations with the United States, they are themselves in great degree to blame, and counsels the payment of the Alabama claims, going even beyond the *Times*' liberal offer of October 4th. It argues for the restoration of a cordial understanding with the "Great Republic," because, among other reasons, "the first gun fired" by England "against Russia, will bring down upon her the military and naval strength of the United States." This is the language of the Tory organ, which has been notorious for abuse and evil speaking and misrepresentation of America throughout, and since the war. Even in the present number, it classes Andrew Johnson with Presidents Jackson and Lincoln. Continental Europe has been the scene of profound convulsions, not even so remarkable for their magnitude, as for the unparalleled swiftness with which their great results have been achieved. Instead of a thirty-years war, the world, with breathless astonishment, has seen the political balance of Europe radically altered, and an ancient Polish kingdom brought to the dust of humiliation, in thirty days' fighting. The work between the two combatants was done, and securely done, with such amazing dispatch, that there was actually no time for the most cunning of international meddlers to put in his claim for a share. The French Emperor had the look of a person coming to what he was expecting to find a grand entertainment, and discovering that, in consequence of the expedition of the invited guests in despatching the feast, nothing was left to chance-comers but despicable fragments. The great dish of territory, in which he expected to share with gusto, had all been carved and served out, without so much as reserving a slice for his imperial majesty. And so near was his majesty to the exceedingly awkward attitude of a beggar, that he was obliged, with his well-known veracity in such matters, in so many words to disclaim any desire for such unimportant acquisitions. Of course, the Prussians of Koniggratz, with their needle-guns, felt very much relieved by this considerate announcement. For our part, we think the Emperor must have caught a glimpse of the balances hung out in heaven, "And read his lot in that celestial sign." Prussia, under the lead of a despotic and ambitious statesman, with motives which cannot be justified, especially as connected with her recent spoliation of Denmark, has been made the means, under Providence, in one brief summer, of erecting a first-class Protestant power, for the first time on

the Continent of Europe; of thoroughly humbling the greatest foe and hindrance to free thought and religious liberty in Europe; and of crowning the liberation of Italy, by restoring to her the splendid provinces of Lombardy and Venetia, while she took away almost the last earthly hope of Pius IX. These are events we have been waiting for since the Reformation—nay, for some of them the souls of Huss and Jerome, beneath the altar, have been calling since the Council of Constance, since Protestantism was stamped out in Bohemia and Moravia. The very regions, in fact the identical localities, which witnessed the bloody suppression of Protestantism in the sixteenth century, became the scene of the greatest, most overwhelming, most summary defeat almost ever suffered by a nation—the sorest humiliation a Roman power ever experienced at the hands of Protestants. The withdrawal of the French troops from Rome and from Mexico restores the political equilibrium, and gives a juster aspect to the world's affairs. At present, it looks as if the two usurpers in the Old World and the New, although abandoned by their powerful and only ally, intended, with a kind of mutual understanding, to brave it out alone. Possibly their little of life may be prolonged, but, perhaps, only to assure to them a more signal and irrecoverable overthrow. The power of Rome is not to disappear without a convulsion, if we have read prophecy aright. It is not to melt away in a rose-hued cloud of diplomacy, but to fall, like a great millstone, flung from the uplifted hands of a mighty angel into the sea. Victor Emanuel's courtliness and forbearance to the old Pontiff, though dictated by the best principles of a worldly statesmanship, may have a far different result from what he and his counselors anticipate. But at all events, Protestant powers and tendencies were never so great, and Roman Catholic powers never so weak, on the Continent as now. And even the ritualistic, semi-Popish frenzy in the High Church of England is more than balanced by the great uprising of the middle classes in the Reform movement, which is essentially a Protestant movement. The work of Gustavus Adolphus for civil and religious liberty in Europe, mysteriously interrupted by his death, is resumed, after two centuries, and carried rapidly toward completion. Bohemia is again inquiring for the doctrine of an accession, in the emancipation of the slaves in our country, of millions, who, in gaining the status of men, have become a power in the world. Indeed, the whole upward movement of our country, the resistance to slavery, and the deliverance and perpetuation of a free government, are but developments of the same spirit of Protestantism that has inspired men to fight for liberty everywhere—in Bohemia, in Holland, in England—and that led to the founding of this country at first. Whether we have just witnessed the prelude to those final displays of the Divine justice in which every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess, in which He shall judge the world in righteousness and His people with truth; or whether the half-drawn veil will be suffered again to fall on the startled and admonished world, we know not. We cannot allow ourselves to believe that men and nations will be delivered over to the rule of injustice in Church and State again. Slavery will not be reinstated. The Roman hierarchy will not again triumph over kings, crush peoples and darken the cleared heavens with the smoke of her *auto-da-fes*. Voluntary religious organizations and free governments, general education and an impartial admission of all to civil rights, are the milestones in the advancing progress of humanity, which, once past, will never be overthrown by a reflux wave. But so long as the Gospel does not utterly transform the heart and break the power of Satan over apostate men, we must look for new forms of wickedness and dark periods in the world's history.

