

Banner and Advocate.

PITTSBURGH, DECEMBER 27, 1856

TERMS.—\$1.50, in advance or in Clubs, \$1.25 on delivery at residences of Subscribers, \$1.75 Sea Prospectus on Third Page. BENEVOLENCE should be promptly a little while before the year expires, that we may make full arrangements for a steady supply. THIS RED WRAPPER indicates that we desire a renewal. If, however, in the haste of mailing this signal should be omitted, we hope our friends will still not forget us. REMITTANCES.—Send payment by safe hands, when convenient. Or, send by mail, enclosing with ordinary care, and troubling nobody with a knowledge of what you are doing. For a large amount, send a Draft, or large notes. For one or two papers, send Gold or silver notes. TO MAKE CHANGE, Send postage stamps, or better still, send for more papers say \$3 for Seventy numbers, or \$1 for Thirty-three numbers. DIRECT ALL Letters and Communications to REV. DAVID MCKINNEY, Pittsburgh, Pa.

OUR LONDON LETTER has not reached us, the America being disabled by a storm, and obliged to return to England.

TEMPERANCE CONVENTION.—The New York State Temperance Convention at Albany, last week, determined to prosecute their labors for prohibition.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT.—We received, last week, five dollars addition for a Bell at the Mission Station of Rev. Mr. Guthrie. We need a few more such, to complete the amount requisite.

THE WESTERN UNIVERSITY.—This literary Institution, in our city, is increasing in favor and promises great usefulness. The University has met with several reverses; fire especially having been its foe. The Faculty are—President, Dr. McLaren; Professors, Messrs. McDonald Griggs, Grierson, and Danse. The President has been engaged in his work since Oct. 1855, but his formal inauguration had been deferred. It took place last week, with appropriate ceremonies.

THE PRESBYTERIAN QUARTERLY REVIEW, for December, is on our table. This is an excellent number of an ably conducted journal. The articles are all readable, and some of them are the result of much investigation. They are, I. Athanasius in Contest with the Arians; II. The Westminster Review and Christian Missions (this is a capital article); III. Duelling; IV. Life and Times of Nicholas de Clemens; V. Recent Poetry; VI. Literary and Theological Intelligence; VII. Notices of New Books.

Catechetical Exposition of the Romans. The writer of this interesting series proposes to suspend his contributions for a time. His object has been to present a brief but clear exposition of the text, in a form adapted to arrest the attention of the young, and attack them to the truth. If an exposition of the Epistle, on this plan, should be called for to an encouraging extent, the author could be induced to prosecute the work.

A Church Destroyed. On Sabbath, the 14th inst., a severe storm was experienced at Island Creek, Ohio, which irreparably injured the Presbyterian Church, of which Rev. M. A. Parkinson is pastor. The gale end opposite the pulpit was blown in, breaking through the ceiling, and smashing a number of the pews. The money lost to the congregation will be less felt, from the fact that they were preparing to rebuild, next Summer; but they are, by this event, deprived at once of a place of worship.

But a few persons had assembled at the time, and hence but little personal injury was sustained. One only was hurt, and that but slightly.

Revivals. SALEM, VA.—About forty persons are regarded as hopefully converted, and as many more inquiring.

PITTSBURGH, VA.—The Central Presbyterian tells of a meeting in progress, of great promise. The Church was crowded, and very many attended the inquiry conferences.

COVINGTON, KY.—In the pastoral charge of Rev. J. M. Worrell, it is stated that eight persons have been received on examination, and that others are inquiring.

JAMESBURG, N. J.—A gracious manifestation of God's Spirit has been enjoyed in this church for some weeks. Nineteen new members were received on profession of their faith, on the 7th inst.

MANALAPAN, N. J.—Much interest on the subject of religion is spoken of, as manifest in this church, for some time. Upwards of a hundred at a time have attended the inquiry meetings. There are estimated above sixty hopeful conversions.

Modern Spiritualism, or Spirit Rapping. We had supposed this silly but hurtful imposture well nigh dead. But it seems that it still retains many deluded followers, and that its consequences are no less ruinous than formerly. Last week the New York papers reported the death of a young man of fine culture, intellect, and promise, by suicide, owing to this insane delusion. That city appears to be the principal seat of the operations of the spirit-rappers at present, as it has been ever since the Rochester excitement on this subject, some years ago. So serious has the matter become, that not a few of the clergy have felt it to be their duty to expose and denounce the whole system. Two discourses by the Rev. Dr. Gordon, of that city, have been published on the general subject. It was announced that in his discourse on last Sabbath evening, he would establish the fact that "The spirits of the dead cannot communicate with the living, nor revisit the earth, until the second coming of Christ." How true it still, "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."

