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A DAY OF HUMILIATION AND PRAYER.

It is to be regretted that the very general scattering of church-going people, with their pastors, in pursuit of health and recreation, will interfere with the public celebration of this day as recommended by Congress and the President. Yet the appointment as the joint act of our Legislature and the Executive, must be regarded as a happy indication of the temper of our rulers, and the terms of the joint resolution are so appropriate, practical, and copious, and, as the President says, so solemnly, earnestly and reverently recommended, that every Christian and patriot must derive, from porusing them, unusual satisfaction and hope for our future. We doubt whether any form of prayer for the country, devised by those church officials who are accustomed to promulgate such documents, at all approaches in fulness the topics suggested in the joint resolution of these laymen. Let us glance at them, and thus provide ourselves with material for intelligently approaching the throne of grace in behalf of our country.

There is (1) Confession and repentance. Upon this duty the resolution does not dwell, being content to give it the first place as a necessary preliminary to all successful approaches to God. (2) Prayer for the speedy suppression of the rebellion and the supremacy of the Constitution and laws throughout the United States. This is the first and great desire of all loyal hearts. No man truly prays for his country who does not make this the burden of his requests. We hear some prayers which weakly and hesitatingly mention peace, without alluding to the only basis on which a true and lasting peace can be secured—the suppression of the rebellion. Such prayers are disheartening to the loyal, and, if literally answered, would bring no blessing to the country. Men may offer them to-day, but they will not be responding to the proclamation if they do.

(3) Prayer that God, as the Supreme Ruler of the world, will not destroy us as a people, nor suffer us to be destroyed by other nations, or by obstinate adhesion to our own counsels. The possibility of these counsels being in conflict with his eternal purposes is, in so many words, admitted. No prayer is sincere which does not expressly or impliedly renounce all claim to the superiority or sufficiency of human counsels. "Thy will be done," must be the first word, and "thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory," the last word of every acceptable petition. Yet we are not to have no counsel at all, for fear of going contrary to God's will. Using the lights we have, following the plain dictates of conscience and of Christianity, watching the indications of Providence, with constant prayer for guidance, we must adopt and pursue with humble boldness, the course that seems to us right and expedient. Our prayers for further light and aid must not relax the vigour of our activity in so much of the path as has already been made light to us. War and emancipation are the two arms of our policy; and while Moses and Aaron and Hur go up, to-day, to the hill of prayer, admitting the possibility of error by the very act of prayer, Joshua and the fighting men, with these weapons, must pursue, with redoubled vigour, the work of subduing Amalek in the plains below. And as Moses saw the answer to his prayers in the increased energy and advance of the Israelitish host, so may we be sure that the answer to our prayers to-day will be, not in any peace-maunderings among broken-down politicians, but in the reinforcement of our armies, the quickening of their movements, the downfall of the rebel strongholds, the sinking of their pirates, the renewal of the national credit and the collapse under irresistible military pressure, and amid the shouts of enfranchised millions, of the seditious rebel "Confederacy." Nay, it is the lack of energy and concentration in the use of our chosen means and in the prosecution of our noble cause that should form the burden of our confessions and humiliation to-day.

The resolution expresses the belief that it is in accordance with the Divine will that our place should be maintained as a united people among the family of nations. It is well for us to utter this our heartfelt belief amid the solemn scenes and observations of this day. God knows it is the conviction of our hearts; the one which has animated hundreds of thousands of our brave volunteers to the great sacrifices they have made of comfort, health, and life in the struggle. We are not going to desert our country and suffer her to be dismembered and die by traitor hands. We believe God has given us of this generation the sublime and difficult, but practicable work, of perpetuating it in its unity, and of handing it down to coming generations, a better and a freer country, and a more healthful and potent example to the world at large than ever before. These are our convictions. Coming humbly to God in prayer, we may yet bring them with us, so manifestly have they the indorsement of the plain principles of his word, of the enlightened conscience, of the best human experience, and of the course of providence itself from the opening of our history.

