

session. The daily presence of a few lingering representatives of that vanishing race in the streets of the city is indeed the only thing to remind one that he is now quite on the verge of civilization.

As yet the churches of Omaha are in their early youth, and are not strong. Scarcely any of them are as yet provided with houses of worship, although several are now engaged in building; among which, I am happy to mention our own. Under the care of our able and excellent brother Dimmick, for nearly six years its pastor, our organization has become one of the largest and most influential congregations here. It has indeed suffered greatly from having never possessed any place of worship of its own; but the foundation of a fine edifice, which will cost them \$25,000 to \$30,000, when completed, is now laid, and it is expected that the walls will be raised and the house enclosed before winter, and the congregation find a temporary but welcome home in the basement. We look for a large and able church at Omaha, whose influence in this growing and rapidly rising State shall do much to advance our denominational interests there. It is, however, a very great, and I may add, a very common mistake, in our churches, to put off building until they can prepare just such an edifice as they would like. It is the almost certain way to never becoming able to build.

The Congregational church here has just dismissed its pastor, Rev. Mr. Rose, (who goes to Illinois), and it is now in quest of his successor. Directly opposite to Omaha, nestling under the Iowa bluff, but some four miles distant, because of the intervening bottom, is the flourishing town of Council Bluffs.

Not all your readers are perhaps aware that this is not the original place of that name, so called because of the celebrated council of Lewis and Clarke with the Indians. That was sixteen miles above, at a place now called Fort Calhoun; while this place was called Kanesville, and was settled chiefly by Mormons, of whom, indeed, many are still found in the surrounding region. "The Bluffs," as the place is always called in that vicinity, is a town of some considerable possessions, and of great expectations. It probably numbers from three to four thousand people and has a very busy and thriving look. Soon, however, five important lines of railway will converge here, and a magnificent bridge will connect them with the Nebraska shore. This, it is believed, will make of the place a large and important city. At present we are without a church; but not now, I am happy to say, without a bishop, here. Rev. George L. Little, late of Godfrey, Ill., and well known among us, both as a preacher and an educator, has removed hither, and will in the Autumn open a Female Seminary of a high order, an institution much needed in this region. With enlightened liberality, the citizens have raised the sum of \$6,000, which they donate to Mr. Little, by way of encouraging his undertaking. With the aid of this generous sum, Mr. L. will proceed at once to the erection of suitable buildings for the proposed enterprise. It has every prospect of being a complete success. Meantime, our brother will engage heartily in the promotion of our missionary work in this important region, where so many points require immediate attention. We need at least two or three young and energetic men, at points contiguous to Omaha and the Bluffs, to constitute there a Presbytery. No more promising fields of labor are to be found in the whole land. Who will go?

I will not speak further at this time of my observations during this trip. It has been full of interest to myself, and has deepened and broadened my impression of the vast and pressing need of pursuing, with new faith and zeal, the work of planting the institutions of the gospel in these youthful, but vigorous and fast growing communities. Our own beloved Church has no fairer field for the exertion of her best powers, and none which promises greater or speedier results. May she worthily appreciate her opportunity and justly estimate her obligations in this particular.

NORTH WEST.

BOSTON—LYNN—NEW HAVEN—YALE COLLEGE. NEWBURG, N. Y., July 27, 1867. This old summer resting place has been reached after a circuitous route, by way of Boston, Lynn, New Haven and New York, and here we remain awhile, preparing by repose, for another year's uninterrupted, happy labor. Our route from Philadelphia, to Boston was a voyage on board the steamer Norman, Captain Crowell, one of the regular liners. The whole affair was gotten up in magnificent style; a good boat, good company, weather the best of the season, somewhat sultry on the river, under our awnings, then fresh upon the ocean; but the sea as tranquil as is at all compatible with Old Neptune's rough nature, who gave us "ripples" and foam without pitch or roll, and on the last afternoon and night, a smacking breeze, that filled the sails and brought us up to Long Wharf, Boston, some hours ahead of time; we landing early Friday morning, the 12th, after 42 hours from berth to berth. Lynn stands almost in sight of Bunker Hill Monument, 11 miles south-east, and is a fine growing city of 20,000 or 30,000 people; stretching for miles around a charming shore, that looks forth on Massachusetts Bay, having, Nahant, after an unrivalled drive of four miles, S.W.; and

