THE NATIONAL FAST.

CONTINUED FROM FIFTH PAGE.

giant guardians, and bow their hoary heads in benedictions of peace over the whole land? Does not the old ocean himself, which since creation's morning has dashed upon these shores, and who brought here upon his bosom the old colonies of Plymouth and Jamestown, now moan and sigh and shed his briny tear upon the rocks of every State from Florida to Maine? Does not the far distant surge of the Pacific come booming over the mountain and desert, and calm our angry and impassioned hearts? Are we not still brethren? Does not one great Christian heart throb throughout the land? And shall we now, in the very season when we commemorate the coming of the Prince of Peace—at whose advent the conflicts of the world were hushed to rest—shall we take up the sword, brother against brother, and bathe the land which our fathers consecrated to Christ with blood which will, like that of Abel, cry terribly for vengeance from the ground? It cannot, shall not come, unless God has already cast us off and will not hear our prayer; for we will lift up our supplications to Him—we will confess our sins—we will beg to be delivered from pride, and prejudice, and selfishness, and to have our patriotism sanctified by the pure spirit of religion; and thus earnestly desiring that peace and righteousness may here prevail, the blessed kingdom of God will not be taken from us, but will be our heritage and the heritage of our children, and of our children's children, to the latest generation.

THE REV. J. B. HAGANY.

St. Paul's Methodist Episcopal Church, Corner of Fourth Avenue and Twenty-second Street.

No sermon was preached at this church yesterday, but in its stead a prayer meeting was held in the lecture room attached to the church.

The room was tolerably well filled with the members of the congregation, the majority of those present being ladies.

The services commenced with singing, after which the Rev. J. B. HAGANY offered up a short and impressive prayer, in which he referred to the occasion which had drawn them together, and in view of the present unsettled state of the public mind and the dangers which threaten the country, it is peculiarly incumbent on all classes of the community, irrespective of party or religious opinions, to unite in prayer to Almighty God that he will avert the dangers which now threaten the land, and that he will fill the hearts of all men with feelings of love and friendship for their brethren throughout the length and breadth of this great country.

Rev. Dr. BANKS—who is probably one of the oldest Methodist ministers in this city—then addressed them in eloquent and feeling language, on the dangers which threaten to dissolve the Union; but these dangers he thought were more of an imaginary than real nature. He was living, he said, when the original constitution of the United States was framed, and he did not believe that after so many years of almost uninterrupted prosperity and progress, that the Union was now destined to be dissolved in bloodshed and civil war. With a fervent and impressive prayer to God that He will avert the dangers which now threaten the country, the reverend gentleman resumed his seat amidst the suppressed weeping of many of his hearers.

A short address was then delivered by a gentleman connected with the Young Men's Christian Association. It was similar in character to the others, and was delivered with much earnestness and fervor.

After singing another hymn the benediction was pronounced by Rev. J. B. Hagany, and the congregation dispersed.

THE REV. DR. BETHUNE.

The Rev. Dr. Vannest's Church (Reformed Dutch), Twenty-first Street.

At eleven o'clock yesterday morning, in pursuance of the recommendation of the President of the United States, a meeting for prayer was held in the Twenty-first street Dutch Reformed church, the Rev. Dr. Vannest, pastor, presiding. The church was completely filled, and among the attendants were Collector Schell and other city notalies. After an hour passed in singing and prayer, the congregation adjourned to unite with the meeting at the church corner of Lafayette place and Fourth street, elsewhere reported. It was announced that the Rev. Dr. Bethune would deliver a sermon, applicable to the times, in the evening.

The church was, therefore, crowded at the time for evening service. After the singing of the psalm:—

Wait on the Lord, ye trembling saints,
And keep your courage up,

the reverend Doctor read the fourteenth chapter of Jeremiah, "the Word of the Lord that came unto Jeremiah, concerning the dearth." In the prayer which followed, God was besought "to make the President's heart strong, his mind clear, his courage perfect. May he humble himself today before God, that he may be gifted with God's course. Spare our land, O Lord, from effusion of blood, from civil war, from servile war, from patricidal war. It is difficult, O Lord. Men's passions run high. We hear the rise and rage of the people, but Thy government is over all, and Thou alone canst overrule all."

