

Correspondence.

REV. A. M. STEWART'S LETTER.

CAMP TWENTY-FOURTH CORPS, ARMY OF THE JAMES, Feb. 24, 1865. Dear Brother:—A strong desire has existed for long months to witness a large company of our prisoners, just as handed over by the rebel authorities...

was immediately refilled with fresh water and coffee, with a brisk fire underneath, so that by the time the other two were emptied the first was again boiling and ready. Thus went on this benevolent work, until, at least, a hundred gallons of good coffee, with suitable accompaniments, were distributed—each one of the hungry thousand being comfortably fed.

ENCOURAGING WORDS.

From the following correspondence we extract the recent kind and encouraging words. A returned missionary says:—“Having been for some years out of the country, I was not familiar with your good paper, but since I have made its acquaintance I wish to hold it.

A loyal lady, wife of a minister, writes:—“We are recent subscribers for the AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN but we have learned to value it highly, and think there is no other paper that could fill its place.

Another, in western Pennsylvania, writes:—“Your labors have made the AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN a most excellent time-keeper to its readers. It keeps up with the spirit and movement of the grand current events. Every reader who watches the finger on its dial from week to week, can find answer to the questions, ‘What of the night?’ or ‘What of the day?’

Still another writes from Michigan:—“How greatly the paper has improved for two or three years past, and still its cry is *Excelsior*! Brother Hotchkin is doing well in the Family Department, judging from the interest my children take in it.

From a letter enclosing another year's subscription:—“Been trying to do without the AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN. We've failed; can't spare all our luxuries.”

DEEP RELIGIOUS INTEREST IN NEWTON, N. J.

Our quiet town had been deeply moved by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. A few Christians had long been earnestly praying for the blessing, but yet when it came, all seemed to be taken by surprise.

Rev. Mr. Hammond spent Sabbath morning endeavoring to get Christians to pray for a great blessing and not to be surprised when God answered their prayers. He had addressed the children's meeting Sabbath afternoon, which crowded the Old School Presbyterian Church and found, as he went among them, that almost hundreds seemed convinced by the Holy Spirit that they were sinners.

On Monday night, after Mr. Hammond's sermon to adults, at the suggestion of one of the ministers, the anxious that they might be the more readily conversed and prayed with. At once between seventy and a hundred came. All heads were bowed and many were in tears.

Thursday afternoon, at the children's meeting, a touching scene occurred. After the crowded inquiry meeting, at which hundreds of little ones remained, was closed, still numbers hovered about the platform, putting on his overcoat, about twenty children, one after another, clustered around him, and with tears said: “Will you please pray with us, for we want to find Jesus before we go home.”

Rev. G. C. Bush, who came over from Hackettstown to assist Mr. Hammond, stated that the work of the Holy Spirit in Newton seemed to be as deep and as extensive as that in his own place, and that he hoped all of the Christians would unitedly pray and labor, that the work might go on with power.

IN MEMORIAM.

Rev. Edwin Elisha Merriam, son of Mr. E. J. Merriam of Plymouth, Mass., died in Salem, Wayne Co., Pa., on the 17th of February, aged 28 years.

The deceased was born in Mason, Hillsboro Co., N. H. He became the subject of the renewing grace of God at the early age of eleven or twelve years. Not many years after this he gave himself to the work of the gospel ministry.

To us his death seems a great loss to the church. After eight or nine years spent in preparing for the ministry, he possessed valuable qualifications for usefulness. But the Master who called him to enter the field, has transferred him from this to a higher one above.

to feel that they had lost a friend. For several months his health had been declining. On the 14th of January last, he preached his last sermon, on the text “The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.”

“As sets the morning star, which goes Not down behind the darkened west, nor hides Obscured among the tempest of the sky, But melts away into the light of heaven.”

JOTTINGS FROM A PARISH JOURNAL.

NO. 3. A FAMILY IN THE FIELD.

