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ENLARGEMENT OF THE EDITORIAL CORPS.

Among the measures designed to increase the efficiency and attractiveness of our paper at this time, our readers will welcome the new arrangement by which a large and distinguished corps of writers is added to the Editorial Department. As the designation of these brethren has met the cordial approval of the Pastors' Association of this city, they will be known as

THE EDITORIAL COMMITTEE.

Their contributions will be generally accompanied with the initials of the writers. Their names are as follows:—

- Rev. Z. M. Humphrey, D.D., Pastor of Calvary Church.
- Rev. Herrick Johnson, D.D., Pastor of the First Church.
- Rev. Danl. March, D.D., Pastor of Clinton St. Church.
- Rev. Peter Stryker, D.D., Pastor of N. Broad St. Church.
- Rev. George F. Wiswell, D.D., Pastor of Green Hill Church.
- Rev. E. E. Adams, D. D., Prof. in Lincoln University.
- Rev. Samuel W. Duffield, Special Correspondent.

Mr. Robert E. Thompson will continue to act as Editor of the News Department.

Correspondents in every Presbytery and Synod will promptly furnish us with fresh items of news from their respective fields.

SIN AND FOLLY OF DESPAIR.

Those whose lives have been comparatively calm and happy, and who think it was only a figure of speech when David said, "Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy water-spouts, all thy waves and thy billows have gone over me," cannot understand despair or deal with the instances which now and then arise of this feeling. Many, indeed, under the pressure of disappointment and affliction are tempted to despair every day. Few are without seasons of despondency against which the antidotes for despair are available. Almost every season of deep religious interest brings up cases of greater or less anxiety and dejection, but it is only occasionally that the state of the sinner's mind answers the full meaning of the dreadful word DESPAIR. Want of bread, failure of earthly prospects, may, indeed, bring on a feeling of desperation and lead to suicide—one not affected by moral considerations, but it is conscience, enlightened by the Spirit of truth, and armed with her scorpion whip of remorse, that can alone plunge the soul into the depths of real despair. It is her dread prerogative to hold the keys of Doubting Castle. The grim giant comes and goes chiefly at her bidding.

Perhaps most liable to despair is the true Christian who has been suffered to fall into grievous and open sin. The truer his piety, and the better cultivated his moral sense, the more poignant will be his self-reproach, the more overwhelming his sorrow. With that keen insight into the regenerate heart which has made Pilgrim's Progress a masterpiece of spiritual psychology, Bunyan places Doubting Castle with all its horrors close by the Christian's path, and shows that he considers it perfectly practicable for the advanced Christian to fall into the hands of Giant Despair. It is by wandering from the path of duty, by falling into sin, that this happens. It is by following a path that at first diverges, but little from the true one, but which by little and little separates him utterly for the time, from the life, the experience, and the hopes of the Christian. At last he is overtaken, as were Bunyan's pilgrims, by darkness, storm and floods, and plunging deeper and deeper into distress, he finds himself shut up in the dungeon, and actually listening to suggestions of suicide.

"And yet this," says Cheever, commenting on this passage in Bunyan, "this is the man who overcame the Hill Difficulty and pressed through the Valley of the Shadow of Death, and passed so nobly through Vanity Fair. This is the hero of that dread conflict with Apollyon."

Thus the Castle of Despair lies in wait for advanced Christians, while the Slough of Despond is a different trial for those just beginning their course.

