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THE BIBLE IN OUR COMMON SCHOOLS.

It is the general conviction of the people of these United States, that the security and happiness which we enjoy as a nation, and the grand success of our experiment in free government thus far, result from the wide diffusion of the Protestant Bible, and the general acceptance of its teachings. It is not believed that colonies emanating from heathen; or infidel, or Romish communities could ever have founded, or built up this great Republic. What Romanists could do in that line is shown in South America, Mexico, and Canada. Only Puritans could have made a New England; only Dutch and Scotch Presbyterians and pious Friends could have founded the Empire and the Keystone States; only their descendants could have given us the teeming West, and developed the marvellous wealth of the placers, the Sierras, and the Rocky Mountains. The four million Roman Catholics, men, women, and children, who have mostly fled from starvation in Popish countries to this Protestant land, may pretend to disbelieve this; the few hundred thousand infidels, who are sitting under this thrifty and comforting growth of deep religious convictions, may attempt to deny its origin, but full thirty millions of Americans today are ready cordially to recognize the Bible and Protestantism as the sources of their greatness, and the breath of their national life. The United States is the victorious embodiment of the true Protestant idea of freedom within the wholesome limits of the divine law. We learned our lessons of liberty, to quote Bancroft, from Luther and Calvin.

The Protestantism of the Bible is, therefore, bound up in the very fibres of our country's being. We are a free people, because our forefathers and ourselves believe God alone to be Lord of the conscience; and we are a law-abiding people, because we acknowledge the authority of the revealed will of God. Infidelity and Romanism strike equally at the foundations of our happiness. No one intelligently attached to our national institutions, can consent to allow the policy of our country to be directed by either. And yet that policy is not intolerant, either of such as would seal up the Bible, or those that would abolish it altogether. It constrains no one to be either Protestant or Christian. And why? Because it is both Protestant and Christian itself. Let it cease to be either, and it will cease to be tolerant of those who are neither. Let it become Papal; where would be its liberties? Let it become unbelieving; who that has read of the French Revolution doubts what would be the result? It bears with the opinions of Papists and unbelievers, simply because it does not yield to them.

And now we have come to the point where we are certainly expected to yield to them. The contest to shut the Bible out of our Public Schools is upon us. No better, no more suitable place for the Bible in America can be found than the common schools. We speak not now of the intrinsic merits or supreme authority of the volume; or of the vast mischief involved in the very idea of education without religion. But as a matter of national self-respect, the first lesson that we should impress upon our children, is the source from which our institutions and our national spirit are derived, and from which our history springs. As a nation, we should undertake to acquaint our children with the Bible and to give the book currency and popularity. Wise statesmanship, looking to the perpetuity of our institutions, should fearlessly and unreservedly commit the nation to the Bible; and how better can this be done than by giving it an established place in the exercises of our public schools? That will bring the entire mass of our youth under the influence of its incomparable morality. Appointed by public authority, if not of the nation, then of the State, it will form, in the mind of the pupil, an indissoluble association between Bible and country. Unless this is done, there will be a vacancy in the training of the young citizen, which no amount of domestic, or Sabbath-school, or denominational instruction in the Bible can supply. Even should our mission schools reach every youth in the land with the Bible, it would be the Church and not the State that was doing it, and the full impression which every young American should have about the Bible would never be made. For it is not the Bible as a religious book we plead for, but as the true manual of the citizen and the State.

It is not forcing our religion upon Romanists and infidels to make Bible-reading a part of the exercises of the schools which their children are likely to attend; Republicanism itself might just as well be charged with forcing it upon them. Republicanism itself is a constant, ever-present, overwhelming testimony to the blessed results of a free Bible, in forming the national character. Shall we be asked to apologize for, or in fact, to abolish our Republican institutions because they

undo, in so many thousands of instances, the teachings of Rome? Will our popish fellow citizens protest against the very breath they draw? Against the very oxygen which makes it life giving, and which puts health in their cheeks and hope into their hearts? Rather let them accept the Bible, in our public schools, as simply one of the many facts, adverse to their own creed, under which they consent to place themselves, and their children, in exchanging their own for a Protestant country.

There are Protestant Christians who are nervously anxious to be consistent and thoroughgoing in their toleration. Mr. Beecher, the *Independent*, the *Tribune*, &c., believe that consistency requires us to withdraw the Bible rather than offend our Romish citizens. But we submit that our inconsistency touches the form and not the reality of our tolerant principle; it saves the reality, while it trenches on the form only. Common sense demands a limit to toleration. It may not go so far as to undermine itself. For the sake of the very parties who demand of us, as a nation, the surrender of the Bible, we must refuse. Besides, there are others who stand ready with further demands upon our Christian and Protestant principles, when the Romanists have got theirs. Behold the robed and mitred priests, we see the Mormons thronging, with their spurious revelations and their chartered libertinism, ready to agitate for the abrogation of the laws on which our domestic institutions are founded; we see the Jews clamoring for the removal of our inconvenient public observance of the first day of the week as a day of rest; and still behind these, we decry an endless procession of Mongolian tribes, with their joss sticks and pagodas, and their whole sphere of thought, world-wide from our ideas of the higher sanctions of law, and the meaning of an oath. Where, in conformity with the demands which such as these might make upon us, in the wide interpretation of the principle of toleration, would be the very essentials of our fabric of civilization? Down what Niagara and into what gulf of chaos shall we plunge, if once we consent to the proposition that we are not a Protestant and Christian nation?