The North British Review, Dr. Chalmers, and the Theology of Scotland. The number of the North British Review for November, commences with an extended and elaborate leader on the works of Dr. Chalmers. This article is in many respects one of the most extraordinary and significant which has ever appeared in that miscellany. Popularly, the North British is recognized as the organ of the Free Church of Scotland; but if anything were required in addition to the late disclaimers which have been put forth on this point, to satisfy the community that the popular creed is incorrect, that evidence is afforded in this review of the works of the latest of Scotland's worthies. If such an article had been written ten years ago, in an Irish or American journal, it would have aroused a storm of indignation all over "braid" Scotland. Had such assaults been made in any periodical published out of Scotland, on the mental characteristics, the attainments and principles of Dr. Chalmers, together with the Standards of the Theology of the country, the moorlands of the South, and the hills of the North, would have bristled with warriors, starting forth to avenge the insult. Had any English writer put forth such an analysis of the powers of the great Scottish preacher, it would have been attributed to the influence of an aristocratic and prelatial education, had he been a Churchman; or to the jealousy and the narrow-minded sectarianism engendered by Voluntarism, had he spoken from the ranks of the Dissenters; while a similar criticism, if from an Irish source, would have been attributed to vanity and mortification, in view of the recognized greatness of Scotland's worthies.

We may be mistaken, but we apprehend that the review in question is from the pen of a Scottish writer; and if so, it clearly indicates that the mind of educated men in Scotland, is beginning to drift away from those ancient moorings, which were so long recognized as a place of safety. It is a matter of history, that in England when a latitudinarian tendency in theology began to appear among the later Puritans, the great men of that period foresaw that a prevalence of such views would speedily divert their sanctuaries of all their glory. The same feeling prevailed in Ulster, when it was perceived that the principles of Mylne in Glasgow, and others in Scotland, had been adopted by those who were to become the teachers of the Irish Presbyterian people. And so, also, at the present time there are many in New England who foresee, with regret and sorrow, what the desolating effects will be on the Church, if a swarm of pastors are to be spread over the country, infected with the idealism and unsubstantial vanities of philosophy, falsely so called, instead of being the heralds of the old and unchangeable Gospel of Christ. With a similar feeling of apprehension, we doubt not there are many in Scotland who already, as watchmen on the walls of Zion, are beginning to blow the trumpet, and to proclaim that an enemy is at the door. Our readers will be able to judge as to whether or not there is cause for anxiety, when they are supplied with a number of extracts from the review in question. Our space will prevent us from commenting on these selections as we would desire.

After characterizing Chalmers as a man great in action—as the man to give the needed and an irresistible impulse to whatever he applied his Herculean shoulder—the writer describes him as wanting almost entirely, as we shall have occasion to show, the analytic faculty—wanting also the severe critical faculty, and wholly wanting the melancholic element which leads minds severely reflective, to distrust obvious conclusions, and to scrutinize all things that are offered to their assent, Chalmers sent down his line into no abyss. He had no sympathy with minds deeper rooted than his own, or more discriminating, or more exact, or more analytic, or more scrupulously honest toward their own misgivings. Such minds, in approaching his, would quickly discover that from him they would not receive the aid they needed.

Elsewhere, in speaking of his adopting and following the ideas of others, it is added: "But these legitimate borrowings are also characteristic of Chalmers' order of intellect. Bold, large in his grasp of subjects, statesman-like, business-like, prompt to seize the salient points of an argument, and singularly firm in his logical hold of whatever he held, he was not a suggestive, explorative, penetrative thinker. His intellectual habit was not that which impels or which compels a man to pass his entire material of cognition, even every atom of it, through his own mind, and in doing so to make it his own."

