

Correspondence.

JOTTINGS FROM A PARISH JOURNAL.

NO. VI.

"WELL, SIR, THERE WERE TWENTY-FOUR OF US IN THE SERVICE."

Extract from Diary, 8th April, 1865.

Met Peter, the beadle, on Broad street, who thus accosted me: "Did ye hear o' poor Mrs. McW's trouble?" I replied in the negative. "The news" said he "has come that her husband was killed last Sunday before Petersburg. Six bolts good thro' his heart, and she's in a terrible state." I called on Mrs. McW, and while knocking at the door, a poor little, fatherless boy came out of an adjoining alley and said, "Mother is gone to aunt's."

This incident is a fresh chapter in the history of the article which I wrote a few weeks ago, entitled "A family in the field." The soldier whose death I now record, was one of the six to whom I referred in the said article on entering this bereaved home. I found the little family group in tears. My visit for a moment seemed to embitter the cup of domestic sorrow, but, on recovering the first shock, caused even by a visit of condolence, they became composed, and before engaging in prayer, I entered into conversation with the sorrowing family, when the following facts came out:

The deceased soldier was a young man from County L., in Ireland; had been in this country eleven years; was a tradesman; used to work to one, two and sometimes to four o'clock in the morning to save money, which he remitted to aid in supporting his aged parents, and to assist other members of the family in emigrating to this country. He was a member of the church at home, and exemplary in waiting upon ordinances since he came to this country; had two brothers in the service, and two brothers-in-law, with two nephews, all from this city, all brave men. One has become invalided, one wounded, one is now gone, and it is hoped the surviving members will return to their homes in health and power. During the commotion, it also came out that his affectionate wife was the mother of three little orphans, and soon likely to be the mother of a fourth, and that the family and friends were all very anxious to have the body brought on from the pit of the battle-field, where it now slumbers, and interred in one of the cemeteries of this city; but as the undertaker asked the sum of \$150, for bringing it on, the bereaved widow and friends felt themselves inadequate to the task, and hence I felt it to be right to bring the matter under the notice of the respected President of the Christian Commission.

On calling for my letter to Mr. Stuart, the brother of the deceased, who is in the service, but now on duty here, entered into conversation with me, and on asking him how many of the connections of the family were, and had been, in the service, he replied, after reckoning a little, "Well, sir, there were twenty-four of us in the service!" Here was a single family from a parish in the north of Ireland—all related—all sprung from the same stock, including brothers-in-law, nephews, cousins, and second cousins—all fighting the battles of their adopted country—all giving their lives to the defence of the national glory—all confronting the same foe. When I had despatched my letter to the Chairman of the Commission, I began to reflect, and turning up my scrap-book of "literary curiosities," my eye almost instantly caught the report of a lecture recently delivered by a lady in the Music Hall of this city, and reported in several of our city journals. In this letter the learned lecturer takes occasion to contrast the colored races with the Irish emigrants who are constantly pouring into this country, and to award the preference to the seed of Ham. When I compared the simple and unaffected tale of sorrow, which I heard in the bereaved home of a simple-minded Christian family, with the public discourse of the feminine orator, I could not refrain from indulging in the hope that, should the lecturer ever repeat the discourse to which I have referred, she would inform herself of the service rendered in the recent war to the cause of the North by the brave and daring sons of Erin.

I am one of those men who have held for many years the doctrine that all men are born free and equal; and furthermore, that when a man takes the oath of allegiance to the United States his former nationality is abjured, and he is an AMERICAN, just as much and as truly American, as any native born, man or woman, in the country, and what higher proof of loyalty need be solicited than that a single rural parish in the province of Ulster could send into the "Army of the Potomac" twenty-four men, of such calibre as the hero of this brief story, whose memory as a son, a husband, a father, and a brother is embalmed in the hearts of a weeping household, and of whom his captain said when he heard (on furlough) of his death: "A braver, better man never carried a rifle in the service of this country!"

The whole family are Presbyterians, and so far as the brothers, and sisters, and wives are known to me, they are exemplary and industrious and most attentive to all the duties of domestic and public worship.