(4) Prayer that our soldiers and the masses of the people may have courage, power of resistance and endurance necessary to procure the result. Instead of these qualities we must not for a moment make the fatal mistake of depending on numbers, wealth, and prosperity. The very absence of these things from the South, has given inconceivable desperation to the rebellion. On the other hand, the excessive confidence of the North in its resources has made it more tardy in putting them forth; while the business prosperity and general peace it enjoys, are so dear to the community, that they grow impatient and begin to talk of compromise when the course of the war threatens to seriously trench upon them. No! success depends upon the spirit of the people. The dangerousness of an enemy depends largely upon the determination with which he pushes his malignant plans. What we need among all classes of our community, in the breasts of our wives and mothers, in our business and financial circles, as well as among our population generally, is that courage, power of resistance, and endurance which God alone can give and maintain amid temporary disaster and gloom; that spirit of firmness which springs from martyr-devotion to the principles involved in the struggle, and which calmly discharges the high duty of the hour, even at the peril of life. In this fourth year of the war, with currency devalued, and business and living embarrassed by high prices, with taxes increased and a further draft upon our able-bodied population required, we must, with increased earnestness, look to God for the necessary support, that we may be kept faithful to the eternal principles of free government and human liberty at stake.

(5) Finally, the rebellion is in God's hand. He must be implored, say our rulers, to soften the hearts, enlighten the minds, and quicken the consciences of those in rebellion, that they may lay down their arms and return to their allegiance. This we should seek, they suggest, to the end that they may not be utterly destroyed. For if they persist in armed opposition, they must be crushed, to the last combatant. This would be a catastrophe to the nation and to humanity. We seek not their total ruin. We would have them reformed into loyal and good citizens. We would that by their submission, the necessity for further bloodshed should be removed. It would be an astounding revolution. We see no way to bring it about but by redoubling our hard blows. God can do the work by a word or a breath of his Spirit. To him let us raise our petition on the national day of prayer. He may heed our united and earnest appeal for such a wonderful display of his power.

These topics should occupy our minds to-day. Whether in the public assembly, in our families, or in private, we should fervently and unitedly pour them out before God; deriving hope for the country from the fact that our rulers have so well judged the needs of the hour and have so appropriately and impressively directed the people to the source of all help.

NOTES FROM UPPER DELAWARE.

UNDER THE MAPLES, July 29, 1864.

Sympathy with nature is to be expected, not so much in a rural population, to whom her varying phenomena have grown familiar, as in the escaped victims of the artificial life of the city. Their senses are keen to the sights, the odors, the sounds of the brooks, the forest and the field. They bound forth on their visits to the country like school-boys let loose, or like captives released from narrow walls and an irksome routine of duty, to the free air again. The clover field smells sweeter; the song of birds and the dash of water are more musical; the open arch of heaven is more sublime; their imagination gives an edge of poetry to the commonest objects; they view, with an elation of spirits unknown to the countryman, all the aspects of rural life. They exclaim with the poet:

O sound to rout a brood of cares,
The sweep of scythe in early dew!

Yet they cannot exceed the farmer in their interest in those mutations of the skyey influences upon which depends the success of his crops. They cannot suffer for the parched earth and withering vegetation as he does, whose business prospects are closely involved and imperilled. They cannot long or pray as the farmer does for the blessed rain. But what a desolate place does the country become in a drought, to those who have fled to it for its freshness and verdure! And how all around us, from the shadow of these maples, has the whole countryside, for weeks, spread out one scene of languishing and brown decay! How, for nearly two months, the fervid sun has poured down his un pitying rays, and drank up the moisture of meadow and brook, with scarcely a drop of acknowledgement, or anything more than a delusive ceremony of summoning the clouds whom he speedily dismissed from his presence again.

