

Presbyterian Banner.

PITTSBURGH, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7, 1861.

Having purchased for our office the "Banner" in the City of Pittsburgh, we have the pleasure to announce to our readers that we have secured a new and improved mode of printing...

Presbytery of Saratoga.—This Illinois Presbytery at its late meeting, passed a series of resolutions, denying the right of any ecclesiastical body to take such action with regard to the state of the country...

Religious Convention.—The religious Convention held in Warren, Armstrong County, Pa., in September, will meet again in the Indiana Presbytery church at Sholenta, Indiana County, on Tuesday, the 17th of December, at 1 o'clock P. M.

Brethren of different denominations are invited to meet in Convention, and may expect to enjoy the cheerful hospitalities of our vicinity.

BYRON PORTER, R. McCREERY, Committee of Arrangement.

The President's Message.—This ardent wish for document is received. We give it to our readers rather hastily—too hastily, to spend upon its printing our usual care...

A Call upon the Benevolent.—The ladies of the Allegheny Relief Society, which has been diligent in affording aid to the poor and suffering, for several Winters, have issued a touching appeal to the citizens...

The affairs of this Society are admirably managed. The ladies make personal inspection of every case presented. While the really needy are provided for as far as means will allow, every precaution is taken to guard against imposition.

An Improvement.—At one time Episcopacy was the established religion of Virginia, and forbade the preaching of the Gospel and the organization of churches by other denominations.

Interference.—Can nothing be done to check this terrible vice? Drinking houses line the streets of our cities and villages. In many places the drinking habits once banished from the family table and the social party are being restored.

From the same cause our jails, penitentiaries and almshouses are crowded. Its effects are seen upon all classes and conditions of men. Is it not time to make one united attempt to rescue those who are drunkards and to protect those who are not?

Resolved, That while we do not feel called upon to add anything to the repeated testimonies of our Church on the subject of slavery, nor to offer any advice to the Government on the subject, still, fully believing that it lies at the foundation of all our national troubles, we recommend to our people to pray more earnestly than ever for its removal, and that the time may speedily come when God by his providence shall in his own good time and way bring it to an end...

DEATH OF REV. H. G. COMINGO, D. D. In another column will be found an account of an interesting Quarter-century Anniversary, in the First Church of Steubenville.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE, Washington, Nov. 27, 1861. To the Synod of New-York and New-Jersey.—Rev. Gentlemen:—The Minutes containing your resolutions on the condition of the country, which you directed to me, have been submitted to the President of the United States. I am instructed to express to you his great satisfaction with those proceedings, which are distinguished equally by their patriotic sentiments and purely Christian spirit.

THE INSTRUMENTALITY TO BE USED BY A PASTOR IN DOING HIS WORK. The work of a pastor is to save men—to convert them, edify them, and fit them for heaven. This he is to do, for God. To this end he is called, of God and man, ordained, installed and made a pastor; and if he has not actual success, his labor is lost, or perhaps worse than lost. And yet, of himself, he cannot convert nor sanctify a soul. God can do this. God does do it. He enlightens, convinces, renews, purifies, saves; and all this in the execution of his own predetermined purpose. But all this he does, not in the way of a miracle. He does it by making means effectual—means of his own establishing. He communicates knowledge, awakens hopes and fears, and thus incites the sinner to flee from wrath and lay hold on life.

God, then, employs knowledge in the saving of men. This is according to the sayings of Solomon, in his commendation of wisdom; and according also to these words of Jesus: "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou has sent." And this knowledge is not infused into the soul by a direct Divine act. It enters by the senses; especially by the ear; and it is contained in and drawn from the holy Scriptures. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." "How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?" "It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." The minister thus sees the instrumentality which he is to use in the saving of man—it is knowledge—knowledge derived from God's Word, and communicated in preaching. Hence the good pastor will "preach the Word;" "in season, out of season." It is "mighty through God" "able to save the soul."

All knowledge may be useful to the preacher, but all knowledge is not worth the expense of its acquisition. And however much the minister may know, and however valuable it may be, still, in preaching, he is to use it so sparingly, and so subordinately to one great truth, that he can from his heart say: "I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." A minister's knowledge is often, we have reason to fear, so used as to obscure the cross, or even to hide it entirely—his familiarity with rhetoric, his cultivated imagination, his philosophy, his historical attainments, his hermenautics, occupy his time and energies, and his hearers come, and sit, and go again, without having contemplated the Sacrifice for sin, and the Captain of salvation.

