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PERIL AND VOCATION OF YOUNG MEN.

The perils which young men are called to meet in our day, arise in a large measure from the high degree of respectability given to vice and infidelity. The days of Fielding and Smollett have come back to English Literature. Great literary abilities are lavished upon subjects that decency forbids to mention. Books which may not be read aloud in a family circle are first introduced to the world by monthly instalments, in our leading literary journals. Poetry which rivals the worst products of the immoral muse of Greece and Rome, is trumpeted into favor by critics in similar positions, who deride the objections of the pure-minded as mere prudery. The foul details of criminal trials are spread out with the minuteness of *verbatim* reports over whole columns of our most widely circulated journals. Theatres which maintain their places before the public, by daily notices in the same respectable positions, justify twenty times over all that has been said of their demoralizing tendencies by the character of their leading performances, within the last eighteen months. And it deserves to be named last in this enumeration that religious journals, so-called, of the largest circulation in the country, are found not to be proof against the large pecuniary considerations connected with advertising those infamous devices of Satan, by which the path of vice is smoothed over, and its hideous consequences in the present life deceitfully promised a certain and agreeable remedy. It is not by these remarks intended to be asserted that our age is more vicious than the past; that may also be true; but unquestionably vice, lust and sensuality are making a bold push for recognition beyond the gross circles in which heretofore they have been openly tolerated, and the young man is being leagued by influences tending to corrupt his virtue, more subtle, more general and on a higher plane than in the simple generation just gone by. Wine-drinking and every path to intemperance opens more widely, and begins much nearer to home and to church than it did a score of years ago. Divines in high positions in our own and other Evangelical churches, are found writing down the Scriptural claims of total abstinence upon the conscience, and thus destroying one of the best defences the young man can have against falling into intemperate courses.

Infidelity in various forms has made formidable advances towards recognition among respectable sources of influence. The best literature—as literature—in our country; the most talented writers, the ablest literary organs of our country, and perhaps we must add of England, are more or less under its control, and are diligently used to communicate its leaven. The best daily paper of the country, as our correspondent on another page is showing, lends itself in all its departments to the defence and propagation of scientific infidelity. Men of high and deserved scientific renown are arraying themselves against the plain fundamental teachings of Scripture, on the age, the unity, and the primitive condition of our race on the earth. Again we say, these things do not prove that there is more unbelief in the world than formerly, but what there is has certainly managed to win a more prominent position; has forced itself upon the notice of higher circles, and is more dangerous, more pervading, more persistent than heretofore. Besides this, scientific unbelief tends very decidedly to materialism and atheism, to the confounding of the most radical moral distinctions, and to the removal of supernatural and spiritual truth from the region of possibility. Shake a young man's faith in the Bible, and you loose the chief restraints from a course of vice; but put in its place the teachings of modern materialism and naturalism, and you justify the pleadings of passion; you urge him on to eat and to drink for to-morrow he dies. And it is this materialistic atheistic philosophy that respectable journals in our day are learning to tolerate, or are even recognizing as the *fashion* in scientific circles, and are commending by all the arts of finished rhetoric and specious reasoning.

Truly, it is enchanted ground through which the young man of to-day must pass in forming his character, and shaping his destiny. There is, however, one foe to enervating indulgence in the high enterprise, in the sleepless business activity, and in the enthusiasm for achievement which animates society in this new and great country of ours. And so an opposite peril awaits the youth, who is too busy to read the trash that loads the shelves of our respectable libraries, or to appreciate the specious arguments of high class monthlies and quarterlies against

the truth of Christianity. He is a believer from want of time to become otherwise. He is comparatively safe from low pleasures, because a different passion consumes his breast. Full of haste, full of unrest, he pursues his phantom of wealth and worldly success, often with all scruples against violating the spirit of the eighth commandment, swept away.

Young man of to-day, your perils are not so peculiar after all. Much like them had Joseph, had Moses, and had Daniel, to experience some thousands of years ago. The same noble purpose, and the same aid of the Holy Spirit which gave them such grand victories will suffice you to-day. Your enemies, it may be, are more numerous, and more subtle, but the luxuriant habits and sensual tastes of our day are doubtless less pervading, and have less respectability than had those of ancient Egypt and Babylon. It may be that Daniel, and Moses, and Joseph, would smile if they saw our estimate of the perils of this age in comparison with those which they so triumphantly met. The maintenance of virtue, they might say, in this favored age is child's play, compared with what it was in theirs. And they call upon you, young men of to-day, with your countless aids from the powerful sympathy of the good,—which they alone among idolaters, knew nothing of, to show something of their courage; to refuse to do what is a "great wickedness and sin against God," to "choose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; and to esteem the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; having respect unto the recompense of reward." They call upon you to put your trust in a prayer-hearing God. They hold before you models of true greatness; instances of unmatched worldly success, reached by a course of lofty adherence to principle. They tell you in effect that no temptation has overtaken you, but such as is common to man; that God is faithful and will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able, and will with the temptation, also make a way to escape, that you may be able to bear it.