Again we say, that if a few years ago any except Scotchmen had put forth such insinuations, in which not only the acumen of this great man is depreciated, but his moral honesty is to a certain extent impugned, we can imagine what excitement the literary world of Scotland would have displayed. There are weightier matters yet in store, in which the cause of Gospel truth, as well as the characteristics of Dr. Chalmers are interested. Adverting to certain chapters in the treatise on "Christian Evidences," we are told that, "Coming, as they do, from a mind such as that of Chalmers, they give weight and urgency to the demand of this present moment—that the doctrine of inspiration should now at length be set clear of the many confusions which still attach to it; and that this work should be so done as to leave no staggering difficulties unnoticed and unheeded; while genuine and untroubled faith in the authority of Scripture is brought to rest upon its true grounds. This is a work for the undertaking of which neither was the Christian world in his time prepared, nor was Chalmers himself specially qualified. It might be asked, in the Christian world, even at this time, prepared for entertaining, intelligently and reverentially, freely, boldly, and religiously, that great and arduous argument, which has so long stood waiting its time, and which is to determine what we mean by the *hallowed terms*, Revelation, and the Inspiration of Holy Scripture?"

The italics are ours; but we specially direct attention to be given to the solemn character of the charges which this extract involves. It would seem that not only Dr. Chalmers, but also the great body of the Church of Christ is in a fog and mystery on the subjects of Inspiration and Revelation, not really understanding what is a Revelation, and what is not, and consequently going on from century to century, believing and trusting, and yet in ignorance as to the foundation of Christian faith! In other passages the author speaks out more distinctly, and as in the extract already given,

he puts Dr. Chalmers, and the great body of professing Christians, into the same category, and charges them equally with ignorance of the truth, and even an unwillingness to learn it; so, in the following passage, what is affirmed of the man, must be held to be true of all in the Church of Christ who are described as agreeing with him in sentiment. Again we have ventured to affirm of Chalmers' doctrine of the Inspiration of the Scriptures, that it is crude, inadmissible, unintelligible. This is not all; for it is such that, if it be insisted upon, we must needs give in to the frivolous cavils of writers like F. Newman, and must admit them to be conclusive against the Divine origination of the Bible.

It might, perhaps, puzzle the writer to tell why any one should yield to a frivolous objection; but after having described the views of Chalmers on the subject of Inspiration as unintelligible, he yet asserts that he "was the man—every intelligent hearer felt it with force, and every such reader of his Discourses must feel it in measure—he was the man, and why should we hesitate in saying it?—was 'sent from above,' to revive, to restore, and to re-establish the Christianity of Scotland." And to swell the contradiction to the greatest magnitude, he says, in the next paragraph—

Chalmers, as a preacher, was a great preacher in this sense—that (for the most part,) he occupied himself with First Truths, and treated them with a boldness, and a force, and a largeness of apprehension, which were in keeping with their intrinsic importance. If Chalmers and the Christian world are in ignorance as to what is or is not a Revelation, and in confusion on the fundamental question of Inspiration, we should like to know how he, or any man, could legitimately be said to know, with any accuracy, what were First Truths, and what were of secondary importance. His mind must have been filled with doubt and anxiety if he reasoned at all; or if he adopted popular ideas without any solid foundation, he only subjected himself to another difficulty equally grave in its character.

The most significant part of this article, and that part of it which bears on the Theology of Scotland, remains to be noticed. It occurs in the portion which is devoted to a review of the "Institutes of Theology," and the "Preliminary" on Butler, Paley, and Hill. The author proposes to answer the question, "What is the bearing of this body of Divinity upon those Three Forms of Christian opinion which, for some time past, have been, and are now at this time, competing among us for the uppermost position? or, to be more correct, we should say, one of them for continued existence, and the other two for supremacy." We are left in no doubt as to the essential character of these three forms; for, in the next paragraph, we are informed that they are these:

First—and it is the elder of the three—Logical Theology, or Christianity drawn forth into propositions and into inferences, then deduced by methods of formal reasoning. The second is Philosophical Theology, or Christianity fashioned into conformity, as far as possible, with the notions and the tastes which distinguish Modern Thought. The third is, or more properly it is coming to be—Christianity derived ingeniously and fearlessly from the Bible—Holy Scripture regarded as the source of belief, and as the rule of life.

