

SELECTIONS.

BREVITY is the life of a good newspaper. The putting words of a worthy mechanic in Cincinnati were, "give a shill article." Correspondents must remember this. We claim the prerogative of wanting all the long, dull articles in the paper. Correspondents must be short and spicy. A long communication has not had the chance of publication that a small one has.—*National Era*.

POPIST RELICS.—Popery is imposture from beginning to end. Many different churches in different parts of the world all in possession of the very same relics. In Flanders, Spain, and France, there are eight atoms of Matthew the evangelist; besides the holy coat at Treves, there are twenty-two other holy coats, all equally genuine, and equally holy; and as for the wood of the true cross, it is so abundant, that, as has been said, it would suffice to build a frigate of 74 guns, or supply a town with fuel for a winter. Nor is it only in the darker parts of Europe that such impostures are practised. The Archbishop of Paris has recently discovered a fund of most precious relics, which he has publicly called on the people of his diocese to come and adore. The following are among the articles enumerated:—A bit of our Saviour's crown of thorns, some of the nails with which he was fastened to the cross, the iron lance that pierced his side, the sponge that contained the vinegar given him to drink, the reed put into his hand for the sceptre, a piece of the real sepulchre, and the towel with which he wiped the apostles' feet!—*Bishop's Light of Prophecy*.

SLEEPING IN CHURCH.—The church at Bradford, Massachusetts in the early part of the last century, were much troubled, as many churches are now, with a class of worshippers, who invariably composed themselves, on ordinary occasions, for a nice little nap in the house of God. At length the practise became so offensive to both minister and people, that it was put to vote in a church meeting, and they determined "that sleeping at meeting, especially laying down the head to sleep, in time of public worship, is a very great indecency and irreverence, and justly offensive, and to be observed and reprov'd in any member of the church; and, if not reformed, the church is to be stayed, after exorcise, and the person is to be called forth to be admonished."

THE CATASTROPHE AT NORTH BLENHEIM.—We have already published an account of the destruction of the Holdridge family. In regard to the affair the Schoharie Patriot says:—The family of Mr. Holdridge retired for the night between 10 and 11 o'clock. The children, except the one rescued by the mother, slept in the second story. Mary, the daughter saved, cannot tell how she made her escape, but thinks in rushing through the smoke and flame she fell against a door or window, which gave way and let her into the street. Mr. Holdridge has been for years an intemperate man. The town in which he resides, however, having voted for "No License" last Spring, and the law having been observed, he had not been able to procure liquor for some time, until the night of the catastrophe, when a Blue-Ruin pedlar from one of the "Sword-Fish" factories at Troy, happened to pass by, and sold him a five gallon keg of drugged poison, of which he drank and was bereft of his reason. Those who were first at the scene of the disaster, say that the whole family might have been saved without much difficulty, had not the wretched father insisted that all had left the house.—*Evangelist*.

A HINT TO THE CHURCH.—Self is Dives in the mansion, clothed in purple, and faring sumptuously every day; the cause of Christ, is Lazarus lying at his gate, and red only with the crumbs which fall from his table.

THE DIVIDED HEART, AND THE BROKEN HEART.—There is a wide difference between a heart broken and a heart divided. There is nothing human God loves better than a broken heart: perhaps there is nothing human that has more of his displeasure than a divided heart. I would, he said, thou wert either cold or hot; but because thou art neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. This is the strongest language of detestation. On the other hand, the sacrifice of God, that which he prefers to rivers of oil and the costliest offerings of devotion, is a broken heart. Thou wilt not despise this, says the Psalmist. As if all other offerings in comparison were despicable. Man may despise it, but it is God's chosen sacrifice; and to that man, whether kneeling by the roadside, or in "the long-drawn aisles" of the forest; whether worshipping in temples made with hands, or beneath the broad arch of heaven, or in the dungeon, or on the sick bed; to that man who offers this, the eye of God is directed, and his smile rests there. And yet divided hearts are many, and broken hearts few. The sour cynic of olden time, who searched Athens with his lantern in quest of an honest man, would be scarcely less puzzled to find broken-hearted men now. We do indeed hear of those who have died broken-hearted with grief for lost friends: or through disappointed ambition, or the loss of riches; but in what bill of mortality, in town or country, do we read of death from a broken heart for sin? Alas for us, that the rarest of all experiences should be that of a contrite spirit. Lacking this, what of spiritual good do we not lack? All else is broken, where the heart is not broken. Our alliance with God is broken; our hold on the promises is broken; our peace of conscience is broken.—*Presbyterian*.