The Psalm

No save us, Lord, from slavish fear,
Nor let our hopes be firm and strong,

was then sung, and the reverend Doctor announced as his text the seventh, eighth and ninth verses of the sixteenth chapter of Jeremiah, already read. The history of Israel, said the reverend Doctor, is of a double character. It is God's dealing with the children of Abram, and it is also typical of God's dealings with his church—the true Israel. God's dealings were more plain under the ancient dispensation than now. The tares and the wheat are now permitted to grow together until the harvest. We may find in the history of the children of Israel lessons for us as Christians and as members of a Christian community. We cannot believe that all the Israelites were equally devoted to the service of God, and yet He dealt with the whole nation for the sake of His church. In this country we belong to the nation and to God's kingdom equally—to that kingdom which is not of this world, else would Thy servants fight. We have our duty. It is not to wrangle with our fellow men in political disputations, but to exhibit before them examples of loving patience, and to pray for those whom our examples cannot reach. We can, therefore, take from the history of the Israelites examples of God's dealings especially applicable to this dark day of our country. Consider first the occasion of the prophet's prayer. The people had offended God, and He withheld from them His rains in their season. No industry or skill could help them. Now the Holy Spirit, throughout the Scriptures, is compared to the rain. The blessing of a people proceeds from the favor of God, reaching them through their institutions as his appointed means. The fertility of the soil is the result of God's power, and yet the fields must be ploughed, the rains must fall and the sun shine before the grain grows, though all these would be useless without his favor. So he gives us institutions, and yet prosperity must be the result of his blessing, and adversity comes when that blessing is withdrawn. To a people like ourselves, who are our own rulers, it is especially essential that we have this blessing. We are now witnesses, against ourselves, of our dependence upon God. With abundant crops, with health in our borders, at peace with all the earth, yet in what trouble we are. And why? Because our understanding have failed; because, professing to be wise, we have become fools. It is the greatest even of temporal calamities to lose the favor of God.

The Christian knows, as a matter of consciousness, that the spirit of God works upon the hearts of men. And it can move nations as well as individuals. Not long ago this whole country, from the crowded city to the remotest hamlet, felt the power of the spirit of God, and now it equally feels the power of its withdrawal. But this spirit can also work on the minds of men who never own God's peace. He can make even the wrath of men to praise him. We suffer now from a greater calamity than that which befell the Israelites. We have lost our good sense, lost the control of our passions, lost the use of our reason; and those high power, to whom we look for our defences, exhibit the selves in all the imbecile weakness of poor, imperfect humanity. Where can we better go, in such a strait, than to God? Without God's spirit among us, He only knows what disasters this may be the earnest. Mere politicians may smile at this, but we are not led by the counsels of men. God gives us higher powers in allowing us to call upon Him, that we may be saved for His glory.

This prayer of the prophet consisted of confession, petition and argument. There must be no captious upbraidings of God. If His spirit be asked it must be because we have departed from Him—not He from us. We should forestall His condemnation by condemning ourselves. Out of the depths we must cry to God, and this will teach us the petition:—"Do thou for Thy name's sake." "Who can give rain but God?" says the prophet; who but God, say we, can bring to naught the disturbances of disputes? We have never known our weakness till this trial. I can take every man in this house to witness how very weak is this government of which we were so proud. How easy it was to undermine its strong pillars—pillars which in falling crush themselves and the whole fabric at once! We have been too proud, and thus we are punished in our pride. We are fond of laying out plans for God's providence, and of asking God to let benefits come in our way. Experience teaches us better. It shows how disastrous become blessings, and what appeared benefits become the greatest plagues. We must be willing to take the benefits as he gives them; if not, depend upon it, they will not come at all. And this brings us to the argument. It is beautiful. See what titles the prophet applies to God:—"the hope of Israel," "the Savior thereof in time of trouble." Is not this true of us? Did not our fathers lay the foundations of our government for God, taking Him always into their counsels? Has not this nation been given to God as no other has been? Here we have no king. We have returned from the folly of the nations who asked God for a king and received one in His wrath. We must acknowledge God or bow to the despot. They alone are free who serve God. We are the nation which contains God's Israel. Here God has perfected his church. A saint, of whom I was reading, thought it sufficient cause to emigrate hither because here God would manifest his glory. Nowhere else has the church been so strong. The hand of authority is not stretched out to maintain the pulpit. We have never asked, we would repudiate, the establishment of the pulpit by human enactment. And, too, we are one of the two great Protestant nations; and now that the two great superstitions, paganism and Popery, are falling in the East and in the West, is one of God's great armies to be lost? At the prayer of one man God once brought rain upon a country which his wrath had blasted, and are our prayers to stop mid-air? Are they not to reach that God who has promised to answer prayer? See how strong is the prophet's expression—the strongest, I think, in the Bible:—"Do not disgrace the throne of Thy glory." God loves such holy boldness. Let Moses' prayer be ours:—"Establish Thou the work of our hands upon us. Yes, the work of our hands establish Thou it." Lastly, we should have faith. God is not afar off. He is present to hear; present to breathe His holy spirit upon us; present to rule and to overrule all for His own glory. "Will not God avenge His own elect which call unto him day and night?" Let us plead unto him His own glory, which he loves; and do not let our prayers cease with the day. That was not the intention of this call to a solemn fast. Let us pray till God bless us. If this were a trouble that could be settled by arms, we might leave it for those who are used to war; if it could be settled by the metaphysics of priests and legislators, we might modestly withdraw; but when a whole people are almost in despair—when from the highest places come the cries for Christian people to pray, then it is our duty to respond. But we must also be faithful. We pray for the confederacy. If ever there was a time when Christian men should be faithful to the constitution, to the country and to the laws, it is now. How far this principle extends and what it includes, you know as well as I do. We cannot pray to God for our country, unless we support its constitution. Let me exhort you, therefore, to continue your prayers, and be sure, with me, that, though the prospect be dark and the storm rage violently, God will yet give us a happy deliverance from all our troubles.

