

The American Presbyterian.

New Series, Vol. IV, No. 3.

Genesee Evangelist, No. 1078.

PHILADELPHIA, THURSDAY, JANUARY 17, 1867.

American Presbyterian.

THURSDAY JANUARY 17, 1867.

OUR NEW DRESS.

For some months past, we have not been satisfied with the external appearance of our paper, and have been meditating a change, which, as our readers perceive, has at length been accomplished. In order to secure a clear and handsome impression from the type, we have resorted to a different sort of press from the one hitherto in use, and this has necessitated a slight change in the form of the paper. We have judged that a wider column would be more agreeable to the eye. This, with the handsome new type, and fine white paper, places the AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN again in the front rank of newspapers—so far as externals are concerned. As to internal character, that we are content to leave to the judgment of our readers.

Next week, our subscribers who receive their paper by mail will find a small label pasted on their paper, with the name of the subscriber, and the time to which his subscription is paid, printed upon it. This will facilitate the work of mailing, and will place before the subscriber, every week, the exact state of his account. The receipt of money will be acknowledged by changing the figures on the label, which will be equivalent to a formal receipt, and far better, as it cannot be lost, but is renewed from week to week.

HOW THEY PERISH!

The startling computation has been made, that there are in this city to-day, three hundred thousand souls who would sink to perdition if summoned immediately to the bar of God. So far as man can judge, this immense number are without evidence of a change of heart or of fitness for heaven.

We are all deeply interested in cases of great physical suffering. The wounded and dying soldier, even on the battle-field, can generously turn the attention of the surgeon from himself to a comrade more needy or more likely to be saved than he. The poor and the suffering arouse our sympathies and stir us up to efforts for their relief. A great city visited by a devastating plague moves us with the profoundest pity, and philanthropy and skill exhaust themselves in ministering to its dire necessities. Some of these visitations form famous passages in history. The plague of Athens called forth all the powers of description of the great historian, Thucydides. Then one-fourth of the citizens perished, including the great statesman, Pericles, and his children. The great plague in London, in 1665, is also famous in history. One-third of the inhabitants of the city perished. It is indeed an awful recital, and may well stir our sympathies.

But one-third of the population of Philadelphia, nay, we might say more than half of that part of it which has reached the age of accountability, is smitten with a more desperate disease, and is hurrying on to a far more dreadful doom. Not their bodies, but their souls are infected. They may go in and out, and mingle in the ordinary affairs of life, but it is a fact that one-third of this vast busy population is plague-stricken, and they are perishing forever every day. Is not this a case for pity, for sympathy, for earnest importunate prayer, for energetic effort? Historians, indeed, make no record of it. True, their writings are continual testimonies to the power and prevalence of sin in the world. But they spend no eloquence in expatiating upon the devastations of the great destroyer in the soul of man. We turn to the word of God, and there we see the incarnate Son of God, the central point of all history, expostulating with just such a city, and weeping over its coming doom. He, too, had a compassionate heart for all the commoner sufferings of men, but it was not disease or bodily suffering, or political disaster that brought from the mysterious depths of his nature those tears over Jerusalem; it was their obstinate, hopeless rejection of himself.

But it is a small service to stir the feelings and bring tears at such a solemn and dreadful fact. The great question is, What can we do to save them? What can the two hundred thousand nominally converted persons of the city do for these perishing masses? Why, if the love of Christ, and

the love of souls possesses us, cannot each one of us think of, labour and pray for, at least one of these perishing ones during the year? Is not each true Christian good for one sinner's conversion in a year? Is not this little enough to expect from followers of Christ; from those who have the promises of God, and the power of the Holy Spirit on their side? Yes, with us is the balm of Gilead, and we know of the Great Physician who can heal these sin-stricken thousands, and did we but use our powers, were we but roused to a reasonable degree of Christian effort, were the Evangelical church in this city but for one year fully herself, can we doubt that the three hundred thousand would be saved, and the city converted to Christ? Were the three or four million members of our Evangelical churches in this country, but for one year, wide awake, might not the nation be practically won for Christ? And who, then, is responsible for the slow progress of his cause, and for the continued terrible ravages of the plague of sin?

ONE THOUSAND CONDUCTORS AND DRIVERS.

