

Correspondence.

FROM OUR TRAVELLING CORRESPONDENT IN THE WEST.

WEISSNIGHT, Nov. 15.

DEAR EDITOR:—In my search after "entertaining knowledge" in the West, few things have so thoroughly excited my curiosity, as the popular Western estimate of Philadelphia. Post Bureau says:

O wad some power the giftie gie us To see ourselves as others see us! It wad frae mny a blunder free us An' foolish notion.

It's human nature to want to know what other people think of us, but modesty debar us finding out that in regard to ourselves personally, unless, (sometimes to our sorrow!) from some very plain-spoken people. But modesty does not forbid this indulgence in certain other directions. We take home or country, family or relatives, native land or city,

"As parts of ourself, just a little projected,"

and fish for compliments, or sound after opinions with impunity. I had however, better reasons for wishing to get and to give information on this special theme. I expected to find that the mere commercial centres of the nation were occupying all the thoughts that men were throwing out beyond their own farms, and their daily life; and my theory of national prosperity (a Philadelphia one, learnt from Henry C. Carey,) has led me to regard that as an evil. It would be none the worse for the nation, if Philadelphia stood higher in the national esteem, as a city to be admired, and, in many respects, a model to be followed.

In regard to the appearance of the city, there seemed to be but one opinion, and that I will sum up in the words of a Scotch settler down in "Egypt": "I have been through England and Scotland, an' a gude part of America, but you city o' yours is the bonniest place I ever was in. If I had ma choice I wad rather live there than in any place I ken of." As to our Sabbath quiet and order, I have been assured that it exceeds that of any country town in Illinois, and that the cleanly beauty of our streets is, to strangers, something wonderful.

One Pittsburgh lady, indeed, expressed her hearty dislike for "that cold, stiff city," and hoped that she would never have to visit it again. But no one will wonder at her opinion, when it is known that she was very well content to spend her days in the city of smoke, where, as she herself expressed it, "living is a science," where you must not brush against your neighbor, nor lean against a wall, nor take down an unjusted book, nor touch anything, nor hope to keep your face or shirt clean; where the ladies wear no light dress patterns, and the gentlemen take an extra pair of kids when they go out, to be ready for accidents; and where housekeepers scrub life out at the finger-tips in an unceasing and unavailing battle with the descending Niagara of grime and smoke. De gustibus, etc. Those who like Pittsburgh need not be expected to like Philadelphia, unless they are very versatile in their likings.

And yet the very cleanliness of our city creates a very serious misapprehension in regard to it. Fools judge a workman by his chips, and some not very wise folks judge of a city's manufactures by their smoke. More than one person has gone through both cities, and come back with the impression that Pittsburg is the great workshop of the country, just because there is no unceasing and defiling cloud of smoke settling down over our city of clean streets and clean records. Anthracite coal does not do us justice in such people's eyes. It does not let our smoke so low before men that they see our good works. When such are told the statistics, they can scarcely believe it. When they hear of the Quaker City as the second manufacturing city in the world, outdone only by London, and having twice the capital invested in manufactures that New York has, while New York, and not Pittsburg, comes next on the list, they have to give up all their old notions in order to realize the truth. And so far as the (miscalled) Iron City is concerned, had consolidation not been defeated at the last election, it might have ranked as third, while it in fact ranks only as sixteenth. The manufactures are ours, whether prominent or not. The stores of the West are full of them, though Westerners go to New York to buy them. Few Philadelphians, even, are aware of the localities of our great workshops. How many know that North Front street is lined with rolling mills and carpet factories? How few, even, realize the enormous extent of the built up part of the city, or how far they can drive between rows of brick—from Gray's Ferry to Richmond Landing, or from below the Navy Yard to Girard College. I have seen farmers wonder when told that we have streets longer than from where we sat to the next country town—twelve or fourteen miles off—and that the street railways, which run out of their Western cities, find it a long road to get through ours.

Another Western superstition is, that growth is something for which they have taken out an exclusive patent. They tell me that so many years ago—twenty or thirty—the little town they point out was part of the open prairie. I have only been ten years in Philadelphia, but, I tell them, I have seen cities added to it in that time, that, disdaining the limits that are already straggling Boston, New York, Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, &c., it is spreading out equally and freely in all directions; that whole districts of vacant lots have been built up since I came to it, and "yet there is room;" that a modest estimate claims an increase of two hundred thousand since our last census, while New York reports a decrease in the same period; that, in spite of the slowness of its mere business time, it will yet be what it once was, the Metropolis of America.