You are confronted with temptation, for the trial of your strength, for the training of your virtue, for the development of moral courage and the addition to your character of the sublime quality of patience, the keystone in the arch, the rare fruit of this world of strife and probation. Our life and death struggles with sensuality, with villany, with doubt are needed to discipline such a soul as ours, and to reveal to us its true greatness. Lower creatures may safely succumb; man, immortal man, by yielding sinks lower than they.

Life is not an idle ore,
But iron dug from central gloom,
And heated hot with burning fears,
And dipt in baths of hissing tears,
And battered with the shocks of doom
To shape and use.

Young man! Is there any iron of truth and duty in your nature, or are you only dross? The fire through which you must pass will prove it. Show that you are something, and that something can be made of you, while the agencies of corruption seek to reduce you to naught.

JOINT COMMITTEE ON RE-UNION.

The meetings of these Committees, held in this city during four days of last week, were of the utmost importance and had the most happy results. Nearly all the members on both sides were present, and these large bodies applied themselves most earnestly and prayerfully to the work before them. The plan of last year having been found in some respects unacceptable to a large number of the Presbyteries of the other branch, it became necessary to consider some modifications, which very naturally led to serious discussions and to grave doubts of the result. Yet there was not the slightest diminution of cordiality between the negotiating bodies, and finally, with not a little surprise and joy, conclusions were reached as to the necessary modifications of the plan, which commanded the unanimous vote of the whole Committee, and which, it was hoped, would prove acceptable to the entire Church in both its branches.

It is not considered quite respectful to the forthcoming General Assemblies to whom the report of the Committee will be made, to spread their action at this early day before the public. We can only assure our readers that the distinguished and decided friends of our branch on this Committee were entirely content with the results reached, and voted for them with all their hearts, as did the brethren of the other branch. For ourselves, we believe a union founded upon these articles, and maintained in their spirit, would be likely to prove permanent, happy and promotive of the glory of God and the welfare of men. We have not seen the articles as amended, and can-

not speak finally of their character, and tendencies, but we give our impressions as they arose in conversation with several members of the Committee, and believe they will turn out to be correct.

The stay of the Committee among us was not devoted altogether to business, but was mingled with social entertainments of the most agreeable character. Nothing could have been more delightful than the evening devoted to religious exercises and social festivities at the dwelling of Matthew Newkirk, Esq., who, though poor in health, would not permit the opportunity of demonstrating his deep interest in the members of the Committee and their work to pass unimproved. His princely mansion was thronged on Friday evening with representative men of several branches of the Presbyterian Church, including most of the members of the Committee, and everything was done by the host and his son to contribute to the happiness of the guests. Besides other and more usual modes of entertainment, lavishly provided, the services of Philip Phillips, the eminent vocalist, had been secured. An unusually happy glow spread through the company as it became generally known that the principal work of the Committee was satisfactorily accomplished, and the company parted, feeling that they had well concluded a day likely to prove memorable in the Presbyterian Church.

ITALY—HELP NEEDED.

At present there is scarcely any portion of the globe, the religious condition of which affords more occasion for anxious solicitude, than that of the kingdom of Italy. The government itself is far enough from being settled upon its foundations, and its very stability, as well as its moral influence in Southern Europe, to say nothing of its bearing upon the future of the Papacy, seems to depend largely upon whether that beautiful land goes back into the hands of the priesthood, or takes the leap to the other extreme of utter godlessness, or, on the passage now going on from the former to the latter, is maintained by a sound and spiritual evangelism; and brought into place as one of the kingdoms of our Lord Jesus Christ. Estimates, which we presume to have been carefully and judiciously formed, represent three-fourths of the people of Italy as being still Roman Catholics in name, but in heart lost to the faith of that Church. Their baptism and whole religious discipline has so impressed Romanism upon them as a system of life, that a formal separation from it does not follow the revolt of their confidence. Romanism standing to them for Christianity, the passage from the Church to atheism is only too natural, and without a largely increased evangelic aggression, a few years will probably witness there the reproduction, on an alarming scale of magnitude, of the infidelity of old-Alpine Europe. Of the remaining "one-fourth," a fraction consists of ecclesiastics, and the poor-minded, who are wedded to the superstitions of the old religion. Though few in number, this class must and will hold large power with those masses above mentioned, who still abide under Romanism as a mere yoke. Another fraction consists of undisguised infidels, educated and proud men, who summon science and history into the service of atheism; making Romanism to stand for religion, and under that caricature, representing Christianity as despotic and enslaving. As yet, they are but a handful, but for reasons above stated, they are waiting in hope of a great harvest. The evangelical Christian element includes the remaining fractional part. It is made up of the ancient Vaudois churches, and the Christian societies gathered by the British missions, and those of the American and Foreign Christian Union, chiefly the latter.

