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Thoughts on the New Year.

BY EDWARD SPRAGUE RAND, JR.

How long the coming year appears
How swift the past has gone!
And stayed not by our hopes or fears,
The tide of time rolls on!

The future!—would our straining eyes
Could pierce its ebon night;
To view the shadows that shall rise,
As day by day takes flight.

Ah! no; too many a wreathing smile
Would fade in sorrow's gloom;
The sunny hopes which cares beguile
Be buried in the tomb.

Untimely clouds would dim the brow
Where rests a sunny ray;
No, God be praised, enough for now,
The burden of to-day.

March trusting on; the love of God
Conceals with kind intent;
Enough upon the pathway trod
To view the days misspent.

He careth for thee—seek thou not
That which his love conceals;
His providence directs thy lot—
Improve what he reveals.

Nor seek thou with thy mortal mind
God's ways to understand;
In trusting patience wait, resigned—
Thy times are in his hand.

And let the moments, as they flee,
Be blessings God has given—
Waves on Time's ever-swelling sea,
To bear thee on to heaven.

—*Boston Recorder.*

For the Presbyterian Banner.

Action of the Presbytery of Saltsburg,

At their Winter Meeting, held at Saltsburg, January 1, 1862, on the Nature, Motive, Spirit, Measure and Method of Christian Benevolence.

Notice, then: 1. *The Nature.* It is taught, Prov. iii: 9—"Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the first fruits of all thine increase." To honor God as his word enjoins, is to worship him. This may be done with the voice of prayer, praise, or thanksgiving. We honor, or worship God with the powers of the body or the mind, whenever those powers are used by his direction, and for his glory. And so, when under the constraining power of the love of Christ, we contribute of our worldly goods, for the good of his rational creatures, the progress of his cause, or the glory of his name. We, by so doing, honor or worship the Lord with our substance.

God was dishonored—robbed—by withholding the tithes and offerings—Mal. iii: 8. But declares, verse 10, that if they "bring all the tithes into the storehouse," he will regard it as an act of worship, and follow it with blessing. Giving of our substance for the service of God, is, then, to be regarded as an act of religious worship, as really enjoined as the exercise of prayer or praise; its practice from proper motives as really blessed of God as they; its willful neglect as really cursed, as profaning the Sabbath or restraining prayer is before God.

Christian benevolence is one of God's appointed means of growth in grace, well adapted to impose a check upon that "covetousness which is idolatry," and to cultivate and strengthen the grace of charity in the soul.

Nor is it to be regarded as merely an occasional or special exercise, but as a regular part of weekly devotion, and of Divinely appointed Sabbath worship. 1. Cor. xvi: 2—"Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him."

Notice, 2. *The Motive.* 2. Cor. v: 14—"The love of Christ constraineth us." To give of our substance for the service of God may be regarded in the light of a commanded duty, enforced merely by fear; or contributions may be made under the promptings of pride, of vanity, or even of habit. God may receive and use such gifts for his glory; they were his by prior right; but they cannot be accredited as gifts of Christian benevolence. Or, the wants of a ruined world may excite sympathy, and sympathy may prompt benevolence, which yet falls far short of true Christian benevolence.

The wants of the world should be well known, that the Christian may be able to apportion his benefactions intelligently. But that, and only that, which is given under the constraining influence of the love of Christ, is the real amount expended as Christian benevolence. And that amount the true Christian would joyfully lay in Jesus' hands, without instruction, or restriction as to its use.

3. *The Spirit.* 2. Cor. ix: 7—"Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give, not grudgingly nor of necessity, for God loveth a cheerful giver." This principle of cheerful, spontaneous giving, is violated by all outward pressure or undue special pleading, whether for one object or purpose, or to another, on the ground of the magnitude of the work, the wealth of the donor, or the poverty of the Board.

To contribute under the pressure of such motives, is to give as a necessity—is to give, perhaps, grudgingly; but it is not to give with that cheerfulness which God approves.

Again: Any scheme of benevolence that proceeds upon the principle of assessment, by apportioning definite sums, to be contributed either by Synods, Presbyteries, congregations, or individuals, is utterly at variance with this Scripture principle of voluntary and cheerful giving.

To adopt any such system is practically to assume, either that the love of Christ is not the controlling motive to Christian benevolence, or that the love of Christ is really shed abroad in every Christian heart, equally or in proportion to worldly prosperity; either of which assumptions is palpably false, both in theory and practice. Again: When any Board or agency, entrusted with the management and disbursement of the funds of the Church, expands its operations so as to incur indebtedness beyond its probable resources, it thus prepares the way for a direct violation of this Bible principle; when the Church must be urged to contribute—as very frequently of late—not merely for the love of Christ, but to save the honor and credit of the Board.

