

Correspondence.

REV. WILLIAM E. DEWITT, D. D. [Furnished for the Harrisburgh State Guard by Rev. T. H. Robinson.]

This distinguished minister of the Presbyterian Church, so well known in this community for nearly half a century, departed this life at his residence yesterday morning, December the 23rd. His death was sudden and painless, such a one as he had long desired might be granted him when the "appointed time" should come.

William Radelife DeWitt, the son of John DeWitt and Catherine Van Vliet, was born in the town of Clinton, Dutchess county, New York, on the 25th of February, 1792, and at the time of his death had nearly reached 76 years. His parents were both of Holland descent. After the school-days of his earlier years he was employed as a clerk, first in his father's store in the city of Albany.

During the year 1810 he became interested in the subject of his own personal salvation, and made a public profession of religion in the Cedar Street Presbyterian church, then under the pastoral care of Rev. Dr. J. B. Romeyn. Having had his attention called to the sacred ministry, he entered upon the work of preparing for it.

His first classical studies were pursued at Washington Academy, in Salem, Washington county, New York. While at the academy, the second war with England occurred, and the young student served as a volunteer in the regiment of Colonel Rice, acting as Quartermaster Sergeant.

He was on Lake Champlain at the time of McDonough's victory, September, 1814. After the war he entered Nassau Hall, Princeton, N. J. as a sophomore. In consequence of a celebrated rebellion in the college which interfered with the course of studies, he left and entered Union College, remaining there until near the close of the senior year, when he left, and going to New York, entered the Theological Seminary under the care of the celebrated Rev. Dr. John M. Mason, and connected himself with the Presbytery of New York as a candidate for licensure.

On the 23rd of April, 1818, he was licensed to preach the gospel by that Presbytery, and on the 5th of October of the same year, after preaching two or three Sabbaths to them, he was called to become the pastor of the Presbyterian Church and congregation in the borough of Harrisburgh, which call he accepted. He commenced his ministry soon after in the fall of 1818 and continued it from that time without any interruption until a late period of his life.

Having been transferred to the Presbytery of Carlisle, he was examined by that Presbytery, and on the 26th of October, 1818, was fully ordained to the Gospel ministry, and on the 12th of November, 1819, he was installed as pastor of the church.

On the 2nd of July, 1838, the degree of Doctor of Divinity was conferred upon him by the University of Pennsylvania.

lical in his discourses. He was a Christian preacher, to whose eye all truth arranged itself around the Cross of Christ. A Presbyterian by birth, education and preference, he was in no way bigoted, but ever held the kindest and most catholic views toward other Evangelical churches.

And when at length laid aside from all official duties, and compelled to think of his approaching decease, it was with entire calmness and resignation and even cheerfulness that he contemplated the great departure. Clear and delightful views of that Divine truth that had fallen publicly from his lips for nearly half a century, and unwavering faith in that Great Redeemer whom he had offered to thousands of sinners, now sustained, comforted and assured him, as he patiently waited the last change of earth.

The life of a Christian minister who has spent half a century preaching the gospel of Christ among the same people, growing up to manhood and to venerable age with the community identified for so long a time with its highest interests, can never be fully written.

We may mention a few of its incidents; we may tell of parentage, of birth, education, conversion, ordination, preaching, illness and death; we may speak of his character, of his standing and his success in his profession, but his real life does not consist in events like these. We may sum up his professional labors, and state how many sermons he has written and delivered, how many years he has preached, how many of his people he has baptized, how many he has followed to the place of the dead; but this would reveal very little of the real life he has lived.

FROM OUR TRAVELLING CORRESPONDENT IN THE WEST.

CHICAGO, Dec. 3, 1867.

DEAR EDITOR: One of the local papers says: "No matter where a scamp is born, he comes to Chicago to graduate." The statement seems to be true enough in its original application, but some Chicagoans extend it, and think that no one has finished his education, until he has seen "the great metropolis of the Interior," not of "the West," mark you, that begins at Omaha now, while the "far West" is reached at Cheyenne, the western end of the finished part of the Pacific Railroad.

