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THURSDAY, JUNE 17, 1869.

—The numerical results of the revival in Indianapolis, the last scene of Mr. Hammond's labors, are put down by the *N. W. Presbyterian* at 1500 conversions. At Lockport, a place not more than one third the size, it is hoped that one thousand conversions took place.

—Quite extensive arrangements for street preaching are being carried out in our city. As many as half a dozen positions were advertised, on prominent thoroughfares, last Sabbath, but we fear, too little provision was made for gathering up such fruits as might have been produced. Inquirers should invariably be invited for conference, to some neighboring hall or church.

A MERITED COMPLIMENT.—*The Presbyterian* of last week says:

"The speech of the Rev. Dr. William Adams, delegate to our Assembly from the New School Church, was so admirable in thought and style, that we publish it entire. The Editor of *The Evangelist* says that it was submitted to Dr. Adams for correction, and those who will read it, will readily understand why it was received with so much acceptance in our Assembly."

—The U. P. Assembly's action on Reunion, it now appears, was incorrectly stated by one of their own newspaper-organs, from which we drew our information. The report which was adopted, proposes a continuance of the negotiations, but expressed dissatisfaction with the results thus far. Many of the brightest young and old ministers in this body are leaving it, to unite with other Presbyterian bodies, and the membership has diminished *five thousand in a year*. The stiffer forms of Scotch Presbyterianism represented by this body and the Reformed Presbyterian Synods meet with no encouragement, so far as outward prosperity is concerned.

—The *Press*, with the usual keen scent of our dailies for things "lovely and of good report," could find nothing in the recent Class Day exercises of the University so worthy of republication as the "Class History," by a student who confessed that he had been the most frequent and persistent violator of the rules of the institution, and whose "History" was from beginning to end, a tissue of coarse and spiteful abuse of the institution, its Trustees and its Faculty. The farrago—four columns long—was prefaced with a laudatory mention of the Institution, which reminds us of Job's "Is it well with thee, my brother?" as he smote Abner.

—The Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland adjourned Tuesday morning, June 1st. The report of the Committee on Reunion was presented by Dr. Buchanan. It stated that the negotiations were practically concluded, but proposed that there should be a year of delay for prayerful deliberation and fraternal conference preliminary to final action. After keen opposition by Drs. H. Bonar, Begg, Gibson and others, and a debate of thirteen hours, the report was adopted by a vote of 429 to 89. The opposition has therefore fallen off about 25 votes during the year.

—There are in our country a total of six million two hundred thousand members of so-called Evangelical churches, including one hundred thousand Quakers. It is an interesting question, what number of our population may be reckoned as grouped around this actual personal membership in the Christian Church. We think quite enough to justify the application of the terms Christian, Protestant and Evangelical even, to our whole country. If we reckon three persons to each church member, according to the rate of previous reckoning in these columns, we have about nineteen millions of our population indirectly connected with the Evangelical Churches. We are inclined to regard this as too small an estimate. The Roman Catholic population is reckoned at five millions. These two elements make only twenty-four millions, out of an estimated total of thirty-four and a half millions of people. Thus, ten and a half millions of our people would be outside of both Romish and Protestant Evangelical influences. Now, as Universalists, Unitarians, Shakers, Communists, Mormons, and Jews altogether number but about half a million of the population; and as the heathens, Indians, Chinese, and Greek Christians of Alaska do not count a million more, we would have a population absolutely outside of all direct religious influences of every sort, of nine millions. Is not this much too large?

MAN'S SCIENTIFIC ESTIMATE OF HIMSELF.

