

Correspondence.

ACTION ON UNION OF PRESBYTERIANS

LETTER FROM DR. TUSTIN AND RESOLUTIONS OF THE PRESBYTERY OF POTOMAC.

WASHINGTON CITY, April 19th, 1864.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.—Rev. and Dear Brother: I herewith send you a series of resolutions offered by myself and passed with entire and hearty unanimity by the Presbytery of Potomac, at its recent meeting in this city. These resolutions will be published, I presume, in the Presbyterian, and in some other papers friendly to the cause, in accordance with the expressed wish of the Presbytery. Having no claim, as a Presbytery, upon your columns, I have to ask the personal favor, for the sake of the cause, that you will give them a place in the earliest issue of your paper. You will perceive that they are framed in accordance, though previously prepared, with the sentiments contained in a recent letter from the opulent pen of my learned and noble friend Rev. Dr. S. H. Cox, of New York. I read that letter, as, indeed, I do everything which emanates from that source, with profound interest, even if I might happen to dissent, which, I am happy to say, is not often the case, from the positions which the writer sometimes, not in this case, assumes. I would to God that his elevated and heavenly spirit pervaded the hearts of all the leaders and subordinates of both branches of our beloved Zion. Then, indeed, might we expect soon to realize the bright and lovely visions of many of those who, for long and weary years, have been separated from each other.

Having been highly honored by the unanimous vote of my brethren of the Presbytery of Potomac with the appointment of Commissioner to the next General Assembly, to meet at Newark, N. J., I expect, *Deo volente*, to give an account of my stewardship as the clerical delegate from the Assembly which met in Peoria, Ill., to the Assembly which held its sessions in Philadelphia in May, 1863. Notwithstanding the delightful character of my mission, I am almost alarmed at the responsibility of my position. But, with God for my help and guide, why may not even I, frail creature that I am, have confidence and courage and success? This is not the first time, and this is my consolation,—that "God has chosen the weak things of this world," to further his gracious designs toward his redeemed people.

I cannot close this hasty note without recording my deep sense of the goodness of my Heavenly Father, that whilst at his bidding my harp hangs partially unstrung, upon the willow, He has kindly opened another door, so much in harmony with my feelings, where, in my declining days, I may do something for the honor of His holy name.

Very sincerely and affectionately your brother, SEPTIMUS TUSTIN.

RESOLUTIONS.

Presented by the Rev. Dr. Tustin, to the Presbytery of Potomac and unanimously adopted by that Body at its recent meeting in Washington City.

Whereas, in the order of a gracious Providence, the hearts of God's ministers and people have been moved to consider the expediency of reconstructing the Presbyterian church, which has been severed for many long and weary years: And,

Whereas, the initiatory steps for the accomplishment of this great object have been taken, so far as to appoint delegates from the respective bodies into which the church has been divided, with the view of interchanging Christian and friendly salutations with each other. And,

Whereas, the primary steps thus taken have, as we believe, met with the approval of a large portion of the ministers and people of these respective bodies, and have tended greatly to meliorate whatever of asperity may have remained, and to this extent removed the reproach which hitherto rested upon us, all of which seems to augur well for the ultimate reunion of these bodies—Therefore

Resolved, That the Presbytery of Potomac earnestly and affectionately recommend to all concerned within its bounds to abstain from whatever in speech or conduct, may serve to embarrass or retard the accomplishment of this most desirable object.

Resolved, That in the subsequent stages of this movement we earnestly and affectionately recommend, that all unnecessary issues be carefully avoided, that "by-gones be by-gones," and that in the sublime spirit of Christian magnanimity, we consign to oblivion whatever in the past may serve to awaken the demon of reproach and recrimination.

Resolved, That however desirable in some respects, the early and even immediate accomplishment of this object may be, we earnestly and affectionately recommend, for prudential considerations, that all precipitancy be carefully eschewed and that every step be taken with calm deliberation and devout prayerfulness to Almighty God, for "that wisdom which cometh from above, and which is profitable to direct.

Resolved, That the delegates from this Presbytery to the next General Assembly be, and they are hereby requested,

to use their best efforts to secure from that Body the early appointment of a committee, consisting of one minister and one ruling elder from each Synod connected with our General Assembly, to meet a corresponding delegation from the other General Assembly, to meet in the city of Philadelphia on _____ 1864, for prayer and consultation, and with the view of presenting some definite plan for the action of the next subsequent General Assemblies.

Resolved, That the Presbyterian and editors favorable to the object contemplated be respectfully requested to give the foregoing resolutions a place in their respective journals, and thus aid in advancing a cause which, in its final triumph cannot fail to convey joy and gladness to the heart of the wise and the good.

