

California Department.

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Our Weather:

The greater portion of California is in the midst of that peculiar kind of weather known in the Mississippi valley as Indian Summer. And even the "oldest inhabitant" has not seen the like before in its duration. Surely the "melancholy days have come" and to the Californian, they are in their appearance, the saddest of the year. For instead of our clear atmosphere, crisp Italian skies, dazzling starlit evenings and floods of golden sunlight, the atmosphere is dark and of a lurid hue. The sun rises each day with his royal garments, seemingly dipped in blood, and as he climbs his regal solway his struggling beams deepen in brightness and power till he reaches his meridian glory and even then we feel that a great hand has drawn over his face a misty veil, then begins his descent as if he hastens to cleanse his ruddy garments in the placid waters of the Pacific's ebbing tide. The fair queen of night scarcely shows her silver light, while the twinkling stars with tearful eyes only shed their diamond light when they have reached their zenith and can gaze for a little while on the sinful world below. The condition of the atmosphere reminds us much of an approaching total eclipse, and it appears that if it becomes much more intense that the birds of song will spend much less time with us, will come out later, singing a few cheerful lays and hasten to some swinging boughs as if to spend a winter night.

We are not disposed to think that all this is portentous of evil, that they are the harbingers of an earthquake or anything of that sort, but it looks like, from the reports that the Oregonians have set fire to their immense forests and are trying to smoke the Californians out of their sunny homes.

Bro. W. H. Martin, of Woodland, has prepared a lecture on Australia and Australians. He made his debut at Williams on the 28th of Sept. His address was highly instructive and well received.

Bro. McHatten reports one addition after a week's effort at Red Bluff. He says it is a hard place. The addition is an aged man.

Bro. G. R. Hand has reached our State and is again at work. He is not yet located. We hope he will show his hands in this part of the State.

Since our last report there have been three more additions in College City at the regular meetings. Two by confession and baptism and one by letter.

The sisters at Knights Landing are making a move toward placing a bell on the church house at that place. They have a good house, but no preacher.

A movement is on foot to hold a Sunday-school Institute in Williams, Colusa Co., during the 26th and 27th of October. Brethren and Sisters from different parts of the county will take part in the Institute.

We are pleased to receive the August number of the *New England Evangelist* published by Bro. Frank O. Ellis and hails from Lynn, Mass. We are glad that along New England's seagirt shore and in the echoes of the wavewashed Plymouth rock, the Old Paths are being blazed out by faithful men.

We are much pleased to learn that Bro. Hiram Connell is able, to again, enter the field. Bro. C. is one of our able men, but for several years has been unable to preach much. May the Lord give him strength to do grand work for Him. Bro. C. has moved to Riverside, in Los Angeles Co., one of the garden spots of Cal.

Henry Ward Beecher said in San Francisco, that he would just as leave claim his descent from a monkey as from a pile of dirt. Well, I expect he would. We read in the Old Book of another prodigal who wandered away from his father's house and was well pleased to claim his relation to the *Sus hervidus*, and this later wanderer if he had only known it, would have been just as popular in Cal. if he had claimed his relation directly with *assimus* family, as this animal has more friends in this State than around Plymouth pulpit.

Our missionaries sailed from San Francisco on Sept. 27th for Tokio, Japan. They were set apart at Island Park, for our foreign work. Sister Lyda F. Luse of 14, Essex St., writes that they made warm

friends while in the City. We learned of their coming through our State on their way and hoped that we might be able to meet them at our State Meeting. Let us pray for their preservation from the bounding billows, and that they may Rightly Divide the Word to that idolatrous people, that they may have strength of body and mind and may speak the truth with all soberness, and gather in many golden sheaves. Lord bless them.

Preaching.

A plain farmer in a country congregation, over which was settled a very dull preacher, was once asked how he managed to get along with his domine. "Oh, well," was the reply, "he aint above us for one thing, and then he always preaches the gospel." There is more in this reply than would appear at first. Too much of the preaching of our day is "above" the people, and runs off from their ears like water from a duck's back, and this not because the speaker studies so hard, but because he does not study in the right way. He does not take pains to be so lucid and plain that his hearers must understand him. Daniel Webster used to address mass meetings in a political campaign in such a way that country people understood him with ease. If a man will make himself master of a subject and then set it forth with directness and simplicity, and without taking too much for granted as to the knowledge of his hearers, he will get and keep their attention. But not a few are unwilling to bestow the pains needed for this, and so their words go above the people and pass into empty air.

Again, it is certain that it takes a great deal of stupidity to kill the Gospel's power. Even accomplished theologians, such as Drs. Livingston or Aachibald Alexander, who are at the same time truly devout and spiritual men, will sit under a series of distressing platitudes, and yet be refreshed. The truth, the precious truth of God, delivered on His own day and in His own house, comes to their ears, and however wearisome its accompaniments they rejoice in it as they that find great spoil. And so with many of lesser abilities. They get no intellectual stimulus, their minds are not roused by new or fresh aspects of truth, yet familiar doctrines, precepts or promises are set before them, and they absorb spiritual nutriment.

They get what they come for, another presentation of old familiar truth, and this feeds their souls. They are not astonished with eloquence, originality or force, but they have what is far better, such of the Word as quickens their memories and warms their hearts.—*Christian Intelligencer.*

The *New York Tribune* had a curious and instructive article last week on the "National Surplus." It reports that the next Congress will have to face, for the year 1886-67, a surplus in the Treasury of from \$180,000,000 to \$200,000,000. This is an embarrassment of riches with a vengeance. It means simply that every head of a family, in this country, is paying out of his hard or easy earnings \$18 a year into the Treasury, which the Treasury does not know what to do with. After it has paid all the bonds that are payable, after it has paid all the officials that it can give employment to, and some more to whom that it gives next to nothing to do, after it has spent all that the public will allow to be spent in river and harbor improvements, after all the pensions are paid, and after all has been stolen out of an over-full treasury that a not over-watchful people will permit to be stolen, there will be still this \$180,000,000 in the Treasury vaults. Now, as most of us do not have any more money than we know what to do with, and could easily and comfortably dispose of our \$18 for ourselves, it would seem to be the natural and proper thing to stop taking this money out of our empty pockets to put it into this plethoric treasury; in other words, reduce taxation. But this would mean a reduction of the tariff; for the people have not yet come to the point that they are willing to put a tax on the blankets that cover the temperate in order to take off all tax from whisky and tobacco. But to reduce the tariff is not to be thought of, and the "Tribune" is reduced to the somewhat lame and impotent conclusion that "there are many wise ways in which the prosperity of the country could be greatly promoted by a wise use of Federal revenues. We agree with it in the further declaration that "it is important to have this subject generally and thoroughly understood." And the matter is so simple that it requires no great acquaintance with political economy to understand it. We must either take all taxes off whisky and tobacco, or we must reduce the tariff, or we must continue to take out of the pockets of the public enormous sums of money for which confessedly we have no definite use.—*Christian Union.*