

The American Presbyterian.

New Series, Vol. 11
John A. Weir 15 July 69

Genesee Evangelist, No. 1181.

Strictly in Advance \$2.50, Otherwise \$3.
Postage 20cts. to be paid where delivered.

PHILADELPHIA, THURSDAY, JANUARY 7, 1869.

Home & Foreign Miss. \$2.00.
Address—1334 Chestnut Street.

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RETROSPECT.

There are few years in which men in all parts of the civilized world, and in all conditions of life, have gone through more powerful excitements from both inward and outward causes than in the one just past. Unusual extremes of heat and of cold, of drought and of moisture have been experienced over vast regions. A winter of uncommon severity and duration has been followed by a summer, or rather by two months, of intolerable heat. England, the land of perpetual mists, simmered and sweltered under the burning rays that shot from cloudless skies and that parched her emerald fields to russet crispness for weeks. Earthquakes of almost unprecedented extent and violence shocked the Southern hemisphere, and the swaying of the ocean's bed almost laid bare the foundations of islands and of continents.

Great political agitations accompanied these physical demonstrations. In our own country, the year has been one of great and perilous tension to our institutions and to the principles of every friend of humanity. We have passed through an impeachment trial, which lasted ninety days—from February to May—and which ended in defeat, mortification and saddest revelation of frailty in honored and trusted men. North and South, for three quarters of the year, we have been fighting a rebellion, which, like a deeply wounded and malignant reptile, still drew its slow length along. Only this year was the rebellion which began in 1860 really defeated; and there was not a campaign in all the four years' war, which held the people in a more strained, heart-thrilling expectation, than the political struggle just closed. Violence, bloodshed, assassination and outrage ran riot in the South. A new rebellion and the repudiation of the National Debt were in the hearts and upon the lips of not a few, and were not obscurely intimated in the platform of a party which sought to sway the national policy. The friends of human rights and of equal justice in the country, passed through an agony of effort and expectation, until the result was declared, and an overwhelming victory announced for the right.

While thus engaged in our own country, we have not been unmindful of the great revolution going forward in the mother country. If the crushing of the slaveholders' rebellion was a remote consequence of the Declaration of Independence, the Reform movement in Great Britain which tends to make representation coextensive with taxation, may also be regarded as the late-born but legitimate child of the doctrines enunciated in that paper. Amid intense excitement and with rioting and violence, the elections for the First Parliament of the Reform have proceeded; and it has been a trying feature of those elections as of ours, that the enfranchised people themselves have been drawn to vote in considerable numbers against the policy that led to their own enfranchisement, and humanity has seemed to wait with suspended breath, until the last wave of popular feeling had left its high-water mark far up on the shore.

In Austria, the government has had to contend with the whole power of the Romish priesthood, in pushing onward its great reforms; but it has not hesitated to maintain its own dignity against the insolence of its former rulers. In Italy, the same or worse insolence has been rebuked by the heavy penalties imposed upon the priestly instigators of the Barletta massacre, ten of the ring-leaders having been sentenced to the galleys for eighteen years, and others for ten, eight, seven, and lesser terms of years, according to the degree of their guilt. France still feels the heavy hand of the despot, but her population shares in the wide-spread excitement and strained uneasiness of the times, conscious of strength and quietly aware of the rising tide which is everywhere overwhelming despotism, and which must soon break in upon France.

The great surprise of the year, and we might say of the half century, has been the bloodless revolution in Spain. The common sentiment which regards gravity and dignity as characteristic of the Spaniard, has been justified in the grandest manner, in this vast and peaceable movement. The leaders have shown so much wisdom and so much good principle, and the people so much self-restraint, that we are encouraged to hope for the best results from the change. It is almost like a dream to look back and see how, on the third of September, we mentioned some new act of intolerance of the Spanish government, as a matter of course; and how, in ten days from that date, the revolution was complete; the most bigoted, most ultramontane, the most abject of European peoples, as was supposed, had sprung in a bound, to

an independent national existence, and to the platform of popular rights. Here, too, the pulse of the people beats hurriedly, and the precise nature of the political result is waited for with painful anxiety.