There was a time, not very long ago either, when the chief speculative hindrance to the Gospel was in the form of philosophic pride. The pulpit kept up a steady warfare against exalted notions of human dignity and self-sufficiency. John Foster, in his *Essay on the Aversion of men of Taste to Evangelical Religion*, speaks of his opponents as believing that "Man is still a very dignified and noble being... holding a proud eminence in the ranks of existence, and (if such a being is adverted to) high in the favor of his Creator." To these men, the chief stumbling-block of the gospel was its humiliating view of man's nature. "The corruption of human nature," says Chalmers, "is perhaps the most offensive doctrine of Christianity to the tasteful admirers of fine sentiment and beautiful morality." Whether man are more reconciled to the doctrine of total depravity now, than formerly, we may regard as extremely doubtful, but it is certain the scientific opponents of Christianity are devoting their highest powers, and their latest scientific acquirements in elaborating theories of man's origin most derogatory to his dignity. The last development of intellect is the negation of intellect, and the crown of man's achievements is to level him with the brute.

To our minds, there is nothing in all the annals of philosophic inquiry sadder, or indeed more appalling, than the latest results of physical science. We do not accuse Darwinism of theoretical atheism, although its practical tendencies are atheistic, but we do accuse it, if we may coin a word, of dehumanism. It seeks to destroy the line of radical demarcation between man and the beast. No miracle of creation brought the mature man, as a wholly unknown creature, into recent existence. By an infinitesimal gradation, he was slowly developed from the brute. He is the legitimate descendant of forms of existence immeasurably inferior to the oyster. He is a brute of a very high degree of development. So is the horse, so is the elephant. Everything distinctive is out-growth from conditions where no distinctions prevailed. Human nature and brute nature are but different points in one great unbroken stream of existence. That stream has been flowing for such countless ages and eras, as are absolutely painful to try to conceive of. Man is but one of the little links in an interminable series of being. Man, with his vast hopes and aspirations; with his triumphs in intellect, in art, in enterprise, in science; with his deep philosophies and psychologies, his genius, his inspirations, his foresight and his reflection, his gospels and worships, his prophets and Messiahs, his Sinais and Calvaries, his sublime fears in death, and his sublimer hopes of the resurrection and eternal life,—man is simply a passing phase of the manifold transformation of the living powers of nature. He is but a fragment of a vast pageant, in which himself and all that has preceded him, may be as nothing to the as yet undeveloped parts of the series.

When Chalmers wrote his *Astronomical Discourses* to kindle and charm wherever the English tongue is known, he had to meet a similar attempt to dwarf humanity on the ground of the immeasurable vastness of the material universe, in which we and our earth are but a mere floating atom. Would that a second Chalmers might arise, with similar eloquence and power, to overwhelm these skillful builders of a world of life and law as vast, as bewildering, and as fatal to man's true dignity, as was the material universe of the unbelieving and undevout astronomer! This advantage he would have: that while the main facts of astronomy were based upon acknowledged physical laws and mathematical principles, the degrading tenets of Darwinism are theories of the most attenuated form; mere experimental guesses of men who, indeed, mind earthly things, and who glory in their shame.

View man from the point of his own moral consciousness. Contemplate him as he is set forth in the gospel; his existence the special, unique act of creation; made in the image of God as no other creature was: the earth and its inhabitants given to him to subdue; his nature, spiritual, immortal, holy, capable of knowing, loving, communing with and serving God; the glory and crown of this lower world. Endowed with freedom of choice, it is part of the very dignity of his nature that it should be liable to fall. He can choose between sin and holiness; and by that he is raised immeasurably above the brute. Heaven and hell, an eternity and infinity of joy or sorrow are before him. He is a subject of moral law and of innate convictions of duty; what he feels are the vibrations within him of infinite justice—of the order of the universe. He sins. He falls. It is a tragedy beheld with awe by angels, principalities and powers.

Nature from her seat,
Sighing through all her works, gave signs of woe
That all was lost.

