

Presbyterian Banner.

PITTSBURGH, WEDNESDAY, FEB. 24, 1864.

NEEDLESS ALARMS.

The Gospel has been the object of hatred and unending assault by the enemies of the truth, from its first promulgation until now. Nor does it seem probable that Satan and wicked men will speedily discontinue their attacks.

But these fears have all been groundless. The foundations remain as firm as at the first. Not a single assault has been successful. The Chariot of Salvation in its onward progress has crushed in the dust one after another of its proudest and most defiant enemies.

In support of this it is only necessary to refer to the fate of all the different attacks upon the common faith of the Christian world during the last one hundred years, each of which threatened untold damage, and had the effect of producing more or less alarm.

Great changes have taken place in the position of those formerly slaves, since the outbreak of this wicked rebellion which has brought such calamity upon our land. The first movement was the declaration of Gen. BUTLER that slaves were "contrabands" of war, and must consequently be taken from the rebels, because their labor supplied the means of war.

But a greater work still remains to be done. These freedmen are for the most part very ignorant, unable to read or write, having scarcely any proper conception of ordinary business; and many of them are grossly immoral. These are the inevitable results of the bondage and degradation to which they have been so long subjected.

Our Board of Foreign Missions has always been the favorite Board of our Church, among the people. It has received their largest contributions, and has elicited a deeper interest than any other.

Just complaint is often made concerning the indifference manifested toward strangers in our churches. In most of the city churches there are sextons whose duty it is, in connection with other things, to invite strangers to comfortable seats in a polite manner.

at all of this kind is made, and the stranger is left to seat himself as best he may; the regular attendants rarely troubling themselves about others. This ought not to be. Our churches ought to be as attractive as possible, and the people should not fail to render themselves pleasing to all, and to make strangers feel themselves welcome.

But at the same time, strangers should not be too easily hurt in this particular. Most generally the fault arises from sheer thoughtlessness. The people feel kindly to the stranger and would gladly give him a place in their pews, but they have not been accustomed to manifest a real politeness which undoubtedly has a place in their hearts.

And if at times some church should declare by look or manner that the corner of the pew occupied by you is grudged, do not be alarmed; sit still, and enjoy the services. A very proper course was pursued by a somewhat noted politician from Pickaway, Ohio, who attended the Convention in Philadelphia, in 1848, who nominated Gen. TAYLOR for the Presidency.

The Western Presbyterian.—This is the title of a new publication issued monthly at Louisville, Ky. The original intention was a weekly, but the present form has been substituted. We advise the publishers to return to their first plan.

Day of Prayer for Schools and Colleges.—The last Thursday of February is at hand. Its observance as a day of prayer for the youth of the Church has been for many years recommended by our General Assembly; and it has been followed by the most blessed results.

THE FREEDMEN OF THE SOUTH. Great changes have taken place in the position of those formerly slaves, since the outbreak of this wicked rebellion which has brought such calamity upon our land. The first movement was the declaration of Gen. BUTLER that slaves were "contrabands" of war, and must consequently be taken from the rebels, because their labor supplied the means of war.

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NEWS OF THE CHURCHES AND MINISTERS. PRESBYTERIAN. Old School.—The pastoral relation between the Rev. James Allison and the church of Sewickley, was dissolved by the Presbytery of Allegheny City, on Thursday, the 18th inst. Mr. Allison requested this action, that he might be able to devote himself entirely to the interests of the Presbyterian Banner, of which he is one of the editors and proprietors.

German Reformed.—The Board of Visitors of the Theological Seminary finding that Dr. Nevin could not be obtained to supply the place of Dr. Schaaf during his two years' absence from the Seminary, after mature deliberation, have unanimously invited the Rev. Thos. G. Appleton, Greenville, Pa., to accept of the position. They also raised the appropriation to beneficiaries from one hundred to one hundred and twenty dollars.

METHODIST. The N. Y. Christian Advocate knows but three M. E. churches out of fifty-three in that city and Brooklyn free from debt, and thinks \$250,000 a low estimate of the amount of indebtedness. Gen. Banks has given direction for all the Methodist churches of New Orleans to be taken under direct orders from the Secretary of War. They will all be closed save two. The Missionary Society will send preachers to all the pulpits.

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of the moneyed families of the church threaten to remove their connection in the event of Mr. Stewart remaining. The congregation agreed to acquiesce in the request of Mr. Stewart, and passed a series of resolutions commendatory of him as a Christian and a minister of the Gospel. It was then voted to present him, as a token of regard, a quarter's salary, \$500. This was afterwards increased by voluntary contributions to \$1,000.

On the first Sabbath in February, ten persons were received into the Presbyterian church of Sing Sing, New York, under the pastoral care of the Rev. W. Phraner, nine of whom were admitted on profession of their faith. Since the "week of prayer," unusual interest has been manifested, and the interest continues.

The Presbyterian church of Antrim, Presbytery of St. Clairsville, has enjoyed a most precious season of the outpouring of the Spirit of God. The church being without a pastor, Rev. W. M. Ferguson, on invitation of the Session, preached a series of sermons there last week, which were blessed as the means of greatly reviving and strengthening the membership. Seventeen were added to the communion, mostly on examination. Eleven of these were heads of families. Others are inquiring after the way of peace. The brethren here are greatly encouraged. They have given a call to Rev. Mr. Dool to become their pastor.