One of the brothers-in-law is now, as already stated, invalided and dying of consumption. He has no family, but a sober, pious, industrious wife, who by her thrifty industry is enabled to support herself and her sick husband in the meantime. I read a few days ago a most thrilling letter from his brother-in-law, immediately after the battle before Petersburg, in which his relative fell. He was just fresh from the carnage of the field and had lain him down to rest, after covering with the blood-stained soil the mangled body of his brother-in-law, when he scrawled on the top of his knapsack the letter to his wife in Philadelphia. It would draw tears from the eyes of many a reader were it published just as it is penned. I am promised the perusal of several letters in the possession of his wife, from her husband, and brother, and brothers-in-law, and may embody extracts in some of my future jottings. On hearing the admirable speeches of General Fisk at the meetings of the Christian Commission in this city, I felt compelled to say, "Surely God will own the cause in which such men as General Fisk is engaged," and when I saw such letters as that to which I have referred, and find private and non-commissioned officers placing such implicit confidence in the God of battles, when I find them sustained by the prayers and pleadings of their families at home, I am compelled to conclude that this cause which is sustained by such prayers and owns such men, must be maintained by God.

Victories have been achieved—peace is now all but proclaimed—the war is ended: God be praised for the restoration of peace, and may the sword of this land never again be drawn either offensively or defensively. Such is the desire and prayer of many a heart to-day, but we are prone to overlook the fact that the prayers of God's people have had much to do with the closing of the war and the triumph of the nation's arms. And if farther warfare is to be deprecated and prevented, let God's people be on their knees; let the prayer and cry of the servants of God throughout the nation and throughout all our churches ascend to heaven, that the sword of this Republic may never again be unsheathed until Messiah, "the Prince of Peace" shall return to take possession of our earth, when the inspired song of the evangelical prophet shall be chaunted by every nation and tribe under heaven:

"No strife shall rage, nor hostile feuds Disturb these peaceful years, To ploughshares men shall beat their swords, To pruning-hooks their spears."

"No longer hosts encountering hosts Shall crowds of slain deplore; They hang the trumpet on the wall And study war no more."

A PUPIL OF CHALMERS.

OUR EARTH AND RACE.

DEAR BROTHER MEARS:—In the January No., 2d Vol., of the "Prophetic Times," there is an article on "Our Earth and Race," which, it strikes me, is open to criticism. In it the writer affirms that there will be an eternal succession of generations on the earth. It is not my intention, at this time, to call in question the truthfulness of this theory; but merely to refer to some of the writer's proof texts, and perhaps I may elicit thought. If a passage of Scripture does not prove a doctrine, the quoting of it only weakens the argument. That which is not strength is weakness. Therefore, the more proof texts of that kind the writer uses, the weaker is his argument.

It is the doctrine of the "Prophetic Times," frequently expressed, that the Greek word *aión* means dispensation, and that the end of the present *aión* is the end of the present dispensation, which will end at the second coming of our Lord. The corresponding Hebrew word is *olam* or *olam*. Now if *aión* in the New Testament means dispensation, *olam* in the Old must; and if *aión* means for, or during, this dispensation, then *olam* must.

In proof of an eternal succession of generations, the writer quotes Genesis ix 8-16. The last part of the quotation, as given, is, "And God said, This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations [lederot *olam*]. I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth. And the bow shall be in the clouds; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant [Hebrew *berith olam*] between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth." I do not give the writer's quotations from other versions, for they are merely translations—not inspired. I have not consulted the original, but trust it is correctly quoted. If so, then the singular is used, and therefore, according to the "Prophetic Times," means for, or during the then existing dispensation, which of course ended when the Mosaic commenced.

