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EDITORIAL NOTES ON THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY. III.

Doubtless the great events of the late session of the General Assembly were the receptions of the Scottish and Irish deputations. The Free Church of Scotland and the Presbyterian Church of Ireland, being very much in earnest in the matter, sent us their picked men, including, indeed, such men as Guthrie and Arnot in their appointment, who, unfortunately, were unable to come. But those who did come were representative men, deputed expressly for an errand, which they were competent worthily to perform. The representatives of our American Churches, on the contrary, were men named for the duty after it was known that, for other reasons, they found it convenient or necessary to be in Great Britain at that time. There were good reasons, therefore, why the reception of the British deputations among us should be marked by an *ecclat* which does not seem to have attended our own men, at least in Scotland. In Philadelphia, in New York, in Rochester, and in Cincinnati, the reception was almost an ovation. A large part of the most valuable working time of our body was given, on two distinct occasions, to the hearing of the Irish and Scotch deputations, and no one grudged it to men on such an errand, and in themselves so eminently worthy of a hearing. Whereas, in Edinburgh, the Free Church Assembly crowded the reception of three delegates from the other branch, two from our own, and the Agent of the American Missionary Association, with the single response of the Moderator to the whole, into the first Monday evening of the session, May 27th.

On the part of our Assembly especially, the presence of these delegates was felt to be an occasion of peculiar interest, as the first formal recognition of our body by transatlantic Presbyterian Churches. Every one knows how, for years, the Assembly of the other branch almost wholly monopolized such recognition; how, by reason of its proslavery character, it lost that advantage, and ceased to hold official intercourse with these bodies; how our own advanced position on slavery predisposed our British brethren to a more candid consideration of our Presbyterian character generally, so that, at last, we find ourselves, in some respects, higher on their books than any Presbyterian body in this country.

But the prominent feeling in our body, upon these occasions, was Christian joy in the outflowing and interchange of fraternal feeling with the honored representatives of sister Churches of glorious reputation and abundant usefulness in the mother country. It was joy in the formation of a visible and outward tie between brethren, heretofore known only through literature, through history, and by general Christian intercourse. The memories of Londonderry, and of the disruption, and of Thomas Chalmers, seemed borne into the Assembly, along with the noble persons and the eloquent words of Fairbairn and Hall, of Denham and Wells. The stream of fraternal intercourse had greatly widened and lengthened; our heart-throbs were stronger and our pulses quicker; our sense of Presbyterian and Christian unity was broader and deeper than ever before. The concluding words of Moderator Nelson in his eloquent reply, well expressed the feeling:

"Are we not realizing in our hearts, the communion of saints? Is it not because we are one in Christ Jesus, that we find it practicable thus to unite our sympathies? We are feeling, more than ever, that the Church of Christ is one, and that we may be all united in the one work and look forward to the time when we shall be united in the Church above."

Besides the expression of fraternal regard, these deputations were a tribute to the greatness and importance of Christian America, especially as emerging triumphantly from the throes of a great struggle with rebellion. Perhaps only the delegates from Ireland represented a public sentiment, which had been thoroughly favorable to the North during the entire struggle; but both deputations felt themselves upon the soil of one of the two or three great protestant countries of the globe, at a time when that greatness had been guaranteed as never before, by victory; and it was this circumstance, doubt-

less, that largely aided in bringing them to our shores. And both deputations were earnest and eloquent in their congratulations upon the overthrow of slavery. Their hearts were full of it. It was "the greatest of all recent causes of congratulation." Antislavery Scotland rejoiced "that not one slave breathes on our soil to-day." The Irishmen not only rejoiced at the spread of liberty, but showed their superior knowledge of the position of our own branch of the Church on the subject. Said Dr. Denham: "We especially desire to express our respect for the solemn, faithful, continuous, decided testimony you bore against slavery and in favor of the poor, down-trodden negro." "We come," said Dr. Hall, "to congratulate you on your fidelity to truth."

The numbers, the great activity, the enterprise and efficiency of our American Presbyterian Churches, in their vast field of effort deeply impressed the deputation. A sense of the comparative smallness of their own field and their own numbers at home, seemed really at times to oppress them. The immense, handsomely executed map of our vast country, hung behind the pulpit, contributed to deepen such impressions. And this free, victorious, Protestant America they came to draw more closely to their own land, through the tie of Presbyterian sympathy. The delegates were really ambassadors of the Christian people of Scotland and Ireland, arranging an informal treaty of peace with ourselves. Not out of unmanly fear for their country, but as friends and guardians of Christian civilization, of the orthodox faith against ritualism and rationalism, and of Protestantism against Romanism,—in that high capacity they came to improve and to perpetuate the good understanding between God's people in both countries.