The year has been one of stir, excitement and progress in the Church. Great revivals took place, extending even to the Universalist communities. In the first four months of the year, something like one thousand revivals and twenty thousand conversions in the various evangelical churches, had been reported, and the statistics of the churches show a very fair measure of increase. The leading denominations have been urgent, as for several years past, to bring their whole force, including the laity and the women into the field, and great gatherings, called Christian Conventions, have been held, for the discussion of plans of work and for provoking unto love and good works, which, with some evils and drawbacks, have been productive of good. Much activity in church-building has prevailed. In our own body, the only branch of benevolence which showed decided improvement over the preceding ecclesiastical year, was that of Church Erection, in which the receipts had arisen from \$19,000, to \$50,000. In Chicago, a Church Extension Commission has been formed among the people of our Church, which aims at a fund of \$100,000. In this city, the Baptists have a commission for similar purposes; and our own laymen are busy at raising \$105,000 for the same object. The Methodists have this year completed one of the handsomest churches in the country, and are engaged upon another in this city, of still richer design and material. In Pittsburg, our own people have just dedicated the costliest structure belonging to the denomination.

On the other hand, the great causes of Church benevolence of a more directly spiritual character have languished for want of means. Our denomination's contributions to the American Board fell off \$2,000, and our Home Missionary collections had but trifling increase. A low estimate, too, was shown, in the amount of contributions of the literary interests of the Church. A zeal for the bricks and stones and timbers of the walls of Zion seems to have eaten up the people. A similar distressing want of funds is felt by the mission enterprises of the M. E., and the Old School, and United, Presbyterian bodies. We all know what a strenuous effort had to be made in the closing months of the fiscal year of the American Board, to raise barely enough to keep it from a retrograde movement. On the other hand, new sources of revenue are being opened. Thus, the children of the church contributed to the O. S. Board of Foreign Missions in the year, over forty-five thousand dollars, nearly one-sixth of the whole amount. And the converts on heathen ground, continue to give proofs of a measure of self- consecration quite extraordinary in comparison with the prevalent Christian standard.

Instances of generous liberality to institutions of learning have not been wanting this year, though less frequent than in former years. Messrs. Wm. E. Dodge and S. F. B. Morse have each subscribed \$10,000 to the Theological Seminary of Yale College. The Crozer Family have continued their benefactions to the Baptist Seminary at Upland. Mr. A. Pardee's offer of \$80,000 more to La Fayette College to make up \$200,000 had been very nearly secured towards the close of the year, Mr. John A. Brown and Mr. Matthew Baird of our city being among the liberal contributors to this result. The Drew M. E. Seminary, endowed with \$250,000 by a famous railroad speculator, was opened this year. Drs. Nelson and Morris were made Professors of Lane Seminary, and Dr. Stille, and Rev. C. P. Krauth, D.D., inaugurated as Provost and Professor in the Collegiate Department of Pennsylvania University. Most important to the interests of education, sound philosophy and evangelical religion in this country is the arrival and installation as President at Princeton College, of Rev. Dr. James McCosh, formerly of Queen's College, Belfast. Should his years be prolonged, the whole land will feel the wholesome leaven of his presence at this seat of learning. An endowment of \$60,000 was raised for his chair.

In a previous article, we spoke of the general drift of Christendom toward a stricter Church conformity and a more rigid doctrinal position; upon this we shall make no additional comment. A glance at the history of our own Church during the year and especially at the negotiations for reunion, shows that we are drifting away from the position of safe liberality and sharing in the same general movement towards doctrinal rigidity. This appears in the indifference with which the defeat of the liberal clause in the platform is received by our press and presbyteries generally, and by the content which is expressed in a plan of reunion, from which all recognition of liberal principles is excluded. It is at present uncertain whether a portion of our Church sufficiently large

to control its action is disposed to acquiesce in such terms; but the drift of sentiment is pretty decidedly in that direction.