THE REV. DR. CHAUNCEY.

St. Andrew's (Episcopal) Church, Harlem.

The Rev. Dr. Chauncey, of Yorkville, preached in this chaste edifice at half-past seven P. M. The congregation was very good, considering that the place of worship is situated in 127th street, Fourth avenue, in the outskirts of the city. The services were the same as those used in the other Episcopal churches. The first lesson was the sixth chapter of the Prophet Micah. The second lesson, the sixth chapter of the Gospel according to St. Luke, beginning at the 27th verse. The 91st Psalm was the selection, commencing with:—

That man is blessed who stands in awe
Of God, and loves his sacred law,
His seed on earth shall be renowned,
And with successive honors crowned.

The Rev. Doctor having ascended the pulpit, took for the subject of his discourse Romans xiii.1—"The powers that be are ordained of God."

The Rev. preacher commenced his discourse by referring to the order and uniformity which existed in the celestial world, from the highest dignitary in heaven down to man, who was the chain which linked heaven to earth in God's creation. God himself was not only the God of order in all his works, but he was the God of love. Well has the Psalmist said, when contemplating these things, "When I consider the heavens the works of Thy hands, the moon and stars which Thou hast made, what is man that Thou art mindful of him, or the son of man that Thou regardest him?" He next went on to show how the several parts of the created world were dependent upon each other, and as they were so were the several orders of men in the government which existed upon earth. Man governs his fellow man for his good; and when that government was fairly and justly carried out things went on agreeably and harmoniously. He then explained, in very forcible and lucid terms, of the necessity for, and advantages arising from, good government. When the mind was kept in proper restraint all the affections of men graduated, because of the great benefits which arose to each other. In regard to primeval governments, or the commencement of original power, strange opinions prevailed, and this he ably explained by making special reference to the savages, who, with little instinct to guide them, at once placed themselves under its guard and guidance. Reason, Scripture and common sense confirmed this fact. It was not in God to turn man out of Eden into the wilderness until some well regulated form of republic was ready for him. That peculiar form of government which God gave to the Jewish people was something similar to that which the great Divine Being had given to us in the present day; and which, in His government of the universe, He was carrying forward and propagating. That great republic spirit had formed the people of this country into one great, solid and adhesive mass at first. He then dwelt at some length in reference to the constitution of America, which was erected by the venerable Washington and his compatriots, and whose earnest desire it was that under it they should peacefully and quietly live; and he hoped that that constitution would yet be a pattern to the world. Let them pay a due submission to the lawfully constituted authorities, as it was their duty to rally round and support them. The Son of God Himself showed an example of this during the time He sojourned upon earth; and if they only looked to Him, knowing that they would have to give an account for all their actions, the troubles that now threaten them would soon be hushed and calmed. No doubt misrule and bad government were abroad, and at present stalked the land; and anarchy and rebellion were about to break down that great fabric of the constitution which was formed by its venerable founders. But they should never forget that the powers that be are ordained of God. When peace was in their borders, and when plenty abounded, they were too apt to forget the wise dispenser of those blessings, and it was owing to this that war and bloodshed were now staring them in the face, and each brother's hand was raised against his brother. Their present commotions and afflictions were a punishment from God on account of their sins; and the sins of the nation had called down these heavy visitations. He then went on in a practical manner to apply his subject, and stated that, even yet, if they supplicated the Divine interference, He would stay the hand of the avenging angel in this season of overwhelming trial; if they did not there might be left no room for repentence though they might seek it with tears. The crash of fallen institutions and the noise of battle might soon be heard amongst them; but he would implore them to look for days of peace and quietness, and turn from their evil ways, for why should they die? He concluded an able and effective discourse by calling upon the attentive congregation to value those privileges which had been so freely bestowed upon them; for if they were once denuded of them they and their descendants might never again be permitted more to enjoy them.

The services were then concluded by the reverend preacher giving out the following hymn commencing with "Dread Jehovah, God of Nations;" &c.,

After which prayer was offered up, and the respectable congregation separated.

THE REV. E. H. CHAPIN.

Fourth Universalist Church, Broadway.

A church meeting took place last evening in this church, in consequence of which a regular fast day service had to be dispensed with. As a notice to this effect had been given out on the previous Sunday, the school room was at first the only place intended for the congregation, and was well heated for the purpose; but long before the commencement of the meeting the room was found to be too small, and the assembled persons were transferred to the church above, where the thermometer was about freezing point. The sudden change of the atmosphere had a very quick effect upon the congregation, and coughing, sneezing, &c., was soon plainly to be heard. It was rather an unusual sight to see men putting on great coats and shawls, and ladies wrapping their fur capes around them, inside the walls of a church, but such was the case there; nor did they remove them again during the services.