FROM OUR WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT.

DEAR BROTHER:—In this letter I turn from the strifes of debate to more congenial themes.

RELIGIOUS INTEREST IN WASHINGTON. As I have often intimated in the past, there is no city in this country, exposed to influences so fatal to morality and virtue as Washington.

Multitudes visit the capital from all sections of the land and the world, who have only before them enjoyment, and give their days to the sittings of Congress, and the excitement of political controversy, and their nights to places of dissipation.

The theatres and dancing halls, the number of which no one thinks of counting are crowded to excess. In the great central Avenue of the city, more is flowing during most of the night, thousands of the slaves of dissipation, and the children of passion for whom man's hope has no promise of a better future. This festering, leprous mass, most seriously affected the moral and the spiritual life of the city.

Other thousands are drawn here for the purposes of speculating in Government contracts, and enriching themselves by some fortunate turn in affairs. Great numbers are here to influence for their advantage, some acts of legislation; and as we wof on the Western Prairie snuffs from a height afar off its prey, so these men, in the advance of all others, discern what is coming, and are on hand with wine, supper, valuable presents for ladies, and flatteries to influence congressional action.

Others, and the class not small, are here for the purpose of forgetting themselves. The passions of a wasted, mispent life, drive them, like avenging angels, from one scene of dissipation and mockery to another.

Other thousands are here without any intention of making this city, beyond a year or two, their home. They do not look upon the portion of life spent in Washington as having any duties. It is a holiday and carnival week, and therefore he is wisest who enjoys and gains most, and gives himself but little trouble about his obligations to God and man. Hence, as a singular and humiliating fact, great numbers of professed Christians refuse to identify themselves with the churches here; and are never known by cross-bearing, by charity, by self-denial, by prayer, to be disciples of our Lord.

But it is not all evil and dark. There are many of the best Christians I have ever known here. Several of the churches are distinguished for Christian activity and zeal. I am happy to tell you, that, within the past few months there has been an evident revival in progress in several of our congregations. Early in the Winter, there was a manifest religious interest in the new church!

CALVARY BAPTIST

Under the care of the Rev. Mr. Howlett. For many weeks it was the delight and joy of many to come to all the meetings for conference and prayer. As the fruit of this gracious visitation, twenty were baptized by the pastor; and the church has been greatly strengthened.

In the E. Street Baptist Church, there were seven persons received by the rite of immersion on last Sabbath, and the religious interest has induced the pastor to hold services every night this week.

FOURTH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (REV. DR. SMITH'S.)

There has been an evident spiritual quickening here. This is discerned in the solemnity that characterizes the large congregation; and in the increase of interest and numbers in the prayer meetings and Sabbath schools. At the last communion, fourteen persons were added on profession of faith, and there is reason to hope that as large a number will separate themselves from the world at the coming sacrament.

In the three years of my acquaintance with this church, I have never known it in so vigorous and healthy a state as now. And at no time in the past has the bow, in the hand of the pastor, been drawn with such vigor. Familiarity with awful suffering in the hospitals; daily communion with men who die in his arms, and whom he lays in the bosom of the All-merciful One, has given a pro-founder depth to the con-

viction that man needs an infinite Saviour. Thus the ministry of this venerable pastor was never so rich in unition as now.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (REV. DR. SUNDERLAND'S.)

There has been, more than two months, remarkable solemnity here. At the last communion eleven were added, as I believe, to the church on profession. The meetings for prayer have greatly increased. As many as twenty at a time have attended an "inquiry meeting;" and eight, ten and twelve have arisen at conference meetings for prayer.

The state of the church is most cheering and hopeful. Many of the members have come up to the help of the pastor in this hour, in a way that has filled him with unspeakable joy. The riches of their liberality likewise abounds. Two years since the debt of the church was \$24,000; it has been reduced until, three months since, there remained but \$6000 unpaid. One of the greatest obstacles in the way of Dr. Sunderland's leaving his people for a season was this debt. He had promised himself and them, that nothing should separate him and them until this was done. In order to relieve his mind on this point, and as an evidence of their gratitude to him as their pastor, an effort was made on last Sabbath, in the morning service, to take up a subscription for this purpose. The result was highly gratifying. We may consider the debt paid, for the subscription was most liberal.