Presbyterian Union was, of course, warmly urged, not by any means for the sake of Presbyterianism alone, but for the sake of the great interests of evangelized truth, of Missions, of Education, which would, they believed, be promoted by such union. The delegates spoke as men fresh from scenes of arduous and doubtful conflict with the enemies of righteousness and looking around anxiously for new sources of strength to be had in readiness for the future. They beheld in the tendencies to Presbyterian Union one of the most hopeful indications of the times, and from their point of view felt bound to seize upon it and to encourage it to the utmost. Said Dr. Hall:

"There are high interests which can be promoted only by such union. There are great literary undertakings which we can carry out only by union. The day calls for great literary efforts, it is required of us to meet unbelievers on their own ground. Extensive missionary efforts are best conducted by Churches in co-operation. A noble spectacle it would be if all the Presbyterian Churches in the world could take counsel together, and how would it promote the interests of the world, if we should diffuse our missionaries, so as to reach every dark spot and diffuse the light more equally on heathendom."

Dr. Fairbairn's appeal for a broad and liberal culture as necessary adequately to prepare the ministry of the present age to maintain a high and influential position, as well as his appeal for a more liberal support to the ministry, sprang, apparently, from the same source of solicitude for the cause of Christ in the great struggles now transpiring. An uncultivated and an unpaid ministry, must be alike weak, and incapable of meeting the present race of the champions of error. Presbyterianism must not be behind-hand in the inevitable conflict; she must train her leaders with a generous culture and must support them so well that they can give their whole time and energies to the work. These high lessons were enforced by Dr. Fairbairn's account of the Sustentation Fund in Scotland, and by Dr. Hall's account of the Manse Fund in Ireland. They placed the education and support of the ministry, together, upon the highest grounds, and the stimulus which they thus gave to movements among ourselves for these great objects will, we think, be found to be by no means the least important result of their visit.

DEATH OF EARNEST C. WALLACE.—The secular press of this city has announced, with every mark of respect, the death of this gentleman, who, many of our readers will be interested to know, was the son of the late Rev. Benjamin J. Wallace, D.D., one of the founders and first editors of this paper. Mr. E. C. Wallace, like his father, was smitten with the love of literature, and at the

time of his death, had an interest in the *Evening Bulletin*, of this city. He was also a prominent officer in the Press Club, embracing representatives of the secular press of Philadelphia. He was comparatively a young man. Thus the gifted father, and two sons of this family, have been taken within about five years all in the midst of their years and their activity.

THE DEPUTATIONS TO THE FREE CHURCH ASSEMBLY.

These deputations, consisting of seven persons, representing both branches of the Presbyterian Church, the Reformed Dutch Church and the American Missionary Association, were received by the Free Church Assembly, on Monday evening, May 27th. The building was crowded. The delegates from the other branch were heard first, viz: Dr. Hickok of Scranton, Rev. Mr. Parker, and Rev. Henry M. McCracken. Dr. Hickok spoke of the difficulties in the way of evangelistic work in America, among which, he named especially the multiplicity of sects, and closed with a very eloquent allusion to the movements for Presbyterian union in Scotland and in this country; which was received with loud applause. Mr. Parker referred to the religious newspapers of America, by which our people are kept well informed in regard to the condition of the transatlantic churches. Such newspapers he did not see there. He thought if there had been, much misunderstanding would have been obviated. He regretted that his church had not long ago taken a more radical position on slavery. He showed why Presbyterianism could not occupy in America, the place it did in Scotland; it was not, however from doctrinal laxity, for he believed the Confession was held in our two Presbyterian Churches, as fully and as fairly as in Scotland, (hear hear.) Mr. McCracken gave some testimony from personal observation, as to the substantial unity of the two branches in America, which was received with great applause.

Rev. E. E. Adams D.D., was next introduced, as the delegate from our branch. He is reported to have said:

I come to you as one of its deputies, greeting you cordially on behalf of the New School Free Church in America. (Applause.) We believe we have a claim to the attention, for we were free of the embrace of slavery before our honored brethren. (Hear.) When I entered Pennsylvania a few years ago, going there for the benefit of my health, I was drawn into the New School relation. I was born among Congregationalists, and it was not from any objection to the Old School doctrine that I joined the New School, for I have been called Old School for my attachment to those doctrines. (Hear.)

