

# CHARIOT OF WISDOM AND LOVE.

VOLUME I.

PORTLAND, MAINE, JULY, 1866.

NUMBER 2

## CIRCULAR TO MY FRIENDS.

### THE GREAT FIRE.

Ruin and Desolation! Two hundred acres of what was, on the morning of the inglorious 4th, the very heart of this beautiful city, is now covered with ruins! On going into the street, after passing three houses, I can travel a mile through a wilderness of chimneys, broken walls and charred stubs of once noble shade and fruit trees! Men, women and children are sauntering mournfully about, gazing at the smoking embers of their late comfortable homes! Gardens of fruits and plants have passed away, and the scorched earth is blackened with cinders and strewn with the debris of fallen walls and chimneys. The streets are strewn, and in some places piled, with the same, mingled at intervals with the remains of furniture, burned after being removed. Ten thousand people have been made homeless, and fifteen millions worth of property has passed away. Here men are at work clearing the streets; there a crew is straightening the rails of the horse-railroad, that were sprung and bowed, and rendered impassable for the cars by the intense heat from the burning buildings on either side, and all around people are raking from the ashes the remnants of stoves and other incombustible articles, seared, broken and ruined! **AND ALL THIS RUIN AND MISERY JUSTLY CHARGEABLE TO THE CITY AUTHORITIES, AND THE RICH AND INFLUENTIAL MEN AND WOMEN, WHO GIVE TONE AND CHARACTER TO THE CITY!** And in making this ruin, they have not "gone it blind," but have walked into the pit and drawn their neighbors with them with their eyes wide open—the priests of their false religions marching with them in their foremost ranks.

No city in the nation nor the universe has been more faithfully and persistently reminded of the follies and sins that have led to this catastrophe, or more frequently warned of approaching ruin; yet all in vain.

More than twenty years ago, one man, being painfully sensible of the rapidly increasing vices and crimes of the city and nation, commenced the publication of a paper for the purpose of pointing out the evils and warning society of their effects. He might have floated with the popular current, and published a paper of news, politics, nonsense and advertisements, and made himself rich; but he chose rather to present needed truths without regard to personal ease or comfort. Year after year, among other evils, he faithfully warned the city against the insane and worse than heathenish celebrations usually held on the 4th of July, knowing that whatsoever we sow we must reap, and that such folly and sin would surely yield an abundant harvest. In return for his labors of love, he was treated with ridicule, scorn and contempt, yet continued firm and steadfast, warning the people from year to year. The professed ministers of the gospel, who ought to have been first and foremost to aid him in reforms, were the first to oppose, and everywhere treat him with contempt; and the people, save here and there one, chimed in to aid them. But since the great fire scores of them have taken him by the hand and said, "Well, friend —, if we had taken your advice, we should have escaped this terrible calamity."

Yet there are others who deny that this fire is the fruit of their own works, and charge it to a mysterious providence, in accordance with the teachings of their blind guides, who have led them into the ditch.

A few years since, this same individual wrote a remonstrance against the public celebration on the 4th, giving his reasons therefor: First, no good came out of them; they were got up to celebrate a victory gained in war, and all wars are wrong. Second, supposing the war and victory were right, this was not the way to celebrate it; such celebrations contained nothing instructive, useful nor rational, but on the other hand tended to promote intemperance, immorality, rowdiness, vice and crime. Unstable men were called from their honest employment, and spent from one week to a month or more in drunkenness or the house of correction, while their families were suffering for what they might have earned, if they had remained sober; time and money were wasted that should be donated to better uses; the aged and infirm, the sick and the dying, were disturbed as if in Bedlam itself, for twenty-four hours; there were many who did not want their children to be corrupted by such scenes, &c., &c.; and finally the authorities had no right to take money from the public treasury for such a purpose; those who wanted such pow-wows should foot their own bills, and go with their noise, confusion and rowdiness into the wilderness, for they had no right to disturb civil people.