SUNDAY-SCHOOLS AND HOME MISSIONS.

PRESBYTERIAN ROOMS, 150 NASSAU ST., NEW YORK, Dec. 21, 1866. DEAR BROTHER MEARS:—The letter I send you herewith cannot fail to interest the many friends of Sabbath-schools among your readers. All our missionaries are in a noble sense Sabbath-school agents and workers. They establish Sabbath-schools wherever they go, and they keep them alive when once established. There is no better way to save the children than to aid the cause of Home Missions. Many of the schools connected with our large Eastern churches make regular contributions to our treasury. More might do so, though the number is now rapidly increasing. For the close relation of the Sabbath-school work with that of Home Missions is manifest. But how many schools, if they would think of it, might send joy to other missionaries' hearts and aid them in their work. Send libraries to these men. We are continually having appeals for them. Send money to them. Send money to our treasury—for the more we have, the more such men as the writer of the letter below can we send into the field—the more such Sabbath-schools can we establish and maintain. The writer of this letter completed his studies in one of our seminaries less than two years ago. The letter was directed to our indefatigable brother and District Secretary, Rev. A. M. Stowe. Yours truly, H. KENDALL.

Iowa, Nov. 9, 1866.

DEAR BROTHER S:—I mailed a letter to you yesterday, giving you some statements in regard to my fields and work. I also wrote and mailed a letter to Miss S.'s Sabbath-school class, giving them some facts concerning "Prairie Home" Sabbath-school, to which I gave their ten dollars. This morning I received a letter from Mr. W., of L. N. Y., enclosing the handsome donation of sixty dollars, to be appropriated to "new or needy Sabbath-schools on my field." This is a perfect "God-send." It will give me an introduction and an influence in six school districts and turn others to me to assist them in getting books for their schools. Mr. W.'s class gives \$10 of the amount, Mrs. B. \$40, and \$10 is from another source unknown to me. I shall acknowledge the two \$10's to Mr. W. and the \$40 to Mrs. B., and just as fast as I can, I will appropriate them to schools most needy and interested. Bro. S., you can hardly imagine what an advantage these donations will give me in my work in the "out stations" of my field. It will remove a vast amount of prejudice, when they realize that we can help them so liberally to that which will do their souls good, and develop the intellectual powers of their children and turn others to me to assist them in getting books for their schools. I am very greatly obliged to you for the interest which you manifest in my work, especially in the Sabbath-school department of it. If I can get the means to do it with, I propose to go beyond the direct bounds of my assigned field into regions unoccupied by any orthodox minister, and establish Sabbath-schools next spring, where as yet none exist, and where there is no preaching of the true Gospel. There is a vast neglected field to the northwest of me which must be cared for, and have the Gospel preached to the inhabitants. I am just beginning to realize the dreadful moral and religious destitutions which surround us, and yet the entire approachableness of those who inhabit them, when treated as men with immortal souls to save or lose. Yours in Christ's work, W. M. C.

WHAT A PITY!—A writer in the *Christian Register* complains that the Trinitarian *Gloria Patri* is sung in Unitarian churches; "that almost without exception, the music-books used" by them "are prepared by Trinitarians, and the words in very many of the hymn-tunes and anthems are what we may call Trinitarian poetry—and these books thus become a sort of orthodox tract for general distribution. And it is noticeable that the most active among the music conventions through the country are of the orthodox faith, and can thus act as quasi-missionaries of their own faith." Socinianism has fostered no art, save the art of making smooth speeches. The great artists, and the great mass of artists, (including poets), have been fed on more substantial food, and have been, therefore, missionaries for their own faith. We have, indeed, quite a number of such missionaries, preaching loudly enough, though indirectly, the Gospel of the Son of God—Dante, Durer, Shakespeare, Raphael, Handel, Wordsworth, Turner, &c. Orthodox is the creed to work by.

