

CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE.

ALBANY, WEDNESDAY, MAY 29, 1856.

The proceeds of this paper will be equally divided among the Annual Conference of the M. E. Church, to be applied in spreading the Gospel, and in aiding domestic and foreign missions, and the widows and orphans of the deceased members of the Church.

TERMS: ONE DOLLAR PER ANNUM, IN ADVANCE.

Advertisements are received for insertion in the Christian Advocate, at the rate of one dollar per square for the first week, and fifty cents for each succeeding week.

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to economize their time; in others, to occupy more of it to advantage.

The several professors will not, as now, be placed on a full salary. Each will receive a comparatively small sum with his appointment from the University. For the larger portion of his income, each will be dependent on the fees from his own classes. If his success in teaching renders him popular, and draws many pupils, his income will be large; while moderate success will, perhaps, be necessary to sustain him more promptly than is now the case.

It is expected and proposed, that nearly every teacher will have two classes—one for the more thorough, the other for the more superficial, so that both may be accommodated. It is proposed at once to more than double the present number of professors, to (such) all that we now embrace in the course of study and down, and much more, as well as to teach all these things far better.

Whatever attaches the more conservative of our literary men may have to the present order of things, they cannot deny the fitness of Dr. Wayland to judge in a matter of this kind. His authority is, at least, equal to that of any other man in the country. Some features of the plan, which he proposes, will be recognized as already existing in the Scotch and German Universities. Our common schools and academies have undergone great improvement within a few years past, and we see not why colleges should be left stationary while all the world around them is progressing. It is of no use to think that a school or any thing else of merely human origin, is so high or so perfect, that it cannot be improved. Our age has witnessed an advance in almost every art, and science, and institution, and it would be wonderful indeed if the higher literary institutions, which ought to lead the march of improvement, should be found the last to catch the spirit of the times.

The reasons which have led Dr. Wayland to suggest this reform, are thus given by a writer in the New York Commercial Advertiser:

"The author begins with giving a history of university education in Great Britain, and showing that the whole design of the system was to cherish pious students for the priesthood. He next shows that our colleges were founded for the same end, and have limited classes of students, devoted to the learned professions.

"He then goes minutely into the statistics of the New-England Colleges, and into the pecuniary affairs and condition of Harvard and of Brown Universities, and he draws some very remarkable if not astounding conclusions.

"That the money patronage by the States and by individuals in the last twenty years has increased immensely—probably, (I speak here from general recollection,) not far from \$1,000,000. The population has doubled; the wealth of the people increased fourfold in that time; the desire of the people to give their children costly and appropriate education has increased; and yet the number of students in the colleges has scarcely increased at all, and the Colleges are all in want of aid. At the same time, it appears that the introduction of new studies, while the time continues limited to four years, has constantly diminished the thoroughness of the education obtained by candidates for the pulpit, the bar, and the practice of medicine, and the education of each student has cost the community from 800 to 1,000 dollars."

M. E. CHURCH, SOUTH.

The General Conference of the M. E. Church, South, now in session at St. Louis, occupies a singular position, and will be likely to introduce some new developments in moral science. Dr. Smith, as we stated last week, has proposed a new organization of the General Conference. The following resolution, offered by him, contains the exposition of his plan:

"Resolved, That a special committee be raised, with instructions to consider and report to a full, if they deem it expedient, for the organization of future sessions of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, by two houses—an upper and lower house—conferred, as far as may be deemed advisable, to the following outline, namely:—

"1. The lower house shall be constituted as the present General Conference now is, and invested with the same authority, so far as may be judged necessary to conform its relative powers to those of the other branch of the legislature.

"2. The upper house shall be constituted by not less than one nor more than two traveling elders for each Annual Conference, to be elected by those laymen who are of mature age, and in full connection with the Church. It shall be created with authority to pass upon all the acts of the lower house, and shall constitute a high court of appeals in the case of the trial and condemnation of a Bishop, and to determine all questions of ecclesiastical law that may arise in the administration of the Discipline."