Dr. Adams then gave statistics of our own Church which, in some instances, are ludicrously mis-reported, and which, we therefore, forbear to copy. He also gave some facts in regard to the rapid progress of education among the Freedmen. His concluding remarks are reported as follows:

Perhaps I should say that I was very happy to hear what brother Hickok said about union. I can endorse all that he said, and more than all that he said. There is no reason why the Old and New School Presbyterians in America should not be one (Hear, hear.) There is no difference substantially in doctrine. We all take the standard [sic] Catechism as ours. Everything is passing away that has kept us apart, and will soon be gone; and the committees appointed by each, we have heard, since coming here, have agreed unanimously upon terms of union. (Applause.) Those terms will be belief in the Standards and nothing more; and it will not be long until we shall coalesce and show forth to the world a Church of more than 4,000 churches and 4,000 ministers of the Gospel. But there is a wider and more general union of Christian Churches to be looked for, and I have a suggestion to make in regard to such union. I would like to see your venerable Dr. Duff and our own Dr. Thompson appointed to select a broad Missionary field for the action of all Presbyterianism in Scotland, Ireland and England, also the Presbyterians in France and in America. Let them join together to work that field, and show what Presbyterianism can do in gaining a mighty nation from heathen influence and heathen destruction. (Cheers.)

Rev. Dr. Field, also a delegate from our body showed the composite nature of our Presbyterianism in America, resulting from the diversity of our origin. He spoke apologetically of the American "fancy," of the vastness of our religious and political institutions, and said that the effect of such sudden advancement as we had experienced was dangerous.

"Our country has learned the secret of its own power. It has got a taste of war. Fearing nothing from external enemies, our only danger is from within; hence our only hope for our country is in the universal prevalence of education and religion."

The conclusion of Dr. Field's speech was marked by a disagreeable incident, the responsibility for which rest solely with himself and which illustrates what we have elsewhere said of the importance of sending represen-

tative men for such services as these. The report continues as follows:

I am often asked if we are not disposed to oppress the people of the South. On the contrary, I contend that there is not an example in history of a war so terrible in its character and so tremendous in its proportions, yet ending with less of vengeance. Not a single individual has suffered for treason. Pardon me if I recall this unexampled magnanimity and mercy at this moment when the Great English Government, ruling an empire on which the sun never sets, feels it necessary to send a miserable Irishman to the scaffold, concerned in an insurrection that did not rise even to the dignity of a mob—and reflect, with satisfaction, that my country, after the most terrible civil war known in history, has not stained its triumph by one drop of blood. (Hisses from the gallery.) Dr. Field, turning to that part of the hall from which the hisses came, said—Is this the city of John Knox, the intrepid Reformer, who feared not the face of man? I thought it was a city where they loved a little frankness of speech. During the last five years we have had to bear with a great deal of plain talk from this side of the ocean; and I think that a single manly word may be born from an American. (Applause.)

The genuine pluck shown by Dr. Field in his answer was evidently appreciated by his audience, and relieves us of the necessity of extending to him our sympathies. For to say the truth, we have little or none to offer. When a representative of the New School Presbyterian Church undertakes the role of a conservative politician and a Fenian sympathizer, he may content himself with insult abroad as shielding him from reproof and censure at home. Nine-tenths of the New School body feel themselves deeply misrepresented and wronged by any body presuming; in their name, to rejoice at the complete escape of the most guilty rebels the world has ever known from condign punishment. They repudiate the political universalism of Horace Greeley and so many other New York editors, of whom better things might be expected.

Had it not been for the appropriate, opening words of Dr. Adams, we should have had the singular spectacle of an Old School delegation talking radicalism and the New School-conservatism, before the Free Church Assembly.

After an address by Mr. Thome of the American Missionary Association, the report of the proceedings continues:

Dr. Caidlish moved that in the meantime the Assembly should ask the Moderator to express to the American deputies the satisfaction with which they had heard their addresses, reserving for a future time the drawing up of a formal minute. He could not express the exceeding delight with which they had revived the intimate relations with the American Churches—(applause.) In regard to the position taken taken by Scotland and the Churches of Scotland during the war, he would just take the liberty of stating that, at the commencement of the war, there appeared to be as much misunderstanding and doubt as to the real object of the war across the Atlantic as there was with them here. (Laughter.) However, he begged to assure them of the sympathy of the Churches in this country, and of the country generally, as regarded the prospect of the war issuing, as it had issued, in the entire abolition of slavery. (Applause.) He concurred in the idea that the work of raising the intelligence and educating the freedmen of America was one which belonged to the entire Christian world; and he felt confident that the vast problem of overtaking a population increasing at a rate almost unprecedented was one which ought not to be left to America to solve alone. (Hear, hear.)

Colonel Davidson seconded the motion, and stated that as America sent some of the noblest missionaries in the field to India, so should this country help America in her present position.

The Moderator then formally thanked the American deputies for the interesting addresses they had delivered, and in doing so he stated that if the voices of the Churches in Britain and America were listened to, instead of only a section of the press, which he held did not represent the feeling of the countries, the only feeling existing between the two countries would be one of the most affectionate confidence and regard. (Applause.)

