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THE MOVEMENT CURE.

The great practical question pressing upon perhaps nine tenths of our church members at this time, is how they may regain a reasonable degree of spiritual life, strength and efficiency; how they may rise from invalidism to spiritual health. They are not satisfied to live at their present poor, dying rate. They are ashamed of it, alarmed at it, grieved over it. They do not wish to be ever straggling behind the grand army of the elect as it moves onwards to great deeds and to victory. As true Christians they cannot be given over to utter apathy, and they are prepared to welcome any feasible way of escape from their present condition.

And recovery ought not to be doubtful or difficult. The principle of spiritual life is already implanted in the Christian nature, and is not now seeking entrance for the first time. It is no miraculous resurrection from the dead we are expecting to witness; the patient is merely slumberous and lethargic and we seek to wake him out of his sleep.

It is of the very nature of true piety to be alive, to grow and to flourish; it is of the kingly nature of the eagle and not the grovelling burrowing nature of the mole; it mounts sun-ward and heavenward. It is a spark of divinity which is ever impelling the possessor back to its source, it is the indwelling Spirit of Christ urging to perpetual and grateful service in His behalf.

The penitence of the returning David, as set forth in the 51st Psalm, has been made the model for all backsliders in the renewal of their vocation;—wrongly we think. David was a gross and open offender, a public criminal of the deepest dye. He had brought wide-spread and almost irreparable disgrace on the name of the true religion. If he did not utterly renounce his hope, it were about as well for the cause that he took his place among the unregenerate in the eyes of the world; and it was doubtless more comforting to his conscience to cry for mercy as if he had never experienced it before. Especially will it be altogether unseemly for one so deeply fallen, at once to undertake any public efforts for the salvation of others. He must needs wait for some evidence satisfactory to himself and the world that he is not a reprobate; that his former spiritual status was not a mere sham but a reality, which is recoverable. Hence he prays: "Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation and uphold me with Thy free Spirit. Then will I teach transgressors Thy ways and sinners shall be converted unto Thee."

Now, if the deeply, scandalously and well nigh hopelessly fallen David, in his efforts at recovery, were a model for all backsliders, then all modes of recovery would revolve around the Fifty-first Psalm; would partake of its desperate struggles, its intense abasement, its felt need of a recommitment of the entire converting process; "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me."

Most freely do we admit that just in proportion as the Christian's wandering has been more remote and his life more inconsistent, does his condition correspond to that of the writer of this Psalm and his necessities are the same. But we no more believe that every returning Christian must go through the agony of the penitential Psalm, with the sense of blood-guiltiness running through it as a dark undertone, than we believe that every conversion and every new birth must be the result of long and untold throes of agony.

In a word, the returning Christian feeling himself guilty indeed for every step in his wanderings and crying to God for mercy, must not allow himself to be caught in a miserable slough of despond, but must seek his recovery in action. The crushed, conscience-smitten David waits like a culprit before his judge. He prays and he ventures to hope. But he has no full consciousness of a present Saviour, whose powerful word is summoning him from his sin and desponding to immediate manifestations of life and vigor. We believe that every Christian arrested in his career of wandering will find his best means of recovery in acting to-day, the part of a Christian. He will find the same Saviour, who bade the palsied man stretch forth his hand and use it, as the true

way of cure, present, to give health and vigor to the faculties he attempts to use. The palsied man would have remained a cripple till his death if he had waited for a sense of returning strength before he used his hand. The back-slidden Christian may not wait until he feels himself restored before acting the Christian's part. It is by action and movement that he will gain a cure. Let him resume all his regular duties. Let him seek the society of living, active Christians. Let him engage in some specific Christian work, requiring faith, prayer and self-denial. Let him seek to bring some soul to Christ. Let him make himself useful in the Sabbath-school, or with the young at home. Let him, by all means, put in exercise the strength he has, and he will find it rapidly augmenting. In a word, we believe the true cure for the backslider, who has not openly disgraced the profession, is the movement cure.

THE THEATRE WITHDRAWN.

The proprietor of the Chestnut Street Theatre has withdrawn his offer of this building to the Young Men's Christian Association of this city, without giving them opportunity to fulfil their engagements, which, under the terms of the understanding with him, they had been encouraged to make for future evenings. This cannot be regarded as surprising, especially when we consider the earnest spiritual tone of the two services already held and the nature of the after-meetings for prayer in the rooms of the Association directly opposite. The immediate success of the meetings, in a spiritual point of view, was too marked to be other than startling to those whose business thrives by an opposite condition of things. It is the echo of an old cry, heard first in the theatre of Ephesus, Our craft is in danger.

Yet we trust the two services already held, with the crowded prayer-meetings following, and the score of souls brought through this instrumentality to take a stand for Jesus, will encourage the Young Men of the Association and Christians generally of the city, to greater and bolder undertakings for the unconverted masses, who, through the theatre and every other worldly beguilement, are hastening uncared for to destruction. And as to the proprietor of the Chestnut Street Theatre, whose friendly and courteous bearing to the Young Men's Christian Association, at the first, was the only surprising matter in the whole transaction, let us not cease to hope that some leaven of good is working in his heart and let us not cease to mention him in our prayers.

A GREAT DEAL of small war has been waged against the positions taken in this paper on Re-union, as if they meant hostility to the measure. We are free to say we are opposed to any re-union which shall not rest on a fair promise of permanence. We are opposed to re-union which shall slur over those great principles of Christian liberty, which are compatible with a sincere acceptance of the Calvinistic system, and upon which all Calvinists can stand together. We are opposed to a re-union which shall obliterate, not merely in name but in fact, the only Calvinistic Presbyterian Church known to Christendom which expressly maintains and cherishes such liberty of opinion; we are opposed to any transformation by which the guarantees for such liberty shall disappear from the Presbyterian Church. But what then? In all this, are we not contending for the only practicable permanent basis of re-union in existence? And are not the good men who have been hastening on the matter, with little other guarantee for the future than the good feeling of the present, likely to manufacture greater discords than ever by such a course? They have no more right to call themselves any men *par excellence*, than the peace-at-any-price men of the North during the rebellion could claim to be the best friends of peace; or than the Johnson party to-day can claim to be better reconstructionists and friends of the Constitution than the Republicans. Is the builder who refuses to go on with the house until a good foundation has been discovered, to be called, on that account, an enemy to the enterprise? He is its truest friend. The true New School man is the true friend of union; and every one who is a friend of true union, is, so far, a New School man. Some of the professed friends of the measure are doubtless self-deceived;

some are very short sighted, and some, perhaps, have some very shrewd plans laid. Our part is the fair and open advocacy of the only basis of re-union, which common sense suggests as practicable.

FROM OUR TRAVELLING CORRESPONDENT IN THE WEST.

PITTSBURGH, Sept. 23, 1867.

DEAR EDITOR: I am enjoying the pleasant sensations which fall to the lot of a Philadelphian coming from the "city of clean streets and clear records," to Pittsburgh, dirty, smoky, grimy Pittsburgh,—for which one's best wish is a cheap apparatus to consume its bituminous smoke and then ten years and a couple of Schuyllkills to wash its dirty face. They tell me that the people are used to it, but I doubt it. God made man to enjoy the beauty of pure colors in the open sunlight, and a Pittsburgher never sees such in the open air—seldom within doors. Green is not green, even on the trees; red is not red, even on the bricks, and white is not white anywhere; all colors tone off into a dirty, dusty brown. The very windows of the beautiful churches, charged with exquisite pictures, are begrimed like the bottom of a kettle, in a way that must produce a "dim religious light" within, while the spires suggest the vanity of hope in their disappointed efforts to rise above the blackening smoke.

Some at least, of the inhabitants, have too much sense to sit down content with this; some confess that they look forward to a residence in the Quaker City as the haven of earthly rest which is to reward their labors, and one cleanly housewife, with a true woman's instincts, told me that she often felt like sitting down and crying, as she realized the vanity of her efforts in battling with her great enemy—smoke. But the law of compensation runs through all finite things, and only God is exempt from it. Pittsburgh smoke, like English rain and fog, drives people within doors, and develops the home life of the family, the only sure foundation for the well-being of the State. I have found among these people a pleasant cordiality—or as they call it in the West, a *pleasantness*—which we would look for in vain among the people of "frigid Philadelphia," as Beecher calls us.

The neighboring places are much exercised over the question of consolidation. Pittsburgh is following in the wake of Philadelphia in gathering up all the outlying suburbs under one central municipal government. Some residents in Allegheny City, which has recently absorbed Manchester, say that they have no wish to become a part of dirty Pittsburgh, but that's "the pot calling the kettle black." Consolidation will do for Pittsburgh what it has done for Philadelphia,—diminish city expenses by reducing the number of officers, make offices worth the competition of a higher class of citizens, and establish a sufficient police.

In the religious community here the main event is the resignation of Rev. Herriek Johnson, D. D., of the Third Presbyterian Church, an event which is regarded by Christians of every name as a misfortune to the city. The people of the Third Church, as you will have already learned, offered Dr. Johnson leave of absence, but in the uncertain state of Mrs. Johnson's health he did not know when she would be able to return, if, indeed, it would ever be safe or desirable to bring her back to this smoky atmosphere. He was, therefore, unwilling to keep them in a state of suspense and pressed his resignation, which was sorrowfully accepted, and his people have united with him in asking a dissolution of the pastoral relation.