But while sin leads to despair as a logical consequence it is as truly sin itself; it is sin made the punishment of sin in the mysterious economy of Providence. It is not God, it is our sinful selves that punish ourselves by despair. The Christian, the penitent, has no right to inflict despair on himself as a punishment. It is but plunging deeper in sin to indulge in despair on account of sin. There is no merit in remorse any more than in hook-swinging. It denies the infinity of God's mercy. It questions the boundless fullness of the Atonement. It meets God's gracious offers of pardon with the bitterness of unbelief. It impeaches with falsehood the yea and amen of Christ to all the promises of God. It gives the redeemed world over again to the malignant sway of Satan. Blessed be God,

this world, though a fallen world; though full of sin, and vice, and crime, and shame, and sorrow, and remorse, and sighs, and tears, and graves and breaking hearts, is not a world of despair, but a REDEEMED WORLD. It is not a world where Satan reigns, but where Christ reigns. It is a world which God continues in existence, just because He has chosen it as the grandest scene of the displays of His grace in the universe. It is the abode of hope. The infant Redeemer was cradled among its hills. The star of Bethlehem has hung in its sky. The sin-stricken need not go about with the arrow of remorse through his vitals to die. Though society may be compelled to disown and to punish him, yet such are the relations of this world under redemption to the infinite nature and universal government of God, that nothing becomes Him better or pleases Him more than the full and free pardon of the chief of sinners.

Minister of Christ! when called to deal with the fallen and the penitent, when you have rebuked sin, as the ambassadors of a holy God, remember how cautious the inspired Apostle was; how ready with forgiveness and comfort, lest such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow.

EDITORIAL LETTER FROM PITTSBURG.

Attracted by the announcement that the great and beautiful building of the famous Third church of Pittsburg was about to be dedicated to its legitimate uses, on the last of the month, we took a "silver palace car" on the Pennsylvania Central Road precisely at 12 o'clock in the bright moonlight of a calm November night. We knew little, after we had pillowed ourselves among the comfortable and even luxurious arrangements for sleeping, (which we were told were then in use for the first time,) except as in sweeping around those absurd curves in the earlier part of the journey, the cars surged and careened uncomfortably from side to side like a ship in a storm, and woke us up wide enough to imagine all sorts of disasters, not the least of which, however, was suffered to occur. As we neared the mountains, we saw patches of snow in every direction; by-and-by the whole surface of the hills was covered with the wintry garments. A heavy white hoar-frost, and a thin coat of ice on every standing surface of water,—all of which we got to see only by scraping the thick coat of frost from our car-windows—made us feel as if we had entered a more northerly zone than that of Philadelphia, which we left in the enjoyment of balmy Fall weather. At Altoona, we got a poor breakfast for a big price, paying just about 4 cents per minute for the time we were at the table, a good part of which was employed in masticating a tough beefsteak. Pittsburg, as we entered it, was in all the glory of fog and smoke and rain above, and black mud, two or three inches thick, below. In fact its particular features never showed to greater advantage. And yet its associations for years have been so pleasant that we looked upon it with kindly eyes, and really imagined that it was not so dingy as it used be, when we knew and cared less than now for its Church and people.

Sabbath morning dawned bright and beautiful, and the day has been throughout one of uncommon brightness and beauty for Pittsburg. Such a day any church might crave for its dedication day. And yet so great are the attractions of the new edifice, that the weather would probably have made little or no difference in the attendance. On previous occasions, as at the Freedmen's meeting on the previous Sunday evening, the members of the congregation who went early, even found themselves anticipated in the occupancy of their pews, and many had to stand through the whole service. So it was thought best to put no notice of the dedication in the papers, in the hope that the congregation might have full opportunity to participate in a service so peculiarly their own. Yet the great church was filled in every part. And it was a happy and remarkable feature of the occasion that every one of the former pastors were present to rejoice with Mr. Noble and his people, and to heighten and hallow the gladness of the present by the memories of the past. For it should be remembered that no instance of separation between this people and their pastors has been preceded or followed by the estrangement of either party, so that all can come together again as dear friends to freshen old memories, and to renew holy ties. There sat upon the platform, at the different services, the present pastor, Rev. J. A. Noble, Rev. D. H. Riddle, D.D., the first pastor, Rev. H. Kendall, D.D., the second pastor, and Rev. Herrick Johnson, D.D., the third pastor; and with them Rev. Henry L. Hitchcock, D.D., of Western Reserve College, Prof. M. W. Jacobus, D.D., of Pittsburg, both of whom had frequently officiated for the church during its vacancies,