The congregation and church will experience the greatest loss in the (as we hope) but temporary sojourn abroad of Dr. Sunderland. In the last few years, it has grown to be one of the most powerful and influential in the land. The church, with nearly unbroken unanimity, has rallied about the pastor and sustained him in these troublous times; and the violence of the storm has but driven deeper its roots, and added strength and beauty to its branches. And when "the church had rest"; when it had risen above its difficulties; when its morning was never so fragrant or its future so bright, then came on its people the sorrow of seeing their pastor languish and suffer, and the pain of separation.

Dr. Sunderland will leave, bearing with him the affections of his people, and the gratitude of thousands outside of his church, who were comforted by his unswerving loyalty.

"But who shall come after the king?" Where can the people look for a man who, even for one year, shall fill his place?

THE MOVEMENT OF THE ARMY.

Who does not feel that there is an oppressive solemnity in this hour?—the great hosts collecting for the sanguinary conflict. All hearts here, I hope, feel it. As I see men marching along our streets for the front, I look upon them as I have often done on those marching into battle. May the good God be merciful. Troops are moving in all directions. Fifteen hundred sick men have just arrived from the front, and arrangements are being made for the reception of thousands more. The stones of the Temple of Liberty are cemented with blood.

I am glad to say to you that General Grant has most favorably impressed all men here. He has infused into all departments of the military service a marvellous energy. Let us not only watch for the coming herald, bearing tidings, but let all pray most earnestly that they may be good tidings.

In my next I hope to write from the bosom of the army. J. J. M.

[FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.]

THE BODY OR THE SOUL.

COLLEGE, Va., April 12, 1864.

If the question was put directly to every professing Christian, "Which is the most important, the body or the soul?" I think the uniform answer would be, "the soul." Taking this as the general belief of the church, let us see how it has been carried out with regard to the army. Soon after the war commenced, two large organizations were started; both of them having for their object the welfare of the soldier. One of them proposed to look after his body, only; the other took his body and soul together. I will not stop here to trace the history of these two associations—that is doubtless well known at home—but I propose looking at them in the light of the question stated above, in order to see which is of the greatest importance to the army, and which has the first claim on the church of God for support.

This war came suddenly and unexpectedly upon the nation; and so far as preparation for a gigantic conflict was concerned, we were lacking in almost every respect. Not only was an immense army to be raised, but the vast machinery necessary to maintain it in a state of proper efficiency was all to be got together and set in motion. That there should be mistakes and grievous

blunders made, and that much suffering would follow was only what might have been expected, and any organization proposing to assist the government in such an emergency was a great blessing. But the war has been going on for three years. During that time the government has been becoming more thoroughly master of its great work every day, and deficiencies which existed at the beginning of the contest are now comparatively unknown. I do not think the history of war can show an army better provided for than our army is to-day. Some of your readers, who are fresh in their historical readings, can correct me if I am mistaken. Those who will take the trouble to examine for themselves a little book issued by the government, entitled "Regulations for the Subsistence Department of the United States Army," will be astonished to find how abundant the supplies are, both for the camp and hospital, and how complete the machinery is for their proper distribution.

It will be seen that there is not now much occasion for any organization to "supplement" the government supply of hospital and other stores. I am informed by an officer whose position gives him an opportunity to know all about these things, that while the army is in camp, the government supply of all that is necessary for the sustenance and comfort of the soldier, both in health and sickness, is more than sufficient. It is only during the progress of a great battle like Gettysburg, that the Government needs the aid of voluntary associations in caring for its sick and wounded; and then, not for lack of material, but for want of means to transport and distribute it.

These are facts which are not generally known to the people at home. They have been appealed to so much on behalf of the "suffering soldiers" and have read so much of "starving," "neglect," and "nakedness" in connection with the army, that it is a wonder they have not ceased to respect the Government who, it would seem, is so utterly careless about its soldiers. In my humble opinion very much of the cry about government neglect of the soldiers is not only utterly groundless, but positively mischievous, tending as it must, to discourage enlistments, and to undermine the confidence of the people in the humanity and integrity of the Government. A government supported by a people so willing to submit to taxation as the people of the North are, neglecting or failing to make ample provision for the support and, as far as circumstances will permit, the comfort of its army, in health and in sickness, would not be entitled to the respect and confidence of any people.

There is need for supplementing the Government supply of spiritual provision for the army. The chaplaincy system has not been managed with such efficiency as to supply in every respect, the moral and spiritual wants of the soldiers. Had every regiment a chaplain, his efficiency and power for good could be greatly increased by an organization which would put into his hands Bibles, Testaments and other valuable religious reading. But every regiment is not supplied with a chaplain, nor perhaps, one in every three. There are whole brigades of infantry in which there is not a chaplain, not to speak of batteries of artillery, and squads of cavalry for whom government does not pretend to provide chaplains. In addition to these there are always companies of soldiers, detached from their regiments on special duty of various kinds, who are without any religious services. I do not stop here to inquire, why the Government does not make better provision for the spiritual wants of the army. I merely take things as I find them.