The Rev. E. H. Chapin, taking his place at the feet of the pulpit, gave out to be sung the 246th hymn:—

All hail the power of Jesus' name,

after which he read a portion of Daniel, chapter ix. (the prayer of Daniel), and a portion of Luke, chapter xix. (the parable of the ten talents, and Christ weeping over Jerusalem), following the reading by a prayer for forgiveness for our national sins—that the nation had offended in acting contrary to Divine law and against the religion of the Saviour. He threefore prayed for pardon for them as a people, to deliver them from the effects of their guilt. On that appointed and suggestive day he prayed for Divine forgiveness, for mercy and for grace—for grace that the country might be guided by a national constitution, and that that which had been the guide for the fathers of old might also be a guide to the children, upon whom now rested the responsibility, so that the conclusion might be wisdom and peace. He prayed for blessings to rest upon the President and council, and that they might seek to do God's will, and not the favor of men, so that good might result to the whole people. He then prayed for the members of Congress, that they might speak that which was true and right, and aid in restoring peace, so that the future glory of this nation should far surpass the past; that North, South and East and West should look to God and seek to do His will. He concluded by praying that God would preserve the land in integrity and prosperity to themselves and their children, and to restore past blessings which may have been too much forgotten in the outcry of distress.

He then, after stating that he had but just returned from the country, selected the text, from Luke, chapter xix., verse 41:—

And when He was come near, He beheld the city, and wept over it.

The example of Christ must be taken in the spirit, and not in the letter. He was not a pattern for our outward life, for several reasons, viz.—We live in the nineteenth century, He in the first; we live in America, He in Judea; He was not a husband and a father, therefore could not be a pattern for them. We know what He was as a son and a friend, therefore the example is not to be an outward one, but the same in spirit. On the passage just read Christ proves himself to be a patriot. The picture is beautiful and striking, Christ weeping over Jerusalem. And at what time was this? While the people around him were shouting hozannas, while they were spreading palms and their garments in the way, while he was descending the Mount of Olives in all the glory of a conqueror—while this was the case, the view of the city of Jerusalem burst before him, and he stopped and wept. He then felt as a man. Many a traveller, when describing that beautiful mountain at the present day, has been known to weep—and can it be wondered at that Jesus wept? He felt far more intensely than they did, for he felt as a Jew. It was to him a consecrated and holy spot. Jesus had his attachments. Men often talk about love who have never felt the feeling. The speaker had no faith in such talkers. Some say the world is their country. Such is nonsense. He had a country which he loved, better than the whole world, and those who did not do so were mere abstractions, without feeling, and had no patriotism. From the fact that Jesus loved John and Jerusalem more than others only evinces his love for all men. The text shows him in the attitude of a patriot. It was at a critical time for Jerusalem. The rejection of the Messiah was to determine their fate. Jesus looked into the future. He saw the stately city with the doom cloud hanging over it. He saw the Roman swords within its walls, and the Roman standard reared aloft within its temple. Seeing this crisis in the future, the weight of his feelings overshadowed the present, and he stopped and wept. The speaker's hearers would, therefore, blend their thoughts with Christ. He consecrated patriotism, and it is patriotism which is so much needed at the crisis of to-day. It needs to be touched—"Thank God it is touched." What is it that it feels? The indissoluble obligations which bind men to their country; not that men shall cut off from the nation its organic life. Many look at this confederacy as a joint stock concern, which when it does not pay they can cut off from, and leave it. The nation is an organic whole, bound together by the memories of the past, by the common hopes of the future, by the common destiny. If such a principle were allowed, it would make the condition of the country a political and moral death. The organization of the nation is linked together in one bond, the boundaries of which are the oceans, the lakes and the Gulf, and such a cutting off could be no less disastrous than the cutting off of a man's arms or fingers. Secondly.—We must be true to the honor and glory of our country. We must have a strong executive power, as the only means to ensure safety and peace. We must be firm and strong to prevent our breaking in pieces. Thirdly.—We must have due and proper respect for all laws, sacrificing our private feelings for the public good, else we might as well be afloat on pieces of ice at the mercy of the waves. Respect for the constitutional life is more valuable than our own temporary convictions and feelings. There is now mixed up with the present crisis too much of party triumph, too much of the saying, "such and such a party is the cause of this or that." He would inquire.—How came the party into existence? Such party triumphs are shallow policy. Instead of trying to find out the proper remedy for the present sad state of things, they are far more ready to recriminate and blame others. Such men have not a particle of the patriotism of him who wept. Next, we should respect the integrity of our country. He did not believe in the cant cry of "saving the Union." He was sick of the very sound of it. He loved the Union with a deep and abiding love. When our fathers made the Union they launched a ship—whose timbers were palmetto as well as other good woods—upon the waters of the world that was to shape its destiny; and when that ship goes down the best destinies of the world will go down with it. There are no evils inside the Union so bad as that which will follow when the ship goes down. And when it does, he thought of the destinies of the world. He thought of lame Italy just trying to free herself. He thought of Hungary struggling under the Austrian yoke. All, all, will be darkness when the ship goes down. If she has to go down, which God avert, let not her timbers part with the recriminations of party feeling; if she has to go down, let her go down with her glorious flag flying aloft, and every man standing true to her to the last. (Tremendous applause.] He would say a word about threats. It was not to be by threats that a man's convictions were to be changed. The little English boy in China could not be made to bend to the Chinese; he felt the honor of England rested in his conduct, and he died a brutal death sooner than yield. Therefore we should respect the manhood of our neighbors. It was no way to bind the Union to make men swallow their words. But while acknowledging this he must advocate strong executive firmness, for that alone can bring peace. There can be no good in civil war. Perhaps they would say he was afraid of civil war. He must admit that he was, and he had no respect for the man who did not fear it. Those who did not, it was because they could not realize it. Civil war was no holiday excitement—it was the last of all appeals. Further, civil war never does good; it caused rivers of blood to flow, and yet left them exactly where they were. He in conclusion recommended them to come next Sabbath to the communion, which was the first union recorded, without party feeling or prejudice, but with Christian love.

