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WITHOUT NATURAL AFFECTION.

This phrase has reference, in the first place, and almost exclusively, to the relations between man and man. It describes the melancholy and monstrous condition of the soul that is dead to the first and strongest promptings of nature, that is insensible to the sweet influences of kindred and of family, that is even less human than the brute, less natural than the stony rock. Depths of apostasy and of heathen brutality are described by the words, "without natural affection." The man who does not love wife or mother, father or child, is looked upon with horror. The son-in-law that could lift murderous hands against an aged mother-in-law, is regarded as guilty of ungodly crime. It is against nature; natural promptings and instincts—feelings springing from the most sacred ties, are all against such things. All this is beyond question. Yet may we not go a step further? May we not say of the absence of love to God, and love to Christ, that it equally proves the want of natural affection? If it is a dictate of nature to love our kindred, is it not equally so to love God, who made us kin, who set us in families, who endowed us with capacity to love, and who is himself parent of our parents, and in the most intimate sense, Father of us all? And if kindness can strengthen the claims and cement the ties of kindred, and make the want of affection still more unnatural, then what an affront to nature is man's want of affection to the infinitely benevolent God! And what a spectacle is man, what a spectacle is a race of men, that will give their hearts to everything but God!

It is, however, when we think of the love of God in Christ, that want of affection seems most monstrously unnatural. When to all the ties of creation and benefits of Providence is added the transcendent gift of Redemption, how can words be found to describe the marvel of the hardness and coldness of the heart that feels no grateful thrill? When the force of grace is added to the force of nature, it would seem that the most stubborn heart must yield. If it can be said of any affection that it is natural, it must before all be said of love to Christ. If the want of any affection can be called unnatural, it must be the want of love to Christ. It betrays an unfathomable perversity of the affections; it is the darkest psychological phenomenon in our nature; it is the most damning proof of the sinfulness of the heart that it will not, cannot love Jesus. If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, says Paul, let him be Anathema Maranatha! It is utterly inexcusable. It is too monstrous a misuse of his faculties to be treated lightly. Persisted in, it draws down the heaviest curses, for it proceeds from a cursed and warped condition of the affections, which the sinner makes no effort to amend.

And it is just here that the sinner's conscience should be reached by the preacher. Here will be found the point between the armor-plates where the arrow may penetrate. Press home upon your hearer the great sin and enormity of failing to love Him who has died for him. Storm the citadel of his heart by crowding upon him the overwhelming claims of Jesus upon his love. Accuse him of boundless ingratitude, summon the best powers of his nature, and the most primary exercises of his reason to testify to his lamentable want of affection, which of all other places in the world, it should be found most ardent, most characteristic, most absorbing.

TURKEY IN EUROPE.

Although the Cretan insurrection is again declared to be quite suppressed, and with much apparent truth, it seems, in its dying stages, about to rekindle the whole question of the Turkish occupation of Europe, in its continental proportions. Representatives of all the Great Powers of Europe are summoned to a council, which is to avert the calamity of war, by a re-adjustment of the relations of Turkey to Greece, disturbed by the many acts of sympathy of the latter with the insurgent Cretans. Will this council go to the bottom of the matter, and consider the radical question of the continuance of Saracen power upon European and Christian soil, or will they simply try to prolong the centuries-long truce between antagonistic races and religions by some policy of compromise? The latter is most probable.

Certainly, it is a serious and unavoidable question, what right would any number of nations or a single people have to dictate to Turkey the surrender of her magnificent position in Europe, and her withdrawal from the threshold of modern and Christian civilization; her abandonment of the Queen City of the Levant, the Golden

Horn and the keys of the Euxine and the Mediterranean Sea, and her retirement to the savage recesses of Taurus and of Lebanon, to the desert haunts of the sons of Esau and Ishmael? It is a famous saying, that the Turks are only cramped in Europe. It is not much of a gypsy for a nomad settlement surely, which has lasted now more than four centuries; longer twice over than the occupation of Ireland by England; longer than the occupation of America by the races of Europe. It was thirty-nine years after the capture of Constantinople by the Turks, that America was discovered by Columbus. If there are any such things as rights of conquest, and if these can be confirmed by time, they undoubtedly belong to the Turkish Empire in Europe. And while the so-called Christian nations respect each others' far less ancient claims, they will not act towards Turkey on the principle or the want of principle, that no faith is to be kept with unbelievers, or that non-Christian nations have no rights which Christian nations are bound to respect!