The Christian should be instructed and urged, under the constraining influence of the love of Christ, to devise liberally—to sow bountifully—to give cheerfully; and the Board, under the same controlling power, should faithfully dispose of all the means thus furnished. This will be doing what it can, and it may safely leave the rest with God.

4. *The Measure.* 1. Cor. xvi: 2—"As the Lord hath prospered him." And here it will be considered: 1. That all we have belongs to God. He says: "The silver and the gold are mine; all the beasts of the forest are mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof." Every true child of God acknowledges this; and, 2. That God has entrusted each one with whatever of worldly goods he possesses—all to be used, either directly or indirectly, for the Master's glory. Drawing upon these resources, there are the demands of personal necessity or comforts; the demands of family and of business; the ordinary claims of the Church and of the State; and then the direct claims of Jesus, or Christian benevolence.

And the proper amount due to this last claim, is just that proportion of worldly comforts or superfluities, or growing wealth, that the love of Christ constrains to give.

If that love abounds, so will the liberality abound in proportion to the means. If the love be small, so will be the gift. But in either case, if it is such as to indicate the constraining power of the love of Christ in the soul, it is the true measure of Christian benevolence.

5. *The Method.* 1. Cor. xvi: 2—"Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store."

Any method or machinery that operates by appeals to pride, vanity or fear, or that presents the claim as any other than a debt of love—though for a time it may seem to succeed, yet being unscriptural—is therefore unsound and unsafe. Any system that presumes to fix either the sum or minimum to be contributed either by the congregation or the individual, assumes an unwarranted prerogative directly at variance with 2. Cor. ix: 7—"Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give," &c. Or any system that leaves out of view, or on the back-ground, the fundamental idea that giving is an act of worship, or that fails to give to every one of God's people, full and frequent opportunity thus to worship God, is radically defective.

The great master wheel of the true machinery is the love of Christ; and whatever system can bring this great motive power to bear the most directly, with the greatest force and frequency, on the hearts and hands of God's people, is the true system of machinery, the true Gospel method of Christian benevolence.

And to that end, what better method can be devised than that here suggested by the apostle, that of blending religious contribution with our weekly Sabbath worship, either by laying by in store at home for God, or by casting into his treasury in the sanctuary, as God hath prospered us; and thus, on the first day of the week, "Honor the Lord with our substance and with the first fruits of all our increase."

As this injunction was originally given to the churches of Galatia and Corinth, where "Not many mighty, not many noble were called," it is fair to infer that most of those to whom it was given were such as received a daily or perhaps weekly compensation for their labors, and could therefore know, weekly, how much God had prospered them. This, many a Christian, owing to the nature of his business, and the irregularity of his income, cannot be supposed to know. But the spirit of the injunction is obeyed by that Christian who, prompted by the love of Christ, sets apart a fixed and proper proportion of his income, whether received at regular or irregular intervals—treasures it up for God, and then from Sabbath to Sabbath, or when opportunity is afforded, casts it, in such instalments as the respective claims of the various objects of benevolence may suggest, into the treasury of the Lord.

In view of the foregoing considerations, therefore,

Resolved, That as Christian ministers, it is our solemn duty, under the constraining power of the love of Christ, to teach our people the plain truth, as God has taught it, on the subject of Christian benevolence, "whether they will hear or whether they will forbear."

Resolved, That it be earnestly recommended to all our pastors and Sessions, to use all proper means of enlightening their people in reference to the necessities of the world, that the cry of the perishing may stimulate them to devise liberal things, and ever exercise great self-denial, that the treasury of the Lord may be replenished.

Resolved, That it is the solemn duty of pastors, with their Sessions, or Sessions of vacant congregations, to give to every professing Christian, with their children, full and frequent opportunity thus to express their love to Christ, and to "honor him with their substance."

Resolved, That we earnestly commend to the conscientious and prayerful consideration of God's people, the propriety of setting apart, treasuring up for God, such a proportion of their income, when received, whether at regular or irregular intervals, whether in large or small sums, as the constraining power of the love of Christ may suggest.

Resolved, That we earnestly recommend to the pastors and Sessions under our care, a prayerful consideration of the propriety of falling back upon the Apostolic practice of religious contribution, as a regular part of weekly Sabbath worship.

Resolved, That in practically carrying out the principle of Christian benevolence, the prayer of faith stands first and most important in the list of active agencies—prayer for the spirit of benevolence, prayer for grace and zeal to exercise that spirit aright, and prayer for God's blessing upon all that is then attempted in his name and for his glory.

Resolved, That the Stated Clerk be directed to furnish a copy of the above to the *Presbyterian Banner*, for publication.

W. W. WOODEND, Stated Clerk.

For the Presbyterian Banner.

Army Christian Associations.

WOODBURY, N. J., Dec. 28, 1861.