But it is to the qualitative, and not the quantitative aspect that I especially ask Western attention. It seems to me a misfortune that existing commercial methods bring the West into contact with examples which do them no good; that their ideas of municipal greatness are summed up in the words "New York and Chicago." Right at the start I met this: "Why," said a Newcastle man, "Your city is a slow place. If I ship butter to you it may get sold, or it may not. If I ship it to New York, it is sure to sell." Very

true, but why ship it at all? Why have to pay the heavy tax of transfer, instead of making such a market here as will consume all your farm produce close by your farms, saving both producer and consumer the cost of transportation, and the profits of middle-men; and enabling the farmer to make such a return to the land as will keep his farm always improving, instead of always losing ground? "I am for Free Trade," said an Allegheny county farmer; "What is the use of taxing us by tariff duties for the benefit of these manufacturers?" "How much is your farm worth?" "So much." "Would it be worth that if Pittsburg were away?" "No, it would be worth next to nothing."

"I know it is a heavy tax to send our leather East, to send food for those who tan it and make it up, and then to bring back the boots, paying the freight both ways. But we have not the capital, nor the hands, to start tanneries and manufacturing factories." "Now," said I, "when men want to make a living by farming, they come West, because the farms are here. And if you will but start the factories, those who want to live by them will come West too. You are not so ill off for capital but that you have helped to build big railroads to carry off the strength of your soil, and the fatness of your lands, to the East; and I think, that if you were to try, you would find money enough to help to start factories to save a little of them for the West. Co-operation will do the rest." Co-operation must save the West from being drained out by the big tunnels, called New York and Chicago, if anything will; and the Protective League should see Leybold and Holt's pamphlet broadcast over the West: I rejoice to hear that the movement is beginning, and co-operative factories are going up in Monmouth and elsewhere.

Thus it is that I sow Philadelphia seed out here in an infinitesimally small way, and, unless Philadelphia is appreciated and imitated here, there is no hope of a long run of Western prosperity. The West needs more Philadelphians, and I rejoice to see the indications that she is to have them. Factories are going up on every side, and employments are being diversified in a way that will give free scope to the many-sided character of the people.

But, in political matters, there is a harder work of explanation. What means the election of Sharswood, and of the Democratic City Ticket? I can only say that local causes, and not change of opinions, led us to defeat. I speak of Philadelphia politics in the hands of the O. P. F's, who nominated themselves, while the Democrats put up soldiers; of the terror of our German folks that they would have to spend hazardous Sabbaths, and at home; of the united opposition of the whiskey brigade alarmed at the excise law; of the jealousy of the city bar, who preferred a disloyal "Philadelphia lawyer," to a loyal Pittsburg; and, above all, of the opposition of the Penna. Central, who dreaded another Pittsburg vote on the bench when their suit with the M'Connellsville R. R. is on hand. But it's a lame list of apologies. Yours &c.,

ON THE WING.

LONDON IN NOVEMBER.

LONDON, Nov. 6, 1867.

Lord Lytton, in some of his works has said, that in every month of the year, except November, London is sure to afford the visitor some degree of pleasure and comfort; but who to the unfortunate traveller who should venture to look for anything pleasant during that dismal month. And no one would wish to dispute so eminent an authority in a city where it is a recorded fact that rain falls on at least one half of the three hundred and sixty-five days of every year, and where, by universal admission, the month of November surpasses every other month in fog and mist and smoke and gloom. But notwithstanding all drawbacks London is interesting to me on this particular November. On one day of this month a dubious light of the sun came struggling down through the haze and smoke; and persons coming in from Southampton, on the railway, had a fine view of the houses of parliament, Westminster Abbey, Lambeth palace, and St. Paul's Cathedral. But stop. I am wrong. I mean they would have had a fine view, if they had been in such railway carriages as plain republican American people are wont to ride in. As it was, only those persons enjoyed the unusual sight who sat next the Western side of the train, and those only when they dared to thrust their heads out of the windows of the carriage doors.

This small number, among whom was the writer, were able to obtain a fine notion of the magnificence and glory of the great metropolis, and not Paris itself affords such an impression of solidity, grandeur and world-commanding greatness.