It will be seen that there is ample room in the army for an organization, to "supplement" the Government supply of spiritual provision. It will also be apparent to every Christian mind that on this account the Christian Commission has been, and is likely to be a necessity in the army while the war lasts. If its delegates never preached a sermon, they would yet have an important work to do in supplying the army with religious reading matter, and if the church is true to her mission, this is a work which she should see to it is not neglected.

But how has this most important work been supported in comparison with the work for the body? The answer is to be found in the fact that while eight millions of dollars have been contributed for "supplementing" the Government supply of hospital stores, only a little over one million has been given to "supplement" the more important and real necessity of spiritual provision. This, however, is not all. I learn that the treasury of the Christian Commission is empty to-day, while I read in the northern papers of money being swept into the treasury of the Sanitary Commission by the million. This would seem to indicate, that the

body is more important than the soul, in the estimation of some. Whatever the world may do, the church of God has a responsibility here which she cannot avoid. A large number of the men of this army are anxious for the Gospel. In all human probability, a few weeks more will find thousands of their souls in eternity, while their poor bodies, for which these millions are being given, will be mingled with the clods of the valley. What have you done, dear reader, to help give these men the Gospel of Jesus Christ? J. M.

AMERICAN SUNDAY SCHOOL UNION.

At the March meeting of the Board of Managers, forty-two missionaries were commissioned to labor one year, of which four were new appointments, of these, five are to labor in New York State, three in Pennsylvania, and the residue in States West and South. Rev. A. Brown was commissioned for the new State of Western Virginia. A pastor in Wheeling writes: There are whole counties in this new and noble State destitute of both a minister and Sabbath school. Come over and help us! Reports from our missionaries for the previous month, show 18 new schools started, where heretofore, there were none, with 760 children and 116 teachers. They also visited and assisted in 228 other schools, embracing 17642 scholars, they made 94 different donations of books, visited 947 families and distributed 105 Bibles and Testaments. The Society has also granted libraries to the Indiana State Prison, Cuyler Hospital Philadelphia, Johnson Island for the use of prisoners, Insane Asylum, Utica, N. Y., Park Barracks, N. Y., and schools at Hilton-Head. The intelligence from all parts of the field is very gratifying. The work especially in Missouri and Kentucky, is attended with great success and the people are asking for an increase in laborers, that the foundations of the church may be again laid and the children saved. A letter from New Orleans, asks for one thousand books and urges the appointment of a missionary for that district.

U. S. CHRISTIAN COMMISSION.

LETTER FROM THE SECRETARY OF WAR.

The following noble and unsolicited letter has just been received from the Hon. Edwin M. Stanton, by Rev. Dr. Dyer, of the New York branch of the U. S. Christian Commission:

WAR DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, April 16th, 1864.

DEAR SIR:—Among the benevolent associations organized by patriotic and charitable men during the present war, none has surpassed, and few, if any, have equalled the Christian Commission in zeal, energy, and disinterested devotion to the humane objects of their institution. Their efficient labors in the field, in the hospital, and in the camp have been felt by soldiers and officers, and have frequently been brought to the notice of this department. It is not only a pleasure, but I regard it as an official duty to commend the Christian Commission to public confidence and respect, as an institution whose labors cannot fail to contribute greatly to the welfare of our armies.

Yours truly, EDWIN M. STANTON, Secretary of War. REV. DR. DYER, New York.

A MINISTER DEPOSED.

EDITOR OF THE AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN:—Dear Brother: At the meeting of Chariton Presbytery, held on the 7th inst., the following action was had, viz:

Whereas, the Rev. Wm. Fithian still persists in refusing to appear and answer to the demands of this body, thus expressing his contempt of its authority, therefore Resolved, that he be and is hereby deposed from the Gospel ministry, and excommunicated from the Church.

I send you the above for publication, by order of Presbytery.

ASA MARTIN, Stated Clerk.

Scott, Iowa, April 15, 1864. P. S. The New York Evangelist and the Cincinnati Central Herald are requested to copy.

IMPORTANT MEETING.