By the term, Logical Theology, the author means the system of doctrine which is contained in the Westminster Standards, and while he has no love for the second form, which he elsewhere shows to be a negation of all that is valuable in Christianity, he shows by his definitions of the first and third forms, that he believes the system of doctrine taught in the Scottish Standards, not to be ingeniously and fearlessly derived from the Bible, and, therefore, these Standards do not point out a correct rule of life. Indeed, we are free to admit that there is a candor and distinctness of utterance on the part of this writer, which we often look for in vain, even in the contributions of the Westminster Review. The literary staff of that organ often deal in insinuations, in vague generalities and suggestions of doubts; but here all is plain. Not only are we to believe that the Standards of the Scottish Churches, and consequently of the English, Irish, and American Presbyterian Churches, are not deduced from the Bible ingeniously; but we are to receive it as a fact, that these Standards are becoming obsolete; for, says this writer, "We have alluded to the bearing of Chalmers' writings upon the Three Theologies which now stand in view of our British Christianity, namely, the superannuated Logical, the modern Philosophical, and the future Biblical." We might here be permitted to ask the author of this article, and the editor of the North British Review, how it has come to pass, that the doctrinal statements of the Westminster Standards have become superannuated? Is it a fact that the statements contained in the Confession of Faith, and in the Catechisms, on the Being and Attributes of God, of the character of the Moral Law, the condition of man as a guilty and corrupt sinner, his need of salvation, the work of Christ for the salvation of sinners, and his work in them by the Holy Spirit by which they are sanctified—is it a fact that the doctrines in the Confession on these points are superannuated, or that they are disingenuously deduced from Holy Scripture? If we are to believe this writer, such is the case; for he further says:

The Creeds and the Confessions of the Reformation were, indeed, with scrupulous care, based upon the authority of the "Holy Scriptures;" and, looking at them simply as they stood related to the manifold corruptions of the twelve centuries preceding, they might well claim to be Scriptural. But what manner of things have they become? A certain class of texts, (the italics are the author's), having been assumed as the ground-work of Christianity, and a scheme of theology is put together accordingly, whence, by means of the deductive logic, all separate articles of faith are to be derived. As to any passages of Scripture which might seem to be of another class, or which do not easily fall into their places in this scheme, they were either ignored, or they were controlled, and to any extent that might be asked for by the stern necessities of the syllogistic method.

Three things we have to say relative to this extract. First, We protest, with uplifted hands, against the monstrous, the outrageous attempt which is here made by a nameless writer, to blacken the reputation of men profoundly learned in theology, men famed for their holiness and integrity, as well as for their attainments—men who

although true—true rather in the controversial sense of an age of eager and desperate contention, than in a sense purely biblical! On this extract, comment is needless. We must draw this notice to a close. We had marked several other passages for the present, contenting ourselves with the following morocco:

What, then, is it which we might have wished Chalmers to do more than he has done? What is it which one who had his ear might have suggested to him to undertake? It was this—we could have wished him to loosen, by a little, the tightness of those logical theologies, which, framed as they were in a disputatious age, have now the effect of delimiting us from the free and fearless enjoyment of Holy Scripture. What we need is, not that minimum of belief which some ill-judging writers are now inviting us to accept; but that maximum of belief which an ingenious submission to the entire meaning of Scripture would give us.

Will our readers believe, that after having stated the fact that Chalmers heartily received the doctrinal Standards of the Church, the next sentence which follows the above is this: "This result Chalmers honestly and fervently desired, of which desire the indications are frequent throughout his writings!"

We shall wait to see how the Scottish people, and the ministers and members of the Free Church, shall deal with Professor Fraser, in relation to the insertion of this remarkable article.

"Misrepresentation." Under this heading we gave, on Nov. 15th, a vindication of the General Assembly against a charge, by the Reformed Presbyterian, of "inconsistency" in its action of 1818, and of a "direct contradiction" in that of 1845 to that of 1818, on the subject of Slavery. The Editor replied, in December, with a commendable Christian spirit.

The Presbyterian of the West, however, of Dec. 18th, publishes, with approbation and a flourish of wonders, an article which misrepresents us in the case, even worse than the Assembly had been misrepresented. We are not aware of having given any reason to any one, for this attempt to render us odious. It may be that there is some jealousy, or some scheming, the successful prosecution of which, demands that prejudice should be excited against us in certain quarters. If so, we shall have to bear with it. Such things do occur. Efforts to exhibit a neighbor in an unfavorable light, however pure he may be, are no new thing under the sun. But it may be only a misapprehension on the part of both the correspondent and the journal. We may not have spoken so lucidly as we supposed we did, and their extreme zeal for an important idea may have prevented their noting our true position. If so—if their love for truth in one aspect blinded them to our real sentiments, they will be glad to correct their mistake, and will excuse the plainness of our speech; and will forgive us, even though we should manifest some indignation at their utter perversion of the manifest aim of our article.