MESSRS. EDITORS:—During a recent visit to the camps beyond Washington, I was present and called to preside at a meeting of the Christian members of the First Regiment of New-Jersey volunteers, when the following Constitution and accompanying letter were adopted. The objects proposed will need no commendation.

At the request of the meeting, I ask an insertion in your paper.

Yours truly,

SAMUEL J. BAIRD.

CONSTITUTION.

ARTICLE I.

Name.

This Society shall be called "The Havelock Association."

ARTICLE II.

Object.

Its object is the moral and religious improvement of its members, and of their fellow soldiers of the regiment.

ARTICLE III.

Pledge.

The following Pledge, with a corresponding life and character, is the unalterable and only condition of membership.

It shall receive the solemn assent of each candidate in the presence of the Society, prior to the entry of his name upon the roll, viz.:

"Adoring the grace of the Triune God, and hoping for salvation through the blood of Christ, I promise to endeavor, by the help of the Holy Spirit, to live according to the rule of the Bible, and to be faithful to all the duties of a member of this Association.

ARTICLE IV.

Members.

Any person belonging to the regiment who has the requisite moral qualifications, may become a member; but none shall be entitled to any authority or distinction in the Association by virtue of official rank, or position in the Army. Nominations for membership shall lie over one meeting, and be approved by a majority of votes.

ARTICLE V.

Officers.

The officers of the Association shall be a President, one or more Vice-Presidents, a Secretary, a Treasurer, and any others that may from time to time be found expedient. The elections shall be held statedly on the first Mondays of January, April, July, and October, or as soon thereafter as shall be found convenient.

ARTICLE VI.

Business.

The design of the Association being moral and religious improvement, no other business shall be introduced. That object is to be pursued by the obtaining and distribution of suitable reading, the formation of Bible classes and prayer-meetings, and similar means. Wherever possible there shall be at least one devotional meeting of the Association every week. The exercises shall be conducted by the presiding officer, or by some suitable person designated by him.

ARTICLE VII.

Offences.

Any violation of the rules of Christian morality, if persisted in after proper measures have been used to reclaim the offender, shall be followed by expulsion. A member thus excluded shall not be restored, except upon full evidence of amendment and by a vote of two-thirds of those present, upon a motion, notice of which shall have been given at a previous meeting.

ARTICLE VIII.

By-Laws.

The Association may adopt such By-Laws as from time to time may be found needful.

ARTICLE IX.

Military Duty.

"The powers that be are ordained of God," and we are in arms in defence of his ordinance. It is therefore the duty of members of this Association to signalize themselves by the exemplary, conscientious and fearless performance of all the duties of good soldiers; by strict conformity to the regulations of the authorities, and prompt obedience to our officers; and by respecting the property of our enemies, and the lives and comfort of the wounded and vanquished, doing unnecessary "violence to no man."

ARTICLE X.

Personal Activity.

It shall be the duty of every member to use diligence in endeavoring to advance especially the spiritual welfare of his fellow-soldiers, and to induce all proper persons to unite with the Association.

ARTICLE XI.

Formation of other Associations.

It shall in like manner be a duty to seize every suitable opportunity for securing the organization of similar Associations, in all other regiments with which they may be brought into communication.

ARTICLE XII.

Motto and Badge.

The motto of the Association is the 5th verse of the 20th Psalm: "We will rejoice in thy salvation, in the name of our God we will set up our banners:" and its badge, an open Bible surmounted by a flag, emblazoned upon the American shield.

CIRCULAR LETTER.

The Members of the Havelock Association of the First Regiment of New-Jersey Volunteers to their Christian brethren of the Army.

BRETHREN AND FELLOW-SOLDIERS:—We herewith submit to you, the Constitution of our Association, and with it beg leave to state the reasons impelling us to the organization, and which we hope may induce you to join with us in this means of increasing the strength and efficiency of the moral and religious elements which are diffused through our army.

In dedicating ourselves to the service of our country in this perilous exigency, we did not close our eyes to the sacrifices which we must make and the privations we must endure. Nor were we ignorant, that of these, some of the first and most considerable were those of a moral and spiritual kind. We must leave behind us the family circle—the sphere of so many blessed influences, as well as of so many happy affections. We must forego the wider social circle which clusters around our households, and encompasses them with a pure and healthful moral atmosphere; and withdraw ourselves from the bosom of the Church of God, with all its saving agencies and heaven-born influences, its Sabbath Schools and Bible-classes, its conference, prayer and inquiry meetings. Of the importance of these societies—the family, the social circle and the church—and of the extent to which they are conservative of moral purity and saving influences among men, we need not speak. All recognize it, and none are so capable of a just estimate as those who, for their country's sake, are deprived of them.

