

Correspondence.

OUR SPECIAL EUROPEAN CORRESPONDENT.

SABBATH IN PARIS.

PARIS, June 20th, 1867.

DEAR EDITOR: Let me give you an account of my Sabbath in Paris.

I started out to find the Protestant chapel, which was opened here some years since by the American and Foreign Christian Union. On the way we met carts and wagons, some loaded with stone, drawn by three horses, some also loaded with sand, and some with vegetables, passing along the streets. Nearly every store was open; stores selling fancy articles, (and there are thousands of such in Paris) boot and shoe stores; some trimming and millinery stores. Large dry goods stores had all their windows open, with the finest dresses, &c., displayed, but the doors were closed; though on some the painters were at work outside. The meat and fruit stores were all open. Men with large hand-carts filled with cherries, strawberries, &c., were crying out their goods as they pushed them along the streets. Others standing at the side walk were busily engaged weighing out their cherries to customers. The cafes were all open, with many men and women sitting around little round tables on the side-walks, drinking wine, coffee, &c.; cook shops with very nice looking pies and cakes in the windows were all doing business. Bread shops, with loaves of bread a yard long (and about as thick as our ten-cent twists in Philadelphia) in the windows, were all doing a thriving business. I priced one of the long loaves one day—"Nineteen cents" was the reply. In the afternoon I noticed many of the larger stores were closed, though the smaller ones were not. The coal and wood stores were open all day—little shops where they sell wood in short round sticks and coal by the pound, generally to the poorer classes. Men were at work on scaffolds, building houses, with the mortar mixers at work in the streets. The cabs, of which there are many thousands in Paris, and omnibuses, were all running just as on other days. They have no street-cars, though the omnibuses are larger than ours formerly were, and run crowded inside and on top. On the road to the Exhibition the crowd of people and vehicles of every description was as great, and probably greater, than we had noticed it on week days.

We found our way to the chapel on Rue de Berli, in a very good portion of the city, not far from the Arch of Triumph and the Champs Elysees. The church we found to be a handsome building. The inside was quite tasty. Eight columns painted to imitate Egyptian marble, support high Gothic arches forming the ceiling, which was painted blue, with handsome stained glass windows. The congregation was between four and five hundred, many of whom were residents of Paris for longer or shorter periods. In fact, the pastor, Doctor Eldridge, told us afterward that pews were rented by Parisian residents clear back to the door. The Doctor entered the pulpit in a black silk gown, and with him Doctor Bellows of New York, also in black gown, who gave us a very good sermon from the text, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock." Before the sermon, Dr. Eldridge read a large part of the Episcopal service, omitting the Litany, and in the prayer "for bishops and other clergy" inserting the words, "for all ministers of the gospel" in place of the bishops, &c.; also after that of the President of the United States inserting, "and the Emperor of the French." The chants were all handsomely performed by an excellent choir, with a fine soprano voice and a capital organ and organist. We had hoped to have heard a plainer and more homelike service; particularly as we saw notices of several Episcopal services in English, in Gallegani's paper. This paper, by the way, is the only one in English in Paris, and the one all strangers look to for information from America and England. Here also they find notices of all that is going on of interest to strangers. Below the notices of the churches open on Sunday, the notice appears that all the theatres and circuses in the city are open on the same day. Fine concerts too are advertised in the various little theatres in the gardens of the Champs Elysees where you pay nothing to go in, but merely sit down at the tables and buy wine or coffee and listen to fine opera music, and comic singing, and witness the dancing and other performances, amidst a blaze of gas lights, on the gorgeously fitted up stage, with splendidly dressed lady performers and full orchestra accompaniments, all in the open air surrounded by trees and shrubbery. Near by, among the trees, are whirligigs, where boys and girls for a few pennies, are whirled around on wooden horses, or in boats which hold five or six each, and which sail up and down, while they whirl around. These gardens are much fuller on Sunday afternoon and evening than on any other day in the week.