As a project for lay representation, Dr. Smith's plan is worse than nothing. If he designed to imitate civil government, and complicate the legislative function for the purpose of securing a better result, it is equally a failure. Corruption will stalk through two houses as well as through one. Why did he not propose that laymen should elect laymen? It seems to us that voters ought to be able to elect from among themselves. We cannot see why a Methodist preacher should gain any thing in fitness for his duties as a General Conference delegate, by having a lay constituency. He would still be of the ministry, and not a job wiser, or more democratic, than if elected by his clerical peers.

ILLNESS OF REV. ABEL STEVENS.

The New York correspondent of the Poughkeepsie Christian Advocate says: "We learn that Rev. Abel Stevens is lying dangerously ill at Boston, having had a hemorrhage from the lungs." We regret to learn this, but hope our brother editor will soon regain his health. Zion's Herald, of last week, announced that the editor was recovering.

REPLY TO DR. HUNT.—REV. Wm. Reddy has sent us an able reply to the last articles of Dr. Hunt, on faith. We would gladly publish it, but the discussion of that question has already been protracted too long. Besides, we have several other replies from other writers, on the same subject, and we cannot find room for all.

REV. JOHN B. ALVENS.

Rev. John B. Alvens was born in Seneca, Ontario Co., N. Y., in the year 1793. While in early life, the principles of Christianity held a controlling influence over him, so much so that he was able to say, that he knew not the time when he did not fear the Lord. To ban, the vain and trivial amusements of the world had no charms, even before he made a public profession of the Christian religion. Under the labors of some of the first Methodist preachers that found their way into this (then wilderness) country, he was deeply convicted of sin, sought, and, by faith in the atoning blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, obtained pardon. Soon after his conversion, he joined the Methodist Episcopal Church, and feeling a deep and ardent desire for the salvation of the souls for whom Christ died, and having a strong impression that at no distant day it might be his duty to stand upon the walls of Zion, he set about making the necessary preparation; and after spending several years in qualifying himself for the great work of the Christian ministry, in the year 1817, joined the Genesee Conference, on trial, and was appointed to the Seneca circuit, which embraced a considerable part of what is now the Genesee and Elmira Districts. Here he labored for two years, with great success, at the close of which he was received into full connection in the Conference, and ordained deacon by Bishop Roberts.

His next appointment was Ridgeway circuit. That included all of what is at present the Niagara District, and nearly all of the Genesee District. In 1820 and 1821, he travelled the Canandaigua circuit; in 1822 and 1823, Lyons. Here his health failed, and he was obliged to resign his pastoral charge. After a few months' rest, he was again able to enter the field with his brethren, and received, at the hand of the Bishop, the Newark circuit. In 1826, he was appointed to Penn Yan, where he remained, by the urgent request of the people, for three years in succession, being superannuated the last year. In 1828, he was made effective, and returned to the Newark charge, where, under the circumstances above named, he remained the same length of time. In 1832, he was stationed at Genesee, in 1833 and 1834, at Perry; in 1835, at Batavia; in 1836, returned to Perry. From 1837 to 1841, he was Presiding Elder of Genesee District, and from 1841 to 1843, of the Rochester District. In 1846, he had charge of Pavilion; in 1847, was again returned to Perry, and in 1848, he was again appointed Presiding Elder, and stationed on the Buffalo District.

Early in the spring of this year, his health and strength began gradually to fail, and a cough, that had given him much pain and anxiety for years, became exceedingly troublesome; so much so that he was only able to preach occasionally. He delivered his last discourse at the first church in Covington, on the 10th of June last, from Col. 1: 28—"Whom we preach, warning every man." &c. We have been told, by those who were present, that they never heard him preach with so much freedom; that they seldom, if ever, saw a congregation so deeply affected, especially when he spoke of the closing scenes of the last day, when God's faithful ambassadors would present the souls committed to their care, "perfect in Christ Jesus." The last time he spoke in a religious meeting, was on the 18th of November last, at a love-feast, in the village of Perry, where he lived. Here he expressed his gratitude for the many privileges of the kind which he had enjoyed, for the sweet counsel which he had taken with God's people in his sanctuary, and for the bright prospect which was before him, of meeting the faithful in that "house not made with hands, eternal and in the heavens."