The services ended with the 840th hymn, the first verse of which is as follows:—

God bless our native land,
Firm may she ever stand
Through storm and night;
When the wild tempests wave
Ruler of winds and wave
Do Thou our country save,
By Thy great might.

THE REV. DR. THOMPSON.

New Tabernacle (Congregational), Broadway and Thirty-fourth Street.

At the evening services in the new Tabernacle church, on Broadway, an address, the purport of which is sufficiently indicated in the abstract we present, was delivered last evening by the pastor, Rev. Dr. Thompson. He based his discourse on that chapter of Isaiah which threatens the judgment of the Almighty on rulers who ignore principle and bow to circumstances. History, he said, became prescient and almost personal at the present time; two of the principal factors in history—the ingratitude of man and the righteousness of God—remained unchanged. Humanity was as true to itself today as it had ever been. The rule of national corruption and decay was commonly found in some departure from public rectitude, in lust of grandeur, in the pride of power, in covetousness, or in political expediency. Such an era of abounding calamity and wickedness had this nation reached before completing its first century of existence. The President of the United States had been obliged to avow this melancholy fact, and in a late message to call on the religious feeling of the people for support. In that message to his fellow citizens he set forth, with some exaggeration, in ample detail and in a melancholy strain of language, though with a substantial basis of facts, that the Union of these States is at the present moment threatened with alarming dangers, and that, therefore, it becomes us to humble ourselves before the Most High, and, confessing our individual as well as our national sins, thereby acknowledge the justice of our punishment. The morality of this proclamation was, he was sorry to say, superior to that of the Ostend manifesto, for whilst the one justified the acquisition of Cuba by purchase or by force, from the dread that we should, in process of time, have another San Domingo so near ourselves, the other counselled moderation and addressed itself to our general sense of justice and honor. The morality of this recommendation was higher also than that of the inaugural address of the same public functionary, which foreshadowed the false and inhuman lie, so soon to be uttered by the federal court, that the constitution of the United States recognized property in man.

It was quite above the morality of the recent President's Message, in so far as it related to the long continued interference of the Northern people with slavery. We had now a government which distinctly traced the present distracted and dangerous condition of the country to the crimes and follies of the nation, not excluding, of course, its executive head; and a remedy for this state of affairs was sought, not in the old specific of stealing negroes from Canada or Cuba, but by confessing our national sins, by acknowledging the evils we suffer and the just punishment of our heavenly Father, and, finally, by forsaking the evil courses which had brought us to this hour of peril.

The reverend gentleman proceeded to state at length his opinion as to the real cause of all the existing evils which paralyze the commerce and abstract the intellectual and moral advancement of the country. The grand panacea for the healing of the nation was, according to his notion, the abolition of slavery, and the crisis at which we had new arrived was, he argued, the fittest occasion for inaugurating such a movement.

At the termination of the discourse one of the members of the church rose and moved that the reverend pastor be solicited, on behalf of the congregation, to furnish a copy of his sermon for publication, with the intent of circulating it among the members of the Senate and House of Representatives at Washington. The motion was seconded and carried without dissent, and five gentlemen were appointed as a committee to carry it into effect.

THE REV. DR. KUNREUTHER.

At the synagogue of the Radeph Sholaru congregation, in Clinton street, Divine service was held at half-past eight o'clock A. M.

The services commenced with the morning prayers, followed with the 6th, 22d, 25th, 51st and 100th Psalms, chaunted by the Rev. K. Oestreicher. The Rev. Dr. Kunreuther then delivered an excellent and appropriate discourse, taking as his text in the book of Jonah, chapter iii., from the first to the last verse:—"And the Word of the Lord came unto Jonah the second time saying," &c.