GETTYSBURG NATIONAL ORPHANS' HOME-STEAD.

Many of our readers are among the friends of this Institution. Perhaps some of them need to be informed that it is not identical with the Gettysburg Asylum for Soldiers and Sailors, an organization incorporated by our last Legislature, and which claims authority, from the act of incorporation, to carry on the lottery business, as the chief means of filling its Treasury. The Orphans' Homestead has nothing whatever to do with this concern. It depends not upon fairs, gift enterprises or lottery schemes, but upon contributions which have been steadily paid into its treasury by the Christian people and Sabbath schools of every part of the country. It has been in successful operation since last fall; it has fifty children, as many as its present accommodations will admit, gathered from Pennsylvania, New York, Illinois, Michigan, &c.; its buildings and grounds,—four acres directly adjacent to the National Cemetery,—are paid for within a few hundred dollars, and the instruction and influences under which the children are placed are such as to make the Homestead equal to

any institution of the kind in the State or country. The peculiarities of the institution are in part, as follows:

1. It is National. Children from all parts of the country are admitted. This is an important fact, as very few of the States have asylums for the orphan children of their fallen soldiers.

2. It is not under State control, but is in the hands of religious men. Bishop Simpson is President; Dr. Newton is Chairman of the Executive Committee; Peter B. Simons, Esq., President of the Y.M.C.A. of this city, is Treasurer; Gen. Meade is one of the Vice Presidents. The religious interests of the children are carefully regarded.

3. Its plan of operations puts it in direct connection with the Sabbath schools of the country. The contribution of any sum from \$25. and upwards, gives a Sabbath school the right of nomination of a soldier's orphan for admission. When admitted, the officers of the school may become joint guardians, with the Homestead of the orphan. Some of the schools take a lively interest in their wards, and the relation is mutually gratifying and profitable.

The main want of the Institution, at present, is a larger building. Nearly half the amount needed for that purpose is in hand. When sufficient means are secured, it is proposed to erect on the brow of the famous Cemetery Hill, a monument, not to fortune with her wheel, not to odd numbers and to luck, not to the willingness of the American people to be duped in the holy name of Charity, but a monument of gratitude from true American and Christian hearts, to the men, who, under the blessing of God, held that hill and saved that critical day at the cost of their lives, and to all the men of our armies, who fell in the glorious struggle for national life and liberty.

Who will help speedily in this work?

THE N. Y. INDEPENDENT, being considerably out at the elbows as to orthodoxy, even in the view of such liberal persons as Congregationalists, is trying to mend matters by assuming a chivalrous attitude among the denominations. That very meek and feeble body of Christians, the Episcopalians, having been rudely assaulted by a certain ogre, in the shape of a New School Presbyterian Professor, this knight-errant of the *Independent*, has undertaken to right a wrong so monstrous and so nearly irreparable. The leading editorial last week, a column and a half long, is devoted to weak and noisy generalities on Dr. Hopkins' trenchant phrase: "An Imbecile Pulpit."

We have never felt like defending Dr. H., very warmly in the use of the phrase, but we are quite sure our Episcopal brethren are abundantly able to take care of themselves, and until they show signs of being badly hurt we shall not undertake any vindication of the Presbyterian ogre. We have evidence, in the following extract from the *Protestant Churchman*, that some of their most sensible men are inclined to justify the strong language of the Professor. The New York correspondent of the *Churchman* after describing the inanities with which Ritualist papers interlard their Church Intelligence says:

Such wispy-washy stuff is an insult to the intellectual character of our age. It stultifies our Church before a community which laugh at such childishness. How can one blame the Reverend Moderator of the Presbyterian Assembly for speaking of "the imbecile ministry of the Episcopal Church," when Doctors of Divinity, and Deacons, with no higher hope, spend all their time in the preparation and publication of such ridiculous contributions as these?

GRAND DEMONSTRATION IN SUPPORT OF THE SUNDAY TEMPERANCE LAW.—The friends of Temperance and of the Sabbath are invited to join in Mass Meeting on Friday evening, June 21st, at the new Horticultural Hall, Broad above Spruce Streets to demonstrate their purpose to sustain the authorities of our City in enforcing the provisions of the excellent Sunday Liquor Law. Hon. Wm. A. Porter will preside, and addresses will be delivered by Gen. S. F. Cary, Judge F. Carroll Brewster, Thomas Potter Esq., Rev. A. A. Willits D. D. and others. Tickets may be had gratuitously at Ashmead's Book Store, 724 Chesnut Street.

There is only so much worth in what we do, as there is of heart in it.