quaint old Marblehead six miles E., every inch furnishing a good bathing place, with red rocks and black rocks for children to climb and fishermen to throw their lines, and hotels and boarding houses for those who seek the coolest, cleanest, and healthiest localities for a summer's trip. It is true, the staple business of Lynn is of a lowly nature, but fine dwellings in the midst of fine gardens and rich lawns, with streets full of family carriages, can speak, it must be a far more remunerative trade, than its namesake, ministerial profession; and if one will visit the manufactories, the clean and decent dressings of the workmen, will suggest an elevating impression of shoe-making labor.

As for Boston, the pen of a passing traveller will not attempt to enter into its history or its localities, except to record the profound impression made on one of the company, by a first sight of Keneull Hall, and the old South Church, of the Common and Old Elm, and the places where once stood the birth-place of Franklin and the home of Hancock, of the State House, with this old family residence of Beacon street, and the magnificent streets and piles of magnificent stores, in the centre of the city.

I will not, however, omit Pemberton Square, with its corner house, so unpretending and unassuming, that, to find it, you must be directed to the very door, and even then, the modest letters spelling "Missionary House," out in the brown stone door-way, might almost escape your notice! Yet, what a seat of power, for looking at the table of the Prudential Committee, with the chairs occupied by the different members, among them Albert Barnes, one would think of the council-room of some great monarchy or empire, but only to dwell, enthusiastically, on the greater power, going forth from this chamber to settle and mould the state of nations, and make that state better and happier.

The utmost politeness our party received from the gentlemen we met, Dr. Clark, the new Foreign Secretary, and Dr. Worcester, who gifted us with copies of translations, in the Marhatta, Balgarian and Sandwich Island dialects.

COMMENCEMENT AT YALE.

New Haven, we found, had not been standing still for the last fifteen years nor for the last seven. Neither was College the same institution. Through her princely donations, new, massive and stately buildings have been erected for Libraries and Alumni, and the preservation of art; also to accommodate the new departments of study introduced to make old Yale in all respects a University, and assist the human mind, in every direction to develop its power and gain a universal acquaintance with nature.

But Commencement was the period of time and the centre of events, at which we aimed in our movements, and some of the usual, annual exercises came within our observation. Too late for the Alumni meeting on Wednesday, which was enriched by an address from Dr. Wm. Adams on "The Use of Life," which he showed to be benevolent action, and which was spoken of, by some, in the highest terms of eulogy, we were in time for a gathering of the members of the venerable Society of Brothers in Unity. Some reminiscences of the past were related and warm expressions of interest in her behalf were made by graduates of various classes, and the initiatory steps were taken for a centennial celebration of her origin, in 1768. On Wednesday evening, the Phi Beta Kappa address was delivered by Senator Ferry, of Connecticut, and surely the genius of civilization and benevolence was gratified, when the avails of learning and eloquence were contributed to the cause of public justice, and the necessity and duty of moral virtue in public measures and private practice, were enforced with the ardor and sincerity of strong conviction.

Commencement Day followed the old, time-honored programme, and yet, there was a brilliancy about every thing, that struck coldly to the memories of those who remembered the crowds upon the College green, and the rushing for seats to Centre Church and the Commencement dinner. Still, you might discern the friendly greeting and the buzzing about, under the tent, during the intermission, as eyes met and recognized others' eyes, and hands were stretched and crossed in warm-hearted salutation.

