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### CRIME AND DISASTER.

There certainly have been eras of greater convulsion in nature and of greater dismay among the people than the present. Certainly lawlessness and bloodshed were more rife during the religious wars of the sixteenth century than now. Nothing has occurred in the nineteenth century to parallel the judicial murders of the French Revolution of '93. Secret assassinations by the dagger and by poison were vastly more common in Italy and Spain in by-gone centuries than now. Nevertheless, there is an irrepressible feeling of apprehension arising from the comparative frequency of great crimes in our cities and our country at large, which is deepened by frequent earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, conflagrations on land and water, and other disasters, unusually destructive of precious human lives.

In our own city, we are feeling this with unusual and melancholy force. While three murder trials for recent acts of violence were in progress, two of them cases of the most cold blooded atrocity, a fourth murder has been committed. And a lurid light from immense and destructive conflagrations in the heart of our wholesale and retail districts of trade, has glared again and again in our midnight sky. Some of our noblest and best citizens, ornaments of society, pillars in the Church, stars in the pulpit, or exemplars in the daily walks of life, have been torn from us by one of the most heartrending calamities that has ever befallen the travelling public.

A full share of ordinary disasters meanwhile lend their horrors to all our newspaper columns. And scarcely a breath comes up from the South, that is not laden with some shameful story of wrong or outrage against the freedmen or their friends. It is not now of those bloody encounters between persons regarded as equals,—single combats, or duels,—once so famous, that we read, but of brute force exercised by the stronger against the weaker class, by the more unscrupulous and furious of the disappointed of the rebels against loyal whites and blacks, whose tastes and whose trade are in something else than blood.

Another class of crimes, of which we read more frequently nowadays, are those connected with the fraudulent issue and sale, the ruinous depreciation or false inflation of the value of railroad and other like stocks. Still others are the quite bottomless frauds in the collection of the revenues, particularly those derived from whisky and tobacco. So enormous are these dishonest transactions that they interfere with the financial condition and general welfare of the nation itself, hampering it in its efforts to undo the huge crushing serpent of debt from its own free limbs, and causing the temperate and the thrifty, the yeomen of the country, to groan under a burden not their own, but thrust upon them by the most brazen knavery. And again, a still darker source of crime, is the difficulty of getting convictions; the law's delay, the tardiness of officials, the seeming collusion of detectives and legislative committees with the criminals, the formidable power of bribery, the extraordinary forwardness to pardon and reprieve, especially on the part of the outgoing president, and last and worst of all, the monstrous, perverse, and growing tendency among the people, trained by leading prelates, to sympathize rather with the criminal than with the crime; in short, the whole poisonous, sickly sentimentality, that could rob justice of penalty, would confine criminal courts to mere reformatory proceedings, and would culminate in the abolition of a laqueus, that is capital, punishment for capital crimes.

The failure of our government to make an example in any way of the leaders of lawless and bloody rebellion against the freest of governments, and in the interest of slavery; men who violated honor and bath that they might break into fragments, this fair and almost sacred structure of nationality; men who could commit the highest of crimes against public order and human rights, and wage a war without excuse, and which opened by violence, not one, but hundreds of thousands of graves;—failure to bring to justice a solitary leader in a movement so enormous, which combines, all crimes in one, and swells that one to heaven, must unavoidably demoralize and enfeeble the public conscience, and encourage new growths of crime everywhere.

The Gospel soundly and systematically preached, and truly believed, is the great corrective of such false and suicidal views. The Gospel, fulfilling, not destroying the law; the Gospel, heart-searching, uncompromising, laying its broad claims on the innermost principles of the soul; the Gospel, with its grand central personage coming to magnify the law and to honor its pre-

cepts as inexorable, by suffering; the Gospel, which has a seven-fold woe for the fair-spoken knave and defrauder, and a terrible hell for the Dives and the impenitent; the Gospel which knows nothing of a reformation before the claims of a broken law are adjusted; which says, Add to your faith, virtue; the Gospel alone, in which mercy and truth have met together, and righteousness and peace have kissed each other, can be the tonic of the broken moral constitutions of men, and can spread sentiments so pure, so wholesome, so invigorating, that rascality will feel its doom in the air; will read its sentence in the looks of its own chosen peers in the jury box; will find the road that leads to crime a sheer precipice of quick descent, but painful to retrace; will miss the palatable notoriety and the scarcely disguised sympathy given it by a respectable press, will find fewer hands open for a bribe, and will sink back to the darkness and the infancy to which it belongs.

### MR. HAMMOND AT HOME.

After an absence of more than three years, part spent in the Holy Land and part in labor for Christ in Great Britain and on the Continent, which have been greatly blessed of God, this indefatigable evangelist has returned to his native America, hoping for and much needing a season of recreation. On the very day of his arrival, he was met by a summons to the dying bed of his mother-in-law. Since then he has enlisted with characteristic ardor in his usual work, and we rejoice to add, with the most decisive indications of the presence and concurring power of the Holy Spirit.

