

Correspondence.

[FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.]

THE NATIONAL UNION CONVENTION.

BALTIMORE, June 9, 1864.

The National Union Convention finished the business calling it together and adjourned sine die yesterday evening. Most of your readers are advised already of its action. It was, in many respects, the most remarkable political convention ever held in this country. And yet it was wanting in many traits peculiar to such an assemblage. Delegates from Maine to California came with their minds made up, upon at least one part of the business in hand, and that the most important part. This obviated the great motive for contention and division in the deliberations of the convention. Heretofore the nomination of a candidate for the Vice Presidency has been a matter of comparatively little importance, the interest of all concerned centering upon the nomination of the candidate for the Presidency. On this occasion, however, whatever competition existed was in relation to the nominee for Vice-President. The general harmony which prevailed, is perhaps unparalleled in the history of political conventions.

The unanimous choice of Rev. Robert J. Breckenridge, D. D., of Kentucky, as temporary president, was a feature of the Convention which cannot fail to secure the admiration of the entire loyal, religious population of the country. It is the first time, I think, in the history of such conventions, where a clergyman has been called upon to preside. The task could scarcely have been assigned to one more competent. When the venerable and heroic Kentuckian ascended the platform and was conducted to the chair, the unbounded enthusiasm with which he was greeted, was a fair exponent of the place he occupies in the hearts of the loyal men of the country, while it was an expression of the regard and esteem entertained by the great mass of the American people, for the sacred profession he so ably represented. Dr. Breckenridge seemed to feel this; for it was among the first things alluded to in his opening remarks. No truly loyal Christian man, certainly no Presbyterian, need be ashamed of the Doctor's speech. It gave no uncertain sound upon the great issues of the day, and as he seemed to speak the sentiments of the Convention, it is to be hoped that he also spoke for the Christian Church in the United States. There is little doubt but that the calm dignified manner of Dr. Breckenridge, in the opening ceremonies, had a salutary effect upon the subsequent harmonious proceedings of the Convention. Occasionally he seemed to imagine himself at the head of the General Assembly, then he would denigrate himself the "Moderator" and the secretary, the "Clerk," but the parliamentary tactics which he understands so thoroughly, seemed as applicable to the Convention, as to the General Assembly, and not even Thaddeus Stevens or Ex-Speaker Grow, could find occasion for an appeal from any of his decisions. It may be interesting to mention that among the delegates to the Convention were several clergymen, and men of official position in the Church as well as the State. I have always contended that such men should be in the majority in all such assemblages. If it were so, we would have less official corruption and wickedness, and little occasion for conventions to amend the National Constitution. Many members of the Convention were men of acknowledged ability and talent, while there were also those more renowned for their noisy pretensions than anything else.

The business of the Convention reached a climax when Gen. Cameron, of Pennsylvania, arose in his place and nominated Mr. Lincoln for the Presidency. A scene of excitement and enthusiasm followed utterly beyond description. The vast Assembly arose to their feet; cheer after cheer rang through the theatre; the men threw up their hats, while the ladies were not less vigorous in waving their handkerchiefs. When the vote was taken upon the nomination, and the roll of the States was called, one after another of the chairmen of the delegations arose, and with some word of commendation, cast the entire vote of the delegation for Abraham Lincoln. Only one delegation halted, the "radicals" from Missouri. They evidently wished to vote for Fremont, but their experience among the members of the Convention, had taught them that the mere mention of his name in such a connection would be received with as much disapprobation as that of the vilest copperhead in the country. They, therefore, after being much pushed, voted for Gen. Grant. Dr. Breckenridge, who had opposed their admission to the Convention, turned around to me and said: "I knew they would not vote for Lincoln."

The first ballot for a candidate for Vice-President was not so unanimous. The result, however, showed that Andrew Johnson, of Tennessee, was the favorite, and on the second ballot, one after another of the States, which had cast a scattered vote, went over unanimously to Andrew Johnson. And so, amid enthusiasm, second only to that manifested when Mr. Lincoln was nominated, the man who has fought his way up from poverty and obscurity, was put before the people as the candidate for the second highest office in the country. Abraham Lincoln and Andrew Johnson, owe all that they are or may be, to the liberal institutions of our free Government. They are fair samples of the men which those institutions can produce.