AN EVENT AND ITS LESSONS.

There was a melancholy murder in New York city last week, and a sad development connected with it. A name of distinguished eminence and honor in the world of journalism has been blurred; the lamp of a life once bright, brave, and enterprising in a remarkable degree, has gone out amid the clouds of a sickening domestic tragedy. The man who passed unharmed through war's perils, and survived the barbarities of a rebel imprisonment, who crossed and recrossed the continent in safety, always with a charming tale to tell of his adventures, now falls the victim of a well-grounded jealousy, and leaves his memory to the gossip of the prurient crowd. Astounding mistake! Grievous infatuation of a gifted man! Can it be traced to its source, and can so sad and bitter a fatality enter in any way into the valuable experience of men, particularly young men?

One thing we know; the whole series of events, whose crisis is just reached, began in the theatre. Four years and a half ago a precious life was lost to the nation in a theatre. Two years after that warning, we read that Mr. Richardson frequently escorted Mrs. M'Farland from the theatre where she was an actress. No one need be reminded in this age of the theatre, that its representations familiarize the spectator with every sort of crime and villainy. It is a high school of lust and murder. Does any one wonder that a terrible assassination, and that an actor should be the chief performer in the real tragedy? Need any one be greatly surprised that out of an intimacy with an actress, proposals utterly at war with purity and domestic peace, should arise? Are not such results too disgustingly common to be deemed worthy of remark, or to be dignified by the cracking of pistols and the shedding of blood? We beg to be corrected if we overstate the matter. When that which is performed before the public gaze is so scandalous as to become indelicate, we, at least, expect nothing better behind the scenes. Those who pass their whole lives within the circle of these poisonous influences, and those who become intimate with them, will find it morally impossible to escape personal contamination, or, at the very least, to cherish those exalted views of the domestic tie which are at the foundation of all social peace and welfare. Of the party who is gone we would speak gently. The act which sent him to his account was murder. But, unpardonable as the act was, as a violent and bloody protest against the theatre, its warning should be most thoughtfully heeded. We read that the first stage theatre, built in

Rome, B. C. 155, was pulled down, as injurious to the public morals. The institution has not improved in 2,000 years.

There is a disposition to make of the murdered man a hero, or a martyr. We are getting accustomed to perverse freaks of public sentiment, and even to seeing ministers in good standing sail with and justify the current. But, taking the murdered man's own declaration, written and printed two years ago, when a similar attempt had just been made on his life, by the same person, we are compelled to say, that while he may not have been guilty of technical criminality, he so conducted himself that all the mock heroism and besmirched honor which society ascribes and bestows on such occasions, would more properly go to the murderer than to this victim. An intercepted love-letter ("such a letter as one would naturally write to the woman he expected to marry") from one man to the wife of another; an engagement of marriage with a woman legally the wife of another, and the mother of his children, years before she could be divorced, and whose divorce could be procured only in a remote Western State, are palpable and gross invasions of the sanctity of the holiest of human relations, wrongs which no amount of wrong on the part of the husband to the wife, while she remained his could make right. And ministers who try to palliate or justify such conduct will suffer more from the recoil of their own pleas, than the public whose Christian common sense and strong domestic instincts promptly and indignantly revolt against them.

THE NEWSPAPER REVIVAL—OUR OWN COURSE.