After the discourse the reverend gentleman then recited the prayer for the government and for the peace and harmony of the Union. The synagogue was crowded to overflowing. Services were concluded at half-past ten o'clock.

This shows that the Israelites of this country take a lively interest in the peace and preservation of this great and glorious Union, and the maintenance of our great national independence.

May God Save the Union.

A HYMN FOR THE NATIONAL FAST DAY.

BY REV. G. DOUGLAS BREWERTON.

"Liberty and Union, now and forever, one and inseparable."

Am—"Portuguese Hymn."

May God save the Union! God grant it may stand,
The pride of our people, the boast of our land;
Still, still 'mid the storm may our banner float free,
Unrent and unriven, o'er earth and o'er sea.

May God save the Union! We trust in its might,
In time of the tempest, in fear and in flight;
We'll fall not, we'll faint not, if still in the sky
We see all the stars in the azure field fly.

May God save the Union! The red white and blue
Keep our States still united the dreary day through;
Let the stars tell the tale of the glorious past,
And bind us in Union forever to last.

May God save the Union! Still, still may it stand
Upheld by the prayers of the patriot hand;
To cement it our fathers ensanguined the sod,
To keep it we kneel to a merciful God.

PORT JERVIS, Orange county, N. Y., 1861.

THE OBSERVANCE OF THE DAY THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY.

THE SERMON OF THE CHAPLAIN OF CONGRESS.

WASHINGTON, Jan. 4, 1861.

Fast day was generally observed according to the recommendation of the President. The stores were closed and the churches were well attended. All the sermons were of a high Union character. There was a Union prayer meeting in the hall of the House of Representatives in the afternoon.

The hall of the House of Representatives was given up to-day to the religious exercises appropriate to the national Fast Day. They were under the management of Mr. Stockton, the venerable Chaplain to the House, assisted by two other clergymen.

Mr. Stockton preached the sermon. He commenced by denying the statement in the *Constitution*, that he was a partisan either in church or State. He but strove to improve the little of life and strength left to him by speaking for God and human conscience, and regarded his position as higher than that of Chaplain, or President, or any other position on earth. He then contrasted the condition of the country now with its condition on Thanksgiving Day, two months ago, attributing the change to crime and folly. In no section of the globe, he said, were witnessed such scenes of ingratitude towards God, disparagement of blessings, dishonor of national and universal brotherhood, intent madness of fanaticism and pride, as those which disgrace and threaten to destroy from centre to circumference this American Union. Lift up thy hoary hairs thou aged and anxious President—lift up your heads ye Governors of all the States—and ye, O prostrate people, rise and stand in the presence of God and receive His blessing. Let the distracted and dangerous condition of the country be brought into its former state of harmony and peace. Let the Union of the States be confirmed. Let panic and distress subside. Let our laboring people abound in work and wages. Let the false pride of opinion be removed. Let friendship and good will be restored. Let the horrors of civil war be averted. Would any divide this Union, let them make the Mississippi a hundred miles wide and a thousand fathoms deep—an impassable line of perpetual storms. Let them turn the Alleghanies and the Rocky Mountains East and West and unite them in a Missouri compromise which cannot be abolished. Here is a vast and varied world, which Jehovah reserved for thousands of years to be the crowning beauty and glory and wonder of all time. And must such a heritage as this be sundered and destroyed? Grasp thy broken staff, O flag of stars, superseded and dishonored by the pitiful palmetto. Start from thy eyrie, O eagle of the morning; shake from thy pinions the dews of the night, and relume thy vision at the splendor of the sunrise, lest the rattlesnake crawling up the cliff shall steal on thy slumbers and strike thee unawares. (Sensation and suppressed murmurs of applause.) God be merciful to us. And has it really come to this? Vacant seats in the House, vacant seats in the Senate, vacant seats in the Cabinet, resignations in the army, resignations in the navy, resignation in the confederacy, a Secession Convention, a secession ordinance, a new oath of allegiance, Sabbath sessions, secret sessions, Commissioners from a foreign State, warlike preparations, seizure of forts and arsenals, seizure of government vessels, obstructions in the channel, slaves throwing up earthworks along the coasts, freemen leaving home and camping out on the wintry strand, marching and countermarching, in instant readiness for bloodiest conflict! How shall we account for this universal enthusiasm of utter madness? Slavery! The liberty of twenty-six millions imperilled by the servitude of four! It is said that the South loves slavery, and that the North abhors it; that the South is determined to maintain it forever, and that the North is resolved to abolish it as soon as possible; that it is an "irrepressible conflict;" that the States must be all slave States or all free States; therefore, the North hates the South, and the South hates the North, and we are mutual enemies. It is false—all false—utterly false. In the name of God and man, I pronounce it essentially and eternally false. There is not now, there never was in all the history of the world, a people so welded into one living mass as there is within the limits of this glorious and beautiful Union. What do they, the Southern States, want? Slavery in the States? Let them have it, not because we approve it, but because it is there through the providential allotment of the Divine Being, and they alone are responsible for it. What do they want? Slavery in New Mexico? Let them try it. If they fail the fault is their own, not ours. What do they want? The enforcement of the Fugitive Slave law? That is the duty of the general government. Let it be performed. What do they want? The repeal of the Personal Liberty bills? If the States were ill-advised in their passage, let them be repealed. What do they want? The privilege of slave service in their current transport through the land? Let them have it without molestation at their own inevitable risk. What do they want? Anything less than a sacrifice of principle, conscience and honor—anything reasonable, proper and expedient—anything which God may command and humanity yield? Let them have it, and our true love with it, and our prayers with our love. Does all that sound like hate? Pause, then, ye States preparing for secession. Reconsider thy course, thou lonely State that has seceded. Come back, South Carolina, back to the circle of honest and earnest affection. Come back with God's blessing. Come back with the national glory. Come back in peace. Come back before a single drop of blood shall be shed. Blessed be James Buchanan, if only for that one thing—that he will not, if he can help it, consent to the shedding of a single drop of blood. If he cannot help it, then let it be remembered that the ruler beareth not the sword in vain, for he is the minister of God, the revenger of exact wrath on him who doeth evil. Let his skirts be clear. Let the skirts of the army and navy be clear. Let the skirts of the still United States be clear.

