

# The American Presbyterian.

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## HEAVENWARD - HOMEWARD.

"Blessed are they that are homeless, for they shall come at last to the Father's House."—H. Stull.

We, too, are parted from our native shore, and in our hearts a sorrow evermore; A mourning for that far and boundless sea, Which chaneth to our spirits ceaselessly; And this is why we will not here be blest, Our distant home calls to its deeper rest.

The great test of error on religious subjects; of Atheism, Materialism, dilatory trifling with philosophic doubt, and denial of the essential features of the Scripture system, is death. Any or all of them may carry a man with some degree of ease, or pride even, through life, but at death they one and all leave man to take a more "leap in the dark." They people the awful void, the terra incognita, with guesses at the best; they cannot pacify one twinge of the conscience, which in that hour is so busy. They leave the spiritual nature of man, with its vast yearnings all aroused, a blank vacancy. They rob man of immortality; in that hour, when heart-strings break, and every earthly tie dissolves, they shut out every ray of comfort, and add their own horrors to the scene. Black should be the pall, and sombre the hearse plumes, that wave over the cold form once throbbing with all the irrepressible aspirations of a man, but now going to the burial of a brute.

The Christian is taught to regard death as the transition to an abode so much higher, happier, and more blessed than the present, that he waits for it with joyful longing. The choicest word among those which are peculiar to the English language, is applied to it, and it is called "going home." All the indescribably rich and tender associations connected with that word *home*, are brought to brighten the dying hour. As if even the hallowed experiences of domestic life on earth, were but the passing entertainments of the pilgrim, now, indeed, going to his true home. That magnetism, which to the minds of all English-speaking people, is possessed by *home*, belongs also to the eternal world in the feeling of the Christian. A secret tie of relationship, a secret sense of longing, as if for a once familiar and delightful spot, a sense of belonging there, rather than to the most intimate earthly locality, continually draw the true Christian heavenward. Death is almost like a return of the exile from foreign uncongenial scenes, to the dear home and country in which he had been born and reared, and with which are all his strongest and tenderest ties. This sense of greater familiarity, of truer and closer belonging, of nativity in the heavenly world, is truly marvellous. It is the witness in itself of the soul's spiritual and immortal nature. For indeed, the regenerate soul is "born from above." It is a native of the heavenly world, more truly than of the earthly. There is our Father, there our Brother in the fullest sense of the words. There is company the most congenial to the soul's nature, free from all taint of sin, and burning with zeal for the glory of God. There dwells the greatest of all benefactors, the most self-denying of all friends, the most marvellous embodiment of all love.

Whatever can hallow, beautify and sweeten home below, is but a symbol of the glory, and the joy, and the unspeakable attractions of the home above. It is the Father's house in which there are many mansions, and a place prepared for every one of his people. The outward adorning and the sumptuousness, the comforts and attractions which we would throw around our earthly homes; the tender ties, the life, the love with which we would fill them; the sweet strains of music which should float through halls and chambers; that electric chain of sympathy which binds all together, and that subtle, all-pervading atmosphere which really makes it *home*,—all, all burdened here by imperfection, find their ideal in the heaven of the Christian.

And as time passes, and one after another of the dear home circle below is translated to the better home above; as the one below grows poorer, and the one above richer, it daily becomes easier and more natural for the believer to transfer the strength of his home feeling to another world. There the home circle which at best was a most un-

certain, changeable thing on earth is reassembling. There the loved and mourned and longed-for securely dwell. Yes! They are gathering, the true home-circle there, around the heavenly Father's door, and we—when shall we be with them too? We raise our dimmed eyes to heaven and try to pierce the veil that shuts us out. We are homesick. Our souls break for longing, like that of the child for the dear familiar house of its father. Or like the long absent voyager approaching his native shore again, waiting for the thrilling cry of Land! ready with impassioned ardor to fly to the arms of the friends from whom he has been so long separated.

Alas for the poor desolate homeless wanderers who pass into eternity and have no father's house to go to there! Who orphan and disinherit themselves forever by unbelief!