The youth, who, it may be, has been tenderly trained in the bosom of a pious family, blessed with the pure and refining influences of maternal and sisterly love, surrounded by the congenial society which clusters about such a household—who has been consecrated to God from his birth, trained up in the bosom of the Church of Christ, and perhaps himself enrolled as a professed follower of the Lamb of God—finds himself suddenly stripped of all these privileges, these supports and restraints. He is withdrawn from home, and the family and social community, deprived of the society of woman, and separated from the organized company of God's people. He is cast, without protection or outward resource, into the midst of influences too often depraved and godless. His own moral and religious attitude unknown to his associates, he knows not to whom among them he may look for sympathy in his better sentiments or support in resisting the current of surrounding evil. Whilst thus, better principles, afraid of meeting with indignity, are too often concealed and suppressed, the vile are never ashamed to work vileness, nor to pour streams of pollution on all around. Need we point out the tendency of these things on the consistency of the most watchful, and the graces of the most prayerful and guarded? We address those who know it by painful experience.

We do not ignore nor disparage the services of the chaplains, for whose presence the Government has made such ample provision. The ministry is, indeed, a most important and Divinely-appointed means of grace. But before and fundamental to their offices are the Divinely-created Societies already named. And if the whole history of man exhibits such inadequate results from the joint influences of all combined, how inadequate must prove the unaided labors of our chaplains, however worthy and faithful.

It is as a partial remedy for the privations and evils to which we have alluded, that we have organized, THE HAVELOCK ASSOCIATION. The following are some of the advantages which we hope to realize from it.

1. It will constitute a means of separation from the power of surrounding evil, somewhat analogous to that which is realized in the Church of God. The very fact of an individual being a member of this Society, thus owning his allegiance to God, will both tend to restrain the depravity of others in his presence, and give him the courage of an avowed position, and lay upon him the obligation of consistency to pursue a course in accordance with the teachings of the Bible.

2. We hope thus to enjoy the advantages which are so great, of combination and organization, to the scattered moral influences among us. A few Christian men, scattered through a regiment, unknown to each other, unassociated and unorganized, are liable to be overborne and powerless amid the surrounding mass of hostile agencies. But if brought together, introduced to each other, combined and organized, they will exert an influence on each other and on their associates, which may control and transform the entire mass. On the one hand, Christian principles will be cherished in their own breasts, and a corresponding practice induced; and on the other, good influences thus generated and strengthened will be diffused on all around.

3. By means of the Association we hope to sustain and enjoy more fully the means of grace, not only as we shall rally to and uphold the hands of our faithful and honored chaplain, but by stimulating and giving directions and efficiency to individual effort in opening and sustaining Bible Classes, prayer-meetings, &c.

4. The Association will constitute a centre and agency of correspondence and communication with the churches and benevolent institutions at home, through which their benfactions may be appropriated, and their moral and religious influences be brought to bear, in such a manner, as to serve the greatest good of the troops.

5. Should we have the concurrence and coöperation of our brethren in other regiments and corps of the army, so as to secure in them generally the organization of Havelock Associations, we hope thereby to realize for ourselves and for all, the moral force which numbers gives, concentrated thus in behalf of the best interests of our troops, and through them, in behalf of the country we love.

With views such as these, fellow-soldiers, we address you, in the hope that wherever the proper materials occur, a Havelock Association may be formed, and our common prayers and energies be all combined and concentrated to the one great end of pervading our whole army with the spirit of prayer and the presence and influences of the Spirit of God. We make this proposition in no arrogant spirit of dictation or leadership, but actuated by zeal for a cause which is as dear to you as to us, and by a desire to secure the fullest and most harmonious concurrence and coöperation of all, in united labors on its behalf.

Shall we not, then, thus hope to present the sublime and glorious spectacle of such a host consecrated, not only to our country's cause, but to her blessed God, and to that great Captain of salvation, her only King. Thus may our army—pervaded with a spirit of reverent love for the Most High and trust in his Son—be assured of his smile upon our arms and his blessing upon our cause and country, and the Star-Spangled Banner hallowed by the loftiest associations, become the pledge alike of patriot hopes and yet higher glories, as we behold upon its waving folds in the broad stripes, red and white, tokens of saving blood and spotless righteousness, and in the blue field and bright stars, symbols of that heaven where the true soldiers of the Cross shall shine as stars forever.

R. B. YARD, *President.*

Havelock Association, 1st Reg., N. J. V.
J. B. WOODWARD, *Secretary.*
Camp Fairfax Seminary, Va.

☞ Papers favorable to the object please copy.

EUROPEAN CORRESPONDENCE.

