

# The American Presbyterian.

New Series, Vol. VI, No. 23, 15 July 1869

Genesee Evangelist, No. 1203.

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

PHILADELPHIA, THURSDAY, JUNE 10, 1869.

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

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### PURITY OF SOUL.

To come somewhere near right in the ordinary relations of life is the highest moral aspiration of the great mass of men. If they keep clear of open transgressions, if they do not sink into the slough of filth and drunkenness, if they overreach their neighbor only by methods not reckoned exactly disreputable, they think themselves entitled to a quiet conscience. There are, alas, multitudes of professing Christian people who allow themselves in various degrees of guilty conformity to the world, who yield habitually to the power of covetousness and the love of ease, whose secret living is far below the plainest standard of duty, who seem, almost as truly as the class above described, to fail utterly of understanding the breadth of moral obligation and the extent of the claim made by divine love and divine law upon the soul.

I am jealous over you, says Paul to the Corinthians, for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. By thus crowding into one sentence the three ideas of jealousy, espousal and virginal chastity, he makes a powerful impression of the exalted and delicate nature of Christian obligation. True chastity, and true fidelity in these intimate relations, involve a certain sensitiveness to evil and a shrinking from its remotest approaches. They would be nothing less than completely stainless. The thought of the smallest blemish is intolerable. Indeed the very idea and almost the possibility of unfaithfulness is shut out of the life of the happily married. It is a monster that lies quite beyond their calm and untroubled horizon.

Such, too, is the proper mental state of the renewed soul toward the Saviour. Chaste fidelity is the true type of his experience. He must aim at an inward delicacy of nature. His conscience must be healthfully and keenly alive to every form and degree of sin. He must turn from it as something shocking, polluting, disgraceful, as a stain upon his purity, as a breach of his holiest relations. The chaste soul is intolerant of the least stain. It would rather die than be soiled. Life is not to be weighed against honor and purity and fidelity. Therefore died the martyrs when they might have lived by pronouncing words which, on the lips of their own persecutors, were a mere form. They would not seem to tolerate a stain upon their fidelity to Christ.

Chasteness of soul in our relations to Christ is too little prized, too easily lost, too feebly longed after. How many and deep are the stains upon our bridal robes that should be so white and clean! Conformity to the world, following after its fashions and amusements, seeking its filthy lucre, grovelling for its honors, pampering of self, shrinking from the cross, putting human methods and observances and dependences proudly in place of Christ, indulging in fears and doubts instead of taking Him simply at His word—it is in such ways that our minds, through the subtlety of the serpent are beguiled and corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

And what soul breathes heavenward a perpetual prayer for this chasteness of spirit? Who is filled with inexpressible longings for this great gift which only the Infinite Spirit, whose name is Holy, can bestow upon fallen man? Who sees and feels that the only right view of evil is that which shrinks from it as a deadly pollution and abomination; which holds no parley with it; which is jealous of its least approaches? Who echoes the beatitude of the Saviour as containing the sum of all his hopes: "Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God?"

CENTRAL CHURCH, N. L.—We are pleased to announce that the congregation of "Old Central," have commenced their new enterprise at the north east corner of Franklin and Thompson Sts. It is a source of congratulation that the old building in Coates St. below 4th, is still to continue as a church edifice. The Trustees have sold it to the Zion (German) Reformed church, for about \$18,000. This sale having been effected, ground was broken for the new enterprise about two weeks since; the cellar is now being walled, and the work of building, we trust, will be carried on, without interruption, to completion. The good done by this church in other days, its mastery struggles under adverse circumstances, its necessary change to a new location, all commend it to the Christian liberality of our people, which we hope and believe it will receive.

—Dr. Wm. Adams' eloquent and highly important address to the Old School Assembly will be found in full on our 2d page.

### REMINISCENCES OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The Joint Communion Service on Friday, May 28th, the day after the Reunion report had been adopted in both bodies, has not been remarked upon as it deserves. The vast Brick Church in which the ordinance was observed, has such historic associations; has a pulpit of such honorable repute for Evangelical truth and liberty from early times to this day, is so happily linked to the past through the venerable Dr. Spring, now for fifty-nine years its pastor, that scarcely any other place could have been so appropriate in that branch of the Church. Stained-glass windows and architectural splendor were not needed to give a sacred, sweetness and a holy hush to the very air we breathed. Every part of the great edifice was filled. Fifteen hundred persons, nearly all communicants, scores of them standing, up stairs and down, must have been inside of the walls. Dr. Spring sat, with the two Moderators—Fowler and Jacobus—on the platform. With them were Dr. Shaw of Rochester, Dr. Taylor of Cincinnati, and Dr. Anderson (O. S.) of New Albany. Before them, in the front rank of pews, sat two men, whose white locks were crowns of glory indeed: men walking in the land of Beulah, catching in heart and countenance not a few beams of celestial joy and beauty; but never perhaps in their lives gladder than now, as they unite in services which prove that the old things of their own and their brethren's lives are passing away, and all things becoming new. If they cannot actually set their feet in the promised land, of the Reunited Church, Drs. Spring and Cox and Skinner are now upon the Pisgah which overlooks it.