GUTHRIE'S MAGAZINE AND HOWS AT HOME.—Subscribers wishing to continue or discontinue these magazines, must write directly to the office of publication. We can only concern ourselves with new subscribers according to the terms of our arrangement for premiums.

LANE SEMINARY.—C. W. Potwin, Esq., of Putnam, Ohio, offers to defray the expense of one young man in each year of the theological course. Three young men have been put on this foundation, at an expense, to the donor, of \$480 per annum.

OUR WASHINGTON LETTER.

The Capital is crowded and gay, and the denizens of it have entered upon the enjoyment of the holidays with a unanimity and zest seldom witnessed here before. The halls of legislation are deserted, the corridors no longer echo to the merry laugh of thronging visitors, and the tick of the "historic clock" in the old Hall of Representatives is heard as distinctly as when John Quincy Adams fell dead in his chair, and death, assuming the prerogative of Speaker, commanded silence throughout the House. Most of the Congressmen have gone to spend Christmas with their families. May they enjoy a "Merry Christmas" for the good work they have begun. By the bill which passed both Houses of Congress a few days ago, and which, in spite of the expected veto from the "Second Moses," is sure to be enshrined within the precincts of our statutes, the District of Columbia will soon be, in the eye of the law at least, the freest spot within the broad dominions of the United States. This bill, granting equal suffrage to this "ten-mile square," was opposed with all the ingenuity and desperation which the champions of a rapidly failing cause could summon. The opposition to it in Congress culminated in the attempt of Senator Cowan to heap ridicule upon the measure. By advocating an amendment with which he had no sympathy, he vainly hoped to divert votes enough to prevent its passage. His speeches, however, had but little effect upon his opponents. If he believed half the truths he uttered in his sarcasm, Pennsylvania would to-day rejoice in a Senator who more nearly represented her sentiments. The old residents of the District, who, in former years, held to the "divine right" of slavery, became very much excited at the prospects of immediate equal suffrage, and predicted instant and bloody revolution, rapid depreciation of property, and the exodus of a large part of "the better class of people," as they, in their modesty, are fond of styling themselves. But events have thus far proved that they were neither prophets nor the sons of prophets. Similar prophecies were uttered when slavery was abolished in District, but instead of being fulfilled, property has advanced more than a hundred per cent., and every act of justice will enhance its value. A gentleman, who was high in office, during the mal-administration of Buchanan, and whose love for the "peculiar institution," did not die with that "relic of barbarism," brought a New York Senator, with tears in his eyes, not to allow such an "indignity" as impartial suffrage to be heaped upon the inhabitants of the District, clinching his entreaty with the sordid consideration that it would lessen the value of his palatial residence one-half. The Senator, whose backbone, in common with many others, was wonderfully stiffened by the result of the fall elections, replied with the ring of Hancock, "Though it make me a beggar I will give it my vote; justice is not weighed in the balance with bricks." The colored population are making every effort to qualify themselves to exercise intelligently the right of elective franchise. It is estimated that there are between five and six thousand who will be thus clothed with the toga of American citizenship. The resolution offered by Mr. Stevens, and so promptly passed by the House of Representatives, to appoint a committee to report a bill to establish a system of common schools in the District, is a movement in the right direction. The present system is very defective, provision being made for only about one-half of the children. Much dissatisfaction has been expressed with the manner in which the taxes paid by the colored people have been appropriated. Little or none of it, has been used for the benefit of this class of individuals, while the law requires that all of it shall be. However, we may rest assured that the matter will be remedied by this select committee created by Mr. Stevens' resolution. It is composed of men who thoroughly understand the subject committed to their charge. One of them, Mr. Boutwell, more than any other man, unless we except Horace Mann, deserves the credit of the present excellent system of common schools in Massachusetts. J. F. G. DECEMBER 22, 1866.

LOGANSPORT, IND.—The good people of the church in this place celebrated Dr. Post's silver wedding, on the 1st inst. Dr. Post's successor elect, (Rev. A. S. Dudley), the clergyman who married him twenty-five years ago, (Rev. Dr. Tuttle), his son (Rev. Martin Post), and several other ministers, took part in the rejoicings. On the following Sunday, Rev. A. S. Dudley was installed as Dr. Post's successor. The church is free of debt and prosperous.