## LAYMEN IN THE FIELD.

We notice, in the accounts of the "Christian Convention," held in New York last month, that much is said of the excellence and power of the speeches of several lay members, and the high tone of feeling wrought up by them. One notice, (T. L. C. in the *Evangelist*), says: "The most striking feature of the Convention to me, was the admirable speaking power of the lay members. They made the best speeches of the meeting. This fact is but another evidence of the great part which laymen are to perform in proclaiming the gospel." Further on, after referring to the withdrawal of pastors from ordinary preaching work at important points, to other services for the Church, he adds: "In the meantime the laity are coming forward to stand in the gap. Judge Smith and Mr. Durant are preaching in Massachusetts. Mr. Moody once a shop dealer preaches to a huge crowd every Sabbath evening in Farwell Hall, Chicago." Similar cases have come under our own notice quite recently. An Elder—to be sure, an ordained man—who had been a member of the late Union Convention in this city, gave to the Church in which he rules well, an admirable written address designed to promote the object of the Convention, in place of the regular Sabbath evening services. Another Elder, not now acting as such, plead the cause of Ministerial Relief very appropriately and effectively in place of the pastor in one of the country charges of our Synod, a few Sabbaths ago. T. L. C. asks: "What is the moral of all this?"

Well, there is a moral to it, and one which we opine is not hard to be read. There is a class of men who have not been trained to the ministry as a profession, or consecrated to it as a sole life work, under the usual ecclesiastical forms, upon whom God has nevertheless laid the responsibility of preaching the gospel as occasions offer, and whom he will have to do it. The slowness of ecclesiastical bodies to follow the leadings of his providence and Spirit in this matter, has for some time been to us surprising; and so far as our own Church is concerned, this surprise is fast becoming an alarm, lest the favorable moment for action be lost. While we are hesitating about giving place and system to lay preaching, and making it a feature of our polity, lest it should lower the public respect for the ministerial office, the thing itself is breaking forth on the right hand and the left, and is becoming deeply felt as a power in the Church, owned as such by God. While we are putting forth our doubts whether the right men can be found to accept our call to the work, the call from the perishing is bringing forth the men, and in many cases those who seem to be just the men for the work. We talk of the dangers of disorder from opening the pulpit to so many men of irresponsible ministerial standing, and whose methods are of just the kind which naturally tend toward excessive demonstrations. We admit this danger to be real, but it is one which, as is now becoming evident, the Church must meet; and, this being so, we rather aggravate than avoid it by withholding an ecclesiastical status from lay preachers of any and every sort. The natural remedy for an irresponsible lay preaching, is to give to those approved for it an official responsibility. The rational course for preventing the disorders to be feared from the rushing in of incompetent and unsafe men, is to place the whole matter under ecclesiastical super-

vision. In this way the reflecting portion of the public would soon learn whom to encourage, and of whom to beware. Just now the world is full of events with a moral; and not the least of these morals is that, until mind and tastes and modes of accessibility find a beaten track, it is useless to attempt to confine to a beaten track our modes of evangelization. Providence will move, and why should not we?

## LETTER FROM DR. DUFF TO THE UNION CONVENTION.

THE GRANGE, Edinburgh, 23d, Oct. 1867.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND:—After an absence of three months in the South I have just returned to Edinburgh; and among a pile of letters and documents I found yours of the 7th. For some time to come every moment will be fully occupied, and I indeed may say occupied beyond my strength as my state of health remains much as it was. On this account I am grieved to think that I cannot probably write to you such a letter as I would on the subject of your National Convention of the Presbyterian Church on the subject of Union.

I do rejoice that such a meeting is to be held; if it be only for prayer—prayer for the effusion of the Holy Spirit. From what I know of human nature with its hereditary prejudices, I have long been satisfied that it is not by arguments however clear, or human eloquence however electrical at the times, that real Christian Union will spring whether among individuals or churches.

Real union must spring from souls under the mighty influence of divine grace; just as naturally as water flows from a perennial fountain. Look at the result of the Pentecostal effusion! So long as the disciples though consisting of men from distant and different regions of the earth, many local prejudices clinging to them, continued under the full influence of that outpouring, they continued of one heart and one mind—and for a time even of one purse.

But I cannot dwell on the subject farther than to say, Look for union, not so much to the force of logic as to the power of prayer, with its resulting influences of grace. If men be full of faith and of the Holy Ghost they can no longer keep asunder from each other, but will be drawn instinctively and resistlessly towards each other as surely as particles of matter are drawn together by the attraction of affinity, or suns and planets by the attraction of gravitation. I regret extremely that I cannot go into the subject at all at present. Though not with you in person, I shall be with you in spirit and in prayer. Do, if possible, by God's blessing, set an example which may raise the churches in this land to follow it.

Yours very affectionately,  
(Signed) ALEXANDER DUFF.  
To Geo. H. Stuart, Phila.