The services were simple. Among the Elders, eight in number, none could fail to notice the gratified countenance of Robert Carter, whose untiring efforts for Reunion seemed crowned at last, in this feast of love. His pleading, tearful voice, as for the honor of God and the interests of Church and country, he has continued to urge this union upon his brethren, have reminded us of some Evangelical prophet of old, trembling for the ark of God, and saying: "For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth." The address of Dr. Shaw was especially tender, as he recalled the fact that Dr. Spring had not only baptized him, but had also admitted him to the Church. And here it should be said, that while the tenderest sympathies prevailed, there was no attempt to raise the feelings of the Assembly to an unwonted height, in the near and almost certain prospect of Reunion. The great fact underlying all the ceremony, but it had apparently sunk into the central depths of each one's consciousness. That sort of excitement which may be called frothy, was entirely absent. The two Assemblies were meeting thus in Christian affection, not less genuine, because tempered by *σωφροσύνη*, sobriety. And, if a shallow enthusiasm was absent, it was also to be noted; that no one, as at the communion in St. Louis, felt constrained to half-apologize for his presence at the Lord's table with his brethren, as if he feared his standing would be compromised by such an act. Three years have been sufficient not only to banish such language, but, as we believe, to destroy such feelings throughout the entire Church.

And so we held our communion, and felt we were virtually inaugurating a new and great era of our life as a Church around our Lord's table. Blessed place; inestimable privilege; we think there could have been no one who did not feel himself nearer to Jesus than at any season of fraternal communion before. A dove-like peace came down upon the congregation. The envy and the vexation between Judah and Ephraim had departed. It was a grand Amen to the Saviour's dying prayer. And is not the true Pentecost to follow? Such hopes thrilled us as the hour wore away, and as the tones of the benediction at last fell upon the vast and awed assembly.

### THE REUNION MOVEMENT AS AN EDUCATOR.

Without doubt, these negotiations for Reunion have been pedagogic or educational. At Cincinnati, in 1867, it will be remembered that the Old School Assembly, by a merely respectable majority, sent the basis to their Presbyteries, without a recommendation. In 1868 they sent it, by a large majority, to the Presbyteries, recommending its passage. This action was coupled with a unanimous vote of preference for something else. But in 1869, the opposition was reduced to nine votes. Dr. Atwater, the coadjutor of Dr. Charles Hodge in the *Princeton Review*, whose articles have exceeded in bitterness those of Dr. Hodge, spoke and voted for the measure. Rev. Thomas Laurie, of New

Jersey, seemed to lead the opposition, which woefully missed the splendid array of professorial acumen and dignity of last year. Mr. Laurie had prepared a pamphlet in the interest of high orthodoxy, consisting of extracts from writings of the leading heresiarchs of the New School: Barnes, Beman, Duffield, &c., and from this, as from an armory, he attempted to draw his weapons of attack. But the impatience which had once been manifested on that floor to the defenders of Mr. Barnes, and the summary methods once used to silence them, were now actually turned against his defamers. It was with the utmost difficulty that the young champion of high orthodoxy could get a hearing among its older and once unscrupulous defenders. The Moderator ruled him out of order. Robert Carter told him that all the books he quoted from, but Mr. Barnes' were dead. And actually, but for Senator Drake's appeal for free speech, this assault of New Schoolism would have been put down in the most approved Old School method, by the Old School Assembly. Every succeeding Assembly since 1866, has proved that the rule of such men was steadily passing away in that body. Their power will yet appear in the Presbyterian vote on Union which is to come; but that it can control the vote of one-third of the Presbyteries of the other branch, we cannot believe. It will complete the picture if we add that the only voices for the immediate consummation of Reunion by the Assemblies in New York, without further reference to the Presbyteries, were heard on the floor of the Old School.