Dr. Eldridge informed us that the church was prospering finely; that a debt of \$12,000 in gold had just been paid off the last week, that he had a Sunday-school established, and that the week previous, they had held a Sunday-school monthly concert, the first one ever held in Paris. They have been using this partial Episcopal service (four-fifths Episcopal) in the mornings, in order to accommodate the numerous American Episcop-

alians who come over. As the American Episcopals however have lately started a chapel of their own, we judge the new comers will go to it. In the afternoon, the service is purely Presbyterian or Congregational, but as we did not know this till afterward, we hunted up the English Congregational Church, near the Madaleine, on Rue Royal, in the very heart of the city, where we heard familiar hymns like "Not all the blood of beasts, &c.," sung to familiar tunes in which all joined, accompanied finely on a large cabinet organ. The text was from Rom. 5: 12, on justification by faith; the discourse was close and pungent. The preacher arraigned his hearers, class by class as at a court of justice and pressed the question home to each one: Are you justified? The prayers were fervent and earnest and told of the real wants of sin sick souls. There were from 200 to 250 present, mostly English, not Americans—Rev. Barda Hart is the pastor.

Being near by we went into the Madaleine, one of the most beautiful buildings in Paris, built just like Girard College, and though not quite so large; still very extensive. Splendid paintings were upon the walls, a grand altar, and people kneeling; but there being no special service going on, we merely saw them praying at the different shrines around the walls. No pews are to be seen; all sat on chairs and kneeled on a lower chair placed before them. The whole effect of the interior was gloomy, and we soon left. In fact all the Roman Catholic churches are gloomy inside. Notre Dame, the largest, has a grand high nave, with splendid stained glass windows, high up, in nave and transept, but the church is gloomy. The day we were there two funerals were taking place, and the priests were going through the services in two side chapels. They were both of the poorer classes. The grand Cathedral is located in a district occupied by the poor. The priest took the sacrament, prayed in Latin for the soul of the deceased, so low, too, that no one could hear; but his attendant rang a bell when the people were to kneel or bow down. Afterward, the priest sent them a little mass, with which all the relations, one by one, made the sign of the cross over the coffin, and he walked off leaving them doing it. When this ceremony was over, the coffin was picked up and carried out. One of them was made of rough unplanned boards half an inch thick and roughly nailed together, with a white sheet thrown over it. The other of rather better class, was covered with a black cloth. Poor people! How we pitied them in their sorrow, with only such a burial service to comfort them; how we thought of the services in our own land and in our own churches.

To keep down the dust in Paris, there are men who water the streets with a hose. These men are at work all day everywhere, in every street and public square including the roads miles in extent in the Bois de Boulogne. There must be 1000 or 1500 of them all the time at work, and all day Sunday they were sprinkling the streets, just as on other days. You meet everywhere the gens d'armes, the police of the city, in military dress with sword at their side, wearing dark blue coat with silver buttons up to the chin and a Major's military chapeau—or hat. On Sunday these men are dressed in black coat and pants, with large silver buttons, and present a very fine appearance. There are probably two or three thousand of them, for you meet them at every corner, in every garden or public square, or park and at the Exhibition by the hundreds.

The working people on the Sabbath attend to their work, many of them in the morning, and take the afternoon for pleasure. Some of them work all day. The full effect of their Roman Catholic religion is seen in their Sabbath. They seem to have no idea whatever that the Sabbath is intended for rest and worship, but rather for work and pleasure.

How do I thank God for our American Sabbath and for our American Church; and pray for the day when both may bless not only our own land but the whole earth. Yours, &c. G. W. M.

ORGANIZED CHRISTIAN EFFORT.

ITS DEFECTS—A HOPEFUL CHANNEL. The tendency to organize is part of our life as rational beings—is therefore a vital process, and in its proper degree healthy and useful. The human race develops itself into societies as naturally, and almost as spontaneously, as a vine clothes itself in leaves and branches. But one vital trait in a vine's constitution, is a tendency to make wood rather than fruit; a good gardener will check this, and endeavor always to increase the ratio of the fruit borne to the size of the plant. Is it possible that some branches of the "True Vine" have the same tendency? There seems to be a universal sluggishness in the living creation, corresponding to the property of inertia in dead matter. As manifest as the general impulse toward advancement, is the contrary tendency to stop short of the highest perfection, either in animal or vegetable life—to rest in the means rather than embrace the end. Certainly nothing is more constant or more melancholy in human history than the disposition to idolize forms, ceremonies and material things, whose only use or significance lay in the spirit which they were intended to enshrine. And, on the other hand, nothing is more constant or more marked in the teachings of our Lord and His apostles, than the intimation that Christianity was to be a life and not an institution.