The platform of the Convention is certainly strong enough to hold every loyal man, especially if he believes that loyalty to his country means necessarily enmity to slavery. I append the resolutions. They were adopted with the utmost enthusiasm and unanimity. Let us hope they will be faithfully carried out.

Resolved, That it is the highest duty of every American citizen to maintain against all their enemies the integrity of the Union, the paramount authority of the Constitution and laws of the United States; and that, laying aside all differences and political opinions, we pledge ourselves, as Union men, animated by a common sentiment and aiming at a common object, to do everything in our power to aid the Government in quelling by force of arms the rebellion now raging against its authority, and in bringing to the punishment due to their crimes the Rebels and traitors arrayed against it. [Prolonged applause.]

Resolved, That we approve the determination of the Government of the United States not to compromise with Rebels, or to offer any terms of peace, except such as may be based upon an unconditional surrender of their hostility and a return to their just allegiance to the Constitution and laws of the United States, and that we call upon the Government to maintain this position, and to prosecute the war with the utmost possible vigor to the complete suppression of the rebellion, in the full reliance upon the self-sacrificing patriotism and heroic valor and the undying devotion of the American people to their country and its free institutions. [Applause.]

Resolved, That as Slavery was the cause, and now constitutes the strength of this rebellion, and as it must always and everywhere be hostile to the principles of Republican Government, justice and the National safety demand its utter and complete extirpation from the soil of the Republic. [Applause.] And that while we uphold and maintain the acts and proclamations by which the Government, in its own defence, has aimed a death blow at this gigantic evil, we are in favor furthermore of such an amendment to the Constitution, to be made by the people in conformity with its provisions, as shall terminate and forever prohibit the existence of Slavery within the limits or the jurisdiction of the United States. [Applause.]

Resolved, That the thanks of the American people are due to the soldiers and sailors of the army and navy [applause], who have perilled their lives in defence of their country and in vindication of the honor of the flag; that the nation owes to them some permanent recognition of their patriotism and their valor, and ample and permanent provision for those of their survivors who have received disabling and honorable wounds in the service of the country; and that the memories of those who have fallen in its defense shall be held in grateful and everlasting remembrance. [Loud applause and cheers.]

Resolved, That we approve and applaud the practical wisdom, the unselfish patriotism, and the unflinching fidelity to the Constitution and the principles of American liberty with which Abraham Lincoln has discharged, under circumstances of unparalleled difficulty, the great duties and responsibilities of the Presidential office; that we approve and endorse, as demanded by the emergency and essential to the preservation of the nation and as within the provisions of the Constitution, the measures and acts which he has adopted to defend the nation against its open and secret foes; that we approve especially the Proclamation of Emancipation, and the employment as Union soldiers of men heretofore held in slavery [applause]; and that we have full confidence in the determination to carry out to the end all other Constitutional measures essential to the salvation of the country with full and complete effect.

Resolved, That we deem it essential to the general welfare that harmony should prevail in the National Councils, and we regard as worthy of public confidence and official trust those only who cordially endorse the principles proclaimed in these resolutions and which should characterize the administration of the Government. [Applause.]

Resolved, That the Government owes to all men employed in its armies, without regard to distinction of color, the full protection of the laws of the land;—and that the violation of these laws, or the usages of civilized nations in time of war, by the Rebels now in arms, should be made the subject of prompt and full redress. [Prolonged applause.]

Resolved, That foreign immigration, which in the past has added so much to the wealth, development of resources and increase of power to this nation, the asylum of the oppressed of all nations, should be fostered and encouraged by a liberal and just policy. [Applause.]

Resolved, That we are in favor of the speedy construction of the railroad to the Pacific.

Resolved, That the National faith, pledged for the redemption of the public debt, must be kept inviolate, and that for this purpose we recommend economy and rigid responsibility in the public expenditures, and a vigorous and just system of taxation; that it is the duty of every loyal State to sustain the credit and promote the use of the National currency. [Applause.]

Resolved, That we approve the position taken by the Government that the people of the United States can never regard with indifference the attempt of any European Power to overthrow by force or to supplant by fraud the institutions of any Republic Government on the Western Continent. [Prolonged applause.]—and that they will view with extreme jealousy, as menacing to the peace and independence of their own country, the efforts of any such power to obtain new footholds for Monarchical Governments, sustained by foreign military force, in near proximity to the United States. [Long continued applause.] J. M.