## OUR LONDON LETTER.

LONDON, Nov. 16th, 1867.  
Since I last wrote, the Italian drama has passed through some quick, short, exciting scenes. We were all expecting war, and wonder now, as we look back, how it was avoided. The Divine hand is as clearly on this tangled skein as it ever was on any warp and woof of human affairs—it was fashion and restrain as He will. *The time has not yet come.* Napoleon seems to be moved against his will by an irresistible power. Italy, whose temper was thought to be unalterable, turned round as a feather before a storm, and Rome sits trembling, but still unmoved—a permanent, dogmatic, *non possumus*. You will observe that no public writer ventures to anticipate the coming events—we cannot do so; we look out upon a dismal duski-ness, and through a glass, darkly. Every one feels that the best thing for the Emperor would be to abolish the September Convention—already practically abolished—and enter into a new one with Italy, which shall give her all she desires. But the Elders of the Church cannot break down the *non possumus*. He must be prepared to face the Ultramontanes at home, and the Church everywhere, before he permits vile hands to be laid upon her temporalities. Is he likely to do so—with a powerful party to work against him in the Empire—and the anathemas of the Pope shaking in his face? Many think not—and those who hope, do it against hope.

In England, for a short time, we are taking breath on ecclesiastical matters, after the exces-

sive dosing of the Pan Anglican Synod, and the Wolverhampton Congress. A great meeting has been held at Hillsborough, near Belfast, in the North of Ireland, under the auspices of the Marquis of Downshire, and other great Tory and Orange noblemen and gentry, at which, I am sorry to say, Dr. Cooke, who has been a great man in his day, declared himself for an alliance of Presbyterians with the Established Church people, in trying to save it and the Regium Donum. Of course all the arguments of the speakers went to prove that if the Church were touched, Roman Catholicism would triumph and win the mastery. I know of no greater error. Englishmen only make concessions to Catholics because they think it just to do so, but supremacy, the latter can never get. Nothing could be more proper, surely, than that, as in America, the Roman Catholics should have all grievances removed; and then let Catholic faith, and Protestant faith, fight their battle fairly. Who can doubt the issue after the great Reformation, struggle, and believe God to be on the side of truth, and, especially so, whenever her partisans are sincere and fair?

Very little attention is given in England to this Hillsborough demonstration, which shook Ulster to its very centre. Indeed we are getting to look upon the disestablishment of the Irish Church as a foregone conclusion, and to regard with little interest the protests so often reiterated of its indignant defenders. The injustice is too palpable to be glossed over by words—to be hidden in clouds of rhetoric. Years ago, in letters to your paper, I foresaw the approaching doom, and every day only confirms the accuracy of the foresight.

The Roman question has naturally aroused a good deal of Protestant feeling, some of which has expressed itself, as, for instance, in Exeter riots. Another cause tended to those riots, and to others at Oxford and elsewhere, namely: the high price of bread. This is a disaster which presses most heavily on the working-man, and which he can least of all endure. His objections take a physical and ferocious turn, and he resumes the natural situation, according to Hobbes—i. e., a state of war. I think in my last letter I indicated the probabilities of trouble of this kind.

You will be sorry to hear that there is still but little hope of Dr. Hamilton's recovery. I learn that he is gradually growing more weak. None who have ever come into communication with that large and kindly nature, that heart so tender, appreciative, and sympathizing, that mind filled with grand, if sometimes quaint, curious, and ingenious thoughts, that ready intelligence and overflowing humor, that soul so bright with heavenly irradiancy, will easily hear of his approaching end. To lose so much from the world at once, seems worse than sad—'tis almost unbearable.

Turning to secularities, public opinion, in spite of the Conservatives, has succeeded in abolishing the middle age monstrosities of the Lord Mayor's day. The old civic vessel on wheels, the men in armor, the waterman, all disappeared on the Ninth, forever; and we had a moderate procession in modern state carriages—still somewhat ridiculous—instead. We are hoping, also, to get rid of the stupid old organization of the Mayor, Aldermen and Council of the City of London as well, and to do away with vast civic feasts, and silly shows, at immense expense. That will take longer. "Vested interests" stop the way; but, eventually, even vested interests yield before sense and public conviction. The barriers of antiquity, however strongly constructed, generally have some rotten place, which, once discovered, gives a free opening to reformative destruction. Many such, now existing in England, shall soon fall before young, strong, hands, and sturdy principles.

ADELPHOS.

## FROM OUR CHICAGO CORRESPONDENT.

DEAR AMERICAN:—A grateful change has come over the weather, and we are to-day enjoying our first fall of snow this season. Up to the present week we have had but very few days that could be called even cool, and none of the signs of winter usually apparent at an earlier period. But for the extreme dryness and sultriness of the month, November would deserve to be placed this year among its very pleasantest months. But there has been wide-spread loss and suffering from the want of rain. Streams and marshes usually full at this season, are dry, beyond mid-summer drouth, entailing much misery upon the animal creation; while in Southern Illinois, in Missouri and Kansas, especially, the autumnal burnings of the prairies have swept away in their restless course a very large amount, in the aggregate, of wealth. Never have I seen these vast seas of flame so awfully beautiful and impressive, as when sometimes this autumn witnessing them

by night from the windows of the rail cars, at a distance, or even rushing through their very midst at a speed hardly excelling their own. But copious showers have afforded some relief, though by no means meeting the measure of our wants.