Again, the writer quotes from Gen. xvii. 7, 8, the covenant, or part of the covenant, which God made with Abraham; and as the singular is used, it must, therefore, refer to the generations of the then existing dispensation. The writer also states that the same covenant was repeated to Jacob, Gen. xlviii., but as the singular is again used, it must

refer to the then existing dispensation, which was drawing near to its close. Next, the writer refers to Jer. xxxi. 36, and says: "It is asserted to be part of God's covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, that they should no more cease from being a nation before God eternally, that the laws which govern the universe can depart; and that a state of things shall invest their land which shall not be plucked up, or thrown down any more" during that dispensation. Again, he says, "So also Ezekiel xxvii. 25, 26, where it is promised to the children of Israel and Judah, after their re-gathering and reunion: 'They shall dwell in the land that I have given to Jacob my servant, wherein their fathers have dwelt; and they shall dwell therein, even they, and their children, and their children's children forever [Hebrew *olam*]; and my servant David shall be their prince forever. Moreover, I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them; and I will place them, and multiply them, and I will set my sanctuary in the midst of them forevermore [Hebrew *olam*].' As the singular is used in all these places, therefore the conclusion must be, that the promise is only for the then existing dispensation. So, also, in Joel iii. 20; but I will not weary the reader with any further repetition of the same argument. The writer might, with such proof, run his argument out "ad infinitum," and then prove nothing. JAMES KERR.

REMARKABLE CONVERSION OF A JEW.

WHO WAS BY PROFESSION AN ACTOR.

Several incomplete accounts of the conversion of a well-known Jew in Chicago, have found their way to the religious press.

A friend of ours requested Mr. Ryder to write out in full the history of the great change wrought upon him by the Holy Spirit, through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. It was not intended for publication. But the account in it as it was first written, is full of interest and instruction, and we are permitted thus to publish it.

Mr. Ryder, we learn, was educated at a college in England, and reads Hebrew fluently. Previous to the time of his change, Mr. Ryder was actor in a Chicago Theatre. He is now studying Theology in the O. S. Presbyterian Theological Seminary in Chicago, and is spoken of as leading a consistent life.

After having spent the night of Saturday, May 22d, in dissipation and sin, I arose from my bed feeling very sick and very miserable.

Walking leisurely up Madison street, my attention was arrested by hearing strains of sacred music coming from a church. I was led to enter the church, not to pray, but to hear the singing, and to while away the hour.

After the singing had ceased, the minister arose, and in the course of his remarks said:—"That all his hearers were dying creatures, but not only had they to die, but also had they to render to God an account of the deeds done in the body."

These plain truths came with a peculiar power to my mind. I too must die. I too must give an account for the deeds done in the body."

I left the church a miserable conscience condemned sinner. For many years I had lived without God, catering to the amusement of Satan's children. Truly, I had been very wicked, and I felt it. I returned to my room—tried to divert my mind from thinking over the subject—but still the thought would return: I, too must die. I, too must give an account for the deeds done in the body.

I passed a sleepless night—nay, more, a wretched night. I arose early Monday morning, and looking over the daily paper, found that Rev. E. P. Hammond was to speak in a church on the corner of Wabash avenue and Washington street.

Thither I went, hoping to hear something to remove the terrible feeling from my mind. When I reached the church, the meeting was over. A gentleman seeing me standing, looking painfully disappointed, took the liberty to ask me, "why I looked so sad." I told him that I felt unhappy and unholy, and that I would like to hear and see Mr. Hammond. He gave me an introduction to Mr. Hammond, who kindly took me by the hand, asked me what troubled me. I told him that I felt myself a sinner before God, and a very wicked one too. He prayerfully pointed me to Jesus, and told me I must look to Him, for He only could save me and make me happy. This, I could not understand. My parents had taught me that Jesus was an impostor, and when Mr. Hammond spoke of my looking to Jesus, I felt worse, much worse. Mr. Hammond asked me to kneel with him in prayer. I did so—but when he prayed to Jesus, I felt angry. I thought that I, a Jew, had no business in a Christian church praying to Jesus. Mr. Hammond still prayed on, but I could not understand the matter. Time being precious, and Mr. Hammond having to leave, he introduced me to one Mr. Moody, and some other Christian friends, asking them to speak to me, and to pray with and for me.

Accordingly, Mr. Moody read a part of Luke's Gospel, but still no light. He then read the third chapter of John's

Gospel. He came to the fourteenth verse:—"As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life."