It is, indeed, a strong point against the Turks that they have never fused with the people whom they subjugated in Greece. After a rule of four centuries, they remain an entirely distinct people among their subjects; five millions of Mohammedans among eleven millions of Greek Christians, with undying antipathies of race and religion; the false and semi-heathen faith of the conquerors growing effete, while the Christian faith of the subjects is reviving and proving, even under the depressing effects of superstition and formality, its perennial vigor. Add to this every kind of misrule, extortion, and oppression that can arise under a despotic government, administered with oriental selfishness and disregard of the welfare of the people, and with hopeless depths of corruption on the part of every class of officials; a government whose occasional efforts at improvement are made void by the extreme degradation and fanaticism of the great mass of the Turks—a government from which already a whole nation has been detached, and which has extorted scarcely more than a form of submission from some of its greatest European dependencies during the past thirty years, and which owes its existence, in large measure, to the mutual jealousy of the different classes of its impatient subjects and of the Great Powers of Europe.

An uprising and a revolution of the Greeks of European Turkey against such a government would be perfectly justifiable, and would command the sympathies of the entire civilized world. And if Greece chose to take the risks of aiding the revolution, as she has done in Crete, it seems to us that the Great Powers might find it convenient to remember their doctrine of non-intervention, and not rush in to tie the hands of Greece. Rather should they use the opportunity to press still further upon Turkey the claims of modern ideas, to urge the policy of toleration and the work of governmental reform in earnest. France and England especially should assure Turkey that they have spent their last million of treasure, and last drop of blood to save a corrupt, cruel Saracen despotism from the paw of the Northern Bear, or from overthrow and dismemberment by internal dissensions.

NEW YORK EXCISE LAW.

Although so much has been investigated against this Law, its admirable features and results are so many and of such a broadly practical character, that opposition appears to be dying out, and there is a fair chance that it will be allowed to stand. The third annual report of the Board of Excise, covering the year from December 1867, has just appeared, and will go far to confirm and spread the favorable opinions entertained of its working, and to diffuse a wholesome sentiment, both upon the weekly and Sunday liquor traffic.

The Board refers to the early hostility which it excited, and says: "During the past year there has been exhibited much less evidence of this feeling; nearly all litigation has ceased, and a general disposition to observe the law and to promote its proper execution, has taken their place." The only suit instituted against the Board in New York in the year, was by the then Mayor, Hoffman, in order to deprive it of the power of granting licenses, which he contended belonged solely to the Mayor. This suit is still pending, but no proceedings have been taken for some months, and "as the Board annually pays more excise money into the city treasury than had been received during any twenty years prior to the passage of the present Excise Law, and this law has been declared constitutional by the Court of Appeals, it is hardly anticipated that this litigation can seriously prejudice the administration of the law." The suits brought by the Board for violation of the Law are spoken of as "most

laborious and delicate portion of its duties; and yet, out of 457 cases of revocation of licenses, secured by these suits, only a single proceeding for review has ever been taken, and in that case the Board was sustained and a writ of certiorari denied to the complainant; showing the scrupulous care of the Board to avoid anything approaching to injustice in enforcing the law.