And see! for man's rescue, the Deity unfolds the deeps of His infinite nature. See fallen, depraved, rebellious man; so highly esteemed as to be made the object of a wonderful divine plan of Redemption, in which the attributes and relations of the triune God are employed; in which infinite wisdom, justice and love unite in such an illustrious combination, that the heavens are filled with the glory and angels, desire to look into it. A God takes the form of man, and suffers, and dies as a sacrificial victim. A church is established, and the Holy Spirit is given, and a Saviour stoops to plead for admission at the door of the sinner's heart. And nature, wounded in every part by man's sin, gathers, up the sighs of all the creatures in her bosom, and waits for the manifestation of the sons of God, when the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God.

The true guardian of the honor of humanity is the blessed Gospel. The scientific spirit which habitually ignores leading truths and vital principles of revelation, may be very daring, very brilliant, and may be accepted as the latest achievement of human culture; but it saps the foundations of all culture, commits a real moral suicide, and says, "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die."

VINDICATION OF COTTON MATHER.

All good men rejoice when a cloud is lifted from some honored name. A large part of the responsibility for the tragedy of the Salem Witchcraft, has long rested upon the name of Cotton Mather, and the imputation has been admitted as an unwelcome but an indisputable piece of history. So it is written down in the pages of the judicious and fair-minded Bancroft. The picturesque features of Mather's presence on horseback, at the execution of the unfortunate minister Bradford, as if it gave éclat to the melancholy occasion, is preserved in these pages; and nobleness, gentleness, learning, and piety, and a grand historical name in the opening scenes of our history has been darkened, as we were all ready to admit, beyond hope of illumination.

And yet it is only the present generation which felt itself constrained, in the fullness of its candor, to hear and heed such a grievous accusation. Only in 1831, was a reputation which had shone untarnished for a century, over-clouded by the industrious and seemingly just assaults of Charles W. Upham; since expanded into the "History of the Salem Witchcraft," and published in 1867. Mr. Bancroft and others followed Mr. Upham, so that there seemed no option to the general reader but to submit, with many a sigh over the sad inconsistencies of the best of men, and over the cruelty into which Puritan austerity could be transformed in the person of one of the most distinguished of its leaders.

But Mr. Upham has found his reviewer, and Cotton Mather his defender, in no less an authority than the *North American Review*. The April number of this Quarterly contains an article devoted to a careful, and as is now believed, thorough and satisfactory re-examination of the whole question. Original documents which have never been properly regarded hitherto, are now brought forward, which go far not only to exonerate the distinguished Puritan divine from any real blame in the matter, but which actually credit him with using his influence to expose and counteract the delusion. Instead of getting up the case of the Goodwin children, as Mr. Upham asserts of Cotton Mather; the reviewer produces a document by the father, John Goodwin, which puts the responsibility upon other shoulders entirely. Cotton Mather's advice was not to hang the victims of what he regarded as demoniacal possession, but by fasting, prayer and patience to exorcise the demon. The plan was successful in this case; the children whose symptoms resembled the spiritualist phenomena of our day, all recovered, and the oldest son, Nathaniel, became administrator of Cotton Mather's estate. The circumstances attending the Salem Witchcraft, which broke out in 1692, owe none of their revolting features to this good man. As in the Goodwin case, in Boston, he proposed prayer and fasting as a remedy, and warned one of the judges, who was his parishioner, against accepting "spiritual testimony." The presence of Mr. Mather on horseback at the execution of the minister Burroughs, is also shown to have no significance, in this connection, whatever.

We do not undertake to say that the defence is put beyond all doubt by these and other important testimonies; but the ordinary reader may comfortably rest in conclusions which accord so well with the analogy of Christian character,

and which have commended themselves to such competent judges. We may add, however, that the poet Longfellow, in the second of his *New England Tragedies*: Giles Corey, agrees very nearly with the Reviewer's estimate of Cotton Mather's character. "In the second scene of the first act, he makes Mather argue gently and yet forcibly with Judge Hawthorne, for caution in receiving testimony, and against excess of zeal, as well as lukewarmness in the cause, inasmuch that the Judge breaks out in an impatient strain, insinuates that he is "parleying with the devil," calls him "a man of books and meditation," while he, the Judge, is "one who acts." To Mary Wollcott, who accuses Giles Corey's wife of bewitching her, Cotton Mather is represented as saying:

Only by prayer and fasting can you drive These Unclean Spirits from you.