"W. A.'s" second letter "Among the Wounded" will appear next week.

ADDRESSES

OF THE DELEGATES FROM THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AT DAYTON, O., TO THE ASSEMBLY IN SESSION AT NEWARK, N. J., WITH THE REPLY OF THE MODERATOR.

Rev. James P. Wilson, D. D., delegate from the General Assembly at Dayton, was introduced to the Assembly, and said:—

MR. MODERATOR, FATHERS AND BROTHERS—No possible duty could be more grateful than that which has been devolved upon me and my respected colleague by the General Assembly which we represent. The last time I was ever in this General Assembly was when it met in Rangtead Court, in 1837. At that time I was a young man, licensed but not ordained; but I was a close observer of events then passing, for the Church then dissembled was the Church of my birth—the Church in which my forefathers had ministered—the Church in which I have brought up—the Church I loved. No man felt more profoundly than I the events connected with that period; and I may say now, that in reference to them my opinions are not changed. But when I look around me, and behold what changes have taken place—changes affecting men, and manners, and feelings—I am willing that history shall make her true record willing that everything unpleasant may be forgotten, and desirous that fraternal sentiments may be warmly cherished. I greet you in love; and it comes from the bottom of my heart. Great changes have taken place in us and in you. New relations have grown up, and great changes are in progress. Look even at the great age, was one of the causes of unfitness; what changes have taken place in regard to it, and how has God's hand been laid upon us in connection with it—in chastisement, I trust, and not destruction. Another change that has taken place in us, is the denominational aspect which our Church has assumed since you left us. In regard to voluntary societies as agencies for evangelical action, you were wiser than we were. I frankly confess it. We have abandoned that system, and adopted yours; and in that respect, now stand on your ground. It shows what a change has taken place. The Home Mission Society, which you first threw off, compelled us ultimately to do the same. They were willing to receive money from all our churches, but not willing to use it for the equitable advantage of our churches, not to permit us to control the missions, even in our own bounds, which our funds supported. Our Presbyteries might designate missionaries, but they could not be appointed until they had appeared before a committee of the voluntary society, and been approved. We threw off that trammel; and we found that "co-operative Christianity," though very specious in name, was in the hands of such people as we had to do with, rather a one-sided affair. In regard to the unity of the Church, our opinions have perhaps changed for the better. The notion that the unity of the Church was dependent upon external organization, has long ground. We now believe that unity is not organic, but spiritual. Since the Assemblies have become divided, this doctrine has been received. Ours feel that organic union is not necessary; and it is evident that the time has not yet come when external unity is practicable. When there exists a true spiritual unity—when the Spirit unites us all to the living Head, we enjoy the unity of the Spirit; and men thus united, can no more be divorced, than you can separate what God has joined together. This is one of the happiest days of my life. For twenty-seven years we have been separated. A chasm has been between us. We may not be ready to fill it up, or close it. But let the dead bury their dead, and let us walk up to the border, and shake hands, and restore a spiritual union and fraternity. (Applause.) Let us not attempt a premature organic union. There is a wide field for your operations; there is a wide field for ours. Let us vie with each other in doing good. We both have a Richmond before us—(applause)—let us both march onward, separated, yet united—two columns, but with one destination. It seems as if the spirits of our forefathers know what this, if the spirits of the Church below, they must rejoice at witnessing such a sight as was exhibited last year and now—the sometime severed branches of the same family—fraternizing with kindly feelings—welcoming each other as brethren. When you left us, we could hardly walk alone—we were in connection with our Congregational brethren in the Home Missionary Society, and thought we could get on with them; but we found them more ready to receive than to give; but since we have cut loose from that connection, and followed your example in an organization of Church Committees, we have been greatly prospered.