Rev. S. M. Sparks of the neighboring church of Minersville; Prof. Cutter of W. R. College, and the writer. There were also present at this gathering of the clergy, Rev. P. S. Davies of Birmingham; Rev. A. H. Williams, D.D., of Glendale; Rev. J. S. Travelli, and Rev. James Allison, D.D. of *The Presbyterian Banner*. As the exterior of the church is somewhat known to our readers, we shall but add a word upon the interior. The body of the church is seated with circular pews, all constructed of black walnut, 152 in number, renting from \$5 to \$25. Over three-fourths of them are taken. The organ is in a semi-circular recess, in black walnut case with highly ornamental pipes. The choir and organ gallery quite fill the recess so that the pulpit is set out in a conspicuous position upon the platform. All the wood-work is of the same material, viz. black walnut. The church is lighted from the ceiling, which almost exactly resembles that of North Broad Street church in our city. The effect of the whole interior is in the highest degree good.

The wisdom of the projectors of the church is seen, in nothing so much as in the accommodations for the Sabbath-school and weekly meetings, which are amply provided in the distinct and large building in the rear, architecturally connected with the main building, so as to make but one structure. In the second story of this building there is a room for the infant school, two rooms for Bible classes, one for the Sunday-school, and one for the S. S. library, all separated that with a single exception, they can be thrown into one. On the first floor are the lecture room, pastor's study and ladies' parlor.

After the preliminary service, in which Dr. Hitchcock and Mr. Noble took part, Dr. Riddle announced his text—Ps. 78, 1-7 verses. This text, he said, both justified and required commemorative discourses, such as his dear old flock had kindly asked him to make on this joyous occasion. Joyous, he said, it must be regarded, notwithstanding the many reminiscences of a sad and tender nature it recalled. The speaker then proceeded, in the most deeply interesting and touching manner, to recall the history of the church from those early times of revival in 1828-32, which had so augmented the numbers of the First church as to indicate the expediency of colonizing. The generous policy of Dr. Herron, the pastor of the First church, in urging the movement which led to the formation of the Third church, was warmly recognized by the speaker. The marked Providence of God, which brought about the dedication of Dr. Riddle with this people, was described in an interesting manner. The early history of the church thus formed was one of great spiritual life and prosperity. They enjoyed a continuous gentle revival during the whole of the first year, when 75 persons were added, and in the 35 years of the church's history 1,206 persons have been added, a large proportion by profession. The church was early instructed in the duty and privilege of "consecrating their children in baptism to God," and it is a delightful fact that the Lord has remembered His covenant, and that the children have largely followed in the footsteps of their fathers, very few having strayed away into vice.

Dr. Riddle also spoke of the visit and labors of Rev. James Gallagher among the churches in '34 and '35, when 47 were added on profession each to the First and Third churches; and it was due to history and to the honor of God's name to say distinctly, that the great proportion of those received in both churches continued to adorn their profession by consistent Christian conduct. In 1836 fifty were added, and in 1837, forty-six.

Coming to the times of the division, Dr. Riddle in the clearest manner, yet without heat, unfolded and indicated the noble and disinterested position taken by the Third church and its pastor, who were then so utterly alone, that Dr. Riddle had to join the Third Presbytery of Philadelphia in order to ally himself with our branch of the Church. [We have extracted this part of the sermon, and as there is not space for it now, it will appear next week.]

In 1845, during the great fire of April with which Pittsburg was visited, the edifice of the Third church stood as a wall of protection to the rest of the city, like the miraculous bush, burning, but not consumed, and staying the further progress of the conflagration in that direction. About this time two separate overtures for a return to the Presbytery of Ohio were made to the now prosperous church, the one formal, the other known as the "Fraternal Conference," which, said (Dr. R.) "after discussions not materially aiding fraternal feeling," was like the former, declined. The transfer of one minister and church—the Fifth—to the Ohio Presbytery resulted from this Conference. It is now

the Central church; under the care of Dr. Jacobus. In October, 1863, the structure took fire and burned down. From 1854 to 1857 the growth of the church was unmarked by any peculiar features, but, by this time, it had grown to a recognized position of power and influence in the body to which it belonged.