## THANKSGIVING DAY.

Can scarcely be said to have been religiously observed by any very large portion of our citizens. But few of the churches of our own denomination were opened, and those few, so far as my information goes, were slenderly attended, although the day was bland and pleasant and every thing conspired to invite the whole population to the pleasing duty of public praise and thanksgiving to Almighty God for his manifold goodness to us. The event of the day which attracted most attention, and drew together crowds of people sufficient to have filled to overflowing every church in the city, was the arrival of

## THE GREAT WESTON.

from Portland, in twenty-six walking days, and punctually on time. The hero of the hour marched down Wabash Avenue at about the time of morning service, surrounded by a cordon of police, and attended by a dense crowd of people on foot, on horseback, and in vehicles of every description, and gazed at and applauded by the thousands who had taken possession of every available point of observation. The pedestrian exhibited no traces of exhaustion from his unparalleled feat, as he trod with elastic step the last mile of his marvellous walk, his small but lithe and sinewy figure, handsomely but somewhat foppishly dressed, and his face exhibiting his satisfaction at the ovation he was receiving, and as we may suppose, his natural satisfaction with the successful issue of his great undertaking. Still, the occasion for all this enthusiasm is, of course, ridiculously small, and only shows how ready the populace is to manufacture for itself a hero out of the scantiest material. Weston promises to walk his one hundred miles in twenty four hours over the city race course; for the benefit of the widows and orphans of soldiers. No one doubts that he can accomplish it and it is a common belief here that he "sold" the race as to that feature of it.

## ITEMS.

Your readers will learn with regret and sympathy of the severe domestic affliction of your late Chicago correspondent, "Wabash." (Rev. Dr. Humphrey), in the recent death of his youngest child, a sweet little daughter of seven summers. All three of his children were stricken down at once with diphtheria, and for a time it was feared that the afflicted parents were to be bereaved of all their household treasures. But they were mercifully spared so terrible a blow.

Rev. Dr. Patterson has been recently heard from at Beyrouit, Syria. He was in good health, and was expediting to return home by February next.

Several new Mission Schools have been recently organized in our city, with excellent prospects of success. Most of them will probably prove the nuclei of future churches.

The Y. M. C. A. are holding nightly meetings in their new building, of a miscellaneous character, designed to draw in and improve especially the young men of the city. A course of free lectures of a high order on scientific subjects has been commenced. Mr. Moody preaches on each Sabbath evening to good audiences, made up from the streets and saloons in large a degree.

The recent Fair for the benefit of soldiers' orphans and widows, yielded about \$25,000, nett. A mass meeting of Presbyterians of all branches, has been called for next Wednesday evening, to ratify the doings of the recent Convention at Philadelphia.

Nine tons of tracts have been sent by Henry Buley, Esq., of London, to the Y. M. C. A. It is said that this gift is the result of a vow made by Mr. Buley when the success of the Atlantic Telegraph Cable—of which he is a large stockholder—seemed doubtful; that he would devote all his dividends from it to religious uses. Mr. Buley is a man of great wealth and great Christian benevolence, and holds not only this, but the rest of his income, to be used as the Master shall direct. These tracts are in process of distribution, and a great demand for them has already arisen.

## IOWA.

Rev. Wm. Campbell, of Adel, has been appointed District Secretary of Home Missions, for the Synod of Iowa, with the exception of the Presbytery of Dubuque; which still remains in connection with the Synod of Peoria. No better appointment could have been made.

Rev. H. H. Kellogg, of Marshalltown, resigns the pulpit of the Presbyterian church in that place, thus vacating one of our most important and attractive churches in the State.

A church of six members, of our order, was organized at La Porte City, Blackhawk county, on Sabbath last, and at the same time a house of worship was dedicated to the use of the infant church in the service of God. It is not often that the procuring of the edifice goes before the formation of the church. It is due to the devoted and efficient pastor, Rev. C. S. Marvin, to say that to his great personal sacrifices this indomitable resolution and purpose, struggling onward, when his brethren of the Presbytery agreed that he should abandon the enterprise as impracticable, is this most hopeful undertaking to be credited.

Chicago, Nov. 29, 1867.

NON PARVUS.