These evangelical churches and missions now, under God, constitute our whole hope for Italy, and through them Christians of other parts of the world are to meet the impending crisis in that country. Our American Society, noticed above, with two able missionaries from this country, Messrs. Moorehead and Clark, acting as supervisors of the field, are carrying on an energetic system of itinerant work, through Italian evangelists and colporteurs. The most pressing need of the moment seems to be that of talented and educated preachers, Italians rather than foreigners, some for evangelistic work in new fields, and others to abide with the congregations gathered, confirming and building up the positions gained, and making of them central points for further aggressions. Mr. Clark has, for the last two years, carried on a school in Milan, for the training of such men, and some who have gone from it to important localities, are already giving good account of their work. The number of students is limited, and facilities for instruction straitened by the want of means. Young men of promise and piety, just such as are wanted, are, one after

another, put off, because the means do not come forward for giving them bread, or otherwise helping them. Hitherto private individuals have handed in sums, amounting, in the aggregate, to some \$5,000 in aid of the enterprise. There has been a falling off of these sporadic contributions, and just now Mr. Clark has the sad prospect of being compelled, in May, to send back about twenty of these young men to their shops and trades. In the present condition of Italy, no greater calamity could befall it than the diminishing of its evangelical force. American Christians every year lavish thousands, perhaps hundreds of thousands, upon the hotels and pleasure routes of that land; who among them will step forward to forestall this threatened calamity of one of the most promising agencies for the rescue of that charming country from the blight of spiritual death?

"THE FIFTH ACT" in the Tyng drama came off on Saturday morning, March 14th, in the Church of the Transfiguration, New York. The canons require that the admonition be in presence of at least two presbyters, but whether from a taste for "the histrionic," or a desire to humiliate the offender, Bishop Potter administered it in a densely crowded church, where policemen were "needed to keep order." The admonition which might have been in twenty words, would fill several columns of our paper, and was read to the offender when he had taken the place assigned him after morning prayers, and was as severe—while disclaiming severity—as its author (or authors) could make it. An attempt on the part of Dr. S. H. Tyng Sr., one of the counsels for the defence, to read a protest was choked off by means of "our beautiful liturgy." The bishop received the document after the benediction.

In this paper Dr. Tyng protests against the whole proceeding, from its commencement to its conclusion, as

"False in its allegations, unjust in its principle, uncanonical in its form, illegal in its transaction, iniquitous in its purpose, and voluntarily and persistently perverting in its spirit, process and development." Hence he "appeals to the supreme and final decision of the General Convention, and with the deepest humility, but with confidence unfeigned to the judgment seat of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the one Great Head and Ruler of His Church, and whose approval can never be given to the persecution of the innocent or to the oppression of the weak."

THE HUBBARD-WESTERLY CASE.—Bishop Clark, of Rhode Island seems disposed to be wise about the matter of the recent exchange of pulpits in his diocese, instituting no proceedings, and contenting himself with the issue of a Pastoral letter, which applies to the case without mentioning it. The usual canons are cited, but no mention is made of the historical fact that they were levelled against deposed ministers of the Episcopal Church, such as Ammi Rogers, who traversed the country forty years ago, preaching wherever he could crowd himself upon a congregation. The Bishop argues their importance and force from the care with which they have been instituted—from the fact that their violation involves a breach of contract for specific service—from the danger of leaving to every individual clergyman the guardianship of his own pulpit—from the liability to incursions into Episcopal pulpits of unlearned men—and finally, from the fact that kindly relations with other denominations of Christians are neither dependant on pulpit interchanges, nor promoted by them.—Exchange.

DR. ANDERSON'S IDEAL OF PRESBYTERIANISM.—The *Congregationalist and Recorder*, commenting on the letters from two Andover students in regard to Dr. Anderson's lectures in Andover, says:

"If the quotations which the [*American Presbyterian*] makes from the letter of one of the Andover students, in proof the distinctive Congregationalism of Dr. Anderson's lectures, are genuine, we hope that those young gentlemen will live, and live at Andover, long enough to learn what Congregationalism, as a distinctive system, is."