There are two results of the Excise Law which are especially remarkable; one of them, we think, has been but inadequately presented to the public. It seems that there has been a diminution by almost one-fourth, of the number of places where liquors are publicly sold in New York and Brooklyn, since the law went into operation. The number at that time was 9,720, and it is now but 7,301. This, in view of the probably great increase of population in the two cities, is truly marvellous. The Board says: "The reduction of the number of places where liquors are sold has been made by rejecting and discouraging the applications, and forfeiting the licenses of those who kept the most objectionable places. In this way, it is believed, a gradual elevation has been commenced in the average character of the licensed houses; and it may not be too much to hope that, before long, it may be manifest that high the pride and the interest of the licensed vendors, that this law are united to limit the number licensed, by opposing licenses to all whose places tend to bring discredit on the common business."

This latter suggestion may possibly help to reconcile some classes of vendors with the operations of the law, but it seems to us about equal in value to the advice so freely tendered to the managers of theatrical and similar amusements to raise the moral character of their shows to the audience.

The Sunday-closing part of the law and its benign and salutary effects upon the people of Empire City are familiar to all. The statistics are incontrovertible and overwhelming. Comparing the arrests of all the Sundays, with those of all the Tuesdays for the first thirteen months of the operation of the law, it appears that they stand as 2,514 to 6,021; and in the 12 months ending the first of last November, they are as 1,998 to 4,777. The difference in favour of the Sundays in two years being a total of nearly six thousand arrests for intoxication, or more than two to one; while in the eight months of 1866, before the law came into operation, the arrests for this cause were 3,516 on the Sundays, and 3,380 on the Tuesdays. Well says the report,

Any one familiar with the scenes of terror and disorder that so often precede such arrests, and with the rabble of children and adults of both sexes that so often follow the police with the noisy inebriate to the station-houses on Sunday, will fully appreciate how much is gained for decency and order on the Sabbath by removing the cause of nearly 6,000 such sad exhibitions in the crowded thoroughfares of two great cities.

In its financial operations, the Board commends itself most decisively to the pockets of the tax-payers, and that is certainly one of its strong points. It brings into the treasury, to be used for specific purposes; and therefore not for the benefit of aldermanic rings, nearly one and a half millions annually, over nine hundred thousand of which was, last year, placed in the sinking fund of New York and Brooklyn. Other sums went to inebriate homes, school funds, &c., and the expenses of the whole year, including an expensive suit in Queen's county, were \$56,857.06, about 4 per cent. In this important respect, New York, if it must be admitted, is the best governed large city in Christendom, and where the still better plan of prohibition cannot be obtained, her Excise Law and the mode of its administration are a model for reformers.

After the above was written, a correspondent in New York sent us a communication on the Excise Law from which we take the concluding paragraphs:

"Yet in the face of such facts, Gov. Hoffman in his Message to the Legislature, says 'the law needlessly violates private rights.' The rights of the liquor dealers, to sell on Sundays, and manufacture more drunkenness, crime, and pauperism on those days than on any others? Private rights? Have none but liquor dealers, and liquor-drinkers' rights? 'It provokes hostility,' continues the Governor, 'because it does so, and because it is administered, harshly by partisan officers.'"

"But the liquor dealers provoke no 'hostility' in violating a law which for months past has so manifestly contributed to give us quiet and orderly Sabbaths, and has so diminished the number of arrests for drunkenness and crime! The liquor dealers are the innocent lambs which never administer anything harshly. Hence the Governor has nothing but sympathy for them, and adds, 'I therefore recommend its repeal. Repeal the law, and turn the tigers loose.'"

"Mr. Creamer, of the Senate, at once seconds the motion of the Governor, by introducing a bill to neutralize the law, and open the liquor shops all hours on week-days except from 10 to 4 A. M., and on Sundays after 2 P. M. In the Assembly Mr. Nachtman and Mr. Hartman introduce similar bills to kill the law, and lift the gates of a flood on which no ark can safely ride."

"The old Governors of the Bay State used to end their Proclamations with, 'God save the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.'"

"Is not a similar petition pertinent, just now for the Commonwealth of New York?"

THE WEEK OF PRAYER.

