

Original Communications.

LETTERS FROM A GARRET.—III. BY Z. M. H.

MR. EDITOR.—My last letter was mainly devoted to the first number of The Boston Recorder. I cannot resist the temptation to linger a little longer over the musty volume which contains it; for the succeeding numbers afford many glimpses of the "Then" out of which you and I were born into the "Now." It is pleasant to be carried back in fancy into those quiet days when the stage-driver's horn was the prophecy of the locomotive's whistle, and when the slow steamers of the Sound and the Hudson set people dreaming of a physical Millennium. One can scarcely suppress a smile when reading a paragraph like this, extracted from The Boston Gazette, (1816) printed with emphatic flourish of italics:—

"It is with much pleasure we understand that a turpicks (in continuation of the one from this place to Providence, R. I.) is contemplated from Providence to Stonington in Connecticut. It will be almost a direct route to New York, and by aid of the steamboats will facilitate the intercourse between Boston and New York in a surprising manner, as a person leaving either place one morning will arrive the next at Boston or New York."

This, too, might perhaps be read with some pleasant recollection of enterprise in by-gone days, by our townsman in Walnut street,—a paragraph extracted in the same year from a Philadelphia paper:—

"Extraordinary Summer Excursion. Mr. Brown left Philadelphia for London on the 7th June and returned the 20th of Sept: an absence of 104 days, forty of which were spent in England. Who knows but a step over the Atlantic to look at the old world may become an American fashion."

That was indeed a rapid journey in days when "The Latest from England" was published Sept. 2, 1817, consisting of news "by the elegant and fast-sailing ship Courier bringing London dates to the 18th, and Liverpool to the 20th July."

Nearly all the early numbers of The Recorder contain allusions to the wonderful facilities for travel furnished by steamboats; and it is significant of the spirit of the age, that in one column it is announced that "a Philadelphia paper states that a small tin box is nailed up in each of the Delaware steamboats, the object of which is to collect from all passengers who are favorable to the spread of the Gospel, small donations, from one cent or more, at option, to assist the funds of the Bible Society."

But if these extracts are interesting, what will some of our zealous promoters of Sunday-schools, our Pardees, and our Newtons say to this from the issue of Sept. 4, 1816. It is an editorial paragraph.

"It has been suggested that the notices which we have occasionally published of the establishment and success of Sunday-schools in the Southern and Western States, might induce the idea that similar institutions would be equally advantageous in this part of the country. This was far from our intention. The design of Sunday-schools is, and ought to be, the gratuitous instruction of poor children, whose parents are unable to spare them from labor, or pray for their instruction during the week. In the populous manufacturing districts of Great Britain, where large numbers of poor children are confined to manual labor for six days in the week, such schools are an invaluable blessing. They are the only method of preserving an immense population from heathenish ignorance. In other parts of the country, and in those districts of our own where no adequate provision is made for general education, such establishments are praise-worthy. But in New England, where schools are brought to every man's door, and where the children of the poor may be educated without expense during the week, there are few cases where Sunday schools would be attended with any solid advantage. They might even prove injurious by inducing a neglect of common schools."

The explanation of this paragraph may be found in many other paragraphs scattered through the columns of the paper, by which we learn that the Sunday-school was then in its infancy as an institution, and that it was intended as Robert Raikes intended it, to be a means of instructing the poor, who would receive the advantages of a religious education by no other instrumentality. It would appear that in Massachusetts, special attention was devoted, at first, by the advocates of Sunday-schools, to the rudiments of knowledge, thus occasioning criticism on the part of those who were jealous for the common schools, and also on the part of some who thought that to teach the alphabet to the poor on Sunday was a violation of that sacred day. But as time passed on, the tone of The Recorder in treating this subject manifestly improved. In the issue of Oct. 14, 1817, about a year later than that containing the editorial above, we find an elaborate defence of the Sunday-school system. Probably the system, as practised in Boston, had improved by this time. Indeed, in the issue of October 9, we have the statement that the "society for the moral and religious instruction of the poor" had opened in Boston two Sunday-schools in public school-houses, the use of which had been granted for the purpose by the "select-men" of the city. In connection with this statement it is said:

"If any still doubt the propriety of schools on this day, and believe it a profanation, we would besides referring them to the good effects produced on the children, inform them that a part of this time is devoted to religious instruction, that the children are taught to repeat the Lord's Prayer, hymns, and catechism, adapted to their young minds, and we repeat it, that the Sunday-schools are intended in a great degree to supply the deficiency of parental instruction, by the teachers who render their services gratis to those children whose parents either cannot or do not perform their duty,

so strongly enjoined, and so strictly practised by our pious forefathers."

It is, however, a curious circumstance that, while in Philadelphia almost every church of every evangelical denomination had, at this time, its Sunday-school, open alike to children of every color, it is stated that in Boston "the schools are open to all white children;" and also that while at present Massachusetts considers the Sunday-school as the nursery of the church, the objections her ministers were in 1816 urging against the Sunday-school are now laid on the lips of some clergymen in that part of the land where the blacks do most abound.

From Sunday-schools to sea-serpents, the transition may seem abrupt. The alliteration, however, is in both cases the same: and I observe in the column next to that from which my last extract was taken, an announcement to the effect that "The Panorama of the great Sea Serpent is now completed, and exhibited at Merchants' Hall. The delay of the painting has been occasioned by the recent capture of a Spaw of the Serpent which we learn has also been painted and will be exhibited with the panorama." The Serpent itself is elaborately described in the issues of Aug. 19 and 26; as seen in the Cape Ann Harbor. It may be interesting to naturalists of the present day to know that "his head, as large as the head of a horse, and shaped like that of a large dog, is raised about eight feet out of water, and is partly white, the other part black."

Also, that "he appears to be full of joints, and resembles a string of buoys on a net-rope." And "he sometimes darts forward at the rate of a mile in three minutes, leaving a wake behind him of half a mile in length." Why has not Agassiz yet caught him?

Among the literary extracts of The Recorder, I find the poem now known under the title of the "Star Spangled Banner," given with the title, "Defence of Fort McHenry" together with this preface:

"The annexed song was composed under (sic) the following circumstances. A gentