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American Presbyterian.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 26, 1867.

A THOUGHT ON OUR WAY.

Can this over-busy age of ours, with its clever promptness in speaking and in acting, be ever again brought to believe in the duty and expediency of deliberate reflection, and calm self-converse? Is the lightning-express to be its whole ideal of human conduct? Can no style of reasoning be tolerated but that which leaps, with instinctive rapidity, from premise to conclusion? Unhappy civilization, if it has made thinking the privilege of the few, while it puts the masses at the mercy of such an infinitude of artificial wants, or wheedles them into such an inconceivably mad race after worldly "success," as to nearly destroy both the possibility and the inclination for reflection upon the sober themes and realities of life. Surely this closing season of the year may be held inviolate from the distracting influences of pleasure or business. Here surely are hallowed hours and calming influences. Nature herself gives a lesson of sobriety and repose. The hours of daylight are cut short and the long period of darkness invites us to self-inspection. The chief occupations even of the business man are those of review and settlement. The year is closing: our lives are made up of but a few years at best. We are mortal and our race is fast running. Shall we pass from time into eternity in a mere unthinking rush; tumbling restlessly down cataracts, and without pause, shooting Niagara at last?

1. Let us at this season of the year, resolve to set up some effectual barrier to the tide. Let our lives henceforth have some element of independent thought in them. Let each day have some sacred moments of solitary reflection, upon our own character, upon duty, upon God, upon eternity, upon great principles, upon the divine dealings with us and ours, upon the character, perils and proper training of our children. Take some text of Scripture, some pungent word from the pulpit, and let it employ and nourish your mind. Let ~~the~~ ^{the} goodness, let moral beauty have some inward reality to your thought. Dwell on the love of Christ, the inexhaustible theme of heaven and earth, until the deepest and most enduring motive of action, Christian gratitude is aroused within you. In spite of manifold hindrances and almost impossibilities, strive to bring your thoughts into captivity to Christ. We fear we have quite too much of the organized, associated, ably talking and cleverly and zealously-acting sort of piety in our day, which must and will exhaust itself, and re-act into a state of hopeless nervous prostration and paralysis, if it is not backed by a richer and more spiritual inward life.

2. Let us live more by deliberate plan. True we know not what a day may bring forth, and we dare not boast of to-morrow; but we may be sure the large power of foresight given to us was not meant to lie unused. We are to trust God in all things, but we have no encouragement to cast upon him what is in any measure, within range of human faculties. God, whose decrees are from eternity, does not and cannot approve of a desultory way of living in any of his intelligent creatures. Let us ask: What course of life shall we choose? Or, if we have found our place, what part of our work shall we do this year? What particular duties are to meet us to-morrow? Can we anticipate any of them and assign them their place, so that we shall not go about the whole day's work in a flurry? Are the probable temptations of to-morrow within range of calculation,—the frivolous company we are likely to meet; the pressure likely to come upon this or that right principle; the trials of patience; the incitement to hasty speaking? What scattered moments, the gold dust of time, shall we have at command, and what provision can we make for their employment? There are days so precious that they may be anticipated during a whole previous week—such is Communion Sabbath; such are anniversaries, important events—birth-days and the like. But it is beyond doubt that each day's work may be facilitated and the reins of events may be somewhat brought in hand, by even a few moments spent in anticipating and planning the day before. Life is a campaign; each one needs to exercise generalship in antici-

patting its contingencies from day to day. 3. But in order to wise preparation for the future we need acquaintance with the past. The sagacity of the statesman arises from the study of history. The general's skillful plan arises, in part at least, from the knowledge of past plans; from remembered experience in war; even from past defeats. This is the time for a review of our lives. This is the time to inquire after characteristic faults, after habitual errors and failings; to set up warnings over the known perilous places, which, by the laws of our nature and our position in life, are likely to recur; in a word, our besetting sins. This is the time for a revised estimate of our character and conduct; for an examination of the grounds of our hope; for an addition to our stock of self-knowledge; for improving our acquaintance with that person, so much a stranger to us—ourselves. This is the time for frankness and fair dealing with ourselves, whom we cheat so desperately; the time to go behind the world's public estimate of us; to silence the whispers of pride; to hear fully the long suppressed admonitions of conscience. Where has our character shown a painful lack of Christian symmetry; where is the excess and where is the defect? Have we understood, or humbly sought to profit by our afflictions? Has our gold been refined? Has patience had her perfect work? Looking back, can we "count it all joy" that we fell into divers temptations? Has our character been invigorated and developed by them? Has the power of grace been manifested and so God glorified in us?

And if the Christian is called on to make such diligent self-inquiry, much more should the unconverted man employ this season in thinking on his ways. On his knees he should seek to be penetrated with a sense of his error and danger. Without long thinking he should make haste, and delay not, to keep the commandments which he already knows his life has been spent in breaking. He should hear, as addressed to himself, the cry: "Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain. Escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed." He should think enough to come to himself, and in the conviction of his wretchedness to arise and go unto his Father. Holy Ghost! give voice to the closing year, and through every one of its associations may it cry into his inmost heart, "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light."

CHURCH ERECTION.

ITS RELATIONS TO HOME MISSIONS.

They are one and the same in the great common aim of promoting the Evangelization of our country. They form each a part of the generic work of Church Extension in the broadest sense. They are not one however in such a sense that either can, in any degree, take the place of the other.

They are not one in such a sense that the co-operation and support of the Churches can be concentrated upon either to the exclusion of the other.

The Home Mission Committee never build churches, however sorely they may be needed, and the Church Erection Board never helps to support a missionary.

If the aim of the denomination is to carry on its work of Evangelization *symmetrically* and in such proportion as to secure the highest efficiency and the greatest aggregate result, then it behooves all pastors and churches to carefully consider the question of greatest deficiency and greatest need, and to re-apportion their contributions accordingly.

There are those, and they are many, who announce themselves as fast friends of the Home Mission Cause, but have no zeal for Church Erection. On the other hand there are others—especially at the West—who would have us believe that the Home Mission work was almost an absolute waste of funds without a house of worship, and that the one paramount interest is now the erection of sanctuaries.

The last General Assembly, after a careful consideration of the whole subject, decided upon *one, to two and a half*, as the proportionate need of the two causes for the present year—or one hundred thousand dollars for Church Erection, and two hundred and fifty thousand for Home Missions.

Would it not be wise for our churches to adopt this scale and work to it, in the efforts which they make for the Home work?

The temptation to reach a large and noteworthy figure for one object will be too strong in some cases. The proportion is as low as one to twenty, in some cases, and often the less popular cause is ruled out altogether.

But there are indications of a more and more prevalent disposition to give wisely—rather than strikingly, and, as Carlyle would say, "picturesquely." It is found that continued neglect of the weak column, leads ultimately to the *flanking of the stronger*, and thus the whole evangelizing force suffers.

When a missionary organization has been suffered to linger along for years without a house, other denominations often assume (and they are perfectly right) that the field of their labor is *not worthily occupied*, that a young and growing town in the West demands a far better husbandry, and that it is high time that somebody take hold in earnest, and rear a standard, and build an altar, and lay permanent foundations, and form a centre and a rallying point that shall attract the people.

Thus a mission church which has long been sustained by us at great expense, is swallowed up in another name.

The Home Mission Committee reap the harvest, but *leave it in shocks on the fields*. The Church Erection Board gather into barns. *Both must be done.*

HOME MISSIONS IN PHILADELPHIA.

We rejoice at every suitable means employed to arouse and strengthen the interest of the people in the great causes of the Church. Voluntary Societies have long been accustomed to regard great public meetings as among their most promising means of success. The annual and anniversary meetings of the American Board are probably regarded by the managers of that body as essential to its popularity. The subject of Home Missions can be made quite as effective on the platform as foreign missions. We are glad the Presbyterian Committee of Home Missions has recently added this to the other agencies by which they seek to reach our people.

A meeting was held in Madison Square Church, New York, last Sabbath a week, when Secretaries Kendall and Ellinwood, Rev. Mr. Martin, of Nevada, Rev. Dr. Hitchcock, and Hon. Wm. E. Dodge, made addresses of the deepest interest. Our churches in Philadelphia which are so abundant in labors for the religious needs of the city itself, do greatly need to be stirred up to more lively participation in the work of evangelizing our whole country, and a similar meeting will by God's blessing, do us great good. Arrangements have in fact been made for holding two next Sabbath; one at Clinton St., and one at North Broad street. Rev. Drs. Kendall and Ellinwood, the able and interesting Secretaries, and Rev. William Martin, fresh from the mining regions of Nevada, will address the meetings. Two fine maps of great dimensions will aid in illustrating the addresses, and seasons of great interest may be expected. The meetings will commence at 7½ o'clock, P. M., and the Churches of our branch in the vicinity will be closed, to enable the congregations to attend.

AT HER OLD TRICKS.—We see it stated as one of the expected though as yet ungratified, results of the late great Episcopal council at Rome, that the Bishops of the church throughout the world are to be invested with the rights of Roman citizenship—in other words, to come into political, as well as spiritual, subjection to the Pope; into organic relations to his civil as well as ecclesiastical dominion. This consummated, the Pope will have a subject bound to the political advancement of the Papacy, in every Romish Diocese on the face of the earth. Points for the diffusion of influence will be occupied by men whose power over vast and dangerous masses is almost unbounded; and their civil status will enforce the duty of using that influence so to shape the policies of the country where they reside, as shall most advance the aims of the government which has their higher allegiance. Virtually, this is about the state of the case now; but with an accredited citizen of the Pope's government as his Bishop, every true Romanist must feel a more profound regard for the authority of the Episcopal chair, over his political action. We believe that forty-five is the number of the political outposts of Rome,

which will thus be insinuated into our country. Rome can never give up her ancient claim of the right of supremacy in the politics of the world—the right to obedience from all kings and governments. The farther the hope of realizing this ideal recedes, the more madly she clings to it.

MEETINGS IN NEW YORK.

HOME MISSIONS AND CHURCH EXTENSION.

A very pleasing and instructive meeting, on the subject of Home Missions and Church Extension, was held in the Madison Square church, last Sunday evening. The attendance was large, as is usual at that church. Dr. Adams, the pastor, conducted the exercises. Addresses were made by Rev. Dr. Kendall, Secretary of Home Missions; Rev. Mr. Martin, of Nevada; Rev. Dr. Ellinwood, Rev. Dr. Hitchcock, of the Union Theological Seminary, and Wm. E. Dodge. Assisted by a large map, recently prepared by the Committee, suspended behind the pulpit, the Secretary set forth, very impressively, the constantly expanding, and almost unlimited boundaries of our growing country. The extending of the railroad system west of the Mississippi, toward the Rocky Mountains and the Pacific, is rapidly filling up the unoccupied lands from the British possessions down to Texas and Mexico. The wave of population flows westward at the rate of from fifteen to twenty-five miles a year. All along the lines of these roads, towns are constantly springing up, opening new and inviting fields, calling on the Church to occupy. Five hundred ministers, and the means to support them, are wanted to-day, to supply the requirements of the Home Mission service. The General Assembly voted to double the amount this year over last. Last year it was \$130,000. This year it is put at \$250,000. At the beginning of December, the Committee was \$29,000 in debt, and need \$14,000 at this time, to pay the salaries now due to missionaries. He said that Dr. Adams, of the Committee, favored sending the entire senior class (about forty-five) of the Union Theological Seminary, into Missouri and Kansas, if they will go. They are all needed there. Quite a number have already made up their minds to go and occupy those inviting fields.

Rev. Mr. Martin, for some years at Virginia City, said that the success of the missionaries who had settled among the active and thriving population of the mining States was very encouraging. He called upon those who are making fortunes out of railroads in these regions, to send the Gospel among the people along the lines.

Dr. Ellinwood showed the close connection existing between the Church associations and church edifices. He had in mind thirty churches in pressing need of houses of worship. What an opportunity is here offered to Christians, who, under the blessing of God, are in the enjoyment of the good things of this life, to extend and build up the visible Church.

Rev. Dr. Hitchcock, alluded to the growth of civilization, in connection with the influence of commerce, said it was the duty of the men of large means to take an active part in the moral civilization of the country and the world. If those who had the money would furnish it, the men would be forthcoming.

Hon. W. E. Dodge, spoke of the wonderful influence of railroads in spreading the population, and filling up the unoccupied lands. He appealed to men of means to regard themselves as God's stewards, and to consecrate their treasures to the building up of the kingdom. The meeting was a success, as well in respect to the large attendance, as interest manifested in the object sought to be advanced.

UNION MEETING.

In accordance with the recommendations of the late Union Meeting of Presbyterians in Philadelphia, and at the invitation of a number of the pastors of Presbyterian churches in this city, a meeting was held in the Brick Church (Dr. Spring's,) Thursday evening. Dr. Gardiner Spring presided, assisted by Dr. Wm. Adams. The attendance was small, and before the opening of the meeting, it was thought by many expedient to adjourn for greater numbers. Dr. Adams attributed the slim attendance to the want of sufficient publicity given to the meeting through the pulpits and the press. Dr. H. B. Smith made an exceedingly interesting statement of the action and spirit of the

Philadelphia Convention, urging in conclusion the great good to be expected to the Church from a Union.

Dr. Murray [?] said he had been very much impressed with Dr. Smith's remarks, and he wished that they might be heard by the great body of the Presbyterian churches in this city, and he accordingly moved an adjournment to the first Sunday evening of the New Year. The motion was agreed to, and Dr. H. B. Smith, Henry Day, Esq., and Mr. Gilman, were appointed a committee to make arrangements for the meeting. **NEW YORK, DECEMBER 21st.**

"THE BEGGARS OF HOLLAND AND GRANDEES OF SPAIN."

Many favorable opinions have been expressed by critics of this book. We venture to quote a few of them from sources not in any way connected with the publishers or author. *The Christian Intelligencer*, organ of the Reformed (Dutch) Church, in a very warm and appreciative notice of all the Committee's late issues, speaks of the above-named volume as "a new and capital *History of Holland*, especially of the Reformation in that country. A copy of this work should be in each Sabbath-school in our Church, and in every family of our denomination. It is the only good, faithful, popular history of the rise, conflicts, and triumphs of the Reformed Church in the Netherlands which has yet been produced in this country. The author having thoroughly mastered his great theme, has handled it with an ability visible on every page. A good map of the Netherlands and several illustrations lend their attractions to this welcome and admirable history of one of the grandest of revolutions. We trust that pastors will quickly discern the merits of this work and the good use they can make of it."

Hours at Home, for December, says it "is a spirited, graphic and eloquent history of the Reformation in the Netherlands from A. D. 1200 to 1578, illustrating the heroic constancy and almost superhuman endurance of the witnesses for the truth in Holland during the period which Motley's histories have rendered familiar to us and immortalized; the cruelty of their Spanish persecutors, and the noble and sublime resistance of the people led on by William, Prince of Orange. There is in all history scarcely a more interesting and thrilling chapter than this, and the author, in giving us the religious side of it, and adapting the history to the capacity of the young, has done a really valuable service. It is a book that deserves a high and permanent place in our religious literature."

THE REVIVAL AT NEW ALBANY.

A private letter contains the following account of this recent blessed work—the first marked instance of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in any of our churches this season. The letter is dated New Albany, Indiana, Nov. 25, 1867.

Rejoice with us, as I know you will, in a recent work of the Spirit in His converting power. The gracious shower descended on "Mt. Tabor," a point outside the city limits, around which a portion of our Church reside, and where I preach in the afternoon of alternate Sabbaths. At a communion season the first Sabbath of October, four persons presented themselves for admission to the Church. One of these was a man of social and business prominence through the entire community; and as he with the others knelt and received the sacred, solemn rite of baptism, few eyes witnessing the spectacle but were moistened with deep emotion. Meetings were continued, brethren in the ministry giving highly valued aid, several weeks. Repeatedly the place was a Bochim; weeping bitterly for sin often turned into tears of joy too deep to find expression in words. Many and signal displays there were of the power of God's Spirit to subdue the stubborn will, bringing the whole man into subjection to the law of Christ. More than three-score persons give evidence of having shared savingly in this precious work of grace. The number of households blest with salvation is an interesting feature. Fourteen husbands and their wives stood up together to profess Christ before men. In the case of six others, their companions were already members of the Church. Twenty families are, by the consecration of both the heads thereof, constituted *Christian families*. And in nearly every instance the family altar was at once set up. Two of the young men express a desire to study for the ministry.

This was a genuine revival—a real baptism of the Holy Ghost; and to God be all the praise.

GREATNESS OF PRESBYTERIANISM.—A correspondent of the London *Freeman*, after referring to the recent controversy about the numbers of Anglicans and Wesleyans, "reminds those who lay so much stress on numbers" that the Presbyterian Church is the largest in the world. Of course, nearly the whole of Scotland is Presbyterian, and this section of the Catholic Church is very strong in the North of Ireland, in Wales, and in America, as it also is in our colonial dependencies. Then there is the ancient Church of the Vaudois, not to speak of the churches of Holland and Switzerland. A Pan-Protestant Synod would assuredly put that at Lambeth into the shade, and I suspect it would utter a less uncertain sound."