Mrs. M., a soldier's wife, with three children, one a few months old, and all recovering from scarlet fever, is supporting herself and her little ones by working for the Arsenal. She is happy and contented, walking in the fear of the Lord, and constant in prayer.

His letters to his pious sister, while in prison, are full of thrilling interest; and since he re-entered the service, as full of devoted loyalty. He has a brother, two brothers-in-law, and two nephews in the service. One of his brothers-in-law, a brave soldier, has lost his health from exposure in the recruiting department, and is now dying of consumption in this city.

Here are six noble fellows, all laying their lives on the altar of their adopted country, and braving the perils of war in its defence; whilst in a retired little street and humble dwelling-place in Philadelphia, the wife, the sister, and the aunt, with her three sickly, pining children around her, is daily bearing them on her spirit before the throne of grace.

In the days of Israel's warfare, God honored women and owned prayer, investing both with no ordinary amount of power. “Blessed above women shall Jael, the wife of Heber, be.” Deborah was the chief counsellor of Barak, while for twenty years Jabin, king of Canaan, with his nine-hundred chariots of iron, oppressed the people of God.

Nor are we less indebted than Israel was to the praying mothers, and devoted wives, and sisters of country for their intercessions and their prayers. The censor of Aaron, with which he rushed in between the living and the dead, did not stay the plague. It was the prayer of the high-priest. It was not the prowess of arms that vanquished Amalek in the wilderness.

When Sennacherib sent in his vaunting war-message to holy Hezekiah, and demanded an immediate surrender, the devout monarch did not consult his executive council. He did not send for the generals of the army to raise before them the question of national defence.

ply their battering rams upon the walls of the holy city, lo!

“The angel of death spread his wings on the blast, And breathed on the face of the foe as he passed.”

“Like the leaves of the forest when summer was green, That host with their banners at sunset were seen; Like the leaves of the forest when autumn hath blown, That host on the morrow lay withered and brown.”

In conducting the affairs of this great national struggle, it is right that each department of the service should be efficiently managed. The executive must enlist and enroll. The commissariat must supply food and clothing.

I doubt much if the entire Christian Church possessed as much influence as could have opened a single lock in the prison where Peter lay. Yet the united prayers of the little company, who met in a private dwelling, brought an angel from heaven, who shook off the chains and bore the apostle away from between the Roman soldiers—a free man.

Christian wives! Christian mothers! Christian sisters! Pray! Pray constantly; pray fervently. Give God no rest till he turn away the tide of war from this once blessed country, and restore to your happy homes your beloved husbands, fathers, and brothers, amid songs of gratitude and shouts of victory.

INTERESTING LETTERS FROM HOME MISSIONARIES, WITH A WORD FROM SECRETARY KENDALL.

PRESBYTERIAN ROOMS, 150 NASSAU ST., New York, March 1, 1865.

“Our young men now seem to fear that they will be forgotten, if they do not keep near the great centres of commercial life. The probability is, they will be forgotten while waiting for a place! Dr. Hoge of the ‘other branch,’ who died a few months ago, venerable and beloved, at Columbus, the capital of Ohio, went there fifty years ago as a Home Missionary.

“We have had fearfully cold weather, the mercury reaching forty degrees below zero, and I am entirely destitute of winter clothing, as I left it all in my trunk, which has only reached Salt Lake City, and has no teams can come through before spring. I have written to have it sent by stage. It will cost seventy-five dollars, but it would cost more than that to replace the smallest items it contains. Paper is now \$1 50 per quire; postage stamps 30 cents each; ink \$1 50 for a six cent bottle.

“I am living on the bare necessities, and it cripples me to be in debt. ‘But I have a very interesting little prayer-meeting; four professors of religion are regularly there, and from four to six other young men; (the population is mostly composed of men) and last Sabbath evening, I had the largest audience I have seen since I came out.

“There is scarcely any reading matter here. Dr. Nelson sent me some tracts which I received some time ago, and they were very acceptable among the people. I never knew the value of a tract before. I get the AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN and read it all, even to the advertisements. I regard this as a very important field—it is to become a large and influential city.”