After the Week of Prayer, he commenced a series of meetings in Vernon, Ct., his native town, where his father, now 80 years of age, resides. They were very well attended, ministers and people coming in from the adjoining towns, a considerable number of persons being hopefully converted, with a prospect that the work would spread through the county. Rev. Mr. Kendall, pastor of the Congregational church in Vernon, who urged Mr. Hammond to commence the work, most heartily sympathized with the meetings, and is still carrying them on.

Upon the invitation of Drs. Shaw, Campbell and others of Rochester, whose church sessions, by a unanimous vote, have combined in the movement, Mr. Hammond will visit that city, and commence a series of meetings on the 23d of the month. Let the prayers of God's people ascend, that a great blessing may attend them. His invitation, coming from the scene of some of Mr. Hammond's most wonderful earlier labors, when a thousand and one were gathered into the churches, from the Sabbath schools alone, is an indication of the confidence felt in the permanence and soundness of the work.

We learn from leading evangelical papers of England, that the concluding part of Mr. Hammond's labors in that country, especially those in Mr. Spurgeon's tabernacle, were among the most remarkable and successful of the whole. Mr. Spurgeon introduced him to his people in a sermon upon the words, "Do not sin against the child" (Gen. 42, 22), using the following language in the opening:

"I thought it meet, beloved friends, as our friend Mr. Hammond is coming among us to labor for the conversion of the young, that I should as it were, this morning, deliver the preface to his series of services. Perhaps by enlisting the consideration and the affectionate prayers of God's people for the young, I may be doing more to help my friend in his work than it would be possible for me to do by any other means."

After a truly powerful sermon, upon the conversion of children and the duty of the Church, to labor for it, he concluded as follows:

"Will you not, dear friends, this afternoon, pray that Mr. Hammond's words may be powerful among the throng of boys and girls? Will you not, as matter of conscience with everyone here, that at home you will plead with God for a blessing? and during this week will you not maintain a gracious concern of earnest prayer that the benediction may descend like showers of gracious rain upon these young plants? Will you not give us your best help if you see any movements of God's Spirit? Will you not join to cheer and to instruct the newborn converts?"

The same afternoon, Mr. Hammond preached to one of the greatest audiences that ever gathered even in that great tabernacle, numbering from six to eight thousand persons. An inquiry meeting was held at the close, and many were found anxious for their souls. The meetings were continued during the week, the great tabernacle being well filled, night after night. Among the marked features of the meetings, was the singing of Mr. Hammond's hymns with the American tunes, which rolled up as a great anthem from the multitudes of voices, making a sea of sound, and of harmony almost celestial. Among the earnest workers in the inquiry meetings, were Mrs. Bartlett, teacher of the great Bible Class (mentioned in another part of our paper), and very many of Mr. Spurgeon's theological students. The

manifestations of interest were at times well-nigh overpowering. Two-thirds of the whole vast audience would sometimes remain to the inquiry meetings, which, notwithstanding their unprecedented size, we are informed, were as quiet as those with which we were familiar in this city in 1866. We have seen no estimate of the number of conversions, but judging from the results of similar appearances in this country, they must have been very great.

As might have been expected, Satan could not be quiet under such assaults. Not only the openly infidel, sneering press of London, daily and Sunday; but High-Church journals who owed Mr. Spurgeon a grudge, joined in assaults of the bitterest and most virulent type against both Mr. Hammond and Mr. Spurgeon, which were kept up day after day, and re-echoed by the press of the country districts, by a few papers on this side of the water. Mr. Spurgeon felt it necessary to take up the pen in his *Standard and Tribune*, in defence of his course. He stated, in substance, that the accusations of frightening the children, made by these papers, was utterly unfounded; and that whatever difference of opinion might prevail in regard to Mr. Hammond's methods, they had evidently been blessed of God to the children. Mr. Hammond, he said, was a prince of preachers to children. He has his mode of working, and we have ours; and he had as much right to criticize us, as we to criticize him. Of the services recently held in Mr. Spurgeon's Tabernacle, *the Christian World*, Nov. 27th, has said: "It is not only that he was present at most of the meetings himself, and can bear witness as to the great good that was done. One school, with which I am acquainted, had been greatly blessed. Many boys who were incorrigible have been made truly penitent."

