Newspaper.

BY F. M. HURST.

I frequently find a large congregation without one religious paper. I have never met a church too poor to take a political paper. As a general rule you can find the *Enquirer* or *Gazette* in every house in the congregation, while I have frequently gone two or three weeks without seeing either the *Times* or *Standard*. As a natural consequence, our brethren, otherwise intelligent, are very ignorant concerning church matters.

Among a congregation of one hundred, frequently there is not a member who knows anything about such men as Bres. Graham, Grubbs, McGarvey, Briney or Munnell. When you speak familiarly of such men, some of the brethren ask about them as though they were characters that lived a thousand years ago, while others ask if they are "Bible students." Another, who wants to conceal his ignorance, looks wise like an owl, and very thoughtfully remarks that "if McGarvey had have lived, he would have made his mark," while you change the subject to get a chance to laugh.

Now, these good brethren are naturally intelligent, and you will find them so if you but change the subject to politics. They can give you the pedigree and biography of every noted politician in the country.

This lack of information greatly hinders the work of our evangelists. It takes Bro. Munnell two days to introduce himself to the whole congregation, (it would take most men two weeks), four days to explain the nature of his work, and about one day to set things in order.

Besides being a hindrance to evangelical work, frequently brethren become suspicious of our mission work, and refuse to contribute. The time would fail me to tell of the ills that grow out of this one branch of ignorance.

A man's conclusions are never broader than his field of observation; hence you go into a church that is progressing slowly, and every member concludes that religion is on the decline, never once supposing that the church in his immediate vicinity is not a representative of the universe.

I believe that circulating religious literature among the people is one of the first duties of an evangelist.

Every thoughtful man knows that the literature of a people has a great deal to do with their morals. What can we expect of children whose minds are continually crammed with such stuff as is generally found in our political journals? These papers are generally published by men who have more party spirit than principle. They publish anything that the reading public may desire, without regard to kind or color, from the market to a Beecher scandal.

One day they are abusing a man; the next, praising him. Their conscience (if the thing may be called by that name) is like melted wax—ready to take any form that a general convention may dictate. Everything sensational finds its way into their columns. On one page you find Talmage's sermon, and side by side you find a lectioneering scandal.

An old man met a young man shortly after the birth of his first child, and addressed him thus:

"Well, John, you have a boy, have you?"

"Yes, sir," was the reply.

"Well, how do you expect to raise him?"

"I don't know. The best I can, I suppose."

"Well, I will just tell you. If you raise him to believe that everybody is honest, he will die in the poor-house. If you raise him to believe that everybody is dishonest, he will die in the penitentiary."

This is too true to make a joke of. I are seated in some good brother's house. The mail arrives. Some member of the family brings in the papers. The sixteen-year-old daughter eagerly snatches up the *Ledger* to complete an unfinished love-story; the eighteen-year-old son grabs the *Police Gazette* and glances over the columns until his eyes falls upon some such a heading as "A Terrible Tragedy;" then everything settling down, the good mother entertains you with a learned disquisition on the character of "Mark Twain Roughing It," or "Innocents Abroad." She is very anxious to know which you think is the best for boys to read. After a time the daughter goes off to muse upon her ideal lover, and wonders in her mind if John, the fop, is not just the hero she has been reading of in her new novel. This girl is to become a wife and mother, remember, and is to help to mold the character of the next generation, while she could not tell for her life whether Gideon was a man or a woman. She can play a few giddy tunes on her piano, and perhaps has learned to carry her person erect, which she supposes to be dignity; but that true dignity of soul and mind is a stranger to her. That principle of manners which provides for the happiness of all, she violates every time she meets a poor-dressed girl, by laughing at her clothes.

Presently the son arises, after having read of every murder and robbery in the United States. He walks out, murmuring: "There is not an honest man in the world. The world is going down hill. Yes, it is. An honest man can't make a living here, that is certain, and it ain't no use of trying it. The world is a goose, and the smartest men pluck the most feathers."

The father of that family is surprised to find his home void of piety and even honest principles, and immediately falls into the Predestination theory to account for the wickedness of his children. All of this has taken place because after he had spent from $10 to $20 a year for trash, he was too poor to provide his children with better reading.

While soliciting subscribers for our our papers, I frequently meet with objections that appear to be plausible. One in particular seems rather common. Says a good brother, "I think our elders are guilty of extortion. Why, sir, I can get a political paper containing much more reading material for $1.15, while our papers cost $2.00. I'll tell you, sir, they think more of the fleece than the flock."

I don't know why it is, but I find those burry sheep think and talk more about their fleece, than the good sheep. But so it is.