We may give a specimen of two of our assailant's unfairness. He says, "Dr. McKinney gives up entirely that noble testimony of our Church against the evils of slavery." Now, this is altogether a misstatement. "Dr. McKinney" never did, and we trust never will give up that testimony—not an iota of it. He always held to it; and has often reiterated it. We published it to the world, with our approbation, when others were silent; we, in the very article alluded to, thank the Reformed Presbyterian for publishing it; and we there urge it—the whole of it—as "rational," "upright," "thoroughly based on sound sense, and on the foundation of the prophets and apostles." How could any one then say, that we entirely give it up!

Again, we are represented thus: "In speaking of the Act of 1818, he says, 'the Assembly did not say slavery; it said the voluntary enslaving.'" How could the man thus write, when it was as obvious as noon-day, that we were not speaking of the Act, but of a sentence quoted from that Act. The Assembly there condemns a thing most strongly. What is that thing? The Assembly does not call it slavery. It says, "the voluntary enslaving." Whether the brethren of that day understood their mother-tongue, we need not affirm, but the truthfulness of our remark, as to the words they used, is indisputable. Why then pervert our words? The Act speaks of two things. First, it speaks of the "voluntary enslaving" of men; the Slave-trade was then not very long abolished, and the remembrance of it was fresh with every one. This it utterly condemns. It then proceeds to speak of slavery, it being an existing evil, which the Assembly deprecates and would eradicate, by the power of truth and love.

The Assembly, as clearly as language can express ideas, speaks of two things, or of the same thing in two aspects. First, of the reducing of free men to a state of slavery. This it calls a "voluntary enslaving," and describes it as "a gross violation of the most sacred rights of human nature; as utterly inconsistent with the laws of God;" and "totally irreconcilable with the spirit and principles of the doctrines of Christ." Now, could the Assembly tolerate in the Church, men habitually guilty of such a sin—living in such a sin! Impossible! Then the word "slavery," as used afterwards in the Act, cannot be synonymous with "voluntary enslaving," as first used. The Assembly could not retain in communion, men horrible in sin, as first described. Why, even Congress, with all its faults, will not bear with such in the country—will not suffer them to live. The traffic, which stimulates to the habitual practice of that sin, is made PIRACY, and is made punishable by death; and in the whole House of Representatives, last week, there could be found but eight votes against its re-commendation. And could the Presbyterian Church tolerate, and regulate within her communion, and embrace in her bosom, men living in such a sin! Shame on those who would charge upon her such corruption. And shame upon the journals which would

condemn as "hypercriticism" the clearing of her from that charge. The Assembly having thus summarily and most sternly disposed of the enslaving of men, proceeds to speak of the subject in its second aspect, that is of Slavery—Slavery as an existing institution. This it calls "a paradox in the moral system," and goes on for pages to deplore its evils, and to point out and enjoin remedies. Read the whole Act, and note the consistency of its parts, and its conformity to right reason and the Holy Scriptures. Will not men discriminate? Can they not bear to look at truth in all her aspects? What has blinded their minds? Will they not allow the Church the use of language, and judge of her by what she really says?

But possibly our contemporary regards our opinion as of very great importance. It would seem so from the editorial, and the communication, and the promise from each, of more such. It may hence be our duty to speak yet again, and very explicitly; and may be it will rejoice in an opportunity to give to its readers our sentiments, just as we state them. We shall try.