It is proposed, at Harrisburg, to throw open the Sabbath to one of the largest, noisiest and most lucrative forms of traffic carried on in our city. Every three or five minutes, cars, capable of carrying thirty or forty people, are to be allowed to drive at a rapid rate through all our leading thoroughfares and in every part of the city. For seventeen hours out of the sacred twenty-four, this work is to go on. Five hundred cars, one thousand horses and one thousand conductors and drivers, with many thousand passengers, are to be exempt from laws in force upon all other forms of business, except those of necessity and charity, and from laws, which, in every other part of the State, will continue to forbid this business also.

The gross inequality and unrighteousness of such legislation is too plain to need argument. We do not intend here to argue it. But we put in our plea for the one thousand conductors and drivers, who will be deprived of that great defence against the exactions of soulless corporations, that most powerful friend of labor in its struggles with capital, the Sabbath. They will be the helpless victims of a mere greed of gain, which is, utterly reckless of God and nature's ordinances requiring a suspension of man's activity, one day in seven. We know they will be ruthlessly required to choose between seven days' labor and none at all. We know that many, very many of them, not religious men, but with conscientious scruples, as well as with the natural cravings of a tired body for rest, will reluctantly yield to the pressure brought upon them and will sacrifice their God-given right to liberty one day in seven. We pity them. They will be crushed under the heel of an unscrupulous lust of gain.

Workingmen are accustomed to combine in order to protect themselves against the exactions of capital during the week. Their trades-unions are powerful, and if they unite, they cannot fail to secure every reasonable wish. We suggest to them that there is no right of theirs so valuable, or so necessary to their true elevation, as of a Sabbath exempt from labor. Hitherto, the laws of the State have protected them amply in this right. That the workingman is contemplated in the laws instituted by William Penn and the first legislators of the colony, appears from the peculiar phraseology employed. The law is declared to be "for the Ease of Creation," and requires people to "abstain from common toil and labor." These laws, the ancient defence of the Pennsylvania workingman, it is now proposed to abrogate, and the beginning is to be made in the part of the Commonwealth where laborers are most numerous, the city of Philadelphia.

True, only one class of laborers is struck at in the proposed abrogation. And the other classes, it is cunningly argued, will have their own liberty enlarged and enjoyments increased by this sacrifice of conductors and drivers. They are to ride about on Sunday, while for their enjoyment, their fellow-workmen stand at the reins and at the door of the car all day long, just as on other days of the week. It is supposed in the argument, that workingmen are so supremely selfish that they can be brought to take a part in a systematic oppression of

any of their class. And it is also implied, that they are so ignorant as not to see that when once the Sabbath laws are broken down, upon any plea and for any class of employments, the whole principle and protecting influence of those laws are undermined; and at any time they may be abrogated for some other class or for the whole body of workmen in the State.

We call upon the workingmen of this city to rally to the defence of their Sabbath, and to say, as one man, in the spirit of JOHN QUINCY ADAMS, when once the House of Representatives was about to hold a Sunday session:—"This House has no power to compel me to stay here on the Sabbath day!"

Only thus will the workingmen of America retain their remarkable pre-eminence for thrift, comfort and intelligence, and for real liberty over all the work people of the rest of the world.

WHERE SHALL WE BEGIN?

In the great work of increasing the supply of ministers, a question arises as to the field of labor whose necessities we should endeavor to supply first. Perhaps there is an order of Providence which, carefully noted, may lead us soonest to the full accomplishment of our wishes. There are old fields languishing; there are important charges in our cities vacant; there is a great and growing cry for more laborers in the rapidly opening regions of the West and the Pacific coast; and the vast fields of work in foreign and heathen countries are, in fact, partially abandoned from lack of men. The American Board, needing over thirty new laborers last year, could find but one to send to the heathen.

Mr. Barnes, in his admirable Missionary Address on the first Monday of the year, which ought to have been heard by many more than the seventeen laymen who were present, made some remarks suggestive of the true way of relief from the existing embarrassments of the Church on this point. He said, substantially, "God bless his churches just in proportion as they take an interest in the cause of Foreign Missions. In proportion as the churches rise to the great work, and send out their strong, educated young men, God raises up others to take their places."