All the commands and institutions of the Scrip-tures point to the simplest means for the dissemination of the truth. In the dignified reign of righteousness on earth, it is said, "They shall teach no more every man his neighbor and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord," clearly implying that such had been the method during the preceding ages. "Let him that heareth, say, Come!" was the last great commission given by our Lord, among the last divine words that stirred the air of this lower world. Why have we not rendered as universal obedience to these as to His other words: "Do this in remembrance of Me?" Are they not as distinct, as sacred, as binding? Or do we, perhaps, love ordinances better than service; the institutions better than the work of the Gospel?

In a large part of the nominally-Christian world, the religious life has expressed itself in rites and ceremonies, to the complete exclusion of rational activity. And so far has this extended, that the simplest commands and incidents in the New Testament have been caught up and crystallized into ordinances, of which the Apostles never dreamed. In the south of France, we are told, it is customary for the Bishops once every year to march in solemn procession through the streets, wearing a glove upon their left hand, and with the other flinging coins among the crowd of beggars who congregate, of course, to perform their part in this pious farce. Could there be a more profane mockery of the command of Christ, "When thou doest thine alms; let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth?" And yet could any thing more completely illustrate the tendency to preserve and idolize the form to the utter neglect of the spirit? Those brave women who attended our hastily extemporized hospitals, cleansing and dressing loathsome wounds, all for pity and nothing for merit or reward, rightly obeyed our Lord's injunction, "Ye ought also to wash one another's feet." But the titular Head of the Church, annually trailing his pontifical robes upon a platform of mosaic, to wash the feet of thirteen beggars from a silver basin, presents a spectacle that would be ludicrous, if it were not too sad in its half ignorant approach to blasphemy. Wherever the Spirit of Christ works itself out spontaneously in the life, we need not fear the forms it will take; but where we seek idolatrously to preserve its original form, we shall speedily find death and corruption upon our hands. The body, like all organized things, has its period of life, and must come to its end; the spirit is immortal, incorruptible, and can clothe itself in ever new forms.

Europe is overspread with the lifeless remains of systems that have had their day and ceased to be, once energetic and powerful, now worse than useless, a burden and an offense. The question is—the question toward the solution of which all the Revolutions since 1790 have been blindly working: Shall they be replaced by new systems, equally complicated, or can there be a resurrection to newness of life; a life that shall clothe itself spontaneously in more vital forms? We believe that even to the civil—certainly to the spiritual—life of Europe, the old formula will apply: "The law of the spirit of life shall make it free from the law of sin and death."

It cannot be denied that the great power of a certain sect has degenerated into this complicated machinery. Perhaps no organization for any purpose, sacred or secular, has ever spread itself over so vast a surface, controlled or influenced so many men, turned to its own use so vast a variety of means, or produced so visible an array of results, as the Society of the Jesuits. Adapting themselves with singular flexibility to the circumstances and customs of the various nations into which they have gone, sharing the but of the savage and the palace of the king; conversing on equal terms with the highest in culture and learning, and reaching the lowest in his ignorance and squalor, the members of the Society have planted their standard on almost every point in the known world. We feel their influence in our own households, almost as pervasive as the air that envelops and sustains us.

A half-defined impression prevails among many Protestant Christians, that the same plan of organization might avail to spread the truth as we believe it. "Why should the children" of this world be wiser in their generation than the children of light? We have been almost ready to concede that our zeal and faith are less, because we have not built up so vast a machinery for their expression and diffusion. This might be just, if we had yet the evidence that a pure gospel could be diffused by any such means. A society for the celebration of ordinances is one thing; a means for the enkindling of a true Christian faith is necessarily another, and a very different thing. If we could know in how many disciples of the Jesuits a real transformation of life has resulted from the instructions they have received, we should know better how to estimate their success as a religious organization. But we do know that, in earlier ages, the white robe of the baptized convert too often covered a heart beating with the same old heathen passions that had animated the pagan warrior.