Mrs. Johnson's disease is consumption, and necessitates a removal for the less changeable climate of the lake regions of the Northwest. They will spend the winter at Marquette, where the Doctor will labor as the stated supply of a recently organized congregation, which may consider itself highly favored.

On Thursday evening a number of his people met at the house of Col. Herron and presented him with some valuable and elegantly bound volumes of theological lore, as mementoes of his pastoral labors. On Saturday evening the young men of his charge presented him with quite an extensive and really valuable collection of historical works, embracing sets of Froude, Carlyle, Prescott, Macaulay, Hallam, Bancroft, &c.

On Sabbath morning he preached his farewell sermon in his own church to a deeply affected audience; and in the evening took his farewell of the Young Men of Pittsburgh in a masterly discourse before the Young Men's Christian Association on the text: "I will make a man more precious than fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir." It was delivered in the First Presbyterian Church, the introductory

services being conducted by Drs. Jacobus and Scovill.

"Dr. Johnson," says the *Evening Chronicle*, "will be missed from the Pittsburgh pulpit. He has been a constant and arduous worker in the vineyard of the Lord, and has endeared himself to all." None who have heard him need to be told of his power as an orator, and in regard to his constancy in labor we need only say that, during the revival in this city last winter, he preached for several months daily, with almost no help from any one. His church ranks probably as the second in the New School body in point of liberality in giving, yielding only to Dr. Adams' of New York. Though not numerically as strong as many, it is made up of such material, that the nuclei of several churches could be sent off in colonies without materially diminishing its strength. It is as yet only a childless Hannah, and wants one thing to the crown of its rejoicing,—that it should be a mother of churches.

There is only one New School church in this great Presbyterian city, and none at all in Allegheny, where, however, enough New School people reside to form a separate church. Should such a church not be formed, the denomination may soon have a church there by *accession* from another body, and, indeed, if the check-rein is pulled too tightly elsewhere, more than one of them.

Pittsburgh is a Presbyterian centre, being the northern focus of the great Scotch-Irish district which reaches down through Western Pennsylvania, Western Virginia, Eastern Tennessee, embracing small sections of South Carolina and Georgia, and reaching on through North Alabama to Huntsville, a very New Ulster of the new world. A glance on the map will show how strongly this region is marked out by natural boundaries—the mountains of the Apalachian system—and how closely it coincides with the region of Southern Unionism during the rebellion. On much of the southern part of it Presbyterianism has lost its hold, although it is still the creed of Western North Carolina; around Pittsburgh it still holds unrivalled sway, but, as might be expected, the New School Church is by no means the strongest here. Stock is looking up, however, for them, and I prophesy a large accession from the Reformed Presbytery (N. S.) of this and of your neighborhood, in the breakup which is everywhere threatened in that Church. This body has recently gone through a somewhat excited discussion on points of Church order and worship, being a part of the great "acclimatization" process which is shaking so many American Churches to their foundations, and those of her ministers and members who are looking for a home elsewhere are turning to the "Broad Church of Calvinism." "Why," they reason, "jump out of the frying pan into the fire—out of one knot of heresy hunters into a bigger one?" They are not afraid of that word "liberal," which the Assemblies' Joint Committee dared not put into the "Basis of Re-union."

That same "acclimatization-process" is the great event of our time and nation—one which is shaking both Church and State. What is the Church of the future, the State of the future, the Man of the future to be? Not a Yankee, not a Dutchman, not a Scotch-Irishman; but what? Our Church seels rest largely on imported international differences and not on great principles, and on the attainment of unity in this direction the safety of the nation in time to come depends. We have a government, a country, a flag, all the machinery and grist enough, but where is THE AMERICAN? It is doubtful if we have him yet. Local vanity has so belauded local types that the Yankee, the Sucker, the Hoosier, have in turn been set up as Uncle Sam, but to no purpose.

In my next I may give you some news of the working of the acclimatization-process in the Church of this region.

Yours, ON THE WING.

CIRCULAR LETTER.

The following paper was adopted at a meeting of ministers and elders of the various branches of the Presbyterian church, held in Philadelphia on Tuesday, September 24th. It was adopted unanimously and heartily.