I do not understand enough of the running gear of an editor's office to fully explain this problem, having never spent two hours at one time in a printing-office. But I trust that I have a few general ideas that are correct, and perhaps will serve in some measure to relieve some good brother's mind.

1. It cost more to prepare the material for the paper and set up the type, than it does to print the paper and furnish ink and paper after everything is ready. Consequently, you can get 100 hand-bills printed almost as cheap as 11.

The steam-engine and various other inventions all go to help the editor print after the type is prepared.

The first thing to be done is to prepare reading material, and you know how we all grumble if this is not done well. The next thing is to take each letter and mark, one by one, and set them in place. This would take an inexperienced man about twelve months to each column. When this is done, one copy is printed, and some experienced proof-reader must read everything carefully, and correct all mistakes. They are ready then to go to press, and the more copies of their paper they can print, the cheaper they can print each copy.

Suppose it costs $100 to get the type ready to print this paper this week, and $5,200 a year. If the ink and paper costs but fifty cents per copy a year, it would require about 4,000 subscribers to allow him to come out even, allowing $1.50 profit on each copo. Now give that same editor 80,000 subscribers at $1.50 each, leaving only $1.00 profit, and he has more clear profit at the reduced subscription and increased number of subscribers than he had before.

A great many political papers strike 100,000 copies each week, and as a matter of course, they can print them cheaper than the paper that has only 4,000 or 5,000 subscribers.

It appears from the above figures that the brethren are to blame for the high price of our papers. If every family in Kentucky, who has members in it belonging to the Christian church, would take a copy of the *Times*, it could be furnished to them much cheaper than it is at present.

2. Your county paper, often not more than one-half as large as the *Times*, costs $2 per year, and you never hear of a county editor getting rich. Besides, our editors (of religious papers) are men of deep piety, who would not dare to impose upon our brethren, but are more willing to give than to receive. They are not getting rich. Many of them are well acquainted with the hungry wolf, having met him at their own door frequently.

One objection frequently urged is that they must have the Cincinnati papers in order to get the markets. I do not know how to answer this, but will leave it to the editor to explain.

Again it is urged that we have too many religious papers, and that it is the duty of the *Times*, *Standard*, and others, to unite, and thus be enabled to furnish the papers cheaper to those who do read them.

I do not profess to know anything about other men's business, and will let them answer for themselves; but I enjoy a paper printed in my own State, and I suppose the Ohio brethren are of the same mind.—*Apostolic Times.*

The Havoc of Desuetude.

Never before in the history of intelligent races was there so universal and manifest readiness to abandon the old for the new as now. In Paul's time it could be said that "that which decayeth and waxeth old as doth a garment is ready to vanish away." But now, garments do not "wax old" before they are ready to be cast away; they have only to go out of the fashion for the season. In all matters where there is room for the exercise of our ever varying tastes, in architecture and landscape gardening, upholstery and general furnishing, and in dress and gait, there are abundant illustrations of the prevailing fickleness to which we refer. At a glance the changes which take place in these things seem trivial as compared to those more radical and fundamental changes of customs and laws, of theories and beliefs, and of mechanical and social plans and operations; and so are the winds and waters volatile and unsubstantial as compared with the solid earth over which they move; yet, the mounds and excavations, the elevations and depressions, the hollows and hills, the valleys and mountains, all owe their shaping to the courses and forces of storms and tides. The shifting zephyr's soft breath bears a definite relation to the ponderous forces of nature, and is laden with intelligence relative to the impending and irresistible tempest, and its message may easily be read in the warning barometer. In like manner the effeminacy or the strength, the weakness or the power of the common mind may be indicated by exponents which are properly put down as little things.

We sit in the barnyard and muse under the old barn's eaves. There hang on the wall the reaper, the mower and the thresher of a few decades ago; each is as good as new, and all are typical of the simplicity of an age forever past. What were once indispensable implements of toil, in hand unremittingly in the busiest season, are now thought of only in a liesure hour; and like the escutcheon and amonial ensigns, they are hung up as reminders of a period of brave struggles and an epoch of final conquest of invention and the triumph of the new over the old. Almost simultaneously the earthen lamp with lard and wick gave place to the kerosene burner; then came the hydro-carbon gas light, whose luster is now lost in the superior brilliancy of the electric torch. The foot-path through the woods was improved into an open county road, the county road was graded and macadamized, and at last the graded road has been supplied with iron rails, and the carriages propelled by a stronger than Samson bound to the wheel. But what we wish to note is the readiness and gladness with which we have accepted and helped on these changes. A desire for improvement led to changes everywhere, and change became a synonym for improvement; so that to say a thing is new is to give it the very best recommendation to our age. Nothing that is old is too dear to be given up. If a joint-stock company were started for the purpose of furnishing a substitute for our reliable and enduring solar torch and for the night lamps that God has set to blaze around our globe, it being understood that the polar regions are to be perpetually lighted up, and that no region is to have an intermittant supply of light, thousands would subscribe in aid of the enterprise, and all would hail with pleasure the change. Were the appliances for aerial navigation completed to-day, and an excursion from New York to London or Paris announced to-morrow morning, every available ticket would be sold before the morrow's midday; and when the æronauts should put off on their journey, they would leave behind them countless multitudes in sadness because they could not go on the first trans-atlantic trip.