Unhappily for the systems, life refuses to be subjected to machinery. In their own sphere, and for their own limited purpose, organizations are certainly good. For developing and distributing wealth, for applying force to material things, for dealing with masses of men where they must be approached as masses, they are indispensable. An army is a great machine, the more completely

governed by machinery, the more perfect in its character as any army. And the ministration of mercy which accompanies this ministry of death must correspond in its form and method to the object it has to meet. Sanitary Commissions must organize the sympathies of mothers and sisters at home into an all-embracing system of healing and comfort for the wounded and the sick. Yet even here, if it were attainable, how much more effectual to each individual sufferer would be the living presence of mother or sister herself, than that of her official representative!

But an army is an unhealthy growth on the civil body, thrown out like many another symptom of disease, as nature's protest against evil or abuse,—not a model for healthy life. In dealing with those vital interests which make every human soul something more than an item on a payroll, or a lever in a machine,—a member of the great family of God,—the official machinery may fail. Nay, we may find that in this living warfare for the truth, the old hand-to-hand method is better than modern brigade manœuvre.

For there are some things that cannot be done by complex organizations. What, but Fourierism run mad, ever dreamed of snatching little children from the protecting arms of their mothers to cast them upon the tender mercies of an institution? Heathen Sparta may have invented the plan; but Sparta was laboring to train up armies, not families; and the good of the person was purposely sacrificed to the supposed good of the State. When a real life is to be nourished and developed, the simple institution which God created in Paradise, alone can meet the case. And it may be that in imparting that truth which gives life to men's souls, the same intimate communion of mind with mind is best. One heart enkindled by the truth may communicate its heat and light to the one nearest it, and so the sacred flame be spread faster than we can invent and build machinery for its diffusion.

The need for organization belongs to our limited being. Where human will and reason are working out their ends, a complicated array of instruments may be required. But the life of God is one; making, like the light, its own path through the universe, as it goes forth to diffuse its saving health into all nations. And where the object of our working is not merely to distribute material things, as books or tracts, but to open by personal influence a channel through which the Spirit of God, acting according to the means which He has appointed, may enter the souls of men, our plan may well conform to the simplicity of the Divine, rather than the complexity of human operations.

Every Christian disciple has a commission from our Lord himself to preach the good news of the kingdom. Have we not too often satisfied ourselves with preaching, as the Buddhists pray, by machinery? Or have we not at least left the work of the Church too exclusively to one class in its membership? If the body of Christ is a living body, its vital heat must be maintained by the even circulation of blood in every limb, through the healthy cooperation of the arteries and veins of every part. But if the hands and feet are benumbed for want of exercise, what is to hinder congestion upon some vital organ, and disease in the whole frame? If one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; and if one member of the Church stagnate in sloth, the life and vigor of the whole is by so great a degree injured. The "movement cure" would be effectual for a great majority of the diseases which affect our spiritual life.

Our living tree, whose leaves are for the healing of the nations, exists among us in the Sunday-school. The distinctive good of this mode of working—it is hardly fixed enough to be called an institution—is, not in the teaching of children, for that has always been done wherever there was common affection and intelligence in the parent—but in the motive and sphere for activity which it furnishes to every living Christian. Great good has already been done by this most simple and primitive of instruments; and this good is not to be measured by the number of children instructed, because the reflex influence upon the heart and soul of the teacher is among its most precious results.

It is natural that the Sunday school should have produced its greatest effects in our own country, where religious life is more nearly free from the weight of dead ordinances. But its power is already felt in Europe, where, for several years, a current of new life has been moving the stagnant waters of official state-religion. In Germany alone ten thousand children are every Sunday under religious instruction, chiefly through an impulse given by an American layman devoted to this means of evangelization. In Italy, by the same influence, forty Sunday-schools have been established; and in the progress of that great reformation of faith which has dawned upon that land, so long overshadowed by spiritual despotism, the value of this primitive Christian agency cannot be overestimated.

Our limits, already overpassed, will not admit an account of the Free Church of Italy, nor of the efforts made by one of its ministers, laboring as a Sunday-school agent, to extend this means of evangelization among the masses of the people. If the AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN will open its hospitable columns once more, we promise to detail, very briefly, some facts concerning the Sunday-school movement in Europe, which seem to justify strong hopes for its success.

LETTER FROM BOSTON.