The well known liberality of the Third church, was described as the result of early training in this direction. Men who now give hundreds and thousands with ease, began by giving their tens when it was much more of an effort. The Third church has been known to give at one time to Home Missions more than the entire surrounding Synod of the Other Branch. As this fact had got into print, Dr. Riddle supposed there was nothing amiss in mentioning it in this connection. He hoped that the liberality of the Third church in the future would be such that no man could find fault with them for thus making "the place of His feet glorious."

Dr. Riddle's connection with the church closed in 1856. Dr. Kendall followed, and remained until 1861. The additions under his ministry were 148. The ministry of Dr. Johnson which closed last year, commenced in 1862, lasting over five years, during which 247 persons were added. Dr. Riddle closed by an eloquent comparison of the Church below to the Church above.

The Dedication Prayer was offered by Rev. Dr. Kendall.

In the evening every sitting and all the aisles in the house were occupied. Dr. Johnson preached from Ezek. 47, 12: "Their waters—they issued out of the Sanctuary." The discourse presented the truth that the Sanctuary is the source of spiritual influence and power, and that in three respects, in the building, in the ordinance, and in the lives of the members. These truths were illustrated in the history of the Third church as well as in their more general bearing. The discourse was simple, earnest and delivered with all the well known effectiveness of the speaker.

The performances of the Choir and the fine Organ were a very great addition to the services, and under these happy and somewhat unusual auspices, the Third church enters we doubt not upon a new and enlarged career of usefulness with its new building and its new and highly acceptable pastor.

One matter among the notices deserves mention. It was announced that pews or sittings would be furnished, on application to the Trustees, and that none need go without, from inability to pay for them; in case of necessity they would be supplied without money and without price. Thus, the poor will not be turned away from the door of this great structure, a fact which will be more to its credit, than any of its architectural adornments, great and tasteful as they are.

THE YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION of this city celebrated their fourteenth Anniversary on Tuesday evening of last week. The exercises, held in the great Academy of Music, were attended by an immense audience, and were in a high degree stirring and spirited. Addresses were delivered by Rev. J. Cotton Smith of the Episcopal Church; Warren Randolph, D. D., of the Baptist Church; Herrick Johnson, D. D., of the Presbyterian Church. It is noticeable what a sense of relief seemed to be experienced by the former speakers in escaping from the confined denominational barriers of their own Churches to the freer Christian atmosphere of the Association. We do not see how such men could breathe, at all, if they could not fly occasionally to such breathing places as are afforded by these Union institutions. To our own people,—we mean the Presbyterians of various names,—who, in this city, are the main financial support of the Association, such things are matters of course.

From the Annual Report prepared by the efficient Secretary, Mr. Thomas Marshall, we make the following extracts:—During the last year seven hundred and two new members have been added to the Association. The present number is as follows: Active members, 1101; associate members, 1284; honorary and sustaining, 355—total, 2740.

Our reading room is open from 9 A. M. to 10 P. M. The tables are furnished with abundant supplies of reading matter, and visitors are at all times supplied with facilities for writing.

The rooms are frequented by strangers seeking employment, advice, sympathy, temporary homes, or transportation to distant cities, and many have gone forth with gladdened hearts from their brief sojourn with us. A committee of the Board of Managers is present every night to welcome strangers and to promote social feeling among members.

Arrangements have been made with the Managers of the House of Industry by which meals and lodging are furnished to the destitute; we have thus supplied during the year two hundred and fifty-nine persons, who otherwise would have suffered from want and exposure. A list of good boarding-houses is accessible to visitors at all times.

The charge of admittance is merely nominal, and many young men avail themselves of the opportunity of improvement in these branches.