A meeting of all denominations of Christians, for the purpose of securing an express recognition of God in our Constitution, will be held on Monday evening next, in the Second Presbyterian Church, Seventh below Arch Street, at 8 o'clock.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Of Moneys Received at this Office: From Assembly's Church, Washington, D. C. For Committee of Home Missions, \$40 00 For American Board, 40 00 From Newark, Mo. (Individuals), for Christian Commission, 3 00 From Rev. Ambrose J. Wight, for Special Fund Pub. Comm., 2 00

MORE COMMISSIONERS.—Rev. Ephraim Whitaker and Elder Joseph Wells, were elected principals, and Rev. Edward Stratton and Elder S. T. Terry, alternates, by the Presbytery of Long Island.

THIRD PRESBYTERY OF PHILADELPHIA.

This body held its Stated meeting in the new and beautiful Church at Darby, on Tuesday and Wednesday April 12th and 13th. Nineteen ministers and twelve elders were in attendance. The Rev. John W. Dulles was elected Moderator and the Rev. Wm. E. Moore, Temporary Clerk.

By concurrent request of pastor and people, the relation, subsisting for thirty years, between the Rev. Joseph McCool and the 1st church at Pottsville was dissolved. Declining health and advancing years were the sole causes of this request. A minute expressive of the high esteem in which this venerable brother is held by Presbytery, and their sympathy with him in this withdrawal from pastoral work, was most cordially adopted.

The Installation of Rev. Richard A. Mallery over the Cedar Street Church and that of Rev. J. S. Willis over the Western Church, were reported. The Stated Clerk also reported the dismission of Rev. Henry Darling D. D., to the Presbytery of Albany; the dismission of Rev. T. S. Johnston to German Reformed Church, and the decease of Rev. John A. Blythe.

Mr. George W. Forbes, for nine years Treasurer of Presbytery, resigned that office in consequence of feeble and declining health. The Presbytery recorded its thanks for the services rendered by Mr. Forbes, in accepting his resignation. Mr. Wm. E. Tenbrook was elected Treasurer.

Examiners of Candidates, and a standing Committee on Assessments were appointed for the ensuing year.

The chief feature of interest was the series of reports from the Standing Committees of Presbytery upon Home and Foreign Missions, Education and Publication. Those of the two first named were ordered to be published in your paper. It may be interesting and useful to give the amounts contributed the past year to all the Assembly's Permanent Committees:

Table with columns: Church, Home Miss. For. Miss. Education. Publication. Rows include Calvary, N. Broad, Walnut St., Clinton St., Westchester, Green Hill, Westport, Pottsville, Mantua, Darby First, Darby Second, Beechville, East Whitland, East Nantmeal, Olivet, Labor, Logan Square.

The Presbyterial sermon was preached by the Rev. Daniel March, at the request of Rev. Mr. Crittenden, the retiring moderator. The theme, taken from Exod. xix: 9, "Lo, I come unto thee in a thick cloud," was treated with peculiar beauty and simplicity, as well as effectiveness. The reports from the churches indicated steady progress in all the elements of church life. This has been evinced by the increasing numbers of our congregations and Sunday schools, and augmented contributions to the great causes of the church. Two churches, Cedar street and Western, have received new pastors, while from three, Calvary, Mantua, and Pottsville, pastors have been dismissed during the year.

Presbytery, by unanimous and hearty vote, gave a fresh commendation to the United States Christian Commission and its noble, Christ-like work.

MEETING OF PRESBYTERY.

Philadelphia Fourth Presbytery held its stated meeting in Southwark First Church, the sessions beginning Tuesday evening, 12th inst., and closing at one o'clock, P. M., Thursday.

During the sessions 23 ministers and 13 elders were present.

The Rev. James Y. Mitchell was elected Moderator, and the Rev. Messrs. Earle and Snyder Temporary Clerks.

The leading items of business were the following:

- 1. Reception of Rev. Brown Emerson, from Worcester North Association, Massachusetts, and of Mr. William H. Thorne, Licentiate, from Philadelphia Third Presbytery.
2. Election of Commissioners to the General Assembly: Principals—Ministers: Brainerd and Richards. Elders: Stevenson and Sam'l H. Perkins. Alternates—Ministers: Boggs and Mitchell. Elders: Jagers and Clouds.
3. Licensure of Albert Bryant, candidate, to preach the Gospel.
4. Dismissal of Rev. Albert Erdman to Utica Presbytery.
5. Reports and discussions respecting Publication, Education, Home and Foreign Missions.
6. Selection of Bethlehem Church and the first Tuesday of October next, at 7 1/2 o'clock, P. M., as place and time of next stated meeting.
7. Adoption of the Narrative to the General Assembly, with order to publish.
8. Adjourned to meet in the Presbyterian House, on Monday, 9th of May next, at 12 o'clock, P. M. T. J. SHEPHERD, Stated Clerk.