The sermon was listened to with marked attention, and appeared to produce a profound impression on the audience, among which, however, were to be found but few members of Congress.

The ghastly pallid face, long snowy locks, and emaciated frame of the chaplain, were calculated to convey a deep and lasting impression.

The exercises were closed with the Doxology.

FAST DAY IN RICHMOND.

RICHMOND, Jan. 4, 1861.

Business was entirely suspended here to-day, and services were held in all the churches. Most of the sermons were extremely warlike. Rev. Mr. Hoge, of the Second Presbyterian church, strongly counselled resistance; and the Rev. Mr. Duncan, of the Broad street Methodist church, said he would himself, if necessary, lead an army in resistance to federal aggression. All hopes of saving the Union are lost.

FAST DAY IN NORFOLK.

NORFOLK, Jan. 4, 1861.

Business was suspended to-day, and all churches, both white and colored, were filled at an early hour. The day has been generally observed by all classes. The different congregations held prayer meetings this afternoon and at night. African churches were open all day. Our people are growing more excited as the news from South Carolina and Washington comes in.

THE FAST DAY IN BALTIMORE.

BALTIMORE, Jan. 4, 1861.

The Fast Day is generally observed here. Business is suspended, and a deep and saddening gloom pervades all minds.

THE FAST DAY IN PHILADELPHIA.

PHILADELPHIA, Jan. 4, 1861.

The Fast Day is partially observed here. The banks and most of the business houses are closed.

THE FAST DAY IN BOSTON.

BOSTON, Jan. 4, 1861.

The National Fast to-day is generally observed in this city. The banks and many of the stores are closed.

Before Divine services commenced in the churches a salute of thirty-three guns was fired on the Common in honor of Major Anderson and the Union, by the Boston Light Artillery.

FAST DAY AT CINCINNATI.

CINCINNATI, Jan. 4, 1861.

To-day was generally observed, leading business and banking houses were closed and services were held in all churches.

FAST DAY AT PORTLAND.

PORTLAND, Jan. 4, 1861.

The government and municipal offices and schools were closed to-day, in observance of the national fast. Divine services were held in most of the churches.

FAST DAY AT ST. LOUIS.

ST. LOUIS, Jan. 4, 1861.

Business was generally suspended to-day, and services were held in nearly all the churches in the city.

The State of Trade in Detroit.

[From the Detroit Free Press, Dec. 30.]

The following table shows the receipts by railroad at Detroit of a number of the principal articles of commerce during the past week, the week previous, and since the 1st of January:—

	Past week.	*Previous week.*	*Since Jan. 1.*
Flour, bbls.....	6,860	10,190	754,724
Wheat, bush.....	1,183	1,537	1,564,967
Corn	4,930	11,479	558,023
Oats.....	1,224	1,391	155,004
Wool, lbs.....	1,335	3,702	4,095,284
Butter.....	33,690	32,688	2,697,178
Live hogs, No.....	2,724	1,232	61,436
Dressed hogs.....	3,268	1,451	26,759

There has been an improvement in the market during the week, though not of a sufficient character to produce very favorable results as yet. The advance in produce in New York has had its effect here, and some little inquiry begins to be made for flour and wheat, so that prices cannot be quoted wholly nominal as heretofore. A continued improvement in the market at other points and an easing up in money will speedily produce a better state of things than has prevailed for the past six weeks. The quotations for produce, provisions, &c., will be found in the appropriate department of the paper.

Dressed hogs have improved a trifle during the week, though not sufficiently to warrant an advance in the rates quoted last week. Good lots bring only $5 a $5 25, though the latter figure is paid only for averages of 250 lbs. and thereabouts. The receipts are larger than heretofore, and packing is progressing rapidly.

NEWS FROM THE STATE CAPITAL.

