

Presbyterian Banner.

PITTSBURGH, DECEMBER 9, 1863.

The War.

At this time last week, the ARMY of the POTOMAC was on the South side of the Rapidan, and separated from the rebel army by the small stream, Mill Run, or Mill Creek; and a battle was supposed by after writers to be imminent. We had our doubts. We stated, two or three weeks ago, the probability that Gen. Meade and Lee, and their armies, would keep watch upon each other, till Spring, at some point between Washington and Richmond, so far from either city as not to be annoying. While both are watchful, neither is able to do anything very effective against the other. The Confederates, finding an invasion of the North to be impracticable with the armies they have, give Lee but enough to cover their capital; and our own Government, needing strong forces in Tennessee, weakened Meade's army to the condition in which it could but make Washington secure. When Lee advanced, Meade retreated, evidently by authority, to Centerville, where he could receive battle with assurance of victory. Lee then retreated to the Rappahannock, and having spared some of his men to help Bragg at Chickamauga, Meade advanced. It was now Lee's turn to retreat, till he would come to a place where he could fight safely. Meade then prudently retired. Meade now holds the Rappahannock, and Lee the Rapidan. Most of our army is on the South side of the former; while a portion of the enemy is on the North side of the latter.

GEN. BURNSIDE, at last advised, was still at Knoxville. He had successfully repulsed the assaults of Longstreet. Gen. Sherman had arrived, and Longstreet was retreating. We hope that he may be caught and defeated, cunning and brave though he is. GEN. GRANT'S operations for the week have been concealed from the public. His success over Bragg, in the late battle, has caused Bragg's removal from his command. He is succeeded by Gen. Hardee. It is said that Grant is arranging to move on Atlanta. We doubt it. And yet we know that the inducement to do so is very great. Atlanta is 136 miles from Chattanooga, and one of the most important places to the rebel cause. It is finely situated; is an important railroad centre; and contains about 26,000 inhabitants. It is the great military depot of rebellion, and it is here that the naval supplies are stored. There is an Army at Atlanta, a chemical laboratory, and a sword factory. Shells, solid shot, siege guns, field pieces, and mountain howitzers, are cast there. Percussion caps, cavalry saddles, artillery harness, gun carriages, ambulances, army wagons, tents, and all the shoes and clothing for the Western department are made at Atlanta. Many turns out muskets of the Springfield pattern, and rolling mills stretch the plates of the rebel iron-roads. Large quantities of meat are packed there for the army. It may well be termed the most flourishing city of the Southern Confederacy, though the first house was built there as late as 1845.

To hold East Tennessee, to keep up his supplies, and to advance to Atlanta, Grant could still need large reinforcements. GEN. BANKS makes some progress in Western Texas.

CHARLESTON is visited by some twelve thousand shells a day, many of which do damage. Sumpter holds out. The rebels have a pertinacity which is to be admired, though it is, to us, so expensive.

Organization of Congress. Congress met in Washington on Monday 7th inst. The Union party had held their caucus on Saturday evening, and agreed to support Mr. Colfax, of Indiana, for Speaker. Mr. C. was accordingly elected, on the first ballot, and had a majority of twenty-one votes. This is probably a correct indication of party strength in the House. The majority is not large; but is sufficient to thoroughly sustain the administration.

Mr. Colfax is a gentleman of much ability and experience. He has a good reputation. He is a firm supporter of Mr. Lincoln, but is not a violent party man. The readiness with which the organization of the House was effected, is an indication of good temper, and of a disposition to go to work. The President's Message was sent in on Wednesday afternoon. We shall hope to put it on record next week. Most of our readers will have seen it previously, in the Dallas. But it is a document which will read, and ponder, and which may almost lay by for reference.

Report of J. D. Williams, RECEIVING AGENT OF THE BOARDS OF DOMESTIC MISSIONS, EDUCATION, PUBLICATION, CHURCH EXTENSION, AND FUND FOR SUPERANNUATED MINISTERS, FOR OCTOBER AND NOVEMBER, 1863.

DOMESTIC MISSIONS. Synod of Pittsburgh.—Blairsville Presbytery: Blairsville ch., \$68.00; Greensburg Sabbath ch., \$4.00; New Alexandria ch., \$23.50; Mt. Zion, \$15.00; Bethel, \$4.41; New Salem, \$1.00. Blairsville Presbytery: Parkersburg Sabbath ch., \$7.55; Bethel, \$13.00; Leechburg, \$1.26; West Lebanon, \$1.15; Bethel, \$1.00; Bethel and Jacksonville, \$1.00.