But at length the long, painful spell is broken; the rain has fallen in a sudden food and outburst, as if impatient of the restraint laid upon it, and desirous of relieving its overburdened storehouse of its treasure. The clouds of dust are laid; the corn unrolls its shriveled leaves; the pastures put on new greenness; the hopes of the sorely-tried husbandman revive. Turn to the concluding verses of the 65th Psalm for an inspired description of such a scene occurring in still more thirsty Palestine: it is in language that we shall vainly seek to improve:

"Thou visitest the earth and waterest it; thou greatly enrichest it with the river of God, which is full of water; thou preparest them corn, when thou hast so provided for it. Thou waterest the ridges thereof abundantly; thou settlest the furrows thereof; thou makest it soft with showers; thou blessest the springing thereof."

And a fresher breeze stirs among these maple boughs, swaying them back and forth almost into the window where we sit, with a rustle and a murmur that almost seems to have a meaning. Yes, ye inarticulate yet ever whispering maples! Well may you demand of us that dwell beneath your grateful shadows, the task of interpreting your voice and joining it with the anthems of praise that rise from conscious creatures to the God that gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness. Your ceaseless murmurs are a sweet leaf-chant that all day long utters praise.

THE MUSTER OF THE SEVENTH DELAWARE INFANTRY.

"The fisherman forsook the strand;
The swarthy smith took dirk and brand;
With changed cheer the mower blithe
Left in the half-cut swathe his scythe;
The herds without a keeper strayed,
The plough was in mid-furrow stayed;
Prompt at the signal of alarms,
Each son of Alpine rushed to arms."

Having thus turned aside from our avowed purpose to speak of certain gratifying indications of firmness recently given by the Government in its dealings with the disloyal in this vicinity, let me further digress to speak of still more gratifying demonstrations recently made by the true men of the community, many of whose homes are within sight or easy reach from this maple shade. Brave and true men, and not a few of them, are to be found in little Delaware; prompt as the minute men of the Revolution, without the advantage of their previous organization; shaming by their alacrity the great neighbour States of

Pennsylvania and Maryland. We ask ourselves, with an astonishment that we cannot at all explain away, how it happened; that, while we in Philadelphia were slowly and incredulously awaking at the cry of the newsboys on Sabbath afternoon to the reality and nearness of the danger, the people of Delaware, in towns and villages, were already gathering at the call of the governor, not to be harangued, but to decide *who could go for the emergency*. The decision was quickly made. None waited for his neighbour, and that very Sabbath night they began to crowd into Wilmington, until, as we are told, six hundred or more volunteers of the very best men of the city and State were gathered at the rendezvous. And on Monday morning, at 11 o'clock, a company from Dupont's powder mills had reached Gunpowder bridge, and had a skirmish with the enemy! We said some severe words a few weeks ago about the inefficiency of officials in the three States most interested in the late invasion; we take every word of it back, every word, so far as relates to Delaware. While Pennsylvania and Maryland were a humiliating spectacle of unreadiness and inaction, little Delaware was in harness, and her best citizens, wealthy farmers, merchants and clergy forming the Seventh Regiment of Delaware Infantry, were hastening to the front.

Looking around me here, I find among those freely offering themselves and now in arms for the emergency, the superintendent of the St. George's Presbyterian Sabbath school—a farmer in the midst of his harvest; leaving crops, leaving wife and family behind, and mounted upon a horse from his own stable; I find the Provost Marshal of this military district, also a farmer and a man of family, mounting his best horse and hastening to the rendezvous—no holiday official you perceive.—I find a prominent tradesman of St. George's leaving his entire stock of goods shut up, until his wife, inexperienced in such work, could be trusted to stand behind the counter; I find three sons of one of the elders of the church gone, the fourth was hindered by disability; I find the fourth son of another member, of the church who has three sons in the three years' service, gone to spend his vacation in the service; I find the brother of a captain in the three years' Delaware Cavalry, who had been left in charge of the captain's fine farm, himself enlisting for the emergency and leaving the oat-crop standing in the field; I find the wealthiest farmer in the immediate vicinity of Delaware City gone as a private in the infantry. And that the Presbyterian clergy might not go unrepresented in this spontaneous outburst of zeal for the imperilled cause, the young pastor of the Forest Church, Middletown, REV. ISAAC RILEY, volunteered in a similar capacity. Whether his patriotic example moved any of his congregation to follow him, and thus make the parallel to revolutionary scenes of honored memory complete, we cannot tell; we are sure that the step was not only noble and inspiring in a civil point of view but, in the emergency, one perfectly justifiable from the point of view of the profession. We are glad to be able to record it, that not only the laity of our churches, but our ministry, proved their quick sense of danger, and their fitness, by the most self-sacrificing promptitude, to meet and to avert it.