Anxiety About the Committees—The Course that the Speaker Will Pursue—Fire Department—Greeley at Work for Senator Sessions—The Combination for United States Senator—Parish Will Case, &c.

ALBANY, Jan. 4, 1861.

There is a great deal of anxiety and tribulation amongst the members in regard to the positions that they will have on the committees to be announced by the Speaker on Monday evening next. The applications are numerous, and the pressure upon the Speaker for places on the most important committees would astonish those not initiated in such affairs. The republican members who voted for Robinson will no doubt feel a relief when their places are known, as it is the general impression that they have forfeited all claims by fighting Littlejohn so strong. Those gentlemen who look upon the question in that light will be happily disappointed when the names of the committeemen are read off. I am satisfied, from the best information that I can obtain, that Mr. Littlejohn will select the members of the several committees solely upon the ground of their fitness and qualifications, without the least regard for their action in the contest for Speaker, determined, if possible, to prevent any further rupture in the republican ranks. He will in his selection let bygones be bygones, and those who are worrying themselves on this point can quiet their nerves at once, for no one intends to harm them.

Mr. Robinson, by parliamentary usages, will be Chairman of the Committee of Ways and Means, and will have a strong committee to back him. Mr. Bingham will be chairman of the Judiciary Committee; the New York city members on that committee will either be Hutchings or Coyans, probably the latter. It is rumored that Prendergast will be appointed chairman of the Committee on Cities and Villages. This is the committee who have referred to them all the New York city bills—such as railroads, amendment to the Charleston police, and all others of that nature. There will be one republican and one democratic member on that committee from New York. Mr. Shaw will be the republican, and either Woodruff or Hardy the democratic member—the chances, I think, are in favor of the latter.

The bill in regard to the Fire Department noticed by Mr. Craft on Thursday was not for a paid Fire Department, but amendments that have been prepared by the officers in the present system for the purpose of correcting some of the abuses that now exist. It reduces the force, and changes very materially its general management. The bill that has been prepared for a paid Fire Department and the purchase of steam engines has not made its appearance as yet, but is expected to make its debut some time next week.

The combination in the election of officers of the Assembly furnishes some singular facts, especially that for Clerk. Greeley came here, and next after Speaker went to work zealously for Mr. Risley for Clerk. Now it happens that Mr. Risley was brought out by Senator Sessions, one of the Senators that Greeley has denounced more than any other member of that body. It was universally understood that Sessions was managing Risley's card for him, but in the face of this fact Greeley advised the friends of Robinson to support him. The result of his election is to strengthen Mr. Sessions at home, and in a measure place him back to his original popularity at home, thus counteracting the damage that the *Tribune* had done him in denouncing the course of the Senator last winter. It seems, also, that Weed, Sessions and Rice make up the slate of appointments for subordinates. No person is able to obtain an appointment under the new Clerk unless satisfactory to that trio.

The contest for United States Senator is already assuming some importance. It is now generally understood by the Weed men that Seward will be renominated as a compliment to him, and that he will immediately decline, when Wm. M. Evarts will take his place, it being their intention to place Seward's mantle on the shoulders of that gentleman. The other side now have a radical or barnburner in the United States Senate from this State in the person of Preston King.

It is therefore considered a bad policy for them to urge the election of another person of the same stamp. Their programme appears to be the election of Governor Morgan; this will place Lieutenant Governor Campbell, one of the most uncompromising men, amongst the radicals in his opposition to Weed, in the Gubernatorial chair and at once settle Thurlow's claims as Governor and chief barber to the State.

Among the noted New Yorkers here are Chas. O'Conor, Wm. M. Curtis and Robt. J. Dillon. They are stopping at Congress Hall, where are to be found all the judges of of the Court of Appeals, before whom they are to appear next week as attorneys in the Parish will case, which has so long been in the courts of the State.

Shipwreck and Loss of Seven Lives.

SQUAN, JAN. 4th 1861.

The schooner Hamecin, of and from Granville, with a cargo of codfish, Capt. Robtin, came ashore ten miles South of Barnegat yesterday morning. The captain, first mate, two sailors and three boys were drowned. The second mate was the only man saved. The vessel will be a total loss.

Reforming the Constitution.

[From the Richmond (Va.) Enquirer.]

When the old confederacy had, in the opinion of some of the States, failed to effect the objects for which it was formed, our forefathers, like sensible men, set about its reformation without any threats of coercion or talk of war. They assembled a convention which formed the present constitution, and provided for a Union when ratified by nine States, and between all the States ratifying. There was as much objection to the old confederation as there is now to the present Union, and there was as much opposition to its dissolution as exists at present against the disintegration of the present confederacy. But, notwithstanding all this, our forefathers proceeded with their work, and brought peace and a constitution which won the admiration of the world, the nullifying States of the North excepted.

We know no reason why the example of our forefathers cannot be followed at the present time—why a convention, outside of the present constitution, and appointed by the State Legislatures, cannot assem