Redstone Presbytery: McKeesport ch., \$60.00; Mt. Pleasant, \$11.70; Brownsville and Little Redstone, \$20.00. Ohio Presbytery: Centre ch., \$5.00; Sharon, \$12.75; Cantonburg, \$16.00; Miller's Run, \$12.85; Temperanceville, \$8.87; Mt. Washington, \$18.00; Pittsburgh ch., \$706.43; Pittsburgh 2d, (Sabb. Sch.), \$28.00, monthly contributions, \$12.75; Clinton Presbytery: Leechwood ch., \$10.00; New Rehoboth, \$10.75; Clinton, \$2.00. Synod of Allegheny.—Beaver Presbytery: New-ark ch., \$20.00. Allegheny Presbytery: Plain Grove ch., \$4.00; Centre, \$16.85. Synod of Westing.—Washington Presbytery: Washington ch., \$68.00. St. Clairsville Presbytery: Nottingham ch., \$1.00. Steubenville Presbytery: New Philadelphia ch., \$3.55; Oakridge, \$2.20; Steubenville 2d, \$24.44; Bloomfield, \$6.00; Island Creek, \$8.00; Steubenville 1st, \$4.54; Hartsville, \$5.70. Synod of Ohio.—Wesley Presbytery: Wooster ch., \$28.85; Holmesville, \$8.00; Cones, \$9.83; Mt. Hope, \$12.25. Richmond Presbytery: Ashland ch., \$28.11; Mansfield, \$26.00. Zanesville Presbytery: Zanesville 2d ch., \$9.00. Mt. Pleasant, \$18.00; James Paul, Esq., (proceeds of Bee-Hive), \$10.00.

EDUCATION. Synod of Pittsburgh.—Redstone Presbytery: McKeesport ch., \$1.00; Mt. Pleasant, \$20.00. Clinton Presbytery: New Rehoboth ch., \$4.00; Clinton, \$5.00. Allegheny Presbytery: Glade Run ch., \$8.00; Buffalo, \$3.00. Synod of Westing.—Steubenville Presbytery: Hartsville ch., \$5.00. Synod of Ohio.—Richland Presbytery: Ulich ch., \$1.70. Zanesville Presbytery: Duncan's Falls ch., \$3.85.

PUBLICATION. Synod of Pittsburgh.—Redstone Presbytery: Uniontown ch., (for Soldiers and Sailors), \$60.00. Synod of Westing.—Steubenville Presbytery: Bloomfield ch., \$2.65. Synod of Ohio.—Wesley Presbytery: Wooster ch., \$2.65; Apple Creek, \$9.00; Mt. Eaton, \$5.00; Berlin, \$7.00. Richland Presbytery: Martinsburg ch., \$14.00; Mt. Pleasant, \$7.58. Zanesville Presbytery: Zanesville 1st ch., \$4.00. Uniontown ch., \$4.00.

CHURCH EXTENSION. Synod of Pittsburgh.—Salisbury Presbytery: Boiling Spring ch., \$6.00. Redstone Presbytery: New Providence and Jefferson chs., \$16.00; Uniontown, \$29.00. Allegheny Presbytery: Hartsville ch., \$5.00. Synod of Westing.—Washington Presbytery: Uniontown ch., (for Soldiers and Sailors), \$60.00. Synod of Ohio.—Wesley Presbytery: Hartsville ch., \$5.00. Synod of Ohio.—Wesley Presbytery: Apple Creek ch., \$9.00; Mt. Eaton, \$5.00; Jerusalem, \$7.57. Richland Presbytery: Ulich ch., \$1.00; Shelby, \$6.00; Waterford, \$4.00; Martinsburg, \$7.00; Ashland, \$2.76; Bellville, \$2.00; Mt. Pleasant, \$2.00.

SUPERANNUATED MINISTERS' FUND. Synod of Pittsburgh.—Blairsville Presbytery: Uniontown ch., \$29.00; Pleasant Grove, \$17.00. Redstone Presbytery: New Providence and Jefferson chs., \$10.00; Rehoboth, \$8.00. Clinton Presbytery: Mt. Pleasant ch., \$7.00. Allegheny Presbytery: Tarentum ch., \$3.35; Centre, \$3.15. Synod of Westing.—Washington Presbytery: Uniontown ch., \$29.00. Synod of Ohio.—Wesley Presbytery: Berlin ch., \$7.38. Richland Presbytery: Waterford ch., \$4.00. Total, \$128.85.