We do not know of anything in the war to compare with this swift muster of the yeomanry of Delaware. It stirs the blood like the stories of the gathering of the Highland clans, or the response of the Greek chieftans to the summons of Agamemnon. It exceeds the wonderful marshalling of Gen. Butler's militia at the outbreak of the war; for that had already been organized by Governor Andrew, before the war commenced, at the suggestion of the far-sighted Baile. These men had no tie but a common devotion to the cause, so unselfish that none waited a moment on the other, but all rushed eagerly to the common defence, the moment the Governor's summons was received. Worthy is the muster of the gallant Seventh Regiment of Delaware, to be sung in poet strains and to be held up as an example to the tardy militia of her sister States. At this writing, the regiment

*We have since learned that a number of the congregation of Forest Church are with Mr. Riley.

is encamped a few miles out of Baltimore. Cannot the organization be preserved after the return of the regiment?

"HOURS WITH THE YOUNGEST."

We regard that pastor as singularly fortunate, who has been able always to secure for his infant school a competent teacher. The qualifications for this position are so many and so diverse, that they are not often combined in the same individual. Few in any congregation are fitted to stand so near to the sources of life, and to give the first direction to its streams. Such an office requires not only a heart devoted to the service of Christ, and a well-stored intellect, but also great natural vivacity and sprightliness, the power to illustrate truth simply but yet vividly, the faculty of word-painting, and all blended with such a measure of loving authority as will preserve the most perfect order.

Until quite recently, also, those engaged in this department of Christian usefulness have had but little direct aid, in the way of judicious books. They have been constrained to choose their own topics and to depend upon their own resources for appropriate illustrations. No wonder that the result has often been an unwillingness on the part of those most competent to fill such positions, to enter upon them, and their consequent occupation by those who were wholly unfit to discharge these high duties.

But this want in our religious literature has recently been met. We have now what we may properly call a *text book* for this department of instruction. The result of long experience, and—as the writer of this notice may add from his personal knowledge—of great success, the "Hours with the Youngest," is just such a treasury of themes and illustrations as every infant school teacher has long needed.

Moreover, the introduction of this book would remedy some defects that are almost universal in the primary departments of our Sabbath schools. The instruction that is here imparted is very generally desultory. There is little that is consecutive in its teaching. The topic for each Sabbath selected at random, and mainly if not entirely, with reference to the interest that it may excite, has seldom any direct connection either with what preceded it or what may come after. No regular system of instruction is even attempted. There is, also, in each session of the school, oftentimes such a want of unity in the different parts as to fail to make upon the pupils any definite impression. They go away without any distinct gospel truth lodged in their minds. The service has been pleasant, the children have been interested, but not in the highest degree profited.

And, indeed, until taking up the volume of which we are now writing, we did not know but that these defects were unavoidable, and that system and unity, must both, in an infant school, give place to the more imperious demand of interest. We had hardly conceived it possible to teach theology to babes, to convey a whole system of truth consecutively to minds so immature, and so to collect in each service, around a single topic, catechism, hymns, verses of scripture and illustrations, as to leave the impression of but one great truth on the mind. This to us is one of the greatest excellencies of "Hours with the Youngest." The teacher who adopts it as a manual of instruction, will each Sabbath impart some one great truth to his pupils, and in two years will have given them a general outline of the whole Christian system.

