

Miscellaneous.

ADDRESS OF REV. MR. NILES. The following is the Address of Rev. H. E. Niles, delegate from our General Assembly to the General Synod of the Lutheran Church in Harrisburg, May 12th, 1868.

Mr. Moderator and Beloved Brethren:—I perceive the pressure of business that you have, so that I will occupy your attention but a few moments. It is with pleasure that I appear before you to-day, as the representative of the Presbyterian Church of the United States, "Constitution," or New School, so called, in order to bear to you their Christian salutations. I take pleasure in performing this service, because of late I have been called into the neighborhood, and have had a better chance to make the acquaintance of your Church. Formerly I knew you as a constituent portion of the sacramental host bearing the name of that grand old hero of the Reformation, with us in sympathy, and marching under the same Banner of the Cross. But during the last three years my host of service has been side by side with some of your leaders. Our signs have both floated on the same breeze; we have heard the same general orders from our Commander-in-Chief; have met in the same conflicts and rejoiced over the same victories, so that now I claim the right to greet you as comrades in the service and to clasp hands with you in brotherly embrace. (Applause.)

Having mentioned the term "New School," perhaps I ought to say a word in explanation. It is, indeed, true that the great family of Presbyterians in this land, notwithstanding their agreement in doctrine, polity and historical associations, is yet separated into various branches, and called by different names. But as you are aware, various steps have been taken for a reunion and consolidation, and they promise to be successful. (Applause.) We cannot believe that the spirit of heresy-hunting, or the habit of estrangement, should be allowed to keep asunder those who ought to be joined together. We look with hope to the time when all questions of delicacy shall be adjusted; when all feelings of distrust shall be dissipated, and when, through the Providence of God, there shall be one harmonious Presbyterian Church—a Church national in her extent, liberal in her policy, aggressive in her movements, and fraternal in her sympathies, always ready to co-operate with yours and with sister denominations, in all efforts for the evangelization of men and the glory of God. At present, however, I can speak for only one of six or eight different sections of Presbyterians. As the representative of twenty-three synods I extend to your General Synod assurance of heartfelt and increasing sympathy. In the name of one thousand eight hundred and seventy ministers I give you and your fellow-watchword of Christian faith. In behalf of one hundred and sixty-five thousand members, I greet the rank and file of your division of the Grand Army, and say to you, "Soldiers of the Cross, all hail!" For an equal number of children and youths in our Sabbath-schools, I shout to the noble company of cadets whom you are also training for the missionary service and bid them good cheer. May the God of our fathers, brethren, be with us in these latter days. He who raised up Zwingle and Luther and Calvin and Knox to take their successive places in the line of appointed development, and to contribute, each one, his part in furthering the train of influences which have blessed the world—influences which may be traced down through the landing of the Pilgrims and the Declaration of Independence to the blessed revivals of religion in later times and to the grand outbursts of Christian patriotism in our day—may that same Almighty Leader continue with us and guide us on in the march to victory! We did you God speed in every enterprise for His glory.

We love to hear from you the same ancestral rallying cry of justification by faith in Christ alone, and we pledge to you our hearty co-operation in furtherance of that which the Reformers felt was "articulus stantis vel cadentis ecclesiae." We rejoice that you as a body are decidedly arrayed against those tendencies to formality and ritualistic observances which are being reproduced again from the dark ages; and we are encouraged by your sympathy to insist that the business of ministers and churches of the House of God is not to produce an imposing effect and dramatic imitation of worship, but it is to worship the Father of Spirits and the Saviour of men in spirit and in truth. We appreciate your efforts in the cause of Christian Education, and trust that all your institutions of learning may be increased in numbers and influence proportionately to the vastness of the work to be accomplished and as becometh the church which has always protested against that most baneful heresy, that "ignorance is the mother of devotion." We admire your efforts for the production of a sound English literature, and believe with you that the agency of the press in the publication of standard volumes, and of religious papers, should be widely and liberally employed. We welcome you to new activity in support of the reformation reform, recognizing the duty of all branches of the church to separate themselves from the drinking customs of society, and to remember that alcohol is one of the mightiest agencies which Satan employs for the present and eternal ruin of men. (Applause.) In unwavering loyalty to government, in ardent attachment to the interests of liberty, of philanthropy, we rejoice to know that you are in sympathy with the great body of our people, and that you do not hesitate, despite the scorn of demagogues and the sneers of infidelity, to assert that there is a "higher law" by which statesmen and civilians should be governed. We believe that your