MISSIONARY CLOTHING. Ladies of Pittsburgh 1st ch., a box valued at \$248.00. Ladies of Pittsburgh 2d ch., \$98.50. Ladies of Allegheny City Central ch., \$198.00. Total, \$644.50. J. D. WILLIAMS, RECEIVING AGENT, 114 Smithfield Street, Pittsburgh, November 30, 1863.

For the Presbyterian Banner.—The Board of Colportage acknowledges the following donations during the month of November: Scroggs Cong., Allegheny, \$14.00. Murrayville, Allegheny, \$1.00. Rev. J. W. Hallett, to send religious reading to soldiers, per Ch. Com., \$30.00. Rev. J. W. Hallett, to send religious reading to soldiers, per Ch. Com., \$5.00. Master Alexander Shields, of Jacksonville, Indiana County, to send religious reading to soldiers, per Ch. Com., \$6.00. Master Joseph Shields, of Jacksonville, Indiana County, \$26. Mrs. Margaret Anna Stricker, \$1's worth of books, per Ch. Com., \$1.29. Lawrence's Sabbath School collection, \$68.70. F. G. BAILEY, Treasurer. John Culbertson, Librarian.

PRESBYTERIAL NOTICES. THE PRESBYTERY OF ALLEGHENY CITY will hold its next meeting in the First German church of Manchester, to commence on the last Tuesday (29th) of December, at 10 o'clock A. M. The meeting is to be opened with a sermon by the Rev. Gilbert M. Foster, pastor of the Pine Creek church. W. ANNAN, Stated Clerk. THE PRESBYTERY OF SALTSBURG stands adjourned to meet in Kittanning, on the last Tuesday (29th) of December. W. W. WOODEN, Stated Clerk. THE PRESBYTERY OF ALLEGHENY stands adjourned to meet at Mt. Zion ch., on the second Tuesday of December, at 11 o'clock A. M. J. B. COULTER, Stated Clerk.

A Grateful Acknowledgment. Messrs. Editors.—The writer and his family have lately been called to sympathize deeply with the military brethren and their families who in time of need have been so kindly and generously treated by the churches, and therefore feel constrained to ask the privilege of making public acknowledgment. On Thanksgiving—which proved to us a very happy day—at the close of the public services, the congregation requested the pastor to read a little what, as business, of importance would be brought before them. The result was, that on the following Saturday, the day of preparation, the pastor, at the ladies' request, handed over to their pastor the biggest roll of bank bills that he has been his privilege to handle lately (\$165), and that a short line from a visit to his friends in the city that they would make it two hundred dollars. This liberality has truly affected us, as it is replete with necessities. That the authors of this noble generosity may inherit the true riches, and occupy mansions of eternal rest, is the daily prayer of their unworthy pastor. B. C. CHAPMAN.

A Surprise. Messrs. Editors.—Thanksgiving day in Bethel congregation was one of such interest as to be long remembered. The day was pleasant, and the congregation large. The pastor had returned, and a short line from a visit to his friends in Union County, Pa., and also to the city of Brothly Love. The services of the morning consisted of a prayer-meeting, followed, as usual, by Thanksgiving sermon and other appropriate exercises. At the close of these services, contributions were taken up for the Christian Commission, in connection with Church Extension, to the amount of nearly seventy dollars. When the people were dismissed, one of the officers read and gave notice that the congregation would now retire to the residence of the pastor, where a public dinner was in waiting. And just here, Messrs. Editors, we take up the subject of surprise, and come to the pastor. What does it mean? Come and see. The pastor starts for his residence, followed by the Book to the number of about two hundred and thirty persons. Some few could not be present. In the yard to the North-East of his residence, all were brought to a halt and formed in a circle. The pastor, with the aid of the congregation, was all well and attentive, Prof. Stillely, of Bethel Academy, came forward, as the representative of the congregation, and delivered a most interesting, instructive, and affectionate

sermon.—rehearsing the long-continued pastorate of nearly thirty-two years, its trials and vicissitudes, with the love and affection of the people which he held in his heart, well settled with bank notes, amounting to the handsome and most liberal sum of two hundred dollars. After a short response to the pastor, a prayer was given to advance to the dinner table, where a feast was prepared with which kings and nobles might well regard their feast and satisfy their appetites. It was held in a hall, well fitted with the good things of this life. After all were served, to the number of two hundred and thirty or thereabouts, there was a large surplus left over to satisfy half as many more. And if not twelve, more than seven barrels full of these good things, there was a large surplus left over. But, Messrs. 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