We are not in the habit of concealment; nor are we much troubled with fear, unless it be the fear of doing wrong. But neither do we think that a man should always prate; and especially we do not allow any one to dictate to us what we shall talk about, nor when we shall speak. "A word in season, how good it is!" On the subject of Slavery, we gave our sentiments very fully, some time ago, in a leading article. Then, on the 11th of October last, exciting as were the times, we, and we alone of all our Church papers, gave the Minutes of the General Assembly on the subject. Then, on the 16th ult. we defended those Minutes against charges made. That defense is now, most strangely, perverted into an opposition. To correct the perversion, and as most pertinent to the case as presented, we now say, that, as respects the Slave Trade, or the "voluntary enslaving" of men, the language of the Assembly, in the first few sentences of the Minutes of 1818, expresses our views clearly. As regards Slavery, its evils, temptations, incidents, tendencies, the duties of parties connected with it, and of others toward it, &c., &c., the sentiments of the Assembly are ours. They are correct and well uttered. We hence adopt the whole Minute in all its force. As relates to ecclesiastical duty toward masters, we approve of the Assembly's action of 1845. It seems to us Scriptural and wise. Next to the words of inspiration by which, in all their fulness, we would guide our faith and learn our duty, we know of no language which better expresses our views than the documents referred to. Those who have not the Banner and Advocate of October 11, may perhaps find access to the Assembly's new Digest, by Rev. S. J. Baird, pp. 809-814. But, for a purer exhibition of our belief, we refer to God's precious Word, in Matt. vii. 12; Luke xvii. 7-10; 1. Cor. vii. 21-24; xii. 13; Gal. iii. 28; Eph. vi. 5-9; Col. iii. 22-25; iv. 1; 1. Tim. vi. 1-8; Titus ii. 9, 10; Philimon 10-17; et passim. Let the reader turn to the places cited. We do love to draw our principles from the Sacred Oracles, and to purify and confirm our faith by oft recurring thither. "To the law and to the testimony." It is the recourse of the man who loves light and truth. If this statement is not sufficiently explicit, we know not what we can do more. Those who will pervert this, would pervert anything we could say. Those who cannot understand this, have some failing about their perceptive powers which it is not in us to cure; and for us further to attempt to discuss the subject, would likely be but a war of words and a stirring up of strife, with no profit to Zion's unity, peace, and purity. And now we request our contemporary, and our brother "Adelphos," and all others who may feel interested, to examine carefully the solemnly expressed and oft reiterated opinions of the Church to which we mutually belong; and to read the Scriptures referred to; and to drink in the whole spirit of the Gospel. They will then know just what we regard as an excellent expression of our sentiments, and will feel just as we wish to feel on this whole subject of human relations.

The above paragraph is not so very long but our contemporary, which has shown so much interest in our opinions, can give it to its readers. Doubtless, we might say, it will be pleased to let them know just what the Banner and Advocate thinks; and, lest they might not have access to our files nor to the Digest, it may accommodate them with a full copy of the documents concerned; and then tell them whether it and its correspondent believes also, heartily, with the Assembly.

Each family to which our sheet has been a visitant, has a retrospect of mingled joy and sorrow. Each family has had a history unknown in a great measure to the world without—a history of the deepest interest and import.

To some, it has been a year of joy. Prosperity has waited upon their efforts. New relations have been formed—new objects of affection secured. The family circle remains unbroken. The voice of gladness is heard in their dwellings.

To others, it has been a year of sorrow. Disappointments have met their hopes. Sickness has palsied the arm, and rendered every life a burden. Afflictions have caused weeping and lamentation. There are vacant places by the fire-side. Voices sweeter than music to the ear of affection have been hushed forever.

Let us remember that every event of Providence has a voice of meaning; and as we call to mind all the way in which the Lord has brought us during the year; as we re-visit in memory the scenes of our joys, and of our sorrows, let us inquire what duty of gratitude, or of humiliation, or submission; or self-denial, or benevolence, the dealings of Providence were intended to inculcate. If bounty bestowed upon us has been wasted, and the afflictions sent us been lost, let us hasten to humble ourselves before him.

Each one has an individual retrospect which will call for thanksgiving, and for humiliation. Before the year shall come to its close, let us carefully and solemnly review its record. How many occasions for gratitude will meet our view! And yet, they passed, perhaps, without calling for a single expression of thanksgiving and praise. How wonderful the mercy of Him who has

The Closing Year. The year which is now drawing to a close, has been fruitful in great events. The history imperfectly chronicled in our pages during its progress, is more important than that recorded by the ablest historians of other days. So far as history is the guide of our actions, those events are of paramount importance which are near to us, and most intimately connected with the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom. That kingdom furnishes the central idea in relation to which the events of history are to be viewed, and by which their value may be determined. The philosophy of history, about which so much has been vaguely said, is contained in that simple and sublime generalization of the immortal Edwards, by which he regarded the history of the world as the history of Redemption. In its light, the distinction between civil and religious history disappears. Hence the history of the world must be re-written, if the historian would set forth the true cause of events, and the true end to which they are tending. Thus the religious journal contributes to the present generation the most important history, and to the future historian the most precious materials.