THE PEACE NEWS FROM AMERICA—THE PRINCE OF WALES' VISIT TO AMERICA—AUTOGRAPH LETTER OF THE SON—A STATUE TO THE MEMORY OF THE FATHER—REVIEW OF THE YEAR 1861—HOME AND CONTINENTAL POLITICS—INDIA—DEATH OF LADY CANNING—A SEVERE WINTER AND ITS CONTRAST—THE OBITUARY OF 1861—MEN OF MARK FALLEN AT HOME AND ABROAD—DEATH OF PRINCIPAL CUNNINGHAM—HIS LIFE-STORY—HIS LAST DAYS—HIS GRAVE—THE UNIVERSAL CONCERT OF PRAYER.

LONDON, Jan. 4, 1862.

PEACE is the present watch-word here. The last news from America has given universal relief and satisfaction. We have, as yet, no definite information, but it clearly appears that President Lincoln and Mr. Seward are harmoniously (in concert with Lord Lyons,) seeking an amicable solution of the difficulty; and within two days more, we hope to hear that it is finally settled. The rebound in all kinds of stocks and shares, is very remarkable, and "meek-eyed peace," for a time threatened with deposition from her benignant throne, will now assume with firmness her gentle sway over hearts on both sides of the Atlantic, agitated, ruffled, and almost tempest-tossed. Prayer has thus been answered, and the Hearer of Prayer will solve other great questions to the glory of his name and the good of mankind.

It is now clearly ascertained that the visit of the Prince of Wales to the United States (as well as Canada,) was the suggestion of the lamented Prince Consort. He was emphatically a man of peace, and he desired to see the two great Anglo-Saxon nations in close accord in their relations, as well as in their vanguard leadership of the cause of progress and civilization. The universal garb of woe which clothes the people, is but the outward emblem of a great sorrow which has fallen upon the nation and stamped its memory in characters enduring, on all hearts. The Queen so lavishes her affection on his memory, that she instructs the Prince of Wales to write a letter (published this day) to the Council of the Horticultural Society (of which the deceased was the President,) declaring that instead of her own statue—as suggested by the late Prince—being erected in the gardens of the Society, *his* shall be raised. The Prince of Wales declares his intention to present the statue at his own expense. Steps will also be speedily taken to raise a monument on the site of the Hyde Park Great Exhibition of 1851. Statues and memorials of the Prince will be raised in Edinburgh and other places throughout the kingdom.

THE YEAR which has just closed, has been, if not an *annus mirabilis*, yet remarkable in many respects, and will undoubtedly contribute a chapter of great interest to the future historian of the second half of the nineteenth century, and as having been a period fraught with momentous consequences both as to the old world and the new. As to the Parliamentary session, it was almost, if not altogether, "unpolitical." Bills brought in by private members, for the enlargement of County and Borough franchises, as well as Berkeley's annual Ballot motion, were rejected. Lord Derby, in May last, vaunted the growing strength of his followers, declaring that "every election bore testimony to the increasing hold their opinions and principles had on the country." This is true only in one sense—there is political quietude or indifference, and also dislike to violent changes among the middle classes. The public mind has been absorbed by commercial anxiety and the American crisis; but Toryism will not be suffered to raise its head on high, especially as the Tory party are not free from suspicion (in spite of the real Liberalism of Bulwer, and of the sentimental talk of Lord Malmsbury,) of being any thing but favorable to the downfall of the political Popedom, and the expulsion of Austria from Venetia, and the possession by Italy, of her proper capital, Rome.

The Church Rate Question underwent a reverse in Parliament, as far as the Lords were concerned; but its opponents are more formidable, and more feared, also, than ever. D'Israeli has been rallying the clergy, and professes to secure to them safety. But even he hints at a compromise.

During the year, the income tax was reduced one penny—a great boon to literature, and religion also—and the paper duties were abolished. India, also, has received a new Constitution, and promises to be one of the most prosperous colonies of the Empire—the cultivation of cotton being powerfully stimulated by the Southern rebellion, and its varied resources being increasingly developed every year, by railways, irrigation, inland river trade, and the final and full recognition by Zemindars and Princes, of British supremacy. At the beginning of the year 1861, upwards of seven millions of the people in Hindoostan stood on the verge of starvation. The bounty of the home public came to the rescue, and the rains that fell in May and June, secured abundance. In that country, however, cholera has been raging, and the amalgamation of the Royal and Indian forces have not been unattended with great hardships to men in the flower of life, as the servants of the ever faithful and generous East India Company—men who trod in the footsteps of the Lawrences and the Clives, but by whom the cold blooded Indian Secretary, Sir Charles Wood, is regarded as having acted a heartless part, and dealt out but scanty justice. India for once was to be redeemed, and it has been done, and but for the recent lamented death of the excellent lady,

"a woman nobly planned
To warn, to comfort or command,"

a discriminating and generous friend of the distressed, the present Viceroy might now come home, yielding, as he does, his place to Lord Elgin, the most successful and fortunate of Indian Governor-Generals.