It would perhaps be pleasant for you to hear what we are doing in regard to the work of education, missions, publication, and church erection. We have about sixty laborers in foreign missions. The last year we were in connection with a voluntary society, one-half of our churches did not give a dollar. The connection seemed to remove a sense of responsibility from them; but since we have been doing our own work, we find the advantage of it. The responsibility is more felt, and our funds are more abundant. Our churches raised \$50,000 for missions the second year after we organized. It was the eighth nominally, but really the second. Now all our churches have been drawn into line, and their resources are being drawn out. Dr. Wilson was exceedingly sorry to say that they had a superabundance of education funds; because the war and other causes had decreased the number of candidates. Like you, we have too many unemployed ministers; but this was not always a bad sign. The law of supply and demand is to have a surplus, and before long this surplus will be needed. We shall want ministers for all the Southern churches when the war is over.

Let us, my brethren, remember our substantial unity, in the seven points of unity. We are one historically. We trace our origin to that primitive Presbyterianism that was obscured during the dark ages, blazed out at the Reformation, and continues still. We claim the same historical names—Knox, Calvin, Henderson, Gillespie, and other glorious worthies. We are one body, one spirit, one faith, one hope of our calling; one Lord, one God and Father of all, one baptism. Do we want a stronger unity? Do we want a closer tie to bind us in one great brotherhood in Christ? We, brethren, will soon pass away. Let us, then, look to those who will come after us, and leave an example that they may safely follow; and we will hope that they will carry on the blessed work when we have passed to that world of which the Lamb is the light, and God the glory.

Remarks of Judge Allison. [This is the only full report of Judge A.'s remarks which has been given.] Judge Allison said:—

MODERATOR AND MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY—In presenting myself in conjunction with my reverend colleague, I feel that my situation, whilst it is one of distinguished honor, is attended with some embarrassment. To have been chosen as a member, through which the Christian salutations of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian

Church, now in session at Dayton, Ohio, are presented to this venerable body, may justly be esteemed an honor. My embarrassment arises from the fact, that whilst most cordially endorsing and approving with a single exception, everything which my colleague has so well said in the address to which you have just listened, yet in one particular I find myself differing with him upon a question of no little interest and importance to the Presbyterian Church. I refer to the question of an organic union of the two branches of the church. After twenty-five years of separation, from 1838 to 1863, the two divisions of the church find themselves again united in the bonds of Christian fellowship; each represented on the floor of the other Assembly by delegates bearing each to the other assurances of confidence and affection mutually entertained. It is right and proper that fellowship and Christian regard should exist between us, and it cannot be pleasant, after so many years of estrangement and separation, to mingle again our sympathies, and to feel that we are brethren, looking to the time when the way shall be opened up for a happy reunion of our churches. We are entitled to rejoice over the fact, that such progress has been made towards the accomplishment of this end that we can hail each other once more as brethren. And I am certain, Moderator, that I do no more than justice to my church, in giving expression to these sentiments, and to say further, speaking more especially for the great body of its membership, that they not only approve of the restoration of amicable relations between us, but that they desire a union that shall be both spiritual and organic, a reuniting of our now severed and broken church, a fusion of the two bodies into one.

We are not unmindful, Moderator, of the fact that the proposition for an interchange of delegates was your proposition made to us, and by our church most cordially approved and accepted. And when your request was communicated to us, a request which was in itself so kindly, conciliatory, and fraternal in its spirit, it thrilled the heart of the church and rekindled, in no slight degree, the dormant affections that long estrangement had almost led us to believe had died out forever. Nor can I doubt, Moderator, that in proposing an interchange of delegates, composed of a representation of both the clerical and lay element of the church, the specialty of this plan had reference to the question of our ultimate union. The recognition of the ruling eldership as an element in the delegation, is not only appropriate but acceptable; for upon this question, which may be postponed, but cannot be avoided, the churches themselves will claim to be heard. As far as my acquaintance with the membership of both branches goes, it enables me to say, that in cordial assent to the essential doctrines of the Presbyterian Church, they are one; the lines of separation have not been so broadly drawn nor so sharply defined among the laity as they have been among the ministry. The laity as a body understood less of the philosophy of doctrinal differences, and were content to yield an assent to the system of religious belief as contained in our standards; were satisfied with the truth in its simpler and more practical form; and on this account, less concerned with doctrinal disputes, which are not of the essentials of a Christian's faith and hope. The churches had never ceased to respect one another; and possessing a substantial unity, though separate in organization, a unity of faith, the pulsations of the great heart of the Presbyterian Church represented here and at Dayton are for organic union. I do not say, Moderator, that the fullness of time has come; that we are ready and prepared for an immediate fusion; but I do say, that the first step having been happily taken, we should take counsel together, in the hope and expectation that the two may in due time become one.