We may just remark, (1) That we are not in the habit of forging or publishing forged documents. (2) That the question is not so much "What Congregationalism, as a distinctive system, is," as "What is Presbyterianism?" (3) That we hope that both the editor of the *Congregationalist* and Dr. Anderson may live long enough to find out a satisfactory answer to this last question. Dr. Anderson, as if to come to our rescue against those who had charged us with misrepresenting him, publishes his views on this last point, at great length, in the *Evangelist* of last week. We quote what seems to us to form the gist of it:

"If a mission church be governed by presbyters chosen for the purpose, it is Presbyterian; if by the general vote, it is Congregational."

Though independent of all other churches [?], yet if governed by presbyters, it is still Presbyterian.

And this, we must suppose, is what the advocates and champions of the policy of the A. B. C. F. M. mean when they speak of "Presbyterian Mission churches."

AFFAIRS AT THE CAPITAL.

Another step was taken in the impeachment trial last Friday,—the President then appearing before the Senate by his council. He came to ask for forty days in which to prepare his answer to the charges; he got ten.

The dilatory tactics employed by the President indicate his sense of weakness and his selfish determination. He seems to rest his case solely on his ability to prolong the trial. He commences by asking for forty days—forty days in which with the help of five learned lawyers to make up his mind whether to plead guilty or innocent to the charges made against him! This is his line of defence. Technical forms are the trenchments behind which he hopes to shelter himself for a year, holding each as long as possible, and then retreating to the next. He ought not to be suffered to have his own way. He is entitled to full and fair hearing, but the Senate has a duty to the country as well as to him, and should promptly and peremptorily refuse every motion to consume time and prevent a decision. The people want peace, and they want the confidence that the industries of the nation shall not be wrangled and distracted by the mad freaks of a wilful and reckless Chief Magistrate. Precious time should not be wasted in deference to legal quibbles.

It was a great relief to find the majority of the Senate acting with such unanimity, in favor of fixing an early day for the return of the President's answer. Mr. Staunton had made a decided impression by his bearing and his earnestness in his advocacy of precedents and in his indignant denunciation of "railroad speed" in a case of such gravity. He found Messrs. Bingham and Wilson quite equal to the task of discussing legal subtleties and precedents with him. Both showed themselves clear-headed, self-expression, incisive in their retorts, and ready to cope with any of their opponents. Their replies were calm, dignified and logical. Gen. Butler appeared to fine advantage. He is more at home in the court room than in a legislative assembly. His reply to the specious arguments for delay, were admirable in manner and in substance. To the charge that the trial was to be conducted with railroad speed he replied: "Why not? Railroads have affected every other business in the civilized world; telegraphs have brought together places that were thousands of miles apart—they give the accused the privilege of calling his counsel together instantly, and of bringing him here in hours where not long ago it took months. In every other business we recognize the change, why not in this?" He then retorted with rapidity and clearness the nature of this trial, the position of the accused and his power for evil, and showed that the plea for delay could not be admitted as in ordinary cases, because the accused is the Commander-in-Chief of the army, because he controls the Treasury, the Navy, all our foreign relations, and so can interrupt the business of these departments while the trial is delayed. "But this is not all. The great pulse of the nation beats perturbedly while this strictly constitutional but anomalous proceeding goes on. It pauses fitfully when we pause, and goes forward when we go forward; and the very question of the national prosperity depends upon our actions here and now. I say the very pulse of the nation beats here, and beating fitfully, requires us to still it by bringing the respondent to justice—from which God send him a good deliverance if he so deserve—at the earliest hour consistent with the preservation of his rights." He closed with the hope, "that no man anywhere hereafter may say that the charges upon which we have arraigned Andrew Johnson at this bar are either frivolous, unsubstantial or of none effect; since five gentlemen of the highest respectability, skill, and legal acumen as counsel have told us that the articles of impeachment were so grave and so substantial that it would take them forty days even to write an answer to them."

The impression is very strong here that the President will adopt every expedient to protract the trial, and that failing in these he will attempt to avoid conviction by filing his resignation with the Secretary of State. Some of the Democratic papers are urging this, and with a kind of grim malice, after the New Hampshire election, recommending an appeal to the people. Probably that would be the best thing he could do, but he is not in the way of doing the best thing.

A painful rumor ran through the city Saturday evening that Thad. Stevens was dead. He is very feeble so that such a rumor gains easy credence. He is working with all his strength, sits with the Reconstruction Committee, is carried in his chair from his house to the Capitol every day, watches the progress of Legislation and the impeachment, knowing full well that his work here is nearly ended.

Gen. Thomas telegraphs here of rebel disturbances in Tennessee in aid of the President; rebel Gen. Moseby has been scheming near Washington; but Secretary Stanton is still in office, and General Grant in consultation with him every day, and the little impeachment revolution will not reach any vast proportions.

FENWICK.
Washington, March 16th, 1868.