### THE CONTAGION OF REUNION.

The Preachers' Association of the M. E. churches of New York and vicinity, one hundred in number, did not let their first meeting pass after the adoption of the basis by the two Assemblies, without uttering their lively sympathy in the movement. These resolutions of congratulation look beyond the mere union of Presbyterians, and express the inspiring sentiment that "the time has fully come when all evangelical Churches, forgetting the sad estrangements of the past, should come nearer together, and, united in heart, aid in maintaining throughout this land, a sound morality, against Sabbath desecration, intemperance, and all other forms of vice, and a pure religion against ritualism and Romanism." One of the speakers in the lively discussion which preceded the unanimous adoption of the address, remarked that he liked the action the Presbyterian Assemblies had taken, in that it would speed the re-union of the Methodist of the land. "Just as," interposed another, "a wedding stirr up all the young people that see it." A most apt illustration of the new tendency which will throbb with irresistible energy through all Christendom, if the existing experiments in Reunion have a happy issue. The word which pronounces these two strong independent Churches ONE, will be heard all over Christendom as a talisman. A breath of conscious unity will stir the dissevered fragments of the Church. "We hope," says the address, "the day is near at hand, when the most friendly relations will be established and maintained between the Presbyterian and Methodist Episcopal Churches." Truly the marvel of the union of Old and New School will, by and by, go clear out of sight, in the greater and later marvel of a courtship between the followers of Arminius and of Calvin.

### GENERAL SYNOD OF THE REFORMED (DUTCH) CHURCH.

This venerable body has been holding its annual session in this city during the last week. A brief sketch of its history and proceedings may not be unacceptable to our readers.

This branch of the Reformed church is from Holland. The first church organized in New York City was of this persuasion, and is now known as the Collegiate Reformed Dutch church. This church was established early in the 17th century, about 240 years ago. The Low Dutch language was used in preaching, until late in the last century. Since that, the English tongue has been employed, except in churches composed of those who have lately emigrated from the mother country. In consequence of the Americanizing element, the name *Dutch* has lately been eliminated from the title of this venerable church. Yet the name will adhere to them, as there is no other way to distinguish them from other branches of the Reformed church.

Call them what we may, we have a great respect and love for this portion of Zion. They are small in number, having less than 500 churches and about that number of ministers. But they have much power. Their ministry are well educated, and the people well indoctrinated. Their form of government is Presbyterian, the only difference between them and us consisting

in their having a limited liturgy, and electing their elders and deacons on the rotatory principle. They are rigid Calvinists, yet preach "free grace" with muchunction, and power, and of late years have exhibited considerable progressiveness, as they have always evinced true spiritual vitality. So closely allied are they to the great Presbyterian church of this country that we look for them to join the family, some day, in organic union. But they are plucky and independent, and even talk of absorbing all the others, which would be very much like Jonah swallowing the whale. One thing is certain, they have drawn more of our ministers into their service than we have obtained from them in return. Perhaps it is thus they intend to accomplish the union.

The meetings of the General Synod, held in the church corner of 7th and Spring Garden streets, have been very interesting. Among other matters of importance which have been discussed are the adoption of a new Hymn and Tune book, and the reconstruction of their Particular synods.

On Saturday last among other delegates who addressed the Synod was the Rev. Dr. Stryker, of the North Broad St. church, who was appointed corresponding delegate to this venerable body by the General Assembly of our Church. His address was brief, and substantially as follows:

Mr. President, fathers and brethren.—I bear you the fraternal congratulations, and affectionate salutations of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian church, lately convened in the church of the Covenant in New York city. We are commonly known as the *New School* branch, but the name is distasteful to us, as the name *Old School* is to our brethren of the other branch. The action taken by the two Assemblies in their late session in relation to organic union is well known to you. We hope the desirable result will soon and satisfactorily be accomplished, and that the terms "*new*" and "*old*" will be forever consigned to the oblivion of the past. Perhaps I may be the last delegate who will address you as a representative from our branch of the church.

Mr. President, it is delightful for a child to return to his old home. However pleasant may be his new relatives, he cannot ignore the old. It is with no common feeling I now stand in this Synod to represent another body of Christians. I cannot forget that for over sixty years my grandfather, whose name I bear, was a minister in this venerable church, that my father, midway between three score and ten and four score years of age, is yet among your pastors in active service, and that for a full score of years it was my privilege to labor with you in the gospel. It is, sir, with tender emotion I now look into your once pleasant face, and recall the fact that as classmates we sat side by side at the feet of those learned Gamaliels, Rev. Drs. Carmon, and Van Vranken and McClelland, all now gone to their rest.

But God in His Providence has called me to another portion of the great Gospel field, and I have learned by experience that there is no essential difference between the body I am now connected with, and that which I left. Our aims, aspirations, hopes—our wishes, prayers, labors—are they not one?

I will not enlarge upon this fruitful and interesting theme. It would be impossible for me, if it were expected, to make a lengthy and elaborate speech. And it is quite unnecessary. The history of our church is too well known to you to need any reference to it, and your record is understood and respected by all intelligent people in our connection.