Subservient to the doctrine of the cross, and the faith, repentance, reverence, and holiness which flow therefrom, are the social duties. Jesus drew much on these, practicing and inculcating them. So also did prophets and apostles. So also will you as one faithful in the ministry. But in all this, you will take a text, and abide by it, expounding and applying it honestly. In all your ministrations you will make the Word of God your guide—not only your guide, but the light which you will supply, and the food you will administer. Thus you will both save yourself and them that hear you.

THE SYNOD OF NEW-YORK AND NEW-JERSEY, AND THE PRESIDENT. That Christians, whether ministers, elders, or private members of the Church, have the same rights, personal, social, and public, as infidels have, is not to be disputed. If then worldly men may meet together and deliberate on affairs which concern them as members of the community, why, may not Christians also? If lawyers, physicians, merchants, mechanics, manufacturers, laborers, bankers, &c., &c., may address Government, why should ministers and elders be denied the privilege? It is true that when met in Ecclesiastical Council we think, ordinarily, that it does not become those who bear office in the Church to speak, either by way of advice or reproof, of governmental affairs. Let them adjourn and go home, and mingle with their fellow-citizens, and thus take their part in their country's affairs. But there are occasions in which they not only may speak, but should speak—occasions when religion, morality, life, peace—every interest of man, temporal and spiritual, are concerned. Such an occasion is the present—deemed so by nearly all Christian people.

We have noticed the action of several religious bodies, both North and South. We had here that of the Synod of New-York and New-Jersey. This Synod, at its late meeting at Newark, ordered a copy of its Minutes to be forwarded to the Secretary of State. Among the resolutions on record was the following: Resolved, That while we do not feel called upon to add anything to the repeated testimonies of our Church on the subject of slavery, nor to offer any advice to the Government on the subject, still, fully believing that it lies at the foundation of all our national troubles, we recommend to our people to pray more earnestly than ever for its removal, and that the time may speedily come when God by his providence shall in his own good time and way bring it to an end; that nothing may be left of it but the painful record of its past existence.

The following is the reply of the Secretary of State: DEPARTMENT OF STATE, Washington, Nov. 27, 1861. To the Synod of New-York and New-Jersey.—Rev. Gentlemen:—The Minutes containing your resolutions on the condition of the country, which you directed to me, have been submitted to the President of the United States. I am instructed to express to you his great satisfaction with those proceedings, which are distinguished equally by their patriotic sentiments and purely Christian spirit. It is just tribute to our system of Government, that it has enabled the American people to enjoy, unmolested, more of the blessings of Divine Providence, which affect the natural condition of human society, than any other people ever enjoyed; together with a more absolute degree of religious liberty than before the institution of that great Government had ever been hoped for among men. The overthrow of this Government might therefore justly be regarded as a calamity not only to this nation, but to the world. The President is assured of public virtue and of the public valor; but this is an appalling statement, and he earnestly solicits the same inquisitions from all classes and conditions of men, believing that those prayers will not be denied by the Lord for his goodness? Shall we not express our gratitude in liberal contributions to that cause which speaks his praise—to the sustentation and spread of those means of influence by and through which he bestows upon us benefits so inestimable? The RECEIPTS in October were, for Domestic Missions, \$4,366; Education, \$1,988; Foreign Missions, \$10,800; Publication: donations \$1,114, sales \$4,170; Church Extension, \$554.

EMIGRATION AND THE IRISH FAMINE. Since the breaking out of the war, the Irish have shown less disposition than usual to emigrate to this country. The falling off has been considerable, though it is likely soon to be revived. The population which we have received from the Emerald Isle has contributed immensely to the wealth and power of the country. A large portion of the labor which constructs railroads and canals, and builds houses, is performed by Irish immigrants. Many of our seamen, mechanics, farmers, and tradesmen, are from the same country, as are also quite a number of our politicians and clergymen. And our soldiers, both in the regular and volunteer armies, are, numerously, Irishmen, or the sons of Irishmen.

THE SYNOD OF MISSOURI. Some two weeks ago there appeared a curt note in some of the newspapers, signed by the Rev. Dr. ANDERSON, of St. Louis, informing the public that the following action had been taken without debate, at the late meeting of the Synod of Missouri: "It was unanimously resolved that the Rev. Dr. Anderson, in a note in which he expressed his 'sorrow and surprise' that such a record could be made," and says that "but for sickness in his family there would have been one vote in the negative, and one voice for the 'Christian patriotism' of the General Assembly."