On the same day, as I walked over Waterloo bridge, the Thames gleamed right and left with a sort of murky brightness, which did much to reveal the multitudinous operations of business going on upon its bosom. As I passed on through the Strand toward Fleet street and Chancery, there was light enough to reveal quite distinctly a number of historic objects, which overwhelmed me with the rush of recollections of the olden time. There was "Temple Bar." I was sorry to overhear a gentleman saying that it would soon be removed. Will the town itself be torn down next? Temple Bar is a gate-way built by Wren, and it was ornamented for ages with the heads and mangled remains of traitors and criminals. The people were wont to examine these trophies of justice through spy-glasses hired on the spot, for half-penny the look. It is surely to be regretted that so significant a monument of English customs should be removed from the eyes of the tender and sympathetic admirers of Jefferson Davis, "that clever and gentlemanly statesman," "that much oppressed and sorely wronged hero," "the gallant sufferer of the aristocratic confederacy." It would be wholesome to preserve as long as possible such a relic of British justice for the benefit of those whose ardent desire is to lay down their lives, if need be, to rescue that "noble man from the vindictive cruelty of the North."

Even when rain was falling in torrents, I found some matters of interest. I happened to take refuge, ten o'clock on Sunday morning, in a lecture room of Baptist Noel's Chapel in John street. Some good women were already there and others coming in and some grave and reverend elders

round the desk. It was a prayer-meeting, upon which I had fallen, and those who have passed months in such cities as Paris and Rome, and Florence, and Venice, may perhaps be able to understand how refreshing to my spirit was the notion of a prayer-meeting. One after another the aged and the young offered up their supplications. Two prayers and a hymn, two prayers and a hymn, until the time was exhausted. Not a word was said except to God. It was by no means a social meeting. There was no aspect of "conference" about it. It deepened in my mind the conviction already formed, that the good brethren on this side of the Sea have much to learn in the way of managing prayer-meetings for comfort and profit. But the prayers themselves delighted me. They were warm and fervent. They indicated plainly that that group of praying men had a deep and heart-felt acquaintance with God and an earnest desire for the prosperity of his Church. They were full of specific petitions. Those brethren who were sick, or in trouble were remembered plainly and by name; and those who had received special mercies were mentioned with special thanksgivings. It was evident that the prayers too were fresh. They did not have the swing of endless repetitions. The petitions were not offered as a matter of course. They seemed to imply that those who offered them expected that the Divine Parent would attend to their requests. One good brother asked the Lord to especially favor with his presence the meeting of Monday evening, when Rev. Mr. Hammond again would address the children and the young. The sermon of Baptist Noel was in keeping with the prayers. It was plain, earnest, practical talk and fatherly admonition and instruction. His subject was taken from the parable of the sower:

"Some of you," said he, "I rejoice to believe and to say, are hundred-fold Christians. Others of you are not. Now why is it, dear friends, that you who are only thirty-fold Christians, do not bear the hundred fold? The same seed has been sown in your hearts. The same sun has poured warmth and light upon you. The reason is in yourselves. The difference is a difference of soil. Not of sky: not of seed. Surely you should give attention to make your thirty fold sixty fold and your sixty fold a hundred fold."

The next evening I took occasion to return, and there I found Rev. E. P. Hammond, face to face, with a thousand children and youth. His heart and spirit were unchanged. As thousands have seen him in Rochester, Utica, Philadelphia and elsewhere, so he was here, simply trusting in the Holy Spirit, combating spiritual cowardice, establishing the believing and awakening the careless. At the close of the service I met more than a hundred converts, of some three months' standing, in an adjoining room, into which those only were invited who felt sure that they were renewed by Divine grace. I have never seen a happier or brighter group of youthful converts.

During the week I had the pleasure of seeing an effort, made by Mr. Hammond in a large charity school in the West End, apparently crowned by the conversion of the majority of the pupils.

As I chanced to be in the office of the "Christian Times" in Paternoster Row, my eye fell upon a large sized portrait of "Rev. E. P. Hammond, the Children's Preacher," which ornamented the centre of the sheet. It is for the good of this city that this great-hearted and earnest evangelist is laboring in it. It is good to set off the lively faith of these young disciples against the lives of those who are regenerated only in the prayer-book fashion, by baptism. I have learned, however, that Mr. H. expects soon to begin evangelical labor in Dublin. May the Divine blessing go with him. C. C. K.