As to Continental politics, your readers, I trust, have had sufficiently clear statements as to the various countries and their condition, especially as to Russia, in its relation to Poland; Austria, with its financial bankruptcy, its playing at Constitutional Government, while Hungary is still trodden; Italy—Cavour dead, but Liberty surviving, and Garibaldi standing by the "Honest Man" and King, and by Ricasoli also; Prussia—death on the 2d of January, 1861, of Frederic William, the succession of his brother under the title of William I., the attempt made at Baden to assassinate him, and his coronation, with its festivities; Turkey—a weak Sultan dead and gone, a stronger one in his place, and yet either unable or unwilling to carry out promised financial and political reforms; Spain—becoming prosperous and ambitious, her seizure of San Domingo, her expedition to Mexico, thereby resuming her place among the Great Powers, persecuting poor Protestants under the not unfelt reprobation of enlightened Europe—all these facts, with their belongings and antecedents have been duly chronicled and commented on by your correspondent.

Socially, 1861 began badly. We had the sternest and bitterest of Winters, and a frost which set in at Christmas, continued without intermission for weeks, and which had no parallel here since 1814, turned thousands not only of the destitute, but of the industrious poor, into the streets and highways as paupers. The machinery of our Poor Laws was found inadequate to the crisis; immense sums in private gifts sent to the City Magistrates, were distributed, and yet the tendency was to degrade; when at last, in Heaven's bounty, the frost broke up, and an infinity of industrial employments, suspended by stress of weather, were resumed. The *present* Winter is singularly mild. Trade, also, for a time early in the year, was at a stand-still. The rate of discount was raised on the 7th of January, to 7 per cent. at the Bank of England. Early in February, terrible shipwrecks occurred in the English channel and along the coast, entailing severe losses to the underwriters; while at Blackburn, and elsewhere, "strikes" were commenced, rendering idle in a few days thousands of looms.

The Obituary for 1861 indicates some memorable blanks in the different departments of literature, science, and art, as well as among the great and noble of the land; although *latest* the death of the Prince Consort claims the sad preëminence. Within the year the Queen has been made to know her two great trials—the loss of the Duchess of Kent almost destroying the balance of her mind for a time, but special strength given her now to bear up under a still more terrible bereavement. Of the peerage, upwards of twenty have died, including Lord Chancellor Campbell, born in a Scottish Manse, and Lord Herbert of Lea, the flower of the Peelite party, and Montague Villiers, the Evangelical Bishop of Durham, of fragrant memory. One titled lady, the special "favorite" of George IV., the Dowager Marchioness of Conyngham, has just expired, at the advanced age of ninety-two years; suggesting a parallel in Court history in connexion with the days of the second Charles, and bringing up at once the memories of an evil past comparatively recent, as contrasted with the *purity* of the circle which were gathered around Victoria in her Palace halls.

Among conspicuous men who have died was Sir Richmond C. Shakespeare, a cousin of Thackeray the author, (who pays to his memory a just and beautiful tribute,) and an Indian officer of great bravery as well as largest military attainments, and "a hand open as day" to all in distress. So, too, passed away Sir Edward Bowater, tator and guardian at Nice to our young Prince Leopold, dying on the very day that Prince Albert expired, and the poor child, without one to comfort him, was convulsed by an excessive sorrow, (produced by the telegram opened in his presence,) which could only find vent in the cry, oft-repeated, "My mother! my mother! take me to my mother!"

Literary and scientific circles will never more behold Herbert Coleridge; Bishop, the Astronomer; Danby, the painter, of golden sunsets, and the Royal Academician; Thomas Flower Ellis, the friend and literary executor of Macaulay; the gifted Elizabeth Barret Browning; Francis, the veteran sculptor; Baudinel, the courteous and careful Librarian of the Bodlean, Oxford; Dr. Oliver, the learned historian of Exeter; Mrs. Geldart, a well-known writer of juvenile books; the Rev. J. W. Cunningham, Vicar of Harrow, the well-known "Evangelical," for half a century, and author of "The Velvet Cushion;" Dr. Southwood Smith, a great Sanatory Reformer, and who was also one of the founders of the *Westminster Review;* Dr. Donaldson, of Cambridge, a famous philologist; Robert Jamison, the philanthropist; Professor Stephen Reay, the eminent Arabic scholar; Mr. Macgregor Laird, the great African explorer, and his friend, Mr. John Brown, the geographer, and biographer of Arctic discovery.