In our own Church, Rev. George Duffield, D.D., was gathered to his fathers, like a ripe ear of corn in the fullness of the year, and of his own honored and useful life. And John Marsh, D.D., one of the early apostles of Temperance, closed a long and active life for the good of his fellow men. In the death-roll of the other branch, we read the names of George Junkin, D.D.; P. D. Gilley, D.D., Chairman of that portion of the Joint Committee on Reunion, Joseph H. Jones, D.D., and Matthew Newkirk. The Episcopal Church has lost her Senior Bishop, Hopkins of Vermont; besides Messrs. Parvin and Rising by the calamity on the Ohio River. Among civilians, of the dead, none were more distinguished than Thaddeus Stevens. The Sunday schools and choirs will miss the spiritual composer and indefatigable worker Bradbury. While from our own side, we miss the genial, obliging, and wide-awake publisher, Rodgers. Only God is our dwelling place in all generations.

DR. HENRY COOKE.

This greatest of Irish Protestants has gone to his rest. Born in 1788, in a small farm-house near the North Coast of Ireland, he entered the ministry of the Irish Presbyterian Church at a time when that Church was divided into paltry fragments, despised and persecuted by the dominant Church and the political powers, forced to send her ministers to Scotland for an education, unable to legally consecrate the marriage of her children, and already threatened by the inroads of un-Christian heresy. He has left it more united and powerful than in any other land in which the Presbyterian Church is a power, courted by the Established Church in the hour of her extremity, respected and consulted by the State on all legislative questions in which her interests are concerned, furnished with endowed institutions of learning of high character, orthodox beyond suspicion, and already beginning to assert herself as a power and a name in the land. And to Dr. Cooke, more than to any other one man, these changes are owing.

Graduating at Glasgow, he was successively pastor at Dunoon, Donegore, and Killileagh, (in 1818), before he attracted much attention among his brethren, save as an efficient member of the Synod of Ulster, who had earned the thanks of his brethren by his six years' labor in the preparation of the "Book of Discipline." About a sixth of the ministers of the Synod, including the Clerk, were avowed Arians, while the latitudinarian Synod of Munster, with its Presbytery of Antrim, avowedly held the same opinions, and were in correspondence with the English Arians—those nominal Presbyterians and degenerate descendants of Baxter and Howe. In 1821 an English Arian landed and began to preach his heresies through the Province, and had the ill-luck to come into Mr. Cooke's parish to preach. On the next Sabbath, Mr. Cooke refuted his arguments with his characteristic fervor and power, and "then gathering indignation as he proceeded, he followed him over the province. His chase went through town after town; there was no escape from his restless energy; and whatever might be said of the clergy, the sympathy and the reason of the people went with the brilliant speaker whose zeal consumed him like fire." The baffled apostle of error returned in weariness to England. Cooke was aroused to the emergency, and in the following years, the fight was transferred to the floor of Synod. Tradition still tells how, at the first, the hearts of the faithful trembled as the unequalled orator, Dr. Henry Montgomery, poured forth in the cause of error that brilliant eloquence, which (as Cooke said), "like the snow, beautified, but hid whatever it fell on." But "that young man from Killileagh" was taking notes, and offered to meet him if Father * who "knew the whole Bible by heart," would repeat all the texts of the Bible that bore on the controversy, while he was getting ready. On a tombstone in the adjacent churchyard those "notes" were got ready, and when Cooke rose on the floor of Synod, Montgomery knew that he had met his master. The cold light of rhetorical brilliancy was no match for the intense fire and fervor of an enthusiastic orthodoxy. The fight was renewed in the following years, Cooke taking the lead—at Strabane in 1827, at Cookstown in 1828, and at Lurgan in 1829, when it was resolved that every minister of Synod must sign and accept the Westminster Confession, or forfeit his standing. At a special meeting at Cookstown in the same year, the Arians tabled their Remonstrance and withdrew. Since then their history has been one of decline, dissolution and demoralization. Irish Arianism, crushed by the strong hand of Presbyterian dis-

* The name has escaped us.

cipline, has dwindled into unheard of feebleness.