It was my good fortune, Moderator, to be present at Philadelphia a year ago, when the venerable delegate from your body presented himself to the General Assembly in Session in that city, as the bearer of your most Christian and cordial message. He is, I believe, in communion in this body, and better than I can hope to do, he can report to you his reception as your ambassador. He can tell you how cordially he was received; how the deep fountains of feeling were broken up; how solemn and intensely thrilling the scene of the first renewal of fraternal intercourse between brethren long alienated from one another. I have never, Moderator and brethren of the Assembly, beheld an audience so animated in that which fell from the lips of a speaker, so fixed and earnest in its gaze, as that which listened to your delegate as he eloquently, and with the deepest and most tender emotion, spoke from a heart overflowing in its fullness, your kindly greeting and most Christian salutation. Upon the countenances of the younger portion of the Assembly was depicted absorbing interest; while many of the more aged members could not or cared not to restrain the tears which so freely coursed down their furrowed cheeks. These were those present who carried with them the scars of the unhappy strife which rent our church in twain; and I mention this to the Assembly, because of James and Cox and Skinner and Benson, all save the last commissioners to that Assembly, I need do no more to convince you how deeply some, at least, of the auditors could appreciate and enter into the spirit and depths of such an occasion. To be fully appreciated, the interview to which I have but referred must have been witnessed. It was a blessed privilege to receive the baptism of such an hour; and to but few is it accorded to be thus twice blessed in the course of an ordinary lifetime.

This, Moderator, may be regarded as an auspicious beginning, which justifies us in hoping for a happy and enduring union. It was as the sun long obscured, breaking through the portentous clouds that had hid it from our view; and for myself, I devoutly hope, that the blessed influence of a restored confidence between us, may result in establishing a united, consolidated, Presbyterian Church. And this may be so if we will it to be; the difficulties in the way may be overcome. The mountains which in times past have risen up between us may be made to disappear, so that we shall again become one people. Are we not one now in profession of attachment to a common Lord and Master? Have we not the same standards and symbols of faith? Is not our historic life our joint inheritance? Why then shall we remain separate, one from another?

Two causes combined to bring about the separation which resulted from the action of the assemblies of 1837 and 1838. First, a difference of opinion as to the polity of the Church, in regard to the mode of carrying on the operations of the Church; and second, alleged doctrinal differences which were claimed to be of the life and essence of our faith.

The first cause of separation, Moderator, no longer exists. We have come to occupy substantially your ground, we are in the main doing our own work through our own agencies; we call these agencies committees, you designate yours as boards; we visit the poor, you make the rounds; we better than you do as the sun long obscured, breaking through the portentous clouds that had hid it from our view; and for myself, I devoutly hope, that the blessed influence of a restored confidence between us, may result in establishing a united, consolidated, Presbyterian Church. And this may be so if we will it to be; the difficulties in the way may be overcome. The mountains which in times past have risen up between us may be made to disappear, so that we shall again become one people. Are we not one now in profession of attachment to a common Lord and Master? Have we not the same standards and symbols of faith? Is not our historic life our joint inheritance? Why then shall we remain separate, one from another?

On one other fact, Moderator, let me merely refer to, before I sit down: We have become substantially one upon the great questions of the day; we are standing shoulder to shoulder in support of the Government, in its effort to suppress the rebellion, in its causeless and therefore the most atrocious war that has ever existed. Both Assemblies have affirmed the duties of loyalty and patriotism, the one with which I am connected, three years ago, spoke out in emphatic language upon the subject, by a unanimous vote. Already, therefore, we are the united Presbyterian Church in an uncompromising war with rebellion, and when the authority of the Government shall have been again estab-

lished and the record comes to be made up, as to who stood firmly by or who resisted legitimate, constitutional authority, will it be said that one was of this and another was of that Assembly? Will not rather the joint testimony of both churches, pass into history, as a grand historic deliverance of the Presbyterian Church, represented by the Assemblies now in session at Dayton and at Newark? This, Moderator, is no slender bond of union in a crisis like that through which we are now passing.

In conclusion Judge Allison renewed the assurance of the most cordial and fraternal regard from those whom he represented.