CORRESPONDENCE WITH JOSEPH BARKER.

For a period of about ten years, (and much of that time in various sections of this country,) the author of the following letter, Mr. JOSEPH BARKER, was an avowed advocate of rank infidelity. The open attestation below, made by him in favor of Christianity, is therefore important and of deep significance; and we commend the careful perusal of it to all, especially the young.

The following correspondence ought to have, therefore, an extensive circulation; that the cause of truth may be sustained, and error condemned. All friends of Christianity and the Bible, are requested to publish the same, that through the Divine blessing, it may hinder the workings of Satan, and aid in breaking down especially this specious refuge of unbelief.

PHILADELPHIA, February 9th, 1866.

MR. JOSEPH BARKER—MY DEAR SIR:—Some twelve years since, I was one of two persons, acting as a committee of arrangement, (on behalf of Christianity,) during the discussion between Rev. Dr. Berg and yourself, in this city; and having observed various reports, (brief items) occasionally in some of the newspapers of this vicinity, from the interest that I feel in our "common salvation," I have taken the liberty of addressing you, and for my own satisfaction would inquire of you:— Have you entirely renounced the views you formerly entertained, with regard to the Divine authority of the Holy Scriptures? Do you now, with all sincerity, advocate and proclaim the Gospel of the Son of God, as revealed in the Sacred Scriptures, to be the only antidote for sin, and the sovereign remedy for the "healing of the nations?"

In a word, do you believe in the doctrines of grace, and salvation by the finished work of Christ? When did the change take place in your views;—from what cause;—and had the discussion alluded to with Rev. Dr. Berg, any bearing in the premises?

With what Christian denomination do you now hold connection? I trust that you will not deem me inquisitive. The suggestion to write to you, has originated with myself, and I feel solicitous, first, for the glory of God and honor of the cause of Christ; and secondly, because very many in this country would doubtless regard with deep interest, a recantation of your former errors, an exposition of your present views, and the reasons for the change. As I have intimated, the published items are far from being satisfactory, because somewhat conflicting, and coming from sources oftentimes unknown. It may, therefore, be a satisfaction to

you, to make your own statement in reply; and if disposed, you may write to me, giving me the privilege of publishing your reply in some of our prominent religious newspapers; but if you prefer to keep the contrary, I shall withhold it.

I need scarcely say to you, that it is always magnanimous for one to correct errors, and so far as possible, endeavor to counteract their influence. Trusting soon to hear from you, I remain, Yours

C. COLLINS, JR., of Ref. Prot. D. Church.

Note. The above letter was accordingly mailed to England, Feb. 10, 1866, and failing to reach Mr. Barker, was returned from the Post office department, Washington, to the author, June 20th, 1866. It was subsequently again mailed, and the answer below received.

PHILADELPHIA, Oct. 30th, 1867.

MR. JOSEPH BARKER, SOUTHPORT, ENGLAND.—DEAR SIR:—You will perhaps notice the date of the enclosed letter, and wonder at its delay in coming into your possession. It was mailed as per date, and directed to you, at Burshum, Staffordshire Potteries, England; and not finding you, was returned to me again, June 20th, of the same year. Although nearly two years have elapsed, I again enclose you the same letter, having incidentally learned of your address through a friend recently from England.

I am yours, very truly, &c., C. COLLINS, JR.

REPLY.

VICTOR PLACE, William St., Southport, Lancashire, England, Nov. 21, 1867.

REV. C. COLLINS, JR., Philadelphia, MY DEAR SIR:—I am happy to be able to say, that I have "entirely renounced the views I formerly held with regard to the Divine Authority of the Sacred Scriptures," and that I have now for nearly five years, been preaching and advocating "the Gospel of Christ, as presented in the New Testament, as the only antidote for sin, and the sovereign remedy for the healing of the nations."

The change did not take place suddenly; it was spread over several years; nor can I trace it to any one event, or man, or book. I believe it commenced while I was in Nebraska, and advanced somewhat irregularly, from that time, to its happy consummation in 1863.

A correspondence which commenced between me and the Rev. Dr. Cooke, of London, in 1862, was of great service in accelerating the change, and bringing it to a happy issue.

But to give you an account of the process in a letter, would be impossible. I am thinking of preparing a statement for the Press; and when it is published, I shall be glad, if you desire it, to forward a copy or two to your address. If the Post-office regulations allow me, I will forward to you along with this letter, copies of some of the pamphlets I have published, since my return to Christ. I would send you one I published on the Bible, but it is out of print. I have often wished to write to Dr. Berg, but I was told he had left Philadelphia.