The old trees had grown a shade older and more umbrageous over the College campus and the city green, and old faces had gathered the significant crow-foot of time, and some old heads had entirely disappeared. Our dear, old, venerable Ex-President Day will be seen no more in public, though still hale enough at ninety-four to be visited, even by a whole class. President Woolsey gains not in flesh, however much learning and reverence may grow about his name. Dr. Bacon, though retired from the pulpit, as still at work in the Chair, and as we saw him good-naturedly picking up the bouquets and pitching them after retiring orators, all unconscious of the sweet honors that fell from fair hands, no one could fail of imputing to him a well-preserved youthfulness of heart.

The music was eloquent as usual, and in the afternoon, all that Presentation Day had spared, crowded together to hear the honored graduates, looking more like the ancient days than any other point presented. Of the few orators, completely and favorably heard, the Latin Salutatory by Day, of Newton, Mass., was very neat and appropriate; it was well committed, and gracefully and unforgettably delivered.

The "Veto," by Brown, of New Haven, was

a piece of vigorous thought, of a very high order of composition and well spoken.

"Milton in his Old Age," by Burnell, of Illinois, was well done, but, making some allowance for peculiar interest, the oration of P. Brinberg Porter, of Wilmington, Del., putting composition and oratory together, came with the highest eulogy. Mr. P. is a poet, and hence, perhaps, the choice of his subject, "Sir Philip Sidney," to whose character and talents he did no more than justice, when, in clear language, he held him forth as a pattern scholar, soldier, statesman, gentleman, and Christian, failing not to recite that touching incident, of his refusing the water, when mortally wounded on the battle-field, because a poor soldier, who was carried by, looked imploringly at the cup! But whilst partiality was pleased with this performance, it was doubly gratified at hearing others pronounce the same judgment of its merits and congratulate those who felt most concerned.

This visit to old Yale was refreshing; invigorating to us seniors to see crowds of youth, coming forward to take our places, prepared to carry every thing good further onward, than they may have left our hand. And as the records of our multitudinous schools come forth, of graduates and degrees, who will not be glad of the prospect of prosperity, that under God, must still attend our country's advancing years; convinced, that no interest shall arise for which strong hands to uphold will be lacking; no perils come, from which strong hearts will be waiting to deliver.

As for Newburg, her everlasting river and protecting hills are still the same; presenting the same imposing scenery, and yielding the same healthy air. Lately I looked down and out upon the prospect, and as a soft mist came down and covered the mountain heads and crept down the mountain sides, it seemed some new shape of creation; and reminded me of those mysterious diabolical chislings, where a sweet face is detected, wrapped in some gossamer veil, and the wonder always is how the wail was made!

W. W. TAYLOR.

Miscellaneous.

BENEFIT OF THE CLERGY. To be changed without benefit of clergy. The first three words of the sentence seem severe enough, but the last part of it conveys to many minds an idea that the intention of the Legislature was to increase indefinitely the punishment of the culprit, by sending him,

Out of, even in the blossom of his life, unhouse'd, disappointed, unanell'd, to the other world, after breaking his neck with a halter in this one.

Such, however, was not the design of the framers of the sentence, nor did "benefit of clergy," refer in any way to those spiritual ministrations, which the coldest form of charity would not deny to the condemned. Benefit of clergy was a privilege founded upon the exemption which clerks in orders originally claimed from the jurisdiction of secular judges. Basing their claim upon the text, "Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm," and theoretically, perhaps, on the presumed impossibility of men whose calling it was "to wait upon God continually" committing any serious crime, the clergy, in the days, when justice was hampered by superstition, procured that, no matter how heinous the offence of which they had been accused, they were to be answerable to their own ordinary only, and not to the king's justices. A clerk arraigned, or convicted before a secular judge, had but to declare who and what he was, his declaration being backed up, if necessary, by the demand of his bishop, and he was discharged into the custody of the ordinary, who was supposed to provide some sufficient punishment for him, or else to deliver him by "purgation." The latter process was most frequently adopted; it consisted in the accused taking oath before the ordinary that he was innocent, and a certain number of other people asserting, also upon oath, that they believed his statement.