Such was his attachment to Methodism, and such his love to the cause of God, that, though unable to preach, he visited the most of the charges upon his District, up to the close of the year; presiding in the Quarterly Conferences, and giving such advice, from time to time, to both preachers and people, as his wisdom and experience suggested. He was in his place at the last Annual Conference, but not able to take his former active position in its deliberations, farther than to represent his own District. Here he was made superannuated, and for a time his friends indulged a hope that his health would so far improve as to render it practicable, by the next Conference, for him to assume the duties and responsibilities of an effective man. On the 8th of January, he met with the Trustees of the Genesee Wesleyan Seminary, at Lima, and on the 10th, with the College Board. Here he performed the duties that devolved on him, in reference to both institutions. He returned home much fatigued, and from that time was mostly confined to his house, but able to walk about some part of each day, until some three weeks before his death, when he was prostrated by a violent attack of diarrhea, that assumed a form not to yield to the most skillful medical treatment, this coupled with a disordered state of the lungs. It soon became apparent, notwithstanding the kindness and sympathy of friends, and medical attention and skill, that death had marked him for his prey.

Dr. Alvens was no ordinary man. He possessed a strong mind, which was well stored with useful and religious knowledge. His distinguishing traits of character were clearness of perception, discrimination, penetration, a prompt, yet cautious judgment, decision, a high sense of honor, integrity, and an elevated taste; and by those he secured for himself a high position in the affections of the members of his Conference, as may be clearly seen by the various honorable appointments which he from time to time received, by their suffrages. He was elected a member of the General Conference of 1824, of 1824, and of 1848. At these several Conferences, he was appointed on some of the most important committees, where he discharged his duty with credit to himself, and with honor to his Conference. At the last General Conference, he was made a member of the committee on the revision of the Hymn Book, that has given so general satisfaction to the whole Church. For the last twelve years, with perhaps the exception of a single year, he was President of the Board of Trustees of the Genesee Wesleyan Seminary; and here he evinced a love for the cause of education, and a commendable zeal for the prosperity of the institution. When the Conference was divided, in 1848, and the question arose as to the union of the two Conferences in the erection of a College, and the permanent endowment of both the College and the Seminary, he was among the first to advocate a liberal policy, and to sustain the plan proposed, which has met with unparalleled success.

As a Christian, his piety was consistent and uniform. His general deportment was serious and dignified, and such as well accorded with his high vocation. As a friend, he was constant and ardent; as a preacher, sound and practical. His sermons were well calculated to enlighten the intellect, move the heart, and arouse to action. His talents, as a minister of Jesus Christ, always commanded respect. He was the gentleman, the Christian, and the Christian minister. In his last sickness, he enjoyed much of the consolations of religion. In a free conversation with him, but a short time previous to his death, he said he was fully aware of his condition, and talked with great calmness about his approaching dissolution. He said, "I have not a shadow of a doubt concerning the truth of that religion I have preached, and recommended to others; for it is my sole reliance in this hour of trial, while passing down to the valley of the shadow of death." My only hope," he continued, "is in the atoning blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. I am a sinner, saved by grace." And then he repeated a part of the hymn that commences, "Rock of Ages, cleft for me."