I expected to return to America before this; but the state of my wife's health has thus far rendered it impossible.

I desire very much, to have an opportunity of making known to my former hearers and readers, the change which has taken place in my views and feelings; and the considerations and influences, by which under God, it has been effected.

You are perfectly at liberty to publish this statement in any way you think well. So far from having any objection to its publication, you will greatly oblige me, by giving it as extensive a circulation as possible. All I should ask is, that if my statement be accompanied with any remarks, they shall be such as shall have no tendency to exasperate my old unbelieving friends. Many of them were very kind to me; and in every case, meekness, and gentleness, and love, are best calculated to win sceptics and unbelievers to Christ and his cause.

I am in connection with the Episcopal Church; though my labors as a Lecturer and Preacher, have been mostly in connexion with the Primitive Methodists, and other dissenting denominations.

The accompanying remarks, made at the close of one of my lectures here, may render my answer to your kind letter somewhat more complete.

Lamenting that I should ever have erred, but rejoicing that I have been so happily restored,

I am, My Dear Sir, Yours most Respectfully, JOSEPH BARKER.

ADDITIONAL REMARKS.

To you, young men, who are beginning to entertain sceptical views, let me offer a word of counsel and warning. I assure you, you know not what you are doing. The path on which you are entering, may seem right to you in your present state of mind; but the end thereof is death! You are preparing for yourselves matter for bitter repentance.

I have trod the dreadful path, from beginning to end. I know it all. It is a weary and dismal road, and it leads to wretchedness and ruin. I have seen the terrible effects which infidelity produces on men's characters. I have had proof of its deteriorating influence, in my own experience. Its tendency is to utter debasement. I have read and studied both sides, and what is more, I have tried both; and the result is, a full assurance that infidelity is madness; and that the religion of Christ is the perfection of wisdom and goodness.

I think of my wanderings in the dark shades of doubt and unbelief, with unspeakable sorrow. I would give a world, if I could have my time to live again, that I might avoid the dreadful mistake I made, in turning my back on Christ and his cause, and joining the ranks of his enemies. The only comfort I have is, that I was permitted to return, while in the fulness of my health and strength, and in the vigor of my mental powers; that I am allowed to speak for Christ and Christianity once more,—that my family are all happy in the love of God and in the faith of the Gospel;—and that my large and varied experience enables me to speak of the infinite excellency of religion with an assurance; and to substantiate what I say with a kind of evidence, which, without such an experience, might have been impossible.

I have no inducement to address you thus, but a regard to your welfare, and to the welfare of

those over whom your influence may extend, and a sense of duty to that Great Good God, who is the Father of us all. I owe it to you, I owe it to all, to make known the result of my life-long experience; and this is the reason why I speak. I know that virtue is necessary to happiness, and that religion is necessary to virtue; and that Christianity is religion, and virtue, and happiness, in their highest and divinest forms. I have proved its power. I have felt its worth. I have tasted its blessedness. I have seen its elevating and cheering power in others near and dear to me, in the hour of grievous suffering. It is,—as the best and dearest creature I know on earth, said to me not long ago, when apparently drawing near to death,—it is 'the Pearl of great price,' the 'one thing needful.'

I could say more;—my heart is full, and would fain pour forth itself in prayers and entreaties to you, to return to Christ. The man that leaves the religion of Christ for unbelief, or sinful pleasures, or worldly gains, makes a dreadful exchange. He leaves the fountain of living waters for cisterns that can hold no water. Like the Prodigal Son, he leaves the home of his soul, and the love of the Father for a far country; where, after his short delusive pleasures, he must encounter the horrors of friendlessness and starvation. The Prodigal was beside himself; and so are they, who imitate his example. When the Prodigal came to himself, he returned, with shame and sadness, to his Father and his home again; and when you come to yourselves, you will do the same.

God grant that it may be soon. God grant that you may be brought to see things in their true light, and to seek his mercy, and give yourselves to his service without delay.

Infidelity and sin, and all that they can give, are but vanity and vexation of spirit;—but a life of faith on the Son of God, and of obedience to his Gospel, "is profitable unto all things, having promise both of the life that now is, and of that which is to come."

JOSEPH BARKER.

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