One gratifying result of the Re-union is seen at once in the efforts made to put the newspaper press of the denomination upon a higher footing. It has by no means compared well with that of other denominations, particularly Congregationalists and Baptists, in time past. We know of no Presbyterian journal that can rank with the *Boston Watchman and Reflector* (Baptist), or *The Congregationalist and Recorder*. We might extend the list farther and fare no better. Even the Methodist press of the country, as a whole, is superior to the Presbyterian. It now looks as if Presbyterians were about to take the eminent position in this important branch of service, which their standing in other respects has long demanded. *The Herald and the Presbyterian* of Cincinnati, have consolidated in a most honorable and satisfactory manner, and as we have already noted, and as we every week observe, the united paper is a most decided advance on either of the two alone. The march of improvement has now reached New York city, where *The Evangelist* has long shone with a mild and somewhat dry light. The wick is to be trimmed, and more oil, in the form of money expenditure is to be poured in. A new editor, Rev. C. K. Imbrie, D.D., of Jersey City, formerly of the other branch, makes his salutary in the last paper. Dr. F. F. Ellinwood will keep the readers posted up, and stirred up, too, on the causes of the Church, and Dr. John Hall is promised as a regular contributor. The paper will also be enlarged at the commencement of the year. At Chicago, it is announced that we shall have a paper representing the best elements of the united Church, at the beginning of the year. A happy exchange for *The N. W. Presbyterian*, and an auspicious omen for the whole Church. But nothing more clearly proves the power of this advance movement than the fact that it has stirred our cotemporary, the old *Presbyterian* of this city. That paper announces that it has endeavored to secure the services of Rev. Dr. Cuyler, of Brooklyn, as an editor (without success, however), and that it will endeavor to comply with the demands of the Presbyterian Church, as now constituted, upon the newspaper press. The large constituency of this paper, the influence it has hitherto wielded and probably will continue to wield, make its action among the most important that will be taken by the newspapers of the body. We trust it may be guided by Divine wisdom in its future movements.

As for ourselves, our readers know well that we have always represented the progressive, wide-awake and soundly liberal spirit that is expected, and that is actually beginning, to characterize the new era of Presbyterianism. We give our hearts to the Re-union, because we see in it, as it has finally developed, the overthrow of ultra-conservatism, high-churchism, and hyper-orthodoxy, and the ushering in of an era of youthful vigor, hopefulness, elasticity and sound liberality. Our services, such as they are, we wish to render to the promotion of such a result. A truly evangelical paper is needed, which shall cherish the best traditions of our great national conflict; which shall utter no un-

certain sound on the great public questions of the day, which involve high moral considerations; which shall not be afraid of free discussion on matters in which brethren differ; which shall be prejudiced against nothing new because it is new, or in favor of nothing old because it is old; which shall give a wholesome moral impulse to every circle where it is known.

We ask our friends everywhere to aid us, by efforts common at this season of the year especially, in holding up the new standard of Presbyterianism—not an iron pillar, but a banner for the truth. Let us pledge one another to do a great deal more for the interests represented by this paper, in the Re-union than out of it, and let us see such lists of new subscribers as have not yet rallied to our columns. Let your prayers come with your names, that the power of God, the Spirit of truth and the treasures of the Gospel may shine in every issue of the paper, in the coming year.

GROWTH SINCE THE DIVISION.

In 1837 the Presbyterian Church in the United States comprised twenty-three Synods, one hundred and thirty-five Presbyteries, 2,140 ministers, 2,865 churches, and 220,557 communicants. The statistics of the reunited Church show fifty-one Synods, two hundred and fifty-six Presbyteries, 4,371 churches, 4,229 ministers, and 431,563 members. Add to the figures the statistics of the Southern Church, and we have a total of 33 Synods, 304 Presbyteries, over 5,000 ministers, 5,700 churches, and 520,000 members. There has, therefore, been a growth of one hundred and twenty-five per cent. in membership in thirty-two years, the growth in other respects being proportionate. The population of the country at the time of the division was somewhat less than sixteen millions. Last spring, when these statistics of the Churches were fresh, the population was probably forty millions. This cannot, however, be even approximately ascertained until the census for 1870 appears. It points, however, to a rate of growth in the population exceeding by twenty-five per cent. the growth of Presbyterianism in these branches. In other words, its united strength, North and South, should be forty thousand greater than it now is, to have kept pace with the growth of the country in the past thirty-two years. A fact worth serious pondering in these days of jubilee.

OXFORD CHURCH.

"THE FEAST OF DEDICATION."

This church will be dedicated to the service of Almighty God, on Sunday next, the 12th inst. The sermon in the morning at 10½ o'clock, will be preached by Rev. Albert Barnes. In the afternoon at 3, there will be addresses by Rev. Drs. Humphrey, Adams, Mears, Stryker, and Wiswell; in the evening at 7½, a sermon by the pastor, Rev. Frank L. Robbins.

SERVICES during the week: Monday night at 7½, sermon by Bishop Simpson; Tuesday night, sermon by Rev. R. S. Storrs, D. D., of Brooklyn; Wednesday night, a grand Sacred Concert; Thursday night at 7½, Sermon by Dr. John Hall, of New York; Friday night, social reunion of the congregation and their friends; tickets \$1. Saturday, at 4, P. M., a Union Prayer meeting, of all denominations in the North-western part of the city. Subject: Prayer for a blessing on our common work in entering upon our winter campaign. Sunday evening at 7½, the 19th, Rev. Dr. Richard Newton will preach a sermon to the children.

OUR ROCHESTER CORRESPONDENT.

HAMILTON COLLEGE.