As usual, the services of the Week of Prayer have enlisted the warm sympathies and the overflowing attendance of Christian people. In some instances the accommodations were too strait for the thronging assemblies. On Wednesday afternoon, the great audience-room of the First Presbyterian Church, on Washington Square, was crowded in every part, the galleries being also well occupied. The pastor, Dr. Herrick Johnson, commenced the services by reading Scriptures bearing upon the topics of the day; Families, Schools and Colleges. He closed with the story of the Syro-Phoenician woman, commending her example to those who sought the conversion of their children, in two respects: 1st, because she made the case of her daughter her own; Have mercy on me, O Lord, Thou Son of David; and 2d, because of her impatience in the face of great discouragement.

The following requests for prayer were read: "A mother requests prayer for the conversion of three sons." "A mother requests the prayers of this congregation for her two sons that they may be brought to Jesus. Please do not forget this request." "Prayer is requested for West Point Military Academy. A mother requests prayer for her son who is there." "A widowed mother earnestly desires the prayers of the people of God, for two unconverted sons, often prayed for, but still far away from Jesus. Her life has nearly reached its close. Oh, pray believingly that she may be able, before she dies, to rejoice in their full salvation."

Dr. Johnson called on Dr. Castle to lead in prayer, remembering those requests. After singing, the meeting was thrown open, when prayers and exhortations, all brief, earnest and highly appropriate followed, not an incident occurring to arrest the steady and rising tide of interest and of devotional fervor to the close. The first prayer was offered by Dr. Mears. Dr. Boardman of the Baptist Church immediately followed with remarks upon our pride in our Common School System for which the State governments, together, appropriated some time ago, forty millions a year. He also dwelt briefly upon the vast amount of time and interest bestowed on an education which was only secular and temporary, with comparatively little attention given to the spiritual training which was alone indispensable before God. "We are hastening said he, to that account where we shall be judged not by treatises of Geometry or Political Economy, but by the Book of books; and he made a stirring appeal for higher and spiritual training. Rev. Dr. Newton of the Church of the Epiphany, spoke of the vast importance of the three objects for which our prayers are asked. The Family, the School and the College. "In our multiplied institutions of learning, he seemed to see so many fountains sending their streams over the land, and we are met today to procure, by prayer, such influences as, like Elisha's salt in the fountains of Jericho, would sweeten and make them healthful in all their wide influence. He closed with an earnest prayer. Mr. Cunningham, of Alexander Presbyterian church, would like to mention a single promise for the encouragement of praying parents: "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground; I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring." (Isa. 44, 3). He also followed with a brief prayer. Rev. Frank L. Robbins said that a great reason why our prayers are not heard is because we do not prove the sincerity of our prayers by our efforts in behalf of their objects. He appealed to parents, and especially to mothers, as those who, by personal efforts with their children, could do most for their salvation, and pressed the question whether those who asked our prayers were thus doing what was needful to secure an answer. Dr. Bomberger got the floor, after several attempts, and spoke of the inward pressure he felt in regard to the infidel tendencies of many of the schools of learning in the Old World and in the New. The reason why the Evangelical Alliance named the topic of the day, might be readily traced to the lamentable defections from the faith of the Universities of Holland, where the Alliance held its last meeting. Dr. B. plead with great fervor for the prayers of God's people on behalf of these institutions and others on the Continent, and in this country, among which he named Harvard. Dr. Johnson here rose, and within two or three minutes of the time of closing, said he had some more requests for prayer, one of which, though not exactly germane to the object of the meeting, was of a sort that should never be overlooked. It was as follows:

"Your prayers are earnestly requested for one, whose mind is in a horror of great darkness, who would gladly believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as his Saviour, but darkness is on his heart. He is the son of Christian parents and the subject of many earnest prayers. Jan. 6th, 1869."

Another request was as follows: "A friend of mine, who is a stranger in this city, and whose friends in Christ, if it is not out of place

I would ask your prayers, with me, for my Sabbath School class, that they might see their sinful hearts and turn to Christ as their Saviour; also for a friend who has become indifferent to religion, that he may give heed to the teaching of Christ, and be early brought into the kingdom."