The year previous Mr. Cooke had been called to the May St. church in Belfast, where he continued pastor for forty years. His intense fervor and logical power as a preacher, his flashing eye, his tall erect form, (justly said to resemble that of our own Albert Barnes,) his solemn, thrilling prayers, drew thousands to his church, and made it a place of pilgrimage to those who had heard of his name in foreign lands. And while life lasted, his power lasted. Jefferson College, Pa., in 1829 had the honor of conferring upon him the degree of D.D., to which the University of Dublin added that of L.L.D., as a reward for his services in fighting the Scottish opponents of State Churches. As a politician, he was intensely Tory, and continued so to the end, inaugurating in 1834 "the Protestant Peace" and proclaiming the bans of matrimony between the Episcopalian and Presbyterian Churches. In 1841 he challenged O'Connell to a debate on the Repeal of the Union, but "Dan" wisely declined. Yet he sided with the Free Church of Scotland at the Disruption, and gave £1,000 from his own purse towards its support. He united with Dr. Edgar and other leading men in the Seceders' Synod, in securing in 1840 that union which has done so much to strengthen the Irish Church, and in those measures of rigid moral discipline which so strengthened her hold on the Scotch-Irish people. He cordially supported the plan of Irish National Education, which the Irish Presbyterians secured from the Government, in spite of the opposition of the Romish and Anglican hierarchies, and which has done so much for all classes of the community. For the past twenty years he was Professor in Belfast College.

Of nothing was he more proud than of his connection with the Scotch Irish of Ulster, and his descent from one of the defenders of Londonderry in 1691. And no man was such a full-length portrait of the Scotch-Irish character, of its intensity and fervor of will and purpose, its firm and conscientious grasp on truth and duty, and (we must add) its consequent liability to mistake obstinacy for firmness and prejudice for conviction. He has left few equals. He has fought a good fight; he has finished his course.

His course in regard to Psalmody was characteristic of the man. In the earlier days of his Arian fight, he made use of Evangelical hymns as a most efficient weapon against Arianism; the Irish adherents of which still sing Rouse's Version without difficulty. Towards the close of his career he became a bitter opponent of all "uninspired compositions," cutting "the Paraphrases" out of his own Psalm-Book and burning them; and sewing them to the covers of the Bible and Psalm Books in his pulpit, so that no temporary occupant of his place could open them and "profane the sanctuary" by "offering strange fire." Yet tradition tells that in his earlier days the hymn "Coronation" was a favorite of his, being read in a broad Antrim accent which amused the people of less Scotch districts of Ireland—

"And croon Him Loard of awl."

SAVED BY HOPE.

The past by itself, has enough in it to crush any one. Its failures, errors, disasters, sins,—its evil conscience make a dreary retrospect. At the best, we are constrained to say, if there is nothing better than there has been, in national, social, personal life, and in the Church, then life is hardly worth living, and the world itself scarcely deserves a prolonged existence. Christ indeed, has died and is risen again; but if the world's past, and if the known past experience of Christians in time were to be the only result of that great event, it would be a stupendous failure. We cannot feel that the degree of progress and national excellence or prosperity yet attained by this people, fulfils the expectations, or justifies the blood and toil of our fathers, or corresponds to the significance of that wonderful series of providences, by which it was first established among men. Only a shallow self-complacency can buoy us up in view of the present and the past in themselves. The very life of our lives, the very oxygen of our mental atmosphere, is in the idea that this is not a final, complete state of being but wholly probationary and preparatory,—that everything good is in the germ and in process of development; that we see good as tendency and not as realized fact; that we are in the thick of a struggle which has world-wide proportions, and unfathomable mysteries in the universe of God, and that the victory of the good is a future event reached only through delay, and seeming disaster and death. Retrospection kills. We are saved by hope. The earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.