DEAR EDITOR:—I see by your paper that you are making good progress in sustaining the "Sunday Liquor Law," so called. This is, indeed, progressing from where we were two or three years ago, and it is matter of rejoicing to all the friends of temperance in Massachusetts, that the great and rich State of Pennsylvania has a temperance Governor, and the beautiful city of Philadelphia a Mayor who, it is hoped, will enforce a Law so promotive of temperance, as is your present one, for places where liquors are allowed to be sold.

But, you need to take one step more and get a prohibitory law, like the one in this State. There is now no liquor sold openly in this city, and, every week, the State constables take all they can find, and either destroy it, or confiscate it. In addition to this, not a week passes, when some, more or less, are not fined for selling contrary to law.

You are already aware that the strong effort made before the last Legislature here in favor of a License Law was a complete failure. More would have voted for License, had no effort for it been made before the Committee; for the more there was said, the worse the petitioners for License appeared. It was peculiarly unfortunate for them that the two lawyers whom they selected to plead their cause had both heretofore had a better record; as ex-Governor Andrew was the father of the State constabulary law; and Hon. Linus Child was the chairman of a legislative committee in 1837, who made a strong report in favor of a prohibitory law. The fact that these two lawyers operated against their former convictions, as it seemed, for money, operated, also, against the liquor sellers' petition. Some said, these changes reminded them of the woman who "appealed from Philip drunk to Philip sober," reversing the order only.

The business prospects of Boston seem to be brightening. The amount of travel from this city to New York is immense. Your correspondent has just taken a trip to that city, by the "New Line of Steamers," so called; that is, the line by car from here to Bristol, R. I., which is but the short ride of an hour and a half, where the boats, (I ought to say ships,) are taken. The two boats on this line, surpass in size, beauty, and speed any I have seen; and were completely filled on both the nights I was on board. One great comfort on this line is, you need not get up till morning on this end of the route, and you are in Boston at 6 1/2 A. M., in good time for breakfast; and you always arrive in New York in time to take the New Jersey cars at 7 o'clock for Philadelphia. So much for the benefit of those who wish to pass between New York and Boston, as many of your readers do, at this season.

We are having a hearing before a Committee of the city government about opening the reading room of the city library on the Sabbath. It so happens that the City Council, or a majority of them, are in favor of opening it on that day, and so they have given those who are opposed to such a movement an opportunity to remonstrate against it. I have no doubt you have observed how curiously people array themselves, and how you find the same people on the side of the devil in every movement. To illustrate the same gentlemen who appeared before the committee of the Legislature for a License Law, now appear before a committee of the city government for opening the public library on "the Lord's Day." What the result will be is not yet known.

It has become almost as customary to vacate Boston, and close the churches, as it is in Philadelphia, at this season. Religion is a periodical thing that seemingly may be dispensed with in hot weather. We wonder how Paul managed this matter? I confess Philadelphia is a hot place in July and August; but Boston has a sea breeze almost every day, and evening, and there is nothing gained by people's leaving their large, cool houses in the city, for the little, sun-burnt, dirty dens which many of them go into in the country. Home is the best place in hot weather, especially for children. W. M. CORNELL. July, 1867.

FROM OUR CHICAGO CORRESPONDENT.

CHICAGO, July 18th, 1867. DEAR PRESBYTERIAN:—My last letter to you was dated from the Iowa Division of the C. and N. W. R. R., and ended with the road, at Omaha. A few words more about this and the neighboring town of Council Bluffs.

"Do you go far West?" said one of my fellow passengers on the train, to his next neighbor. "No; only to Omaha," was the reply. It is but a very short time since this would have been considered pretty well "out West," and it may still strike some of your Eastern readers as being so. It is, however, difficult for one looking upon its broad and handsome streets, its fine business blocks, its numerous tasteful private residences, the fine equipages—in which its citizens seem to take a very special delight, judging from their usual numbers—the immense works in process of erection by the Union Pacific R. R., or already completed, and the long line of cars departing daily for points 400 miles West of here,—it is difficult to say, for one looking at all these tokens of an advanced state of civilization to realize that he is near the geographical centre of the continent; and where scarcely a dozen years ago the red man held almost sole and undisputed pos-