I came on from Galesburgh by a night train, and saw only a little of Northern Illinois on the road. That little presented a wonderful sameness—flat, rich, black, treeless prairies, broken sometimes by a rising swell, sometimes by a baby city of dingy white, wooden houses, and long, brown R. R. stations. These places mostly are important only as stopping-places for the trains, and have grown up since the building of the railroads. They are one of the means used to make the Western railroads pay the expense of erection.

The State or general Government gives large grants in aid of the roads, generally every alternate "quarter section" along the line, and the companies decide where trains shall stop, and consequently where the towns and cities shall be located, and keep the disposal of town lots in their own hands. The rest of the lands they dispose of for farms. Thus the Illinois Central advertises 900,000 acres of the best land in Illinois for sale.

In the grey of Thanksgiving morning, I reached Chicago by the Lake Street Depot, in the South Side or business part of Chicago. Chicago consists of three such sides, North, South, and West, divided by that pool of abominations, called the Chicago River.

The South Side is to the others what the "city" (zoru) in Philadelphia is to the districts which lie north of Vine St. and south of South St. Here are the official buildings, the great warehouses, the main docks, the finest churches, the most splendid residences, the places of amusement, and all the main centres of attraction. No one can fail to be favorably impressed by the first view of this quarter with its magnificent ranges of wholesale stores, and hotels, separated by liberal breadth of streets, and built mainly of stone. The view was especially impressive when one thought that the very ground on which one stood, was "made;" that these lofty blocks were many of them raised several feet to their present altitude, and that the dry Nicholson paved streets between, were once quagmires, in which, as I was told, you could have sunk as deep as you wanted to. As I passed along Lake street, I could almost have supposed myself on Chestnut St., except that traces of antiquity, and the subtle indications of the ladies' favorite promenade, were wanting. The buildings wanted that variety in age, the side walks that variety in breadth,

that characterize our old young thoroughfare, and there was an average of magnificence wanting with us, while one of the façades were so costly as some of our recent structures. The only traces of what E. Lake St. was in its youngest days were a few wooden houses near the river. When I reached this last ornament to the city, I realized that I was not in Philadelphia. I am thankful to say, that the most corrupt and laziest city council, or even "slushy Smith," dare not let such a stream run through or past our city. Higher up the stream, in a suburb of the city, are situated, the pork-slaughtering houses, which give Chicago the foremost place in that line of commerce. The oil and refuse of these, instead of being saved to enrich the poor, unoccupied lands around the city, is thrown into the river and is carried down past its wharves, warehouses, and mills, and under its bridges, slowly enough to give the citizens the full benefit of its exquisite flavor, while the restless tow-boats and barges stir it up, continually lest any of the precious perfume should be lost. It certainly does not waste its sweetness on the desert air, as it creeps along, too filthy to freeze till long after sunset, streams are hard as stone, too filthy almost to flow. The spring freshets give relief for a time, by sweeping every thing before them into the lake, and in the heats of summer, the whole is pumped by powerful machinery into the canal, and the pure lake water rushes up to fill its place. In spite of these alleviations, it must be set down, as an unmitigated nuisance, and another illustration of the indifference of mammon-worshipping municipalities, to the welfare of the public.

West Side is a huge, straggling wooden town, well laid out and ill-graded. Those parts of the side-walks that have assumed the normal altitude, which the whole district is yet to have, are perched some six or ten feet above the rest, and the passenger clambers up and down again by an inclined plane, which must be pleasant walking for old ladies. The houses here are mainly jaunty little frame-residences, of neat build and pleasant in color. One was pointed out to me which Rev. A. M. Stewart (now of the New School church at Brazer, Pa., then of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in this city) erected with his own hands. Empty lots abound, but are not covered with cinders and unsightly rubbish as with us. Shade trees are multiplying. Parks exist only in name. Market-houses have not even that existence. Washington Avenue is like our Green street, a place of pleasant yet not of the most fashionable residences, but it has no uniformity in the style of the residences.