securely under its malign influence. The old Bay State is in weeds on account of the course of his leading Senator in the recent and still continued struggle between freedom and slavery in the national Congress. And well she may be. It is enough to make the heavens dark and the angels sad, to see the colossal genius of Daniel Webster bending in humility to the infernal spirit of oppression! Selling himself and the good name and influence of his constituents for the infamous adulation of slaveholders, and the false hopes of issue! But the dark deed had been done, and the illustrious sinner awaits the reckoning day—which will surely come. I am not mistaken. Shadows of gloom are coming on; and one of these shadows throw its sickly gleam upon the honary orator as he appeared a few days since in front of the Rev. Hon. Mr. Bowdoin Square, to enjoy the services of his friends. In other days, such an event would have set all Boston agog, and "preach, politicians, populace," would have turned out to greet the honored son of New England! But it is not now. The people were not there, though some hundreds of the heartless "paper men" were. Boston has its aristocracy, its courtiers, and slaveholders, and these now constitute the admirers of Mr. Webster. One of their number spoiled a small quantity of rhetoric in the reception, while the great Received spoiled an equally small quantity of logic, and then the forced concern was ended—gone—forgotten! Mr. Webster is a free agent, and in the free exercise of his volition, has chosen political death; but it is the death of the suicide. He might have lived and travelled still farther into the domains of greatness, or soared to some loftier elevation than he has ever occupied. But it is too late.

There is a tide in the affairs of men, Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune; Neglected—all is lost.

John Davis, one of our Ex-Governors, or "honest John," as he is called, is a man of fine and talents, and holds a strong position in the community where he resides. He, too, has long been in public life, and has rendered essential service to his native State if not to his country; but I regret, and others regret, that in the mighty struggle which is now going on in Congress, he is silent and apparently engrossed in matters, important to be sure, but certainly subordinate to the solemn question now before the American people. When the voting comes, I hope "honest John Davis" will exercise his senatorial suffrage for God and liberty. If not, then he also will bear the significant murmurs of an indignant constituency.—No future legislature of Massachusetts will ever send other than God-fearing, liberty-loving men to the United States Senate. Otherwise, I renounce my character as a prophet.

Horace Mann, for many years at the head of our Board of Education, is now the successor of John Quincy Adams in the House of Representatives at Washington, and a noble successor he is. He shows himself in every respect worthy to walk in the footsteps and to occupy the seat of so illustrious a man as the "Sage of Quincy." He is a man of fine, strong abilities. His industry and perseverance know no limit but that of physical and mental power. His research is great and accurate; he has vast stores of information on all subjects; he is perfectly familiar with the philosophy and history of government, especially our own; his logic is keen and strong, and his rhetoric inspiring and brilliant; and what is better than all, his integrity is unshaken. He cannot be overawed or bought. He is "Mann" by name, and he is Mann by nature, and a Christian by grace. A splendid career is before him. May he live to run his race, and win the crown of glory!

Among the best, and I think, on the whole, the best of the many strong productions occasioned by our congressional agitators, is Mr. Mann's recent letter to his constituents. It is masterly, and will produce a powerful impression on Massachusetts.—You may have seen it. Dr. Hosmer, but fearing you have not, I send you the Evening Traveller of the 4th inst., and I hope you will find some bit of time in which to peruse it. It will do you good, as it must do any Christian good, to reflect that God has raised up such men as Gov. Seward, of your own State, and Mann, of ours, to meet the moral and political emergencies of our country.

MISCELLANEOUS.

The New Hampshire Conference is now (May 11), in session at New Market, Bishop Merris presiding. I learn the Conference is progressing harmoniously with its business. Within a few years, this Conference has lost many of its strong men; by transfers to other Conferences, and because of this, it has suffered to considerable extent, though other Conferences may have gained by such a process. This year, Rev. I. D. Barrows has been transferred to the N. J. Conference. New Hampshire Conference can ill afford to spare Br. Barrows. He is a strong man and an excellent minister of Christ; but really, New Jersey ought to send back his equal to the Granite State.