HOME AND FOREIGN RECORD. The December number of the Record presents evidence that the Lord has not forsaken Zion. Blessings attend the labors of his servants, which call for thanksgiving and afford encouragement. Still, we are not enjoying a season of special favor. All our Boards labor under pecuniary embarrassments, and this to an extent not justified by the condition of our productive industry. The Southern churches having separated from the Assembly, ought but slightly to affect the balances in our treasuries. To a great extent they had been, for some time, collecting and using their own money; and where they were contributing to the Boards, they were drawing to something like an equal amount.

PHILADELPHIA. THANKSGIVING was duly observed in this city. Most of the churches were opened and attended by large and thoughtful congregations. The sermon of the Rev. Dr. Wadsworth is spoken of as being particularly able and patriotic. THE METHODIST PAPERS report a new specimen of ecclesiastical proceeding in this city. The facts are these: Two local chaplains in the army. But a difficulty lay in their way in the requirement of the War Department, that all chaplains must be regularly ordained ministers of some Christian church. However, the Rev. Mr. Slidell, like Breckenridge and others of the disunion conspirators, laid an anchor to the windward, by investing largely in the Western States. The upper peninsula of Michigan and Minnesota presented the chief attractions. It is now discovered that the records of the Land Office, that in the latter State, Mr. Slidell is the proprietor of ten thousand acres of land. This estate will, in all probability, be confiscated. The Baron of Plaquemine will hold no sway in free Minnesota.

Who Have Forgotten?—Read the article signed by J. H. JONES, on first page. ECCLESIASTICAL. Rev. E. BRONSON'S Post Office address is changed from Westfield, Pa., to Dushore, Sullivan County, Pa. Rev. D. F. McFARLAND'S Post Office address is changed from Havana, Ill., to Mattoon, Ill. Mr. WILLIAM E. DINSMORE has been ordained to the ministry, and is installed at Silver Spring, Pa. Rev. VELLEROY D. REED, D. D., is installed in the First Presbyterian church, Camden, N. J.

RELIGIOUS MOVEMENT IN THE ARMY. The following will be read with great interest by all Christians, and especially by those who have sons, brothers, and relatives in the army. A large number of pious men are found in many of our regiments, and it is a very important matter to discover such, awaken them to watchfulness, and engage them in usefulness. Prudent, experienced, and godly chaplains on the ground are the best judges of what kind of organization is best adapted to the promotion of piety in those already Christians and for bringing others under the influence of the Gospel. The President of the meeting of chaplains, that adopted the subjoined paper, Rev. THOMAS P. HUNT, is an Old-School Presbyterian minister, well known as a apostle of Temperance. The Secretary is the Rev. THOMAS JESSUP, of the New School Presbyterian Church, son of Judge Jessup, a distinguished jurist of Pennsylvania.

THE REV. H. G. COMINGO desires gratefully to acknowledge the generous liberality and kindness of his congregation and others, in the bestowal of a large and valuable purse, filled with silver and gold, so delicately contributed and placed in his hands, at the late Quarter-Centennial celebration of the First Presbyterian church. He would also express his sincere thanks to the officers of the church for the elegant and costly suit of clothes given at the same time. And also to individuals for the highly-prized gifts and valentines sent to him on his family on that occasion. Last and not least, to the ladies of the congregation he desires to express his great indebtedness for the sumptuous entertainment given, in his name, to his ministerial brethren, together with the two Presbyterian congregations of Steubenville, Ohio.

THE AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY has done a great work for the army and navy. It has distributed, in these two branches of the National service, about half a million copies of the Scriptures—mostly of the New Testament—and is now issuing seven thousand copies a day. Every man in our volunteer regiments, who would receive one, has been thus furnished, as we are informed, with a very neat and portable copy of the New Testament; and the same good work is to be done for all other regiments, that may yet volunteer in the service of their country, to the end of the war. So noble an object is worthy of every body's sympathy and cooperation.

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RELIGIOUS MOVEMENT IN THE ARMY. The following will be read with great interest by all Christians, and especially by those who have sons, brothers, and relatives in the army. A large number of pious men are found in many of our regiments, and it is a very important matter to discover such, awaken them to watchfulness, and engage them in usefulness. Prudent, experienced, and godly chaplains on the ground are the best judges of what kind of organization is best adapted to the promotion of piety in those already Christians and for bringing others under the influence of the Gospel. The President of the meeting of chaplains, that adopted the subjoined paper, Rev. THOMAS P. HUNT, is an Old-School Presbyterian minister, well known as a apostle of Temperance. The Secretary is the Rev. THOMAS JESSUP, of the New School Presbyterian Church, son of Judge Jessup, a distinguished jurist of Pennsylvania.

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