TO THE PRESBYTERIES OF THE UNITED STATES. FATHERS AND BROTHERN—Allow us respectfully to call your attention to the invitation addressed to all the churches of the Presbyterian order, to assemble in convention in the city of Philadelphia, on the first Wednesday of November next, "for prayer and conference to promote union and communion among the various branches of the Presbyterian family." That all these now divided departments of the Church of Christ should be one, is universally admitted; that they will be one, cannot be doubted. It is proposed to ascertain if the time has now come when they can be one; and if so, to take measures to accomplish this grand result. The present condition of our country, with slavery abol-

ished and peace restored, now more than ever united in all its parts—the movements of a similar kind in the lands of our fathers—the urgent necessity there is for a combination of resources and energies, in order to supply the spiritual wants of the destitute at home, and to extend the gospel among the heathen—and, especially, the evident influences of the Divine Spirit leading the people of God earnestly to desire and pray for the re-union of all who love the Saviour and seek for the redemption of our world—all these considerations lead us to hope that "the time to flay" Zion in this regard, "yea, the set time, is come."

Will you, dear brethren, give your co-operation by appointing a minister and a ruling elder to attend this meeting?

We are, dear brethren, your friends and fellow-servants in the love of the great God, our Saviour.

ALEXANDER REED,
WILLIAM T. EVA, Sec'y.

Arrangements are now making for the meeting of the Convention, and for entertainment of the delegates, of which, when completed, due notice will be given in the Presbyterian journals.

FROM OUR ROCHESTER CORRESPONDENT.

The American Board.

In other columns we have given a full account of the daily sessions of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions at its recent meeting in Buffalo. We propose in this place merely to call attention to some of the most important matters connected with that meeting.

The place was favorably situated for a large attendance. Buffalo used to be a western city, but now none is more central. And yet the number from abroad was not quite so large as it is sometimes. Of corporate members seventy-six were present, about three hundred honorary members, and of other friends of Missions from without the city of Buffalo we should say about five or six hundred. The hospitality of Buffalo provided most amply and gracefully for all that came, and if we may judge from Dr. Clark's closing address, could have accommodated as many more with the utmost ease.

The daily meetings were well attended, and generally crowded. Two large outline maps of the world, one for each hemisphere, added much to the interest of the occasion. These were each fourteen feet square, drawn with mathematical accuracy, and in bright colors, so that they could be easily seen from every part of the house. Some parts were darkly shaded, representing paganism; another color indicated the Mohammedan parts of the earth; another Romanism; and still another the truly Christian portion. These maps pleaded most eloquently for Missions.

Among the distinguished persons present, it may be almost invidious to particularize where so great a host are men of deserved celebrity; but it was pleasant to see the honored President, Dr. Hopkins, another year filling the chair which he has graced so long. The Vice-President, Hon. William Dodge, was also there, and as ready as ever to lead or to second in anything that promised to do more than has ever been done before for the spread of the Redeemer's Kingdom. Ex-Gov. Buckingham, of Connecticut, Dr. Cox, of New York, the aged Dr. Wisner, of Ithaca, Pres. Stearns, of Amherst College, and numerous other men of distinguished position and influence were also present. Rev. Newman Hall, of London, was also there, and spoke with great effect at two of the meetings on Wednesday evening.

But measures are more than men. There were three separate subjects of peculiar importance which were brought to the attention of the Board, by special reports from the Prudential Committee. One relates to Missionaries' children. What shall be done for their welfare? This was the subject of a long and able report presented by Secretary Wood, which carefully reviews the past action of the Board in this matter, and as carefully inquires what more can be done. This report was referred to a special Committee, of which Ex-Gov. Buckingham was chairman. After careful consideration, this Committee reported that it was impossible to mature any plan in time to report at this meeting. From names were put upon the list, and they are to report next year. The Committee is a large one composed of many of the most distinguished laymen connected with the Board, and we may reasonably suppose that, although it is a delicate and difficult subject, they will present the best plan practicable for reaching the ends contemplated. Sure we are that the Board desires to do the best, wisest and most liberal thing possible in the case.

Another special paper was presented by Secretary Clark, on the want of Missionaries. He is after recruits. He has obtained a goodly number in the past year, but he is not satisfied; he wants more, and he seems determined to have them. He asks for sixty-one new Missionaries. It will be seen that the Committee which reported on this paper, Pres. Stearns, of Amherst College, Chairman, fully endorsed the demand, and recommended that a direct appeal be made to men themselves, in our Colleges and Theological Seminaries, as well as to young pastors, and that the claims of the Missionary should be urged directly and personally upon them; that the Secretaries should not wait for volunteers, nor merely appeal for men, but to men, and so try to fill its ranks something more according to the world's need. We certainly hope that this plan may be successful. Indeed, this has been in part already tried. This, in fact, is the way in which most of the recruits of the past year have been obtained. And having seen the advantages of this plan, we are quite sure the Secretaries will continue to use it.

[Conclusion next week.]

*They were painted—and admirably done—by Rev. Merritt Gally, of Marion. He seems to have a hand for any thing.