Mr. John B. Reed, a licentiate under care of Washington Presbytery, has received a call from the church at Parkersburg, West Virginia.

New School.—Rev. Henry Darling, D.D., late of Philadelphia, was installed pastor of the Fourth Presbyterian church of Albany, N. Y., on the 11th inst. The sermon was preached by Rev. Dr. Kirk, of Boston, who had been the first pastor of the church.

The venerable and widely known Rev. Caleb Pitkin, of Hudson, Ohio, died here, at the age of eighty-three years. He was one of the founders of the Western Reserve College, also one of its first Trustees, and held that position until his decease, over thirty years.

United.—Rev. Peter Ballions, pastor of the United Presbyterian church of Troy, died on Saturday last, aged seventy-three years. Dr. Ballions was originally an Englishman, born in Perthshire, Scotland, in December, 1791. He came to this country in 1817, and was pastor of a church in South Argyle, Washington county, for about six years. In 1824 he removed to Albany, to accept the professorship of languages in the academy. As a teacher and a moral writer, he was eminently successful, and his English, Latin, and Greek Grammars, with other similar works, are recognized as Standard text-books wherever the cause of education has spread. In 1830, he founded the Associate Presbyterian church of this city, now known as the Third church, and he has since been its sole pastor—coming here to reside in 1848.

The Rev. Thos. Hanna, D.D., of Washington, Pa., died on the 9th inst., from an attack of paralysis. He was a well-known minister of the Associate Church, and after the union, of the United Presbyterian Church. His widow has been for many years the successful Principal of the Young Ladies' Seminary at Washington.

The Fourth United Presbyterian church of Allegheny City, Rev. Mr. Dickey's, was dedicated to the worship of Jehovah, on Sabbath the 21st inst. The morning sermon was preached by the pastor; that of the afternoon by the Rev. J. T. McClure; and that of the evening by the Rev. Dr. Pressly. The material of the building is brick, and the style is plain Gothic; windows and panels of pews and pulpit corresponding; also the plain white arch in rear of the pulpit. The entire cost of the building, finished, was \$15,000—lot, \$5,000; making a total of \$20,000. We are pleased to learn that \$8,000, the sum necessary to meet the last instalments due for the purchase of the lot and the erection of the building, was subscribed by the members of the congregation. The church may therefore be considered free from debt.

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There is a powerful work of grace in the Baptist church of Pemberton, Me. Forty-seven persons presented themselves for prayer at one of the meetings, twenty of whom were young men. God is greatly prospering that venerable church, under the care of its excellent pastor, Rev. L. G. Beck.

At South Berwick, in the same State, a glorious work has been in progress for some time; the work is increasing and spreading throughout the town, while scores are anxiously inquiring what they shall do to be saved. Skeptics, scoffers, and stout-hearted infidels are bowing before the Prince of Peace.

CONGREGATIONAL. The Rev. Dr. Sturtevant, President of Illinois College, went out some time last Summer, as a delegate from some Congregational body, to the Congregational Union of England, and expected, as a matter of course, to be allowed to address that convocation. This permission was granted, but coupled with it was the mandate, "not one word must be said on the affairs of this country." He says that in Edinburgh he tried to get an audience to address with respect to American matters, but not a man would listen. He thinks that in private he did change the mind of one man, but is not certain! Dr. Sturtevant is of opinion that Henry Ward Beecher probably did confirm a small section which believed before, and did not see converting, but only enlightening. The worthy Dr. has come home decidedly convinced, that on the whole it is not of much consequence what John Bull does think of us. As for himself he declared that "he never meant more to care what an Englishman thought or said." It is about time this going to England to influence public sentiment there, was stopped. The way to influence the mind of England, is to put down the rebellion as quickly and as effectually as possible.

Revival in Camp. WARREN, Va., Feb. 16, 1864. Geo. H. Stuart, Esq.—My Dear Sir: I have much pleasure in writing you a few lines, informing you and our beloved pastor, the Rev. Dr. Wylie, of the great change which has taken place in our regiment and throughout our whole brigade, since three of your esteemed ministers, belonging to the Christian Commission have come among us—Rev. J. P. Caldwell, J. G. Rankin, and M. M. Rice—the two former of your own State, the latter of the State of New York. These brethren hold prayer-meetings every evening of the week, in their rooms in the Court House, and preach to the different regiments on the Sabbath.

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particular region of the Church and the country. I have been led to these suggestions from noticing the fact that the late editor of the Banner, Dr. McKinney, is proposing to establish a religious monthly, if he should meet with sufficient encouragement. In his circular he frankly confesses that such efforts heretofore made in our Church have failed. Dr. Van Benschoten, Dr. Smart Robinson, Dr. Rice, and Dr. Scott, all tried it and failed; and certainly there is no good reason for believing that it should succeed in a new enterprise of this sort. We now get quite enough of the lighter kinds of religious literature, such as is supposed to be appropriate to the domestic circle, in all of our best weekly religious papers; and I would be glad to see the tastes and desires of the domestic circle raised to a higher platform than it is supposed to occupy at present.

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