The North Side I have not seen much of and it seems to be of less importance than the rest of the city. From the frequent Norse and Swedish names on the signs, and the placards inviting patronage for "Norsk, Svensk og Dansk" snuff, cigars, newspapers, and so forth, I should judge that sturdy Scandinavians formed a considerable share of the population. There are several papers published in Swedish in Chicago, among others, a Methodist organ, the Sandvetet or Messenger, by Roe and Hitchcock. The Canadian Scotch are here in great numbers, and bring with them the careful thrift and busy industry of the "Land of cakes." Their residence in Canada seems to make them more warmly attached to the British rule, more jealous of America, and by consequence less open in their sympathy with progressive American ideas than those of their nation who come directly from Scotland. At least I am told that of those who become citizens a very large proportion vote the Democratic ticket. A church of this mixed nationality under Dr. Robert Burns has been organized here in connection with the Canada Presbyterian Church, and is prospering. The Dr. is strongly favorable to Presbyterian union, although the N. W. Presbyterian has drawn out his venerable father, Prof. Burns, of Toronto, in defense of the most rigid subscription to the Confession of Faith.

In my next I shall tell you what I have learnt of the religious side of Chicago. Yours, &c., ON THE WING.

PULPITS, DEVITALIZED AIR AND UROHO MULTIPLICATION.

There is a venerable professor of Homiletics in one of our theological seminaries who annually addresses his classes on this wise: "Young men pulpits are an abomination." Never was spoken a truer word. Would that all the world would say it and believe it. Half of the preacher's body is concealed behind them, and about the same proportion of the gospel preached drops down into the unseen region about the preacher's feet. A bad pulpit for preaching purposes, one of the worst kind of pulpits, was a drawback to a very interesting meeting, held in the interest of church multiplication in Dr. Hall's church, corner of Fifth Avenue and Nineteenth street, on Sunday evening.

Before the services began, a row of solid intellectual heads appeared above the pulpit-top in a way which led to the inference that the eloquent speakers were sitting behind it in deep seclusion. When the business was fairly begun, it became apparent that the ability of the eminent speakers would have triumphed over the obstacle before them, in a good degree, but for two other drawbacks. The first was, that the air in the building had been devitalized by the previous services of the day, and the ventilation was very defective if not forgotten entirely. The second was that the room was overheated many degrees. Of course stupefaction and drowsiness, more or less, prevailed over the congregation. All the heads that ever ache, ached then and there, and every speaker who had ever toiled in a bad hot air to speak to sleepy hearers sympathized with the eloquent orators in their dilemma.

Rev. Dr. Prime was the first speaker. He pressed the following points. First, that the number of Presbyterian churches in New York had not increased during the past thirty years in proportion to the increase of the population, while the contrary was true of the country at large, and that (2) the best policy to pursue is to draw colonies from strong churches to build up churches in desolate places. He illustrated his position by the example of a church in Williamsburg which was itself a colony in 1844, and

which has since developed into four strong churches paying salaries of from \$3,000 to \$4,500.

(3.) The condition of the city and the exigencies of the case called loudly for a union of all the Presbyterian churches in the city. Organic union could not be speedily achieved there should be a convention, and a partition of the ground like that of Abraham and Lot, and then there should follow a general advance upon the enemy's works. Division was weakness, union was strength.

Rev. Mr. Northrup followed with an account of the mode of church multiplication in London and an appeal to labor earnestly for the same object.