Among other more miscellaneous deaths, are those of the Abbé Lacordaire, the ex-St. Simonian; of Mr. Commissary Filder, of Crimean celebrity; of Mr. Launcellot Shadwell, who translated Homer into English hexameters; of James Douglas, of Cavers, in Scotland, the well-known pamphleteer on prophetical and anti-Popery questions; of James Braidwood, (a true hero,) who perished in the great fire at London Bridge; of "The McIntosh" head of one of the oldest clans in Scotland; of Joseph Tasker, the millionaire; of Richard Grainger, of Newcastle-on-Tyne, who rose from poverty to become the decorator and street-builder of his native town; of Charles Tilt, the Fleet street publisher; of Oastler, the "factory King," a tribune among the Lancashire men; of John Murray, the "buckle-beggar" of Gretna Green celebrity; of Mrs. Catherine Burret, who died a few months since, near the Old Kent Road, London, assuring her friends, through a newspaper communication that she was a veritable "descendant of Mahoney the Fair, and of the Princess Sarah, daughter of Brian Borolime!"

Such an enumeration as this, of "death's doings," is not uninstructive, if rightly considered, in connexion with the blanks caused by the Destroyer in our own private and social circles—of the loss of dearest friends, whose spirits, launching out on the ocean of eternity, have gone away,

"To return, never more, never more!"

PRINCIPAL CUNNINGHAM, whose decease I indicated in the Postscript to my last communication, was one whose memory will be sacred and precious to all generations—specially in Scotland, and amongst the great Presbyterian family throughout the world. He was preëminently *a man*—physically so in his lofty stature, in his well-knit frame, in that Jove-like "*os frontis*," and that leonine aspect which made him like another Hector in the conflict. How do the reminiscences of great anti-Disruptive struggles rise up in connexion with the dismay produced among the Moderates by the assaults of Cunningham, and by his complete overthrow of their ablest champion! It was as if a shower of hand-grenades had fallen and burst in their ranks. And yet he had no personal enmities; he was singularly gentle, kindly, and accessible. But for *principle* he stood up always, and double-mindedness and trimming in Church polity, received from him no mercy.

His illness was short, at first mild, but terminating in pleurisy, it soon came to a fatal issue. On Monday he was so far convalescent as to come to his class-room; on Tuesday he had a relapse; early on Saturday morning, 14th December, (the same day on which Prince Albert died,) he breathed his last. His mind was clear and calm, his faith firm and strong. He saw two of his dearest friends a few hours before his death, and committed to them his MS. Lectures, for publication. He perished in the midst of College work, but the influence of his writings, lectures, and personal communications addressed to students—twelve hundred of whom, many now ministers, have sat at his feet as their Professor of Church History and Divinity—will remain fresh and fruit-bearing for generations to come. Dr. Cunningham was only in his fifty-seventh year, and leaves a widow and seven children. Some years ago a magnificent present was made him, in money, expressive of the appreciation in which the office-bearers and members of the Free Church regarded him. There is reason to believe that, as his early student-companion, John Brown Patterson, of Falkirk, sunk under pulpit and pastoral labors, so Cunningham fell under the too heavy task of Free Church battles and responsibilities. The *Scottish Guardian* pays the following tribute to his memory:

No one can look back upon the thirty years of such public life, and remember the great and varied services which he was honored to render as an able preacher of the Gospel—a powerful vindicator of truth in successive controversies—a champion in debate, whether on the platform or on the floor of the General Assembly, before and at the Disruption—and subsequently as a most succesful and much loved Professor of Theology, through whose hands more than twelve hundred students, now settled, first and last, had the privilege of passing—none who can recall, however faintly, such a career as this, can doubt that he was a man of rare and extraordinary qualities, and that his loss at the present time to the Church of which he was a minister, and to the cause of evangelical truth generally, is in many respects irreparable. We believe we but echo the universal and well-founded conviction when we say, that for soundness as a theologian, extent and accuracy of learning, clearness of statement, fine balance of judgment, force of logic, and power of impression, he was unrivalled. The loss of such a man in middle life, and amid the present aspects of philosophical and religious error both at home and abroad, cannot be too deeply lamented. Of the native warmth of his heart and the downright honesty of his character we say nothing. All who knew him were well aware of such qualities; but strange as it may seem to many, they were not less aware of the gentleness and generosity of his nature, his essential kindness and disposition to yield to others, and his profound sense of personal unworthiness. Hence, among other reasons, the intense affection as well as admiration of his students and friends.