It may be that we here have the secret for which we are groping; the key to the problem, now so dark; of an adequate supply of ministers. Our withholding from the foreign field may be the true secret of our poverty. It may be that true Christian policy demands that our attention should be turned first—nay, for a time, almost exclusively—to the foreign fields. Certainly that spirit of consecration and of self-denial which is required as a due preparation for the foreign work, is the very best preparation for the work at home. If we could, by divine aid, create among our Christian young men an enthusiasm for the work among the heathen, we may be sure it would be attended with a readiness for the work of the ministry in any and all its aspects.

It might be policy, even, for many now settled in the ministry at home, to break up the pleasing domestic and pastoral ties which they have formed, and to go abroad and give themselves to the foreign work. That, many will exclaim, is too perilous. Perilous it would be indeed; but how do we know that the neglect of the foreign field is not even more perilous to the interests of Zion than neglect of the home?—and that God will not judge the former more severely than the latter fault, in his churches? Evidently, the church is more or less under a cloud as to the supreme matter of the supply of the ministry, and as yet we seem to have found no way of deliverance. May God guide us into His own providential way, difficult and mysterious though it be.

THE WEEK OF PRAYER.

Our people entered heartily into the services of last week, and a deep and salutary impression appears to have been left, though not, in human judgment, equalling that of last year. The large churches were well filled, sometimes crowded. Numerous requests for prayer were handed in. Stirring and tender addresses were made, and earnest appeals went up to heaven. The warmest feelings were stirred by the remembrance of those godly and gifted men, who were both with us in last year's services for the last time—Drs. Brainerd and Kennard. Frequent

reference was made to them by the speakers. Our afflicted and suffering brother, George H. Stuart, was affectionately remembered in the prayers and remarks. No arrangements for a continuance of the meetings were made.

OUR WASHINGTON LETTER.

The week of prayer was well observed by the Christian churches at the national capitol. The noon meetings were held in the Fourth Presbyterian Church, of which the venerable Dr. J. C. Smith has been pastor for more than a quarter of a century. Over a hundred persons have been admitted to this church during the past year as the fruits of a powerful and uninterrupted work of grace during that period. The union meetings in the evenings were held in various churches throughout the city. A deep religious feeling pervaded them all. The subjects assigned for each day were ably presented. The voices of several members of Congress were heard in prayer and exhortation.

These meetings were held under the auspices of the Young Men's Christian Association. This is now a live and energetic body of five hundred members. Its influence is felt through all our churches. It supports a city missionary, sustains three mission Sunday-schools, furnishes employment to needy and deserving young men, and supplies all who desire it with board in religious families. It has an extensive field of labor among the clerks in the various departments of the Government. Its old quarters on Seventh street are too small for its accommodation. The members bade them adieu a few evenings since by joining hands and uniting in the song, "Say, brothers, will you meet us." Their new parlor, library and reading-rooms on Pennsylvania avenue were dedicated on Saturday night.

A party of men styling themselves "the Democracy," celebrated Jackson's birthday by a supper, some speeches, and considerable liquor. Judging from the speeches the liquors were served with the first course, and all, true to the policy of the party, drank "early and often." Andrew Johnson, whose initials are the same as Andrew Jackson's, offered a toast, which all vociferously applauded. Alexander the Great had a wry neck. When he was at the height of his power, it was no uncommon thing to see men about the streets copying his deformity. There are men who are quick to applaud and proud to imitate the habits of the President. Senator Saulsbury, of Maryland, is such a one. During the discussion on the recent veto message, he entered the Senate chamber in a state of beastly intoxication. Two messengers supported him to his desk. He defaced the carpet and surrounding desks with his tobacco juice, and addressed the chair in incoherent sentences. The uneasiness of the Senators plainly showed that they felt disgraced by his conduct. Scenes like this detract largely from the dignity of such a body. At last his friends induced him to retire to the cloak-room, where he remained until after the vote was taken. So the veto lost his vote, and its author his support. But he is not the only one who brings reproach upon the American Senate in this way. There are others, whose names should be known and whose conduct should be branded by the people. The Senate also owe it to their good name to rid themselves of such unmitigated pests. And let the people hereafter, in selecting men for high public stations, choose only those who are pledged against all that can intoxicate. The country has suffered enough, both at home and abroad, on account of the drunkenness of its officials.