Rev. Dr. Hall was the last speaker. He agreed with Dr. Prime. He had already come to substantially the same conclusions. City missions and mission schools were good, but churches were better. He had a high opinion of the church. It was God's institution. In one sense he might be called a high-church man. Churches should be multiplied. The illustration of Mr. Atoul, of Glasgow, was a good one. There were certain trees which could be made to multiply themselves. When you wish to make one tree two trees, you have only to cut a branch part way off, bend it down and cover the end of it with earth. Presently the covered end will take root and send up a shoot which will grow partly by its own root and partly by lift from the parent tree. But soon as the new root goes deeper and spreads its branches wider, the branch originally only partly severed, may be cut wholly away and you have two perfect trees in the place of one. It is to be hoped that this meeting will help to swell the current of Christian benevolence and that God's people will grow increasingly willing, not only to give their money, but also themselves to new enterprises which shall multiply the number of the churches of our Lord Jesus Christ. New York, Dec. 22, 1867.

PRESBYTERY OF ONTARIO.

The Presbytery of Ontario met in annual session at Lima, N. Y., on the 17th instant. Rev. Samuel Jessup was chosen Moderator; Rev. S. Mills Day was chosen Temporary Clerk, and Rev. P. R. Sanborne, Assistant Clerk.

Mr. Joseph Whiting, a candidate for the ministry, under the care of the Presbytery, was, after a satisfactory and well-sustained examination, licensed to preach the gospel. The request of Rev. Joseph R. Page occurred in by the congregation of Peru, N. Y., to dissolve the pastoral relation existing between them, to enable him to accept the appointment of financial secretary of Ingham University, rendered expedient by the state of his health, demanding rest from pastoral responsibility and labor, was granted.

Rev. P. F. Sanborne and Elder J. T. Van Ness were chosen commissioners to the next General Assembly, and Rev. S. Mills Day and Elder G. W. Norris, alternates.

Concerning the subject of Presbyterian union, the following resolutions were adopted. Resolved, That we have heard with great satisfaction of the spirit and proceedings of the recent Presbyterian Convention in the city of Philadelphia, and that we heartily approve of the steps there taken towards a union of the branches of the Presbyterian church into one organic body.

Resolved, That we instruct our commissioners to the next General Assembly to vote for the appointment, as has been proposed, of five delegates, to meet those from other branches of the church, to secure, if possible, a union on the basis agreed upon in the convention.

Resolved, That we should deplore a union formed by ignoring our nice shades of theological differences, under the impression that time has so modified as virtually to destroy them. We would have their existence recognized, and a general understanding provided for their continuance, without abridging the personal liberty or affecting the individual standing of any minister or congregation in the united body.

Resolved, That Revs. Levi Parsons and Geo. P. Folsom, and Elder L. J. Ames, be a committee to take such measures as they may deem expedient, to secure a meeting of the ministers and representatives of the various branches of the Presbyterian church in this region, (some time during the winter.

Rev. A. L. Benton was appointed Presbyterian correspondent, with Rev. G. N. Lowry, (a member of the Presbytery,) on his foreign mission field.

A letter from Rev. O. P. Allen, (also a member,) missionary at Kharpoor, was heard with interest.

Rev. H. N. Barnum, formerly licentiate of the Presbytery, now a missionary at Kharpoor, was voted a member again of the Presbytery, upon a certificate of dismission and recommendation from the Caledonia, Vt. Association of Cong. Ministers. Rev. L. Parsons was appointed his Presbyterian correspondent. S. M. D.

UNION MEETING OF PRESBYTERIES.

The Luzerne (O. S.) and the Montrose (N. S.) Presbyteries held a convention in the Presbyterian Church in Soranton, Pa., Monday evening Dec. 16th. These Presbyteries occupy contiguous fields in the North Eastern part of Pennsylvania, embracing the Wyoming and Lackawanna Valleys.

There was a good attendance from both Presbyteries, especially of the eldership, who manifested a deep interest, and a hearty sympathy in the reunion movement. Hon. Theodore Strong of Pittston, was called to preside. The meetings were continued with unabated interest through the following day, and evening. A sermon was preached at each of the evening sessions—one by Rev. N. G. Park, of Pittston, the other by Rev. C. S. Dunning, of Honesdale. Both of the brethren appropriately used the same text, our Saviour's prayer for the oneness of his church in the 17th of John. These discourses gave us higher conceptions of the unity of the church, and presented the responsibility and duty of the church in fulfilling our Saviour's desire.