Look we in what direction we will and we see manifestations of the same spirit of desuetude. In all the leading nations of the earth there are signs of restlessness growing out of a desire to break away from old and established customs and to try some new methods of administration. The nihilism of Russia, the communism of Germany, the land-league of Ireland, and the ever-recurring "strikes" of America, all mean one and the same thing. These are just so many mad and blind attempts at "bringing about some change for the better." In this connection hundreds of specifications might be made. Mormonism and free-loveism attack the time-honored institution of marriage, liberalism and infidelity war against the appointments of Christianity, and political charlatanry purposely endangers the institutions of the Commonwealth. Nothing in American politics is now half so noticeable as the readiness of all parties and party leaders to abandon old issues and old land marks for new theories, new plans and a new era. We seem to be in the last scenes of a grand carnival, ready to bid farewell to that which has hitherto sustained the life of existing theories, beliefs, and customs

Among the world of scientific investigators the changes are as incessant and as radical as elsewhere. The men of this class in particular have begun to learn to give out their views in modest phrase with less dogmatism and more toleration towards those who choose to differ from them. The truth is, they have been so often compelled to abandon old theories for new ones, that they with most of their following hold their most thoroughly demonstrated notions in the open palms of their hands, just as ready to yield them up as to lay hold of whatever new thing offers itself. Had Galileo and Harvey and their like lived in our day the voice of the bigoted persecutor would never have disturbed their peace of mind, to say nothing of hindering the progress of their advanced ideas; and this thought opens the way to an understanding of the purpose of God in bringing about the present state of affairs. He has opened the minds of men to the conviction of truth and for its reception.

The Christian religion has already felt and will continue to feel the influence of this age of desuetude; or rather, the world is destined to feel the influence, the spirit and power of Christianity now as it has never felt it before. Human creeds are given up, old interpretations are discarded or kept in the background, old translations and revisions are no longer looked upon in all respects infallible, and a people who are in many ways better prepared to receive it than any former generation, are being given a new Bible to shape the thoughts and to govern the doings of the new era upon which we are entering. God is fulfilling his promise, "Behold, I make all things new;" and, behold, he is preparing the world for the wonderful and welcome transformation. The licentiousness of thought which characterizes our age is alarming to one who is wholly oblivious to the philosophy of our onward movement under God; but to those who believe that God reigns ever more, it is but incidental to the opening of a great and effectual door. Let it be remembered that the best conception from God can be received only in open minds, that the most benevolent sentiments from on high are entertained only in open hearts, and that the greatest benefactions having divine approval are wrought with open hands; hence, upon the whole, we are not alarmed. It is surely for our profit that old things have passed away, and that all things are becoming new.—W. K. A., in *Old-Path Guide.*

—The Japanese colony in Paris are about to erect a pagoda for their religious devotions.

—The Rev. Theodore Bridges has translated St. Luke in the Yahgan language. It is spoken in the south of South America, and is a very difficult tongue.

—Tunis and Tripoli occupy a prominent place in the news of the day, but are little known to American readers. Tunis is the seat of ancient Carthage, is about the size of Illinois and has 2,500,000 population. The city of Tunis located on the bay of the same name, has about 130,000 inhabitants—a mixture of Christians, Jews, Moors, Turks and Arabs—as is the whole country in fact. The sight of the ancient Carthage is within less than twenty miles to the northeast of the city. Mohammedanism is the established religion of the state and a large majority of the inhabitants are followers of the prophet or Mecca. Tripoli, which adjoins Tunis on the west, another of the Barbary states, is also coming into notice, in consequence of the movements of France. It is a larger Territory than Tunis, containing about 62,000 square miles, but is sparsely settled, having less than 1,000,000 inhabitants. These states of Northern Africa were until a recent period nests of pirates who preyed on the commerce of the world, and laid European States under tribute. The United States refused to pay it and sent Decatur to give Tripoli a drubbing which was handsomely done. Later the British chastised Algiers and afterwards the French in the reign of Louis-Philippe, conxuered the happy. They have now added Tunis. Spain has her eye on Morocco; Egypt is under British influence; all north Africa will soon be ruled by European States.—*Evangelist.*