The true believer, indeed, may not look with

jaundiced eyes on the past. It is far from wholly evil. But the good in himself and in the world is so rudimentary and imperfect, that it would chill him to his very soul, if he did not view it as part of a still advancing movement, upward—ever upward, and so never in vain, though slow. He is saved from abandoning his work in disgust by hope. It has a future and a great future; its future is its true stage of existence; as much beyond the feeble present, as the glorious fruits of summer are beyond the darkly sprouting seed of early spring. Through many unfavorable changes, and seemingly backward movements, the germ struggles onward to full maturity; almost its entire worth at any stage of its being, lies in its unfulfilled destiny. It is saved by hope.

Thus all that is really good in the past is saved and carried over into the future by hope. We dismiss weariness, disgust and dependency upon the threshold of the New Year, and enter upon it in renewed, enlarged hope. If we have but laid the foundation of a good life in years past, and have seemed to make no progress since, we will not renounce our plans and go into spiritual bankruptcy. Much rather, the little good of our past shall be saved by hope. If we have believed and have still felt burdened by unvanquished sin, we must remember that we are saved by hope; that faith is the substance of things hoped for; we grasp by faith a salvation that is complete only in the future. For what a man seeth why doth he yet hope for? Yet not in sinful idleness do we wait and hope; but with groaning and earnest labor; and inexpressible desire. If we see the world moving slowly and dubiously on the path of true progress, we shall not despond, but drinking at the fountain of energy and joyousness, the assured hope of the manifestation of the sons of God; we are saved from gloom, shamed out of hesitancy and quickened in zeal and devotion in our work. Toiler in the pulpit, in the Sabbath-school, in the family, by the way side, among the heathen, through the press,—weary, disheartened, broken in spirit by the seeming smallness or discouraging quality of the fruits of your labors, remember that no present results whatever can be the final test of their value. Their feebleness and insignificance may belong to their necessary preparatory condition. They may be the handful of corn, the fruit whereof shall shake like Lebanon. Be not weary in well doing; for in due season we shall reap if we faint not.

But be content in beginning the New Year with no hope short of the Christian's. Other hopes may buoy you over shoals and bars in this life, and, in a limited way, may have a saving effect. But hope in the divine promise and purpose saves us forever, and qualifies us to engage in work for immortal and spiritual ends, as certain as they are glorious. While worldly hope hears its knell in the question, What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul? What shall it profit a man though all the rosy cloud-castles of his worldly hopes shall this year be fulfilled, if this year, too, he lose his own soul?

"If the Sunday had not been observed as a day of rest," said Lord Macaulay, "but the axe, the spade, the anvil and the loom had been at work every day during the last three centuries, I have not the smallest doubt that we would have been at this moment a poorer people and a less civilized people than we are." Mr. Bagnall, an extensive iron worker in England, discontinued the use of his blast furnaces on Sunday in 1841. Seven years after he wrote, "We have made a larger quantity of iron than ever, and gone on, in all our six iron works, much more free from accidents and interruption than during any preceding seven years of our lives." We last week published a report of the working of a Sabbath-Keeping Cheese Factory in Ohio, which deserves a place among the standard proofs of the economical bearings of the Sabbath. In this case, a business generally believed to admit of no interruption from one end of the week to the other, was carried on in entire regard of the sanctity of the Sabbath day; and the result was, as good, if not a better article for the market in equal quantity, and certain incidental advantages of a business character, well calculated to open the eyes of the community on the whole subject. We earnestly hope the good deacon and his patrons will be encouraged to give permanence to their experiment.

Henry Ward Beecher's last "kink" is a Sunday lecture on hygiene. A series is being delivered by Dr. Parker, an eminent Brooklyn physician, in the Mission chapel recently erected by Plymouth church, on Sabbath evening. This is understood to be at the personal request of Mr. Beecher.