prayers ascend in concert with ours, that this land of our fathers, consecrated to God, as the home of liberty and religion—for which in the dark days of the revolution they shed their blood, and for which again in the recent bitter struggle for National existence so many thousands have suffered and died, that this our beloved land may not be given over to the delusions of error, waste and peril and continual discord, nor to the prevalent control of ungodly men, but that the free principles of the Gospel of Christ may be more widely diffused, and that our cherished institutions of justice and religion may be perpetuated to the latest generations. [Applause.] We note with special satisfaction the great work which you have undertaken in behalf of those who come to our shores fresh from the Fatherland, who need to be met with the warm grasp of Christian sympathy, to be directed to their Western and Southern homes, to be supplied immediately with religious teachers, to be the means of a true civilization, but who, when thus properly educated, we believe are peculiarly worthy citizens of our free Republic. The Home Missionary work, brethren, in all its aspects and in all its parts, is of unspeakable importance. It may well command the warmest sympathies and the most active exertions of all who love their country and their race. It may well incite to new developments the large heart of Christian liberality during this Jubilee. On this great continent of ours, stretching from the Atlantic to the Pacific, from the frozen regions to the Gulf, is to be gathered a mighty population made up of all peoples and nations and tribes, but on the unification and elevation of which, by Gospel agencies, must depend the safety of our nation and the hope of the world—Oh! when I think of that tide of immigration which is continually flowing in upon us by the Atlantic coast, and now that other tide which is coming in by the Pacific—when I think how the rationalism and formalism of Europe are meeting here, face to face, with the effete Mohammedanism and subtle paganism of Asia, and that the question must be put which of these shall prevail over the other, but whether they shall all combined prevail against the religion of Christ, or shall be counteracted and put away by its heavenly power—I say when I think of this issue, no words can express the emotions of tremendous anxiety which arise. As it was the Providential mission of the Apostolic Churches to Evangelize the Roman Empire; of the Medieval Church, to keep alive the true faith amid the wrecks of a worn out civilization; of the Reformed Church to lead men back to the simple truths of the Bible; of the Protestant emigrants from Britain and Germany to plant here in America the germs of a purer and freer faith—so now I believe it is one primary duty for every Christian in the land to meet the thousands that are flocking in upon us from either Ocean and lead them to Christ. In that great basin beyond the Mississippi River, where the wave of population rolling Westward across the Alleghenies, meets another rolling Eastward across the Rocky Mountains, it may be that our numerical, as well as our geographical centre, will yet be found. It may be that there the decisive battle between Christianity and all her foes is to be fought. Certain it is, that consequences of untold magnitude depend on the question: How shall the foundations of society there be laid? Certain it is, that the friends of a pure civilization have no time to lose, but all together should resolve to use immediate, persistent and untiring efforts to establish every where in that mighty region the institutions of the Gospel of Christ!

We are glad, Mr. Moderator, that you are still in the field. Let there be no strife between us, because we are brethren. (Applause.) "We are living, we are dwelling, In a grand and awful time, In an age on ages telling," when we have no time to waste in criticizing each others' methods. We have no energies to expend in hindering each others' success. We inherit alike those grand old doctrines of the Reformers, truths fundamental in all creeds, as old as Christianity itself. If on some minor points we do not think exactly alike, that need not matter, so long as we can rally around one common standard, bearing the motto, the charmed words, "Jesus Alone!"—so long as our battalions keep step to the same music of Divine Providence—so long as we can bear down in solid columns against the same serried hosts of error and sin; [applause], that need not hinder us, so long as with Saint Augustine we can say: "In essentials unity; in non-essentials, liberty, in all things charity." "There is one body and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and in you all." Oh, that believers of every name might better understand those significant words! Though in the dim twilight of former times, struggling amidst the mists of ignorance and prejudice, different denominations may sometimes have mistaken each others' emblems, and in the excitement of the conflict turned their weapons upon their own comrades in arms; now, when the sun of Christian charity is fairly risen, there can no longer be any excuse for such blunders. Recognizing each others' position and each others' zeal, we may claim fellowship with each others' success. If some theological Ericsson among you shall give us a monitor which shall bear down upon the enemy with unheard of power, we will also adopt it in place of our cumbersome men-of-war; and if any in our ranks can invent a needle gun of gospel labor that shall be superior of aim and more effective on human hearts, than the old musketry that has heretofore been in use, you shall be welcome to adopt the improvement, [applause], and employ it in helping on the common cause. And so shall it be throughout the widely extended empire of the Lord, His servants

seeing eye to eye and His serried hosts moving forward harmoniously. So shall the day of conflict go on, until that evening time of light, when the noise of battle shall have passed away and gone down out of a peaceful sky, where wave the banners of the Prince of Peace, shall float the echoes of celestial music announcing that the kingdoms of the world have become the kingdoms of our Lord.

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