The Moderator's Reply. The Moderator replied—Respected and Beloved Brethren, many members of the Assembly have anticipated my hearty response to the kind sentiments you have uttered by the approbation which they have expressed. And in reply to what you have said retrospectively, and in the way of good wishes for the future, I can but follow the path you have marked out. Our separation from you is a matter of history; and it occurred, not because we desired it irrespective of what we deemed necessary, but because thirty-six years before the General Assembly had, in the love of union, formed a Plan of Union with our Congregational brethren which led us, thirty years ago, to deplore evils which you have since shaken off. And it was simply the dissolution of that Plan of Union which resulted in the separation. You remember, brethren, that the prophet Zechariah had two staves, Beauty and Bands, and he first cut under Beauty, that it might break his covenant; and not till after Beauty was sundered did he cut in under Bands, that he might break the brotherhood between Judah and Israel. The beauty of our union with those brethren seemed marred before we yielded to the sundering of the bands. But although the bands of organic union were cut, he felt very sure that the more potent bond of spiritual unity, a common love to a common cause and a common Master was as strong as ever. Six years ago he had received a visit from a distinguished minister of your connection. He entered my study, and with much emotion, threw his arms around my neck; and with that warmth of salutation we met. He (the Moderator) assured his friend and brother that he fully reciprocated his Christian affection, and we felt that, although visibly separated, we were spiritually one. "You have written a book," said he, "which seemed to bear severely upon us; but I rejoice to say that times are changing, and that brotherly love seems likely to be restored."

He (the Moderator) had been an interested observer of your branch of the church, and could truly say, for himself and in behalf of the Assembly, we have a growing confidence in your faith and polity—a warm and growing love for you as brethren. We are visibly separated, yet one in Christ Jesus. "We are two, like the waves, and yet one, like the sea." [Applause.] Whether the time is near at hand for an organized union, was a question upon which good men on both sides might differ. But are we not really one? In doctrinal belief we are much nearer one—in polity the same. You, perhaps, have been more decidedly anti-slavery than we. We were always anti-slavery, yet conservative—once trammelled, but now emancipated! [Applause.] War is a terrible calamity; but worth all that it costs, if it shall result in universal liberty. He had the halcyon days of peace were near at hand; that the unity of Christian brotherhood through all churches was maturing. We are a unity in faith, hope, zeal and charity; and he longed for the day when we may be one organically, as we are one in spirit. [Applause.] In behalf of the General Assembly and the churches we represent, he tendered them most cordially the right hand of fellowship.

THE GREAT CENTRAL SANITARY FAIR.

This exhibition of fancy articles, works of art and skill, and various curiosities, such as trophies, relics &c., is indeed worthy of the title "great." On all hands it is conceded to be in advance of any enterprise of the kind yet attempted. Aside from all consideration of its laudable object, it is intrinsically deserving a visit from every one who can possibly make it. The vastness of the buildings; the lavish splendour of the decorations; the profusion and taste in the display of goods; the immense, rich gallery of art—itsself worth the entire admission fee; the fairy-like beauty of the horticultural department; the absence of any disposition to extort money by tricky or unfair means; the excellent arrangements for preserving order; joint to recommend the exhibition to universal patronage. Any one who has once walked up and down the grand "Union Avenue," will have a vision of gracefulness, amplitude and beauty, invovnen with the memories of the time, that will not soon be effaced and that will be "a joy forever."

It is quite likely that the ambition of the originators of the enterprise to excel New York city in material results, will be realized. We hope the intimation in Governor Curtin's opening speech, that the families and the orphans of soldiers at home should be remembered in our bounty, will receive the attention it deserves; for assuredly the immense sums of money realized cannot all be needed to supplement the services of our liberal government to our soldiers in the field.

REV. C. S. ARMSTRONG.—We are pleased to learn that Mr. Armstrong was quite successful in his errand in behalf of the First church, Lansing, Mich., among our benevolent men: The importance of the work and the peculiar circumstances of the church were so well appreciated, that, notwithstanding the extraordinary pressure upon every liberal man in our church and city at this time, a very respectable portion of the amount required was easily raised. This new proof of large liberality and sympathy with remote portions of the church by our people is gratifying to all the friends of Christ's cause.