In scene 2d, of Act 3d, Mather and Hawthorne again discuss the value of the evidence, and the true line of duty; and the Judge is again represented as clear and determined in an extreme policy, while Mather once more pleads for caution and mercy, and yields at last if he yields at all, with evident reluctance. And the closing passage of the tragedy is Mather's lament over the body of old Giles Corey, who has just been crushed to death; as an obstinate sorcerer. The scene is the Potter's field. Mather replies to Judge Hawthorne's expression of satisfaction:

O sight most horrible! In a land like this,
Spangled with churches Evangelical,
In wrapped in our salvations, must we seek
In mouldering statute books of English courts
Some old forgotten law to do such deeds?
Those who lie buried in the Potter's field
Will rise again, as surely as ourselves
That sleep in honored graves with epitaphs;
And this poor man whom we have made a victim
Henceforth will be counted as a martyr.

THE WELL OF WATER AND THE SHALLOW BROOKS.

Spontaneity, fullness, permanence—these are the characteristics of the best sort of spiritual life. It is not dependent on outward supplies; it does not shrink or swell in any marked coincidence with the degree of spiritual life in the surrounding Church or community; it is not driven only by the hard mechanical force of duty; it does not give out when tests are put upon it, or when there is a special call for work or for endurance. It has secret supplies, which are not affected by changes without. By the secret channels of faith and prayer, it has access to the original and boundless sources of spiritual life. A living faith in a living, present, personal Jesus is its chief characteristic and the guarantee of its independence and its perennial flow.

In the fierce climate of the East, brooks and even good-sized streams are dried up in the summer season;—deceitful brooks, Job called them. At the time when they were most needed, they could not be found. Much like them are the shallow sort of professors, who are full and impetuous and noisy, when religion is popular, and so long as no stress is put upon their professed principles, and while no cross of any weight is to be borne; but who shrink away in shame of the name of Jesus when wordliness rules the day. When they are separated from the familiar scenes and ordinances of their Church, in fact, just when and where the throngs of their fellow-men, sweeping along heedlessly to destruction, most directly need the protest and warning of high-minded, courageous and devoted Christian example.

How different those unfailing wells of water that dot the vales of Palestine; grand in that stream of beneficence which they have dispensed to the thirsty and famishing from age to age! Not dependent upon the outward and varying circumstances of the seasons, they communicate with the waters under the earth,—divinely gathered stores, that are ever ready to bubble up from their cool, fresh caverns, even in the most arid climes and regions. By the side of such a well sat Jesus when parched and weary with his noon-day walk. It was Jacob's well. The name savored of the deepest antiquity already; (although we do not know, in Genesis, of any well dug by Jacob); and even now, nearly two thousand years since, although the excavation is partly filled with rubbish, it sometimes has several feet of water. Well might the divine Teacher take from its centuries of usefulness and refreshment the figure of the true Christian. "The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water, springing up into everlasting life."

Christian! are you among the unfailing, upspringing, life-giving wells of water, drawing your supplies from the smitten Rock—Christ? Are your gracious emotions, your consecrated purposes, your daily developments of character, the bubbling up of the river of the water of life, that proceeds out of the throne of God and of the Lamb? You are approaching a time when

your professions are, perhaps more than at any other in the year, to be put to the test. Recreation too easily steps into dissipation. In your altered circumstances, private devotion is difficult. The Bible is easily neglected. The familiar ordinances of home are far away. The Sabbath is half secularized before we know it. The gay throng is near and pressing. Now is the chance for conquests, for desirable alliances, for shining before the world. Tract, Sabbath School, Prayer-meeting, Public Service, the friendly word of warning, are in danger of being forgotten. Such is the pressure which must come upon you, in your summer wanderings. Meet the test bravely. Be ashamed—not of Jesus—but lest Jesus shall be ashamed of the pitiful shallowness of your profession. Prove that it has reserved forces and hidden supplies, the depth and steadiness of which appear the more decidedly and beneficently as adverse influences the more abound.