This blessed truth seemed to come to me. I knew that Moses had lifted up a serpent in the wilderness, but what had Christ to do with it. I could not see any resemblance between Christ and the serpent. But I took the matter to God, and there in that church, with my head bowed down in humility before God, I sincerely asked the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to teach me if it was true. God mercifully heard my prayer, and in a moment showed me Jesus of Nazareth on the Cross. Yes—I saw the whole mystery. Our forefathers looked to the serpent and were healed. So I must look believingly to Christ and be healed from my sins. I did look—and glory to God—I was happy—Oh, how happy! I arose from my knees, saying—I see it—I see it—and not only did I see it, but I felt it. Glory to God! Glory to Christ! Wonderful Jesus! Blessed Jesus! My Jesus! My Saviour, I love thee! Thou art my all in all. Oh, blessed Saviour keep me humble, and may I never forget that Thou wast "lifted up" FOR ME. E. C. K.

CHICAGO, January 3, 1865.

THE CAPTURE OF WILMINGTON.

The following clear and graphic account of the operations which resulted in closing this great port of entry of the Confederacy, and so depriving them of their supplies of ammunition, will be read even now with interest. It is from the pen of one of the teachers of the Reformed Presbyterian Sabbath-school of Chicago.

NEWBERN, NORTH CAROLINA, March 29, 1865.

REV. ROBERT PATTERSON, D. D.

Rev. and Dear Sir:—I had the very great pleasure of getting your welcome letter of the 26th of February last. I heard from my wife and Mr. Hanna that you had been very sick, and that you had been confined to your room and bed for a long time. I am very thankful to Divine providence for your restoration to health, and that you are again able to move forward on your sphere of usefulness.

I wrote to you last time from Clifton, Tennessee. I informed you that my A. C. was on the eve of a journey to the seaboard. The 23d A. C. left Clifton on the evening of the 17th of January, and after a very tedious journey, arrived in Washington, D. C., on the 31st of same month. We passed down the Tennessee, in transports, to Paducah; from thence up the Ohio to Cincinnati; from thence, by rail, passing through Columbus and Zanesville, to Bell Air; then we crossed the Ohio river to Benwood, where we took the cars on the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad for Washington, passing through Grafton, New Creek, Cumberland, Martinsburg, Harper's Ferry. I looked with feelings of emotion on the scene of my first battle, and of the disgrace thrown upon our banners by the surrender of the place by its incapable, if not traitorous, commander; and I thanked God for giving us more efficient and more worthy men, who, under the favor of Divine providence, are leading our brave men on to victory.

After arriving at Washington, we had hardly time to brush off the accumulated dust of fifteen days' march, under the most unfavorable circumstances, when we again got orders to march. On the morning of the 3d of February, we struck tents and marched to the Baltimore depot, where we took the cars to Annapolis, Md. As soon as we got there we went on board the U. S. transport steamer *Herman Livingston* bound for Fort Fisher, North Carolina.

After a short, but rather rough passage, we dropped anchor off Fort Fisher on the afternoon of the 7th of February. We did not succeed in effecting a landing until the night of the 8th of February. We spent the first week on Federal Point in making several reconnaissances and in maneuvering for the purpose of developing the position and strength of the enemy. Early on the 16th, my division, the 3d, was transported to Smithville by steamers. On the morning of the 17th we marched on Fort Anderson, driving in as we went the videttes and outposts of the enemy. The reduction of this fort was necessary before our forces could make an advance on Wilmington. The fort commanded the Cape Fear river, and in connection with the fort were large and heavy breastworks, running from the river across Federal Point to the sea. We found before we left Federal Point that those works could not be approached on account of an extensive swamp in front of them. On the morning of the 18th, the 3d division advanced to the attack, encountering and driving in the skirmishers of the enemy on every side. At 10½ A. M. the enemy were all behind their main works.