The Maine Conferences will soon meet, and they too are feeling the effect, in a measure, of the loss of some of their prominent men—though men equally prominent are still left. A noble class of Methodist preachers cannot be found than those in the State of Maine. They are strong for their work, mighty in the Scriptures, deeply devoted, successful ministers of Jesus Christ.

A few years since, and emigration to this country mostly centered in New York; but now, Boston is at work, or somebody is at work for Boston, to make it rival Gotham in this respect. Foreigners land in our city, three thousand in a day, and our streets are becoming populous with the emigrants from the old world. And this work of emigration will go on, and keep going; and we shall not live long enough to see the beginning of the end. Perhaps our children may, but it is doubtful. Be it so; we will not complain. We have work enough, bread enough, and land enough; and the Church may have, if she has not now, grace enough to salt and save the entire mass of foreign humanity which Providence is casting at her feet. O for a baptism of fire on all heretars and worshipers. Without this, she is powerless; with it she will gloriously conquer. FIDELITER.

Boston, May, 1856.

LETTER FROM MICHIGAN.

It is but a very few years since this region of country was a far-off land, known only to the wild Indian, and these most beautiful plains and prairies were only used as their hunting ground, after a sea of fire had rolled over the whole land, sweeping away the grass and other vegetables, tall and wild as the savages that applied the torch. But now we have a dense population of intelligent and virtuous men. You would be surprised to be in our office six days in the week, when the usual course is, to see, in addition to other matters, the immense number of newspapers, and literary. We have three churches in the place, well attended, with the advantage of ministers of more than middling talent. Our minister, the Rev. J. Ercanbrack and Rev. V. G. Boynton, held a series of meetings in our village, a few weeks since, which resulted in the conversion of some thirty or forty, and an addition to the Church of about thirty members; and I am glad to be able to say that peace and prosperity prevail among us. L. GRANT.

Edwardsville, Cass Co., Mich., April 24.

LAURENS AND ONEONTA, ONTARIO CONF., MAY 5.

The Lord has signally blessed us, the past winter, and revived his work at most of the appointments; as the result, some seventy-five souls have been added to the Church, on probation. It has been

a season of great grace. The Lord has sustained us, as a people, in the midst of trials and temptations, and enabled us to come off more than conquerors, from the battle field, bringing souls for our hire, which we trust shall be gathered into everlasting life.

RAILROAD DISASTER—NARROW ESCAPE.

Yesterday, about noon, the following accident occurred: I had been to attend a funeral, about one and a half miles south of this village.—The procession had proceeded about fifty rods towards the burying ground, going parallel with the railroad, and within a few rods of it, when it reached a place where the travel crosses the railroad, My buggy and the one immediately in the rear, bearing the dead, had crossed. Next came a two horse carriage, having in it twelve persons, seven of whom were children. As the horses stopped upon the track, the cry was heard, "the cars, the cars!" At this moment, they were within a few rods of the carriage, and going at the top of their speed. Quick as the lightning of heaven fell upon the rail, was the locomotive upon the carriage, breaking it in pieces, and throwing the fragments and passengers to the distance of many feet, breaking in the skull of one, and the thigh of another, and sadly bruising others, but killing none, as yet. One of the horses had its leg broken, and is spoiled. I cannot reflect upon the scene without deep emotion. As the matter will, doubtless, be the subject of legal investigation, I forbear any comments, other than the whole was the most culpable negligence on the part of others on the cars.

Midport, Chemung Co., May 17, 1856.

LITERARY.

HAMILTON COLLEGE.

During the next commencement week, in July, the address before the society of Christian Research, will be delivered by the Rev. Albert Barnes, of Philadelphia; the Alumni will be addressed by Hon. William J. Bacon, of Utica; and the Literary Society by Hon. Henry B. Stanton, of Seneca Falls.

EDUCATIONAL STATISTICS.—There are, in the United States, in 1850, 120 colleges, 42 theological seminaries, 19 law schools, and 35 medical schools, containing 1285 teachers and 118,875 scholars, estimating the population at