The two great political events of the past year were the conclusion of the Russian war, and the Presidential election. Though that war is a very bloody and painful chapter in the world's history, yet the result is a matter of joy to the philanthropist and Christian. A check has been given to the advances of that colossal power, whose shadow gave protection to a superstition as baleful and intolerant as that of Rome. The pride of the followers of the false prophet has been humbled. Channels have been opened for the influx of European Protestant influences, which must more and more prepare the way for the increasing success of those missions whose continued existence is perhaps the most interesting and important of all the consequences of the triumph of the allied arms. Had Russia triumphed, our missionaries would have been driven from their fields of labor. Now, they are the hope of Western Asia. Let us thank God that blood has ceased to flow, and that the heralds of salvation are permitted to proclaim the joyful sound.

Our own country has passed through a conflict of opinion, interest and passion, unequalled since the formation of our government. Many feared that the result would be the dissolution of the Union. Many feared that the flame of civil war kindled in Kansas, would spread till it enveloped every portion of the land. All were called upon to mourn for American blood, shed by violence upon American soil.

But the election has taken place, and order and quiet reign. To the astonishment of the nation who are ignorant of the reverence for law and right which dwells in the hearts of a vast majority of the American people, the defeated party have promptly acquiesced in the decision of a constitutional majority. The waters of bitterness have, in a great measure, ceased to flow. Throughout the country, there are unmistakable signs that soberer counsels are destined to prevail, and that the fanatics of the North and of the South will have little influence in national affairs. There is good reason to hope that the in-coming administration will endeavor faithfully to uphold the supremacy of the laws, and thus command the approbation, if not the active support of many who had no share in placing it in power. For our prospects for peace and order, and for God government, let us render devout thanksgiving to the great Governor of the Nations.

With respect to our own beloved Church, the retrospect of the past year is pleasant. No contentions have disturbed her peace, no departures from the faith have given occasions for mourning. She presents her compact united, conservatively-aggressive front, and may thus be viewed in favorable contrast with almost every portion of the militant Church. True, we have to mourn the too frequent absence of the converting influence of the Holy Spirit; still, many precious souls have been gathered into the fold, and much has been done for the glory of God.

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To others, it has been a year of sorrow. Disappointments have met their hopes. Sickness has palsied the arm, and rendered every life a burden. Afflictions have caused weeping and lamentation. There are vacant places by the fire-side. Voices sweeter than music to the ear of affection have been hushed forever.

Let us remember that every event of Providence has a voice of meaning; and as we call to mind all the way in which the Lord has brought us during the year; as we re-visit in memory the scenes of our joys, and of our sorrows, let us inquire what duty of gratitude, or of humiliation, or submission; or self-denial, or benevolence, the dealings of Providence were intended to inculcate. If bounty bestowed upon us has been wasted, and the afflictions sent us been lost, let us hasten to humble ourselves before him.

Each one has an individual retrospect which will call for thanksgiving, and for humiliation. Before the year shall come to its close, let us carefully and solemnly review its record. How many occasions for gratitude will meet our view! And yet, they passed, perhaps, without calling for a single expression of thanksgiving and praise. How wonderful the mercy of Him who has

Eccelesiastical. Rev. S. N. EVANS' Post Office address is changed from Stillwater, Minnesota Territory, to Lane, Illinois. Mr. WILLIAM B. CRAIG has accepted a call from the united churches of Bloomfield, Sherman's Creek, and Mouth of Juniata, Pennsylvania. Rev. J. P. CARTER, having accepted the charge of the Ashman Institute, his Post Office address will be Oxford, Pennsylvania. Mr. J. B. STRAIN was ordained by the Presbytery of Carlisle, on the 9th inst., and installed pastor of the churches of Millers-town and Ickesburg. Rev. A. W. MILLER, of Charlotte, North Carolina, has been called to the Tabb Street church, Petersburg, Virginia. Rev. Dr. PALMER has reached his post at New Orleans.