In this way the clergy enjoyed an almost complete immunity from punishment for their crimes, and as these were neither few nor slight, their privilege gave rise to much complaint by those who had to smelt where the clergy were set free, and still more by those whom the clerical delinquents had outraged. The offensive assertion of the privilege in the case of the clergyman whom A. Becker refused to allow to be tried at common law brought about the Constitution of Clarendon, and ultimately the death of the archbishop.

The Constitution of Clarendon, by which the clergy were admitted to be liable to process at common law, became in this respect a dead letter, and the benefit of clergy survived and increased in the blood of "St. Thomas of Canterbury"; it was now extended to laymen who chose to claim it, and no further evidence of clerkship was necessary than that the claimant should be able to read or write. If he gave these proofs, he was given over to the ordinary, who put him to this purgation, or laid upon him some ecclesiastical penance, as in the case of real clerks. As this privilege was applicable in all cases of capital felony and there was no limit to the number of times it might be enjoyed, the worst evil-doers in the country got off scot-free—at all events, they saved their necks—and the peace of the community was disturbed accordingly. The solemn farce of purgation became, in many cases, too ridiculous to be gone through, or else the ordinary would not give himself the trouble to witness it; and as the alternative punishment he was empowered to award was for the offences of actual clerks, it followed,

as a matter of practice, that a lay-ruffian on receiving benefit of the clergy was ipso facto discharged of his crime, and its consequences.

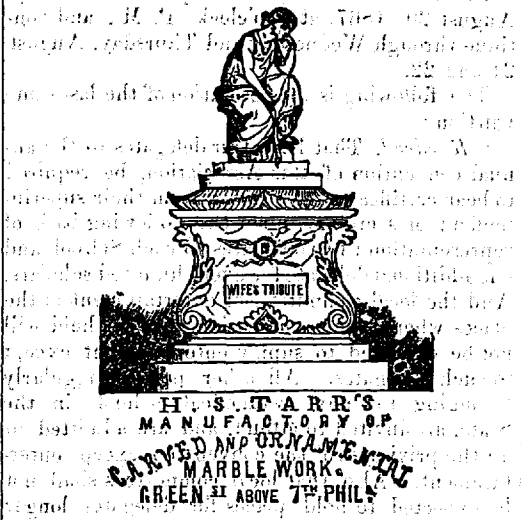
The abuse of the privilege became so flagrant that a statute of Edward I., called the Statute of Westminster the First, provided that clerks convicted of felony, and delivered to the ordinary, were not allowed to go free without purgation, "so that the king shall not need to provide any other remedy therein." A statute in the 25 Edward III., recites the complaints of sundry prelates that the secular judges had actually hanged clerks, "in prejudice of the franchises, and in depression of the jurisdiction of Holy Church," and goes on to direct that "all manner of clerks," convicted before the secular judges of treason or felony touching any other than the king, shall have the "privilege of Holy Church," and be given to the ordinary. The Archbishop of Canterbury, however, promised at the same time safely to keep and duly to punish such clerks, "so that no clerk shall take courage so to offend for default of correction," a promise reiterated by another primate to Henry IV. It may easily be imagined, however, that this promise was evaded. Not only did the ordinary ex-officio incline to the merciful side, but he found it no light matter to receive, punish, maintain, and keep all the scoundrels that were "admitted to clergy." Favoritism also had free scope, and the worst criminals might be abroad with impunity, while offenders in smaller things were undergoing punishment. By a Henry VII. c. 13, it was ordered that the benefit of clergy should be allowed but once to persons not in orders; and all who received the benefit were to be branded with a hot iron on the brawn of the thumb with the letter M, if they were murderers, and T, if they were felons of a less degree. The branding was to be done by the jailer in the open court, before the convict was delivered to the ordinary. Eight years afterwards, when a master was murdered by his servant, and circumstances that excited much popular indignation, advantage was taken to pass an act to deprive all laymen who should thereafter murder their masters of the benefit of clergy.

Henry VIII. dealt the hardest blows that the institution received, until quite modern times. A statute passed in the fourth year of his reign took away clergy from all murderers, and from certain felons, unless they were actual clerks.—Chambers's Journal.

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