THE EFFECTS OF CAPITAL PUNISHMENT.

Just as the just sentence of the law was to be executed on a bad man for the murder of a weak and defenseless woman in our city, *The Independent* held up the "barbarous" capital punishment laws of this State as the cause of so many murder cases appearing on our criminal docket. How it proved the connection no mortal could comprehend or remember. *The Morning Post* of this city has long been well known as maintaining in the abstract the same views as those of *The Independent*—but it stoutly opposed all attempts to save Twitchell from the sentence of the law. Now let us have the impartial *Post's* comment on *The Independent's* theory. In its issue of June 8th it says:

On the 8th day of April last the double execution of Twitchell and Eaton took place. The stern justice of the law was vindicated in a manner which was rare in Pennsylvania. The Governor, in the teeth of a pressure which can hardly be realized, held firmly in the course of duty, and the two murderers met their deserts. We are now at the eighth day of June, a period of just eight weeks since the day of execution, and during that time there has not occurred a single murder in Philadelphia, nor have we seen a single instance of assault and battery with intent to kill. Among our nearly nine hundred thousand citizens, many of them of the worst class of society, there has been a profound peace, an entire absence of the usual deadly broils which had afflicted our city. Such a state of facts is unprecedented. It has never had its rival in our municipality. How wide the difference between the former order of things and that existing to-day is shown by a comparison. The learned and able charge of Judge Brewster to the Grand Jury in the month of April gives data to make a comparison. From his charge we find that during the year 1868 there were one hundred and thirty-three murders, and in 1867 ninety-four. This would make an average number of murders at eleven per month during 1868, or twenty-two every eight weeks.

To whom must the peace-loving citizens of Philadelphia return thanks for this wonderful change? There can be no doubt but that to Governor John W. Geary must be given the credit of having, through his resolution and decision, wrought the beneficent reform. He has proved himself, by the courage and devotion to duty he displayed in executing the two ruffians last April, the true conservator of the public peace, in fact as well as in name. The office of Governor is not only nominally the protector of quietude and the suppressor of lawless violence, but it is so in reality. It is to-day known to the gangs of law-breakers in Philadelphia as well as it is to the good people of our town, that there is a man presiding over the Commonwealth, who will let the law take its course to the extreme penalty, and who can neither be persuaded nor intimidated into acting against his oath and his conscience. The McMullen-Tobin gangs will not, with the certainty of punishment before their eyes, dare to transgress the laws. The Commonwealth's writ to-day runs in every portion of the State, and to all wrong-doers will be dealt out even-handed justice. The fate of Eaton is a lesson which proves that a previously concerted murder, executed in a drunken spree, will not arrest the gallows for the guilty.

Whether murders should recommence to-morrow or not, the truth is the same, that for two months past our city has been free from them, and free through the rigid execution of the law by the executive of the State. From the experience of the past we have the best guarantee that while General Geary continues in his office, the mightiest restraint will continue to check the occurrence of crime in Philadelphia.

Will *The Independent* please copy this?

—Nineteen persons united with Old Pine St. church last Sabbath. During the services the pastor, Rev. R. H. Allen, announced that the church was now entirely out of debt, with between two and three thousand dollars in the treasury as the beginning of a fund to purchase a parsonage, which at a congregational meeting last week they resolved to obtain by November next. At the same meeting they also increased the pastor's salary, and have gone to work with a good will to raise the funds to purchase the parsonage. The pastor leaves this week to make the annual address before the Literary Societies of Hanover College, Ind., and will be absent some six weeks.