At 12 M. the 3d division was quietly withdrawn and sent to the rear. We all knew what for, and that Generals Schofield and Cox had decided not to attack the fort on the front, but get out the enemy by "flanking them." That afternoon we made a detour to the right of the position held by the enemy. At 4 P. M. we came up with the advance posts, and fighting at once began. At dusk we had driven them into their works, which they had erected on the opposite side of a swamp, through which

we would have to pass in order to attack them. General Cox decided to wait until morning. We had marched twelve miles since noon, and had driven the enemy two miles of that distance, and we were within six miles of being directly in rear of the fort.

The enemy withdrew from our front during the night, and when they found out that we had turned their position, they evacuated Fort Anderson also. They fell back to Smithtown creek, where they had heavy batteries erected to guard the approaches. Their front was protected by the river, which was very deep; their right was protected by an almost impassable swamp, and their left by the Cape Fear river. But between their left and the river was also a heavy swamp. On the morning of the 20th, my division was again put in motion, and ordered to cross the river and attack the enemy in the rear. We marched very cautiously, and at 8 A. M. came to the creek. We managed to cross over in an old rice boat; and at 12 M. the division was all across. We had to work very hard to extricate ourselves from the swamps, but after toiling through them for three hours, we managed to get on firm ground again. At 3 P. M. we got out of the swamp, but at the same time we encountered the skirmishers of the enemy. These we drove back, and followed them up with vigor, and very close. At 4 P. M. we came upon the main body. The enemy, finding that we were advancing on their rear, turned round and threw up hastily some breastworks and planted a battery to command the road. The 1st and 2d brigade of my division advanced, and amid a fearful storm of rifle balls, grape shot, canister, and shell, charged the works and battery, and carried them both. The two brigades lost about fifty killed and wounded. My regiment, although in the thickest of the fire, escaped unhurt. We captured three brass ten-pounder guns, a great quantity of small arms, and about seven hundred prisoners. About five hundred of the enemy got away, having fled through the swamp to the right of their position.

The fall of Fort Anderson and the battle of Smithtown creek, opened the road to Wilmington. On the 21st we followed up the flying enemy. At 3½ P. M. we came in sight of the city. The enemy had been so hard pressed that they had not time to fully destroy their pontoons, but sunk them. On our arrival we at once began to raise them. They tried to hinder us with their artillery, but we put a battery in position which silenced them. They set fire to vast quantities of pitch and cotton. On the 22d Admiral Porter came up with his fleet, and General Terry, with his command, attacked the forces of the enemy and drove them into the town, which was under the fire of our artillery from the opposite side of the river. The town was taken by our forces and the enemy driven eight or ten miles from it before night. The enemy fell back to Kinston, on the river Neuse. About the first of March, General Cox and General Schofield went to Newbern, leaving General Couch at Wilmington with the 2d and 3d divisions of the 23d A. C. These two divisions left Wilmington on the 6th of March, and marched on Kinston; General Cox at the same time leaving Newbern. On the 10th we marched all day to the sound of artillery, and at 1 A. M. on the morning of the 11th we marched to reinforce General Cox. We marched all night and all day until 3 P. M., without eating or resting; passing through an interminable swamp up to the knees in mud and water all the way, and fording a creek before daylight, which took us up to the middle. General Bragg fell back on Kinston, and he soon after left that place also, our troops entering on the 12th, Bragg falling back on Goldsboro'. On the 13th General Sherman and General Schofield communicated by courier. On the 20th General Schofield left Kinston and marched on Goldsboro', forming a junction with General Sherman. At this date the combined armies of Sherman and Schofield are in Goldsboro'. The army of Sherman refitting, preparatory to entering on the final campaign.

With many thanks for your kind wishes in my behalf, I remain, dear sir, JAMES DUGUID, Capt. Co. A. 65th Illinois Vols.

JOHN ROSS, THE CHEROKEE CHIEF.

A few days ago we were shown an interesting piece of manuscript, a letter in a beautiful, firm hand, such as would have done credit to a merchant's clerk, from the pen of the veteran Cherokee Chief, John Ross, now seventy-five years old. It is written to his grandniece, a little girl of seven years, living in Wilmington, Delaware, and is in reply to one written by her to the old chieftain, then in Washington. As a matter of interest to the children, and in fact to all who have admired the loyalty of the chief, and of the tribe as a whole, under great persecution and trials inflicted by the rebels, we give the main parts of the letter.