There were two veteran soldiers of Christ and fathers in the ministry present, both upwards of 74 years of age.—Rev. Thos. P. Hunt, the staunch and faithful temperance advocate, and Rev. Edward Allen, who in a few months completes 50 years of active service in the ministry. Both of these brethren were deeply interested in all that pertained to the division, each then taking strong ground on opposite sides, but both now rejoicing together to see this day of promised reunion to our beloved church. There was friendly discussion, and an interchange of views. The difficulties in the way of reunion were considered, but all was characterized by a candid and liberal spirit that brought every mind into a closer sympathy with the others. The blessed influence of prayers and devotions was manifestly present and pervaded all the meetings.

The resolutions adopted express gratitude for the increase of the union spirit, approve the basis adopted in Philadelphia, recommend cordial intercourse between the two branches, and propose that the union of the churches be made the subject of special prayer, on the first Monday of the week of prayer.

We quote the following from the series: Resolved, That we believe that the time is now fully come—in view of our common Christianity and common Presbyterianism—in view of the foes that threaten us, and the magnitude of the work before us—that we make honest, earnest, and prayerful efforts to heal the divisions which weaken us, and the strictures which impair our efficiency, and that we look not backward to the dissensions of the past, but forward to the immense fields of evangelical activity which invite us.

KOLAPOOR—WILDER. Whatever else, dear Doctor, Mears, I may fail to notice in my reading of the AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN, my attention is always attracted by either of the words that head this article.

Mr. Wilder's letter in your issue of December 19th, is by no means the least interesting of his communications. It gives to us, who stay at home, just what we want to know about missionary work and missionary life. Good pious talk about the importance of spreading the Gospel, and enthusiastic hopes of the world's conversion, and advice to those who stay at home, is not what we want from missionaries; but clear distinct accounts of what is done from day to day, and of immediate results, however small, will do more to arouse us to duty than all the urgency of appeal which any man can put into a letter.

This one Presbyterian mission is all we have for our annual hundred thousand dollars, which for so many years has gone into the Boston treasury; and even this is ours only because Boston has cast it off.

It is matter of great regret to some that the General Assembly did not see its way clear to take this mission directly under its care, and thus give our Permanent Committee on Foreign Missions something more and better to do than annually to present its weak and inconsequent reports.

Two years ago that Committee told us that it was well understood that we can ask nothing of the A. B. C. F. M., which they are not glad to concede,—that "their success is ours and ours theirs." And in the same breath the Committee lament "the alarming decrease in the number of our missionaries in the service of the Board!" and "the continued neglect on the part of many of our church members to make annual contributions to the cause of missions."

Surely none is so blind as not to see some connection between the ground of gratulation and the cause of alarm. Surely if this one cast-off mission of the Board is all that our church asks for, the Board may be "glad to concede" thus much in consideration of \$100,000 a year. Give us missions of our own, and the men and money can be had.

With some earnest presentation of this mission work of Mr. Wilder, the writer of this had the pleasure of forwarding to the Kolaapor Mission, from his church, as large a contribution as the church had been accustomed to give in a year to all the committees of the church, and that too, although the church now gives to eleven other objects besides, in the year.

Let us take hold of our one little mission with a will and see what can be done by concentrating our forces on a single point.

We need also one mission in nominal and non-protestant Christendom, which doubtless the American and Foreign Christian Union would cheerfully give us; and this, with our one heathen mission, would put us in living and life-giving connection with the great work of Evangelization; and stir up the hearts of our people to give and work.

Could not Bro. Wilder give to the general Christian public a Report annually of his work, as though he were reporting to the Assembly or to his Presbytery? Let us have the report in a tract for wide circulation; and this with his letters in the AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN, and his book on Mission Schools in India, and a photograph of the Mission premises at Kolaapor, which every church should have and which may be had of Dr. Mears, at the office, would prepare both ministers and people to be thoroughly interested in this work. BEVERLY.

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