The Senate has done its part towards adding two new States to our confederation, viz: Colorado and Nebraska. But the House of Representatives does not seem to be in a hurry to change the number of stars on our flag. The Senate is anxious that these prospective States should be represented in their body, that they may have a majority for any emergency.

No little interest has been manifested in the selection of Senators from New York, Pennsylvania, Missouri and Indiana. Experienced men and fearless champions of freedom have been chosen in every instance. The result in the first two mentioned States was hardly anticipated, and has given rise to much speculation in regard to the influence which the great railroad monop-

lies in those States exert in politics. The annual patronage of the New York Central is equal to that of the general Government during any year of John Quincy Adams's administration. If those interests secured Roscoe Conkling his election, they also secured to the country one of the clearest heads and most ready debaters among the sons of the Empire State.

The denizens of the capital are enjoying a winter worthy of a more northern climate. The frozen ground has received three coverings of snow, so that the face of mother earth has not been seen for over two weeks.—Skaters have enjoyed the "poetry of motion" to their heart's content, while sleighs have made the avenue musical with the "tintinnabulation of the bells." The skating park has had its carnival, where Mother Goose, Robin Hood, Jack, the Giant Killer, and a dozen other personages, noted in nursery rhymes, were represented in masquerade by young men who were better acquainted with these fictitious characters than those prominent in history. School boys, with their sleds, have made Capitol Hill as slippery as the Muscovite's icy slope. The evergreen trees in the parks look like Sibley tents. Washington, himself, dressed in the thin, Grecian drapery which Greengrass threw around him, sits at the eastern front of the Capitol covered with snow. General Jackson, on his snorting charger, is enveloped in an ermine mantle, while the snow-king has ascended to the summit of the dome,

"far above the hum
Of mighty workings;"
and made the goddess of freedom his queen, by crowning her with a glittering coronet. The snow-king now reigns where king cotton once ruled.

DEATH OF REV. FREDERICK STARR, JR.

We record with no ordinary feelings the death of this St. Louis pastor, which occurred in that city, January 9th, after a brief illness. Among the clergy of our Church in middle life, scarcely any was better known or more highly esteemed, or more confided in than Mr. Starr. None had more thoroughly and heartily identified himself with our denomination. Few contributed a larger share to the impulses leading to its recent development to an independent working condition. Especially was Mr. Starr among the earliest to see the necessity for denominational action in Home Missions, and to his earnest appeals is largely due the quickened consciousness of our Church as to its own great needs and duties on this field. He is to be reckoned among our representative men. The position he occupied in St. Louis, the capital of a great State, recently and dearly won to freedom, was one especially demanding such a man, and it seemed just the place for still further developing a nature which had already shown itself capable of large plans and noble enterprise for the kingdom of Christ. A career of great prospective usefulness in the West, seems thus to have been broken off at its very commencement.

Recognizing the will of the Supreme Wise, we bow to this stroke, in which a whole Church unites its sorrow with that of an afflicted family and large circle of friends, especially in central New York. To them we offer our sympathy. We know that their and our loss was his infinite gain.

TEMPERANCE MOVEMENTS.

We rejoice to learn that the recent decision of the Court of Appeals, the highest Court of New York State affirming the constitutionality of the Excise Law, has been acted upon by the police of New York City, and the temporary license to Sunday liquor-selling and midnight carousing, granted by the remarkable decision of Judge Cardozo in June last, has been brought to a prompt and general conclusion. The *Tribune* of Monday says:

"New York and Brooklyn were sober yesterday. Thoroughly sober, for the first Sunday since June, 1866, when the injunctions of Judge Cardozo suspended the Excise Law, and licensed 10,000 Rum-sellers to desecrate the day. Of the hundreds of Sundays that we remember in this city, but few have been held sacred, and yesterday was the latest. The dazzling drinking palaces and low saloons of Broadway, the bear gardens of the Bowery, the gin shops of the Five Points, and the low dens of Water St., were alike closed. The seal was set upon thousands of fountains of dissipation and disorder. It was a day to be remembered; a day that begins a golden era for the Metropolis."