WASHINGTON, D. C., WILLARD'S HOTEL, Feb. 11, 1865.

Do you know, my dear little niece, how dearly I do love the name of Mary, and the reason why? You may, perhaps, think, because it is a pretty name—indeed it is—not only a pretty, but a good name! But I must tell you that I love it more because my devoted mother, who cherished and nursed me in infancy, was named Mary; also, that she who is now the wife of my bosom, and the mother of my children, is named Mary.

And above all, because that blessed virgin, who was the mother of our adorable Redeemer and Saviour, Jesus Christ, was called Mary. So you see, my dear Mary, you have a favorite and a good name, which your "dear Uncle John" prayerfully hopes you may bear with graceful piety and intelligence, through a long life of usefulness and honor to yourself, your sex, and your country. I have been much gratified to receive your "small note." I think you have made good progress in writing. I am delighted to hear that you often think of me when I am away from home so long in Washington—that dear Maggie is well, and is now a year old—that her little teeth are nearly out. No wonder that she is a great pet with all, for she is so smart. You also have news from the Cherokee Nation that your aunt Victoria has a little son!

I must tell you that I, too, have this day received news from the nation. Your cousin, W. P. Ross, states that I have another great grandchild, twenty-four hours old on the 24th of January—Charles Hicks Junior.

Give my love to your mamma and papa, and kisses for your dear brothers James and Johny, and sister Maggie. From Your affectionate uncle, JOHN ROSS.

BOOKS FOR TENNESSEE.

Our Home Missionary Committee has taken hold vigorously of the field of labor thrown upon our hands and hearts in East Tennessee, and the churches are ready to sustain the Committee in this work. In rebuilding these broken churches and restoring to them the institutions of religion, the Sabbath-school is resumed, generally as the first step in the process. These schools need books—books for reading, Catechisms, and Hymn-books. For the adults also books and tracts should be in the hands of the pastor, or missionary. These it is the part of our Publication Committee to supply, and they are anxious to meet the call. Are there not those who are willing to enable them so to do?

The missionary laborer in Tennessee finds every thing to do, and now is the time to help him to lay the foundations, not only surely but rapidly. We must not wait, but work. Whilst society is settling into new forms and new organizations, it is the time to throw in that around which we would have it crystallize. We know of no denomination of Christians on whom the Providence of God calls for action in this matter more distinctly than on our own. We go not as strangers and intruders, but as old friends, the representatives of principles once dear to East Tennessee, for awhile repudiated by the leaders, if not by the people, but again the principles of the Switzerland of America.

Our Home Missionary Agent, with cheering details of the prospects of some of the reorganized churches, writes:—"A number of Sabbath-schools have applied to me for books, and I would like to be able to supply them, as fast as they make requisitions on me. An interesting school is now in progress at New Market; it has sent for a supply of books. Several Sunday-schools in Blount County have also made calls on me within a few days. There is also quite a missionary field at Chattanooga."

We wish to send books immediately to this field, and shall be glad to have commissions from individuals and from our Sunday-schools to do so. JOHN W. DULLES, Secretary.

THE ARGUMENT WELL PUT.

Coleridge tells of a Turk, who in Paris, was prevailed upon to turn Christian, having been promised plenty of wine in this life, and a Paradise of Eternal Delights in the next. He was regularly instructed in the doctrine of the Church of Rome, and after a time had the Sacrament administered to him. The next day, when his instructor was interrogating him, he asked how good God there were; "None at all," said the priest. "How! none at all?" said the Turk. "No," replied the sincere believer; "you have always taught that there was only one God, and yesterday I eat him." Verily there is no absurdity, how glaring soever in theology, that has not had at one time or other believers and supporters amongst men of the greatest powers and most cultivated minds.

DIRECTORY

Of Presbyterian (N. S.) Ministers and Churches, Philadelphia.

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