Those who are called more fully to write his life and times will have many interesting points to record, such as his high distinction as a scholar and attainments as a student—the inseparable companion of that *facile princeps* in scholarship, John Brown Patterson—his debating powers in the Theological Society—his place among the Divinity Hall reformers—his first appearance in the General Assembly, when, in the course of a speech of twenty minutes, he verified all the anticipations of his companions and friends, and electrified the crowded house—his courageous warfare with Rome and successful vindication of Protestant truth—his defence of the Church from assailants without, and earnest and unwearied contendings for restoration to Scriptural and constitutional purity within—his cordial friendship and coöperation with Chalmers, in the general business of the Church—his noble part with others in the ever memorable Disruption—his visit to America—his subsequent charge in the New College for sixteen years—his admirable Courses of Lectures, both in Church History and Divinity—and his training of so many hundred young men for the ministry, numbers of whom are now settled as ministers or missionaries both at home and abroad, and who will ever retain, with indelible impression of his sound teaching, the highest sense of his kindness and condescension as a teacher. His authorship, also, will be remembered, though comparatively limited, and latterly altogether confined to periodical literature—at once theological and philosophical.

The prominent actors in the Disruption of the Scottish Church, both civilians and ecclesiastics, are rapidly passing away. Lord Aberdeen, Sir James Graham, Dr. Jas. Robertson, of Edinburgh, Andrew Gray, of Perth, have all recently fallen, and now Dr. Cunningham is added to the number. While the Free Church is reminded, by the removal of her more eminent men, not to trust in man, but in her Divine Head, who never dies, it is surely matter of gratitude, and has proved a great advantage to her, that so many of her ablest and most worthy sons have been spared so long to direct and consolidate the arrangements of an institution which some short-sighted and unbelieving men imagined was to pass away in a few years, but which, founded as it is on old Scriptural and constitutional principles, the events of the day are rather indicating is destined for ever growing vigor and perpetuity.

Dr. Cunningham was buried with public honors, and he sleeps near to the honored dust of Thomas Chalmers, in the Grange Cemetery of Edinburgh.

The Rev. Mr. Rainy, of the Free High Church, Edinburgh, of which Dr. Cunningham was an office-bearer, referred, on the Lord's day after his decease, to the last moments of this remarkable man, as follows:

It was only about eight hours before his death that hope was given up, and the fact that his change was approaching was made known to him. This solemn prospect may thus be said to have come suddenly upon him, as already very near. You will be prepared to believe that he received the intimation calmly, and without manifesting the least wish to disguise from himself his real situation, even for a moment. At the same time he intimated that had it been left to him to choose, he could have wished to have had somewhat longer warning, for the purpose of dwelling deliberately on the precious truths of the faith in the prospect of so great an event as death. But, accepting the Lord's will in the course of things which he had appointed—viz., that with very short notice, and under great bodily weakness, he should be called to contemplate his approaching end, he said that he did so, as one who cast himself entirely on Christ. He expressed his confidence in Christ, not only as his own Saviour, and one able to save, but as one who, he was assured, would give him the sense and comfort of Gospel truth according to his need, in the unexpected circumstances in which he was placed. He was enabled to express his hope of "entering the kingdom," and to charge his family and friends to meet him there. He was enabled also to express his confidence that, amid many and great sins and infirmities, as he said, what he had mainly sought was to glorify God; which you will believe was not said in any other spirit than that of giving his dying testimony of the Lord's mercy toward him.

No one could listen to him without being deeply convinced that the calmness he displayed, and the hope he expressed, rose out of the earnest exercise of faith on his part, as a sinful man on a Saviour whom he had learned to know and prize. It gave me, I trust, a fresh lesson as to the preciousness of the Gospel, when I saw him with whom we associated all that was masterly and learned in theological science, giving utterance, with laboring breath, and with an earnestness and thankfulness that seemed to fill his whole heart, to his conviction of the truth and worth of such statements as this, that "He died for us that whether we wake or sleep we might live together with him;" "The blood of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, cleanseth us from all sin;" "He died for us, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God." His particular expressions I cannot trust myself to attempt to repeat now. Let us, also, dear brethren, learn the meaning and the worth of these truths now while we live; so shall we also, like him, have them for our comfort when we die.

The Lord Provost of Edinburgh paid a special tribute to the memory of Cunningham, and the Town Council unanimously responded to his eulogy.

Dr. Robert Buchanan, of Glasgow, preached a special funeral sermon, and with his usual discrimination brought out his characteristic traits and services. He was indeed emphatically a Theologian of the Calvinistic School—on this side, at least, of the Atlantic, the ablest.

I am sure the particulars thus furnished will be prized by many of your readers who remember the visit of Dr. Cunningham to the United States, and who nobly and generously contributed of their substance to aid the Free Church in her early struggles. And I cannot help adding, that the remembrance of such visits and such responses, both on the part of Scottish and Irish Presbyterian deputations, makes it doubly distressing even to contemplate the possibility of international war.

PRAYER AND THE NEW YEAR have once more been identified to the great comfort and encouragement of many of the people of God, as well as, doubtless, to his glory, in the subsequent outpouring of the Holy Spirit. The minds of Christians have been prepared for this Conc