The Catalogue of Hamilton College has come to hand, a neatly printed pamphlet of forty-two pages. It contains the names of eleven instructors, able and experienced men, and 166 students, 4 in Law, 41 Seniors, 36 Juniors, 46 Sophomores, and 39 Freshmen. There are still two vacancies in the list of its Professors, two good and wise men wanted, one for Intellectual and Moral Science, and one for Natural Philosophy.

There are now sixteen permanent scholarships, of \$1,000 each, the benefit of which may be realized by deserving students. There is also another fund of \$100,000, the interest of which will be annually distributed to needy students of Christian character and good scholarship.

The Catalogue contains the list of degrees conferred and prizes awarded at the last Commencement, also the necrology of the year, together with themes and prizes proposed for 1870. The Catalogue indicates that work is intended. Hamilton College is a poor place for a lazy man.

We have before spoken of the fact, that this College has furnished more ministers than any other we know of, in proportion to the whole number of its graduates. We have recently

learned that of these no less than sixteen have been *Foreign Missionaries*, among whom the names of H. G. O. Dwight, D. D., Sheldon Dibble, H. B. Morgan, A. W. Loomis and Justus Doolittle are conspicuous.

MINISTERS' MEETING.

They maintain a live one in Buffalo. It embraces the Presbyterians, Baptists, Free Will Baptists, and Methodists. They meet at 4 o'clock on Monday afternoon, and adjourn at seven, after taking tea together. At the gathering which we attended last week, brief reports of Sabbath services were first rendered; then a sermon read for criticism; and the remainder of the time was devoted to the discussion of a practical question in which all were deeply interested. It was a delightful meeting, and must be one of great profit to those who participate in its weekly exercises. Sixteen ministers, representing the different denominations named, were present, and the best feeling of love and harmony seemed to prevail.

CHRISTIAN CONVENTIONS.

We remember with much interest the visit of Mr. Moody and Judge Smith, some two years ago, to our city. Much that was said on that occasion was calculated to stir up Christianity to greater activity in the religious life. The words of Mr. Moody especially moved all hearts. Many, we do not doubt, were more encouraged and strengthened by his addresses than they would have been by the same things from the lips of a clergyman, simply because he was a brother layman.

We think such conventions do good; and we know several laymen in our own State quite competent, in our estimation, to conduct them.

Such meetings might be particularly helpful to young Christians. The voice of strangers might arrest their attention. Suggestions, from those of ripe experience in Christian usefulness, might help them to avoid mistakes, and go to work successfully for the Master. We know that pastors would sometimes welcome such help. If any, in some of our larger villages, desire to make arrangements for such meetings, we can put them in communication with some able and admirable brethren, who would take pleasure in aiding them.

THE BIBLE IN SCHOOLS.

Rev. Dr. Niles, of Corning, preached an earnest, practical sermon upon the above subject, on the 28th ult., in the First Presbyterian church of Elmira, which is published entire in the *Elmira Advertiser*. Dr. Campbell preached upon the same subject in his own pulpit, in our city, at the same time. Both take the ground that the removal of the Bible from the schools, while it would be a great injury in many ways, would not at all satisfy Catholics. What they want is not so much the removal of the Bible as the destruction of the schools. Surely we cannot allow our common schools to be broken down. We have seen too much of their benefits to give them up, and go back where Spain and Italy have so long been with church schools alone.

CALLS, &c.

Rev. Charles H. Taylor is called to the Presbyterian church of Le Roy. He accepts, and is to enter at once upon his charge.

Rev. R. E. Willson, late of Clyde, is invited to take charge of the Presbyterian church at Havana. We think he will accept the invitation. Dr. Lord, of Buffalo, has been preaching a series of Sunday evening services to his people on the coming of Christ. Dr. Clarke has been reviewing Lecky on Rationalism. Dr. Chester is supplying the Presbyterian church of Batavia.

Rev. E. P. Hammond and wife were in our city last week, on their way to Cincinnati. They stopped to hold a meeting one evening in Lockport, coming around this way for that express purpose, by grateful desire of the people of that city, where his labors last spring were so exceedingly blest. GENESSEE.

Rochester, Dec. 4th, 1869.

—The allusion to the efforts of Rome for the proselytizing of the freedmen, in Dr. Dickey's communication on the next page, reminds us of a discovery made by Mr. Mitchell, Agent of the Home Missionary Committee, and reported to us in Pittsburgh. He was looking about the streets of that city, on a recent Sabbath evening, when his attention was drawn to a building around which a number of colored persons were gathered. On inquiry, he learned that they were assembling for Roman Catholic worship, and on entering the building, he found from one hundred and fifty to two hundred colored persons engaged, with apparent devotion, in the usual services of the Romish Church. Further inquiry may have modified the effect of the first impression, which was certainly startling, and well calculated to disturb the indifference with which we have hitherto regarded the designs of Rome upon the colored people.