“If his expectations are realized, how soon will he forget these temporary hardships in the blessed consciousness that he had first planted the standard of the cross on this outpost, and preached the gospel to perishing men! More such young men are wanted. Michigan, Minnesota, Kansas, Missouri and the Rocky Mountain Slopes to the Pacific, are calling for men. The harvest is plentiful—the laborers are not few, except as they cluster about the old centres and refuse to go out and mould society in its formative state, when the gospel is greatly needed and when it will produce the best results.

The Committee of Home Missions desire to send young and energetic men to these destitute fields with the opening of spring. Where are the MEN? H. K.

REV. JAMES GILFILLAN ON THE CHANGE OF THE SABBATH. It has been our happiness in these ‘ends of the earth’ to see the justly celebrated work on the Sabbath of the Rev. James Gilfillan.

We have read his chapter on the change of the day, with interest and edification. In an argument on so very important a question as the change of the weekly Sabbath from one day to another, the very best evidence that can be secured is demanded. This may have been done by the reverend author; and it is with due deference to his views, as well as to the opinions of other great men, that a single doubt is here entertained. But if the criticism is uncalled for, it is hoped that no harm will result from the effort.

“The nature and the importance of the Sabbath is such, that no power below the throne of God could either originate or change the institution in any respect, especially to fix or change the day of holy rest, and of holy convocations. God will be worshipped in ways of his own appointment, and not by our inventions. On page 303, American T. S. Edition, we find these words, Col. 2. 16: ‘The word in the original for Sabbath-days is plural and always in that form has the sense of the Jewish Sabbath in the New Testament.’ The word is *sabbata*, and is plural. In the English Bible, it is rendered ‘Sabbath-days’ in Col. 2. 16. Webster gives it ‘Sabbaths;’ which is doubtless correct. But we deny that *sabbata* in the New Testament always refers to the Jewish Sabbath, or necessarily, to any particular class of Sabbaths. In Matt. 28. 1, this word in its plural form occurs twice. The same word, the same form, and put up with the same letters as in Col. 2. 16. But King James’ forty-seven Translations have not been true to Matt. 28. 1, if Mr. Gilfillan is right as to the import of *sabbata*; nor will their translation be more in agreement with the original: ‘*Ουκ εστιν σabbata, τα ανθρωπου εν μια σabbata.*’ Here we have the same word first referring to the Jewish Sabbaths, and second to the Christian Sabbaths. This is a most interesting and instructive portion of church history, giving a minute and precise account of the going out of the old dispensation and of the coming in of the new. Not only as it relates to the time, but as it relates to the *past*, and the *present Sabbath*; one class being dead and buried, and the other class brought to life and instantly put into active service. But in our translation this is totally lost, and one of the most decided and palpable proofs of the change is lost. *After the Sabbath, or ‘In the end of the Sabbath,’* is not by far a good rendering. It demands a flowing, rather than a literal translation. But to call ‘*The first day of the week*’ a good rendering of *εν μια σabbata*; is rather too bad. A translation might, if possible, give the true sense; what, then, is the true sense of the text, judging by the words, the construction of the sentence, and the history of the Sabbath? Let us try. ‘After the Sabbaths, as the light began to shine into the first-day Sabbaths.’ Now it is manifest that two classes of Sabbaths are here presented to the mind, which might be correctly expressed as follows: ‘After the close of the Jewish Sabbaths as the light began to shine into the first one of the Christian Sabbaths.’ But a very slight paraphrase might place it in a somewhat clearer light, viz: ‘In the end of the seventh-day Sabbaths, as the light began to shine into the first one of the first-day Sabbaths.’ This view of the text seems to correspond with itself, with the history of the case, and of the church, and if correct affords direct and full evidence of the change of the Sabbath to the first day of the week; and it also gives Mr. Gilfillan an opportunity of seeing the first day of the week being called *Sabbath* before Irenæus, A. D. 178. The first day is called Sabbath in the New Testament eight times at least. See page 369 of Gilfillan's Sabbath Book.

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