During the past year we have added, by donation and purchase, 230 books to our library.

Scientific lectures, free to members, embracing the studies of chemistry, astronomy, geology, metallurgy, anatomy, manufactures, and foreign travel and research, have again been resumed, and will be continued every Friday evening.

The building we have occupied the past three years has become the property of the Association. This property was purchased, by the terms of a lease made in 1855, for \$35,000. A loan on mortgage secured the principal portion of the purchase money. An effort is now in progress to obtain this entire amount, the pledges conditional upon the whole being raised. The aggregate subscription at the present date is over \$20,000. The Treasurer reports receipts during the year at \$16,777, and the expenses \$10,306.13, leaving a balance of \$6,470.91.

A ONE CENT JOURNAL OF THIS CITY, which, in some respects, has deserved well of the public and of the Republican party, quite disconcerts the pleasant hopes of its friends, by flourishing its diminutive cudgel in behalf of John Stuart Mill; defeated for Parliament, in England, on account of the natural objection of the electors to the atheistic leanings of his Positive Philosophy. It publishes in full Mr. Mills' letter declining to answer questions propounded by the voters, upon his religious sentiments, as irrelevant, and adds the following comment and expansion of Mr. Mills' position:

"In America, of all countries, no man should be held accountable, in public life, for his private religious opinions. With them the public has nothing to do whatever. When we begin to mix up religion with politics, we sow the seeds of a terrible harvest. Government is a political organization. It is entirely concerned with this world, and has nothing to do with the next. Religion has properly no part in it."

As the establishment of the leading Democratic organ, which is notoriously opposed to the union of religion and politics, is but a few doors from that from which the above extract emanated, we have thought that perhaps things had got a little mixed; that copy intended for the one paper had fallen by accident into the hands of the composers of the other. At all events we protest against any such underground connection, we will not say with the Democracy, but with the very worst wing of the Democratic party, as is implied in this extract.

A Western correspondent of *The Presbyterian*, has a paragraph in explanation of the numerically low condition of our Church in Iowa. We commend it to our exchanges of the Congregational order, who—*from The Independent*—indulge in periodical lamentations over the disastrous results of the "Plan of Union" as regards their own numbers.

Our New-school brethren were signally unfortunate in their early history in Iowa. Their connection with the American Home Missionary Society, which, previously to '37, had given the united Church no little trouble, proved disastrous to its denominational interests. In '42 or '43, a "missionary band" of twelve Congregational ministers went to Iowa from Andover, under the patronage of that Society. Nearly all of them took charge of New-school churches at important points, and in less than two years took them over to the Congregational body. It was a long time before our New-school brethren recovered from this unchristian blow; if, indeed, they have ever recovered. It is certain, that they have never been able to re-occupy some of the important points that were then lost.

We have always preferred to believe that womanhood involved something essentially characteristic; that woman was tenderer, purer, more refined, made of more exquisite material than man. We have not yet unlearned our Milton:

"For softness she and sweet attractive grace,
For valor he and contemplation formed."

Quite another doctrine is likely to be forced upon us in the new, coarse gospel of Woman's Rights. Away with all the poetic, the romantic, the ohivralous, and the Scriptural ideas of womanhood. Our fair sisters are about to be jostled into nearly every masculine position and relation. Possibly much of this is demanded by the hard necessities of the age. The cry for woman's rights may be but the misinterpreted moan for bread for a respectable livelihood. If so, is not our age a hard one—in iron-ages? Is not a civilization which compels the unsexing of woman and robs life of the charm which it gets from the tenderness and sacredness of its peculiar position, in the decline? Are we not in the midst of an attempted "Revolution" backward, which gives itself out very pompously as a movement in quite another direction?

The Associate Reformed Synod of Kentucky is negotiating for a Union with the [Declaration and Testimony] Synod of Kentucky (Stuart & Robinson's). The matter hangs fire, as the old "Psalmody" snarl cannot be got over.