We are greatly pleased, also, to see in this volume not only that proof texts of scripture abound, but the principle everywhere recognized and urged that these should be committed to memory. It may well be questioned whether the importance of this principle is always fully felt in our Sabbath schools. The word of God—the instrument employed by the divine spirit in the great work of the soul's regeneration and sanctification—surely nothing in our teaching should ever be permitted to supplant it, or be in any sense regarded as its equivalent. We would indeed say nothing to lessen in any mind the impor-

"Hours with the Youngest, No. 1. A Year in the Infant School, being a course of instruction about the Lord our God, &c., by Mary Haney Gill. New York: A. D. T. Randolph, 1864.

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tance of instructing the young in some "form of sound words," but who ever heard of the catechism converting a soul to Christ? "Is not my word like as a fire, saith the Lord; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?"

But aside from the peculiar excellencies of this volume, it will always possess to many a mournful interest as the last work of its gifted author; and remembering how diligently and successfully she obeyed while living that command of her Master, "Feed my lambs," it is a source of great happiness to them to feel that, though in the full vigor of her ripened intellect she has left them, she will still, through this volume, in a larger measure than ever, obey that same divine injunction.

H. D.

PRESBYTERY OF NIAGARA.

At its late meeting held in Wilson, June 21st, the Presbytery of Niagara adopted the following minute in reference to the death of Rev. Josiah Partington:

Whereas, Since the last meeting of Presbytery, it has pleased Almighty God to remove from our midst our revered brother, Rev. Josiah Partington, who departed this life on Feb. 11th,

Resolved, That this Presbytery feel his death as a serious loss and a personal affliction.

That we entertain most grateful remembrance of his friendliness and integrity as a man; of his wisdom in counsel, and his consistency of character as a Christian; and of his conscientious fidelity to all trusts as a minister of Christ.

That we commend his bereaved partner and children and his church, to the comfort of Almighty God; and congratulate them on their inheritance in him of such a life and such a death.

That copies of these resolutions be forwarded to Mrs. Partington, and for publication to the *Evangelist* and *American Presbyterian*; and that they be entered upon the records of the Presbytery.

Attest, L. I. Root, Stated Clerk.

Presbytery also held an adjourned meeting at Niagara Falls on the 20th inst. for the purpose of installing Rev. Thomas Daggett Pastor of the church and congregation. Invocation and reading scriptures by Rev. L. I. Root; sermon by Prof. H. B. Smith, D. D., of N. Y.; constitutional questions by the moderator, Rev. L. S. Atkins; installing prayer by Rev. L. I. Root, in the absence of Rev. Dr. Wisner, appointed for that duty; charge to Pastor by Rev. J. R. Bradnok; charge to people by Rev. Joshua Cooke; benediction by the pastor. Brother Daggett enters upon his new field of labor with encouraging prospects of success among a cordial and united people.

L. I. Root, Stated Clerk.

MEDINA, July 21st.

REUNION OF OLD AND NEW SCHOOL.

The *Princeton Review*, in its resume of the proceedings of the General Assembly at Newark, speaks of the "proposal of union" of the Dayson Assembly to their body. We would like to inquire where the reviewer finds any such proposal on the part of our Assembly? We can find none, and we have hitherto supposed our sources of information on the subject equal to any. The paper sent from Dayton to Newark, to which the reviewer would seem to refer, did not in his language show such oblivion of its precise contents, is carefully worded, and while it gives utterance to the favourable feeling in our body on the subject, it expressly pronounces it "inexpedient" to take definite steps towards reunion as proposed by the St. Lawrence Presbytery on our side, and by the Ogdensburg and Buffalo Presbyteries on the other. The language of the *Review* distorts the facts, and so far tends to disunion.

HOW IT IS DONE.

If any of our readers are muddling their brains over the problem of the surprising energy and resources of rebellion, we hope they will not fail to read and ponder the letter of Chaplain Stewart in our present number. That, together with the fact that he tolerates no copperheads, tells the story. About half the amount of self-sacrificing spirit in our Northern homes, and energy of administration toward domestic traitors, male or female, would, under the blessing of God, make for us a short road to peace.