OUR EARTH'S DISTANCE FROM THE STARS.—To convey to your minds any idea of the immense distance which separates us from those twinkling orbs which nightly gem our firmament, is utterly impossible.

We may talk of millions of miles, but this serves only to perplex and confound the feeble intellect of man. I may tell you that light, which flies at the rate of ten millions of miles in a second, and which is conveyed to the distant planet of Le Verrier, and reflected back to us in the short space of a few minutes, will require ten years in coming from the nearest fixed star; and if that star was suddenly blotted from existence, it would continue to shine for ten long years in the place it once occupied. Even were it possible for us to transport ourselves to the very confines of our system, or to the planet of Le Verrier, we should still continue to see these objects in their old places, and, to all appearance, no nearer than before. Here would be Sirius, blazing in its wondrous splendour; yonder we should see Orion; and there the polar Bear.—*Prof. Mitchell*.

ALMACKS.—This is a place in London of privileged fashion. The rules which regulate admission to its saloons are very strict, and exclusive; among these, it is said, that any physical deformity would exclude even a prince of the blood. If an additional rule were adopted, excluding those who laboured under any moral deformity, the company would be still more select. It is probable that the most acceptable visitors at Almacks will be utterly excluded from heaven, where this latter rule is rigidly observed.—*Presbyterian*.

POPULAR CHRISTIANITY.—And the most humiliating, the most alarming symptom in the popular Christianity of the day is, that baptized Christians claim the privilege of friendship with the world in every thing short of actual vice. Let a stranger go into the families of these Christians, and sit at their tables, and be with them morning and evening, and see their way of bringing up children, and follow them into their places of business, and go with them to all their recreations, and see them everywhere except in the house of God: and what would he find that proves them Christians? In what do they differ from the world?—What have they renounced? What do they forego? In what respect does their baptism separate them from the world?—Where are the holy fruits of a living faith displayed in their lives, so as to bear them witness that they are the sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty?—*Rev. Henry Gregory*.

NEW-YORK AND LIVERPOOL STEAMERS.—The Glasgow Citizen gives us the following information relative to the new Atlantic steamers now building in the Clyde. The British and North America Mail Steam Packet Company have ordered four immense timber steamships, to be fitted out for plying between Liverpool and New-York. Three of these are being built by Mr. R. Steel, of Greenock, and the fourth by that veteran in the art of steamboat building, Mr. John Steel, of Port Glasgow, who, in 1811, launched from his building yard the first passenger steamer which ever ploughed the waters of the Clyde. The first of these leviathan steamships will be launched early in March; she is close upon 2000 tons register, and will have engines of 750 horse power. The other three are of the same size, and are constructed on the same model, being, over all, in length 385 feet, in breadth of beam 38 feet, and having a depth of 28 feet. These vessels are intended to ply fortnightly between Liverpool and New-York, commencing on the 1st of January, 1848.

HONOURS TO AGRICULTURE.—The British Government has given a life pension to the widow of Mr London, in consideration of the great utility of his writings on agriculture and horticulture.

NEWS.

Several packet ships have recently arrived, the latest of which brought dates to the 21st ult. This vessel, the Washington Irving, made the passage out in something less than 20 days. The political news was not important. Flour had declined a little from the extreme quotations, and was selling at 40s to 41s. Money was also getting scarce, and as a natural consequence of dear provisions, manufactures and trade generally were becoming dull. The Queen had appointed a general fast to be held on the 24th March, on account of the famine.

From the United States we learn that Vera Cruz has fallen with scarcely a struggle, and indeed we cannot well see how it could have been otherwise, after the American forces had been allowed to land unmolested. The only cause of regret is, that the bombardment of the city slaughtered a thousand human beings, half of whom were women and children. But it is somewhat strange that the Castle, which could have made a resistance, should have surrendered immediately on the fall of the city without having been attacked or even summoned to surrender. The fact is, we suppose, that the Mexican soldiers thought it was more comfortable to walk home to their families, upon parole not to fight again, than to be starved in a fortress or blown to atoms by Paixhan guns. It is said that General Scott with his victorious army, who is forthwith to be joined by that of General Taylor, is in full march for the city of Mexico, there to treat for peace in the halls of the Montezumas.

By the latest accounts from New York, Flour was \$7.69, Wheat \$1.55 to \$1.65, and Freights had fallen to 5s. and 1s. 6d.

The navigation is now open from Dickenson's Landing upward, and also for some distance below Quebec. The ice here still stands fast, with only a channel or two open. The weather is still quite wintry.