Rev. Thomas P. Hunt, then, made a prayer of great appropriateness, commencing with thanks that one person had felt a horror of the great darkness, which so many were in, without being sensible or caring for the fact. Alluding to his experience as chaplain in the army during the rebellion, he prayed again for the Military Academy, and the other objects brought before the meeting. As he concluded, Dr. Crowell continued the strain of supplication pleading the promise which had been quoted from Isaiah, and adding a prayer for our children, in the language of the fourth verse, that "they may spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water courses." Thus at the beginning, middle, and end the meeting fastened itself to the word, and at ten minutes after the time, it was dismissed with the benediction, leaving the happy impression of a well-sustained meeting, in which everything harmonized with the main purpose, and no break or jar occurred to lessen its hallowing and encouraging effect; which could not be said of all the services of the week.

HOME MISSIONS.—Dr. Kendall says: "Since the 1st of May last, we have commissioned 100 new missionaries, in addition to the 450 we had the previous year. In the meantime we have sent 7 additional to Minnesota, 11 more to Iowa, 17 to Missouri and Kansas. By this addition a new Synod—the Synod of Kansas—and two new Presbyteries—Humboldt and Smoky Hill—have been formed. We think more churches have been formed since the 1st of May last than during the same time any previous year. The Church Erection Committee have aided to build 31 houses of worship during that time."

Rev. E. B. Sherwood, of Missouri, writes: "Last Sabbath I organized the Union Presbyterian Church at Marysville, Noddaway Co. I remained and labored with the people Monday and Tuesday following. Backsliders were quickened and sinners pricked in their hearts. We have, as a result of two visits, a church of 25 members, three elders ordained, and a society that think they can raise \$400 for a minister, and means that will complete a house of worship next year. Twenty-five more promising persons I have not met with in the West."

Rev. Calvin Clark, of Michigan, writes: "Lawton is a village on the railroad. I visited the place two weeks ago, and found 20 or 25 persons ready to go into a Presbyterian church. Last Sabbath I visited there again. Monday I passed round among the people, and that evening we organized the church, ordained elders, and sat down to the table of our Lord. It was a precious season. Many hearts thrilled with Christian love."

OUR NEW U. S. SENATOR.—A trustworthy correspondent in Huntingdon, Pa., a member of the medical profession, writes us under date of January 6:

"Huntingdon is jubilant in prospect of furnishing the next U. S. Senator; but with no local interest or pride I am no less elated as a Pennsylvanian in the hope of seeing the State represented by an able, consistent and fearless Christian man on that floor, so often disgraced, and where Pennsylvania has for so long a course of years been put to open shame. The Hon. John Scott, if sent to the Senate, will undoubtedly carry with him his Christianity and his contempt of the partisan politics, and will bring no disgrace upon the State; of the church in which he is a ruling elder and Sabbath-school Superintendent."

THE M'CORMICK ENDOWMENT.—Dr. Lord, of the North Western Theological Seminary (O.S.) has published a long and weighty letter in answer to that in which M. J. Cyrus H. M'Cormick refuses to pay over the last \$25,000 of the Seminary Endowment. He shows that the only ground which Mr. M'C. has for dissatisfaction with him is (1.) that he refused to sign a pro-slavery manifesto; (2.) that he wrote an article urging Northern Christians to rally to the support of the Government after the fall of Sumter; and (3.) that he voted for Dr. Spring's resolutions which were passed by the Assembly of 1861. He justly and properly denies Mr. M'Cormick's right to withhold any part of his gift after it had been pledged, and reminds him of the apostolic discipline enforced in the primitive Church, when a certain person and his wife "kept back part of the price."

The First Number of the AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW, Edited by Henry B. Smith and J. M. Sherwood, is on our table. It contains 212 pages, and is perhaps, in all respects the peer of any of the American Theological Quarterlies. Terms \$3.50 in advance.