Such was the substance of the remonstrance that was presented to the City Fathers, who denied no part of it, but admitted that they had no right to spend the public funds for such a purpose, but said they had made their arrangements, and it was too late to recede. So they have gone on since, from year to year, robbing the public treasury on the principle that numbers or might makes right, disturbing civil people, and corrupting their children with funds stolen from them, and now they have reaped a portion of the harvest they sowed in iniquity, and the innocent have to suffer with the guilty. If the calamity had fallen only on the city authorities, and such as desire to mingle in such insane and worse than heathenish pow-wows, none would have just cause to complain; but it has fallen heavily on a better class of people, who have always been opposed to such doings, and uttered their remonstrance against it.

I have said the City Fathers, and others who give tone and character to the city, are responsible for this ruin. They all knew full well, that for five years past the whole nation has been flooded with vice and crime. Every paper has had its list of incendiary fires, thefts, rapes, robberies, &c. &c., and they must have known that a public celebration, at such a time, was the very height of insanity; that it would be calling together all the combustible spirits in the State, and adding fuel to the fire; and they should, therefore, be held just as responsible for the ruin, as if they had fired the city with their own hands.

The only reason I have ever heard given for these insane celebrations is, that they draw people into the city to spend their money with us, and prevent many of our citizens from going to Boston and elsewhere to spend money. The motive, then, is no better than that of the highway robber. True they do not use the same means to obtain the money, but the spirit and object are the

same. They know that drunkards, rogues and rowdies thieves and pickpockets attend such celebrations more generally than honest, civil people. They also know that most of the money spent in the city on those days goes to hotels, to beer and grog shops, showmen, mountebanks, jugglers and other worthless characters. Let them think of all this, and more, and then see how their account stands with their consciences, as they travel over the scene of ruin they have wrought.

And what shall we say of the priests, who have never uttered a word of reproof, but have ever stood ready to mingle their prayers and other pious mockery with the general confusion and help on the rowdiness? Say them? Why, just as we have always said and as the conduct has proved them to be—the priests of Baal and Mars, the god of Confusion and the god of War.

The publishers and editors of the daily papers are equally guilty—are sold to the devil to work wickedness and are accountable for their share of this ruin. They pretend to be the conservators of the public morals while in fact they are a nuisance and a curse to all that is good. No company of strolling actors or mountebanks are so drunken, immoral or degraded but what the papers will advertise for them for the pay, and urge the readers to "give them a full house and a bumper".

**THE CHARIOT.**—The original 25th number of the Chariot is mingled with the general ruin, and the little sheet is issued in its stead—it being the best that can be done at the present time. My mission here ended, and after attending to a few personal matters, the paper will go forth from some other place, if issued at all. If means are furnished, it will be continued monthly, twenty-four numbers for \$1.25, and as much more as its friends are able and willing to give. If means are not furnished, I am willing to step aside, and let loud voices speak; for sin will continue to be reprov'd, if must be by fire. It is as sure to bring its own punishment as effects are to follow cause in any other matter.

My post office address will be Portland, until further notice, and when there are subscribers enough to warrant the continuation of the paper it will be resumed. If there are not enough, the money sent will be returned. If those who have ordered volumes of the Pleasure Box do not receive them within a month, they are requested to notify me. Those who want odd numbers of the Chariot to complete their files should send at once, naming the numbers wanted. I have a few volumes of the Chariot that will be sent unbound and free of postage for \$1 each, if ordered immediately. J. HACKER.

**The fire,** after sweeping across the city a mile and coming within three houses of mine, changed its course to the right, and passed on, leaving a few families of us unharmed.

**Three days** after the fire a poor old cat crawled into my yard in a dying condition, her fur singed and filled with cinders, and the bottoms of her feet burnt to a crisp. I challenge the whole Union to show the enough good has ever come out of all such rowdyish 4th of July celebrations to balance the suffering of this on animal.

**The Boston Journal** thinks it is time to end such barbarous celebrations. We are glad to find even on paper on the side of common sense, and second the motion with a hearty Amen!