**THE HIGH CALLING.**  
By Rev. DANIEL MARCH, D.D.

It is the supreme hour of greatest and exalted joy to man when he first takes in the mighty thought that a call comes to him from heaven, the infinite and everlasting God has a mission for him to undertake, a work for him to perform. Obedience to that call is the beginning of new life in the soul. A divine charge is received, a kingly rank is attained, an immortal crown is secured, when the loving and obedient heart responds to the heavenly call, "Here am I, send me." A weak man is made strong, a timid man is made brave, the irresolute becomes a man of quick and firm decision, when he wakes up to the grand discovery that he is of so much consequence as to receive a commission from the King of Kings, he is the man; and the only man in the world that can do something which the Sovereign of the Universe desires to have done.

And this is the conviction which takes possession of a man when he feels himself called of God to take a divine commission, and fight against all the powers of evil in this world. This is the first and highest act of Christian faith, when a man feels himself to be sought after and chosen, and his work set before him by the Sovereign of all Worlds. You may seek after riches and have success in your search. You may study language and science, and literature, and master them all. You may climb to the high places of power, and look down with proud superiority upon your fellow men. And all such success may give you self-reliance, courage, and increase of power. But nothing can give you so much greatness of soul, such a true and exalted estimate of the dignity of your own work, of the value of your own being, as to feel that you are the servant of the Most High God; you bear a commission from the supreme and eternal King; he has work for you to do, and everything else must give way to that.

This is the high rank and privilege of every Christian of every man, woman and child who obeys the command of Christ, "follow me." Every one who follows Christ, shares with him in the divine work of doing good. Whatever you do in His name to make the world better, you are entitled to believe is done, under a commission as honorable, and as truly divine, as that which sends forth the archangel from the throne of heaven. Whatever you do to explain, to enforce, to adorn, to exemplify the truth, to commend its claims to the minds and consciences of men, you are permitted to believe is work given you in charge by the infinite God. While you are engaged in doing it, you are the honored and commissioned minister of the Most High. If you ever grow weary in well doing, it must be because you forget how great and honorable a thing it is to do anything for God, how exalted a thing it is to be a co-worker with him in filling the world with light and love.

There are some persons holding very humble positions in the world, who, nevertheless, seem to be divinely inspired. You cannot talk with them, you cannot be in their presence without having

a feeling of awe, come over you. And yet you are not afraid of them. You are only afraid to do anything frivolous, or unbecoming, in their presence. They are the very persons you would like to have with you in trouble and affliction. You would turn to them for comfort and sympathy in the dark hours of life. Their persons are sacred in your estimate. You feel safer in their company than with anybody else. And the reason for all this, is the simple fact, that such persons are living for God, doing God's work. You feel that God is with them, in all that they do. There is a touching tenderness, there is a sacred dignity and propriety, a tone, and an expression of purity, about them, which is not of earth and man alone. You feel that the spirit of the Holy One must dwell in their hearts and direct their conduct. And that divine presence within them gives them power over their fellow men.

That is the kind of character that a man acquires by making his life a cheerful and constant compliance with the divine call, "take up thy cross and follow me." Obeying that command, you share with Christ in his divine work of instruction and mercy. You come to feel that he is your daily companion and guide. You live and work under his eye. You are influenced more by his presence than by the presence of your fellow men. In all doubtful courses you decide by your judgment of what will please Him, in your spirit converses with Him familiarly and trustingly. You feel His presence in the crowd as well as in the closet, in the places of toil and business, and recreation, as well as in the sanctuary. You feel that the powers of the unseen world are all around you, and you are constantly lifted up, and ennobled in character by the consciousness of your high citizenship in the kingdom of heaven.

This is the kind of character we shall all do well to cultivate. This is the greatness and power, and serenity of mind which come from accepting our high commission to follow Christ in all the paths of a pure, earnest, benevolent life. Let your spiritual eyes rest on Christ, let your heart be always interested in His work, and the careless observer, who looks at you for a moment, will feel that you see a face he cannot see, you hear a voice he cannot hear; you have a peace he has not known. Your power over men to do them good, will come from the fact that they believe you to be working for God, walking with God, doing what Christ himself would do in your place to bless and save the souls of men.

Prof. Jacobus of Allegheny Seminary has an able and interesting article on the Union Question, in Scotland, in the January number of the *American Presbyterian Review*. The historical notices of the negotiations, in the churches of the Mother Country are valuable; but the pith of the Article is, we presume, the closing part, in which, with no great appearance of sensation, a defence of the Pittsburgh Circular is undertaken, and Reunion on the "Standards pure and simple," among ourselves, is recommended. From the remarks of the writer on the Tenth Article, we are perhaps not mistaken in supposing him willing to surrender it, but the unhappy ambiguity of the expressions leaves us in doubt. Not in the least uncertain, however, are we of what, recognizes Dr. Jacobus as the surrenderer of the Article, if surrendered it must be in this Article, he says, "can be relinquished only because the right of examination needs no such formal assertion." The relinquishment of the Article would not relinquish the right, which it asserts.