Permit me to lay upon your table the Minutes of our General Assembly convened in 1868, and an abstract of the minutes of 1869 as reported in the last two issues of the *American Presbyterian*, one of the recognized organs of our church, published in this city. I also present, with them some documents and reports, which will show you we are not destitute of vitality. We claim to be not only evangelical but orthodox, and rejoice that with harmony, and some degree of energy, we are prosecuting the work God has assigned us to do. Impressed with the magnitude of this work, the commission of our Lord, the immense field opening before us, and the signs of the times, we hail the cry for union. We behold the heathen coming to our shores from the East and the West, and believe that as a united Presbyterian church we can better accomplish our duty among the seething masses of our large cities, as well as in the sparsely populated parts of our land. And if we cannot have your body and others of like faith united with us organically, we bless God that there is a spirit of union prevalent, and that the sacramental host in different battalions it may

be, but as one great army led by King Jesus, are moving forward to meet and conquer our common foe.

Dear brethren, the immortal dreamer in his allegory represents his pilgrim in the House called Beautiful after a delightful converse with Discretion, Piety, Prudence and Charity lying down to rest in a chamber looking out towards the sun rising, and called "*Peace*." There his sleep was sweet, and when he awoke he felt he had been "next door to Heaven." It is *peace* with us. I am glad to know it is *peace* with your dear old Reformed church. May this peace ever continue! And finally may you and I and all whom we represent meet in the temple on high, with the Church triumphant, where our peace will be perfect and eternal!

To this address the President of Synod, Rev. Dr. Charles H. Stitt, very feelingly and appropriately replied.

### FROM OUR ROCHESTER CORRESPONDENT.

#### DECORATION DAY.

In this city, Buffalo, and many other places, some persons were so unwise as to adhere to the plan of decorating the soldiers' graves on the Sabbath. Of course, the great body of our Christian people could not participate in the services, as they would have been glad to do on any other day. In Utica they showed more wisdom, and turned out on Saturday. We notice that Rev. Dr. Vermilye and Rev. J. W. Whitfield participated in the exercises; and an address was delivered by that Christian jurist, Hon. W. J. Bacon. We do not believe he would have honored the occasion by his presence, if it had been on Sunday.

#### THE BARRETT BROWNING.

This young Ladies' Literary Society, in connection with Houghton Seminary, at Clinton, had its annual exercises on the evening of the 28th ultimo, which were well attended, and did great credit to all concerned. It is a prosperous Society, in connection with a flourishing and most excellent school. The number of graduates this year is twelve, larger than ever before. The address at the coming Commencement is to be given by Prof. Upson. Of course, it will be a good one.

#### ST. PETER'S CHURCH.

The new church edifice is now so nearly finished, that it is to be occupied to-morrow. The old building was burned in March, 1868, the walls alone left standing. The lecture room has been enlarged, was built first, and has been occupied since January by the Sabbath assembly. It is so constructed that it may be used as a part of the audience room on extra occasions.

The church is very beautifully finished; the organ is one of the largest and finest of Hook's manufacture; and the chime of bells is soon to be restored, larger and better than the old ones. The congregation has shown much spirit and enterprise in thus restoring and improving their house of worship. We hear also that Dr. Crowell, the new pastor, is giving great satisfaction, and every thing promises well. The church still retains its semi-liturgical service.

#### PASTORAL.

We are pained to learn that Rev. Dr. CURTIS, of Elmira, is more unwell again; so much so, that the most eminent medical counsel has advised and commanded entire rest for a season; and he has been compelled to resign his charge, that he may have nothing to do but get well. His warm friends, and their name is legion, will devoutly hope and pray that such relaxation and change may accomplish for him, for his family, and for the church, that most desirable end. Dr. Curtis is a man we cannot well spare; strong, conscientious, judicious; a regular standard-bearer in our church. We know not who can fill the place which he is thus sadly compelled to vacate. But the best medical advisors in New York assure him that he has no organic disease, and may hope to be quite well again after a year or so of complete rest.

—We hear also of the sudden death of the WIFE of Prof. EDWARD NORTH of Hamilton College. She had been ill for months, but was thought to be improving until a few hours before her death. She has left the most undoubted assurance of her preparation for the heavenly country. She died in the peace which the Gospel gives, and many will sympathize deeply with the Professor and his family, in the inestimable loss which they sustain.

—The house of Rev. S. W. Brace of Utica, has been visited by burglars. They seem to have carried off nothing valuable but the good man's pantaloons.

—The appointments for Commencement at Hamilton College, on the 15th of July, are already out. Kirk P. Crandall, of Babcock Hill, takes the valedictory; John C. Fowler of Canastota, the salutatory. The other honors seem to be well distributed. The graduating class numbers forty-eight. Nearly thirty of them are expected to "speak in public on the stage." We hope the day will be cool, and the orations shut. Let the young men reserve a part of their wisdom for subsequent use.

—The Orator before the Alumni, at the coming Commencement, is to be given by Daniel Goodwin, Jr., Esq., of Chicago, class of 1852; the Poem by Rev. Edward Payson Powell, of Adrian, Mich., class of 1853. GENESEE, Rochester, June 5th, 1869.