As to the liberal clauses of the First Article, the wishes of the writer are distinctly expressed. We advocate the omission of needless clauses in the First Article, &c. (The italics are ours.) The Tenth Article may or may not be omitted; the clauses of the First must go, as a matter of course. And why? "Because all liberty provided therein purports to be within the sphere of the Calvinistic system. And if the plain and honest intention be to adhere to the Calvinistic or Reformed sense of the Confession, what is the sense of claiming an allowance to explain and expound within that sense? For this, if it mean nothing more and nothing too much, means nothing worth expressing in a formal compact. And this is especially advisable, when the whole scope of such clauses would be to amend our Confession." &c.

Is there not a grave inconsistency here? How can clauses which mean so little, if they are adopted, have the effect to amend our Confession?

And is not this the grand error which is going through the whole Old School Church, that what is merely a principle of interpretation proposed in the First Article, is an amendment of the Confession? And what can we intelligently

make of this conflict of ideas, which first represents the clauses as of no effect, and then repudiates them as an amendment? A judicious principle of interpretation can only be viewed and repudiated as an amendment, by those who have a dogmatic interpretation of their own which they wish to establish as exclusive, and which might be judged incorrect or inadequate, if a reasonable rule of interpretation were admitted. They who are sure they are alone right in their understanding of the Confession, do not wish to hear talk of the principles of interpretation. Doubtless, the clear-headed Professor of Allegheny knows what he is about, when speaking of the same thing, he glides so smoothly from "needless clauses," to an amendment of the Confession.

We must take this opportunity earnestly to protest against the use of the phrase, "The Standards pure and simple," in this connection. Dr. Jacobus does not use it in his Article, but it has a wide currency. We regard it as inappropriate and unjust to the work of the Joint Committee, and of a high degree deceiving to the people. Nothing of the sort may have been meant in the beginning, but whenever the phrase is used, there is an impression made, that the Joint Committee proposed something amelioratory of the Standards in their Basis. If they did this anywhere, it was in the Tenth, or Disciplinary, not in the First, or doctrinal clause. They did not touch, they never thought of touching the doctrine of the Confession. The Standards pure and simple are part of their Basis, just as the Holy Scriptures are. And because they simply revived the old fundamental rule of American Presbyterianism, which recognizes the difference between essentials and non-essentials in Calvinism, they cannot, except by figs, be regarded as abandoning or amending the "Standards pure and simple."

**TEMPERANCE REFORM—ENCOURAGING INDICATIONS OF PUBLIC SENTIMENT.**—On an inside page, we give the state of the question between prohibition and license in Massachusetts, showing a decided reaction in favor of the former policy. The trial of the license system has resulted in strengthening the public sentiment in favor of the prohibitory law, and all branches of the Government are on the side of the law, it now looks as if it would be tried under more favorable circumstances than ever, in the Bay State. We are also informed by the reporters that in the coming inauguration festivities at the Capital, the use of wines or liquors is prohibited, and the entertainment will be conducted on temperance principles. In connection too with the Burns' celebration, in New York City, on the 25th, it is announced, that out of compliment to the many ladies who are expected to participate, liquor and tobacco will be dispensed with.

We are glad to see our city courts meeting the late outbreaks of crime by the prompt administration of justice. In the quarter sessions during the last three days of last week, no less than twenty-one convictions were had, for violations of the eighth commandment in various degrees, some of them on two and three bills of indictment, and sentences were pronounced, amounting, in the aggregate, to about thirty years imprisonment. Sentence of death was also pronounced upon Gerald Eaton for the unprovoked murder of Timothy Heenan. Rum as usual was one of the factors in the deed. Judge Pease, in pronouncing sentence said:

"You sought your victim at midnight, and suddenly brought him face to face with death and the solemn realities of eternity. By a remarkable coincidence, in the providence of God, you, too, at the solemn hour of midnight, by the verdict of the jury, were brought face to face with your coming doom. Thus does God visit for transgression, and teach us that as we sow so shall we reap."

The opening sentence of the *Tribune's* criticism of a new operatic piece, performed on the fourth instant, tells the whole story. "Unfortunately for Mr. Bateman's treasury," says the critic, "there is no possible objection to the new opera bouffe on the score of morality." Comment is altogether unnecessary, but the critic deserves to be called to account for failing to utter a solitary word of approval of the moral sense of the piece, in the three-quarters of a column which he takes to describe and expose its inferiority as a work of art. The attempt to construct an operatic piece on correct moral principles, that will, at the same time, prove a pecuniary success, is so hopeless, that respectable critics have not a word of encouragement to give to the author. Is this not the fair inference?

—Mr. Spurgeon has been heard to say: I receive about forty children a year, into my church, and about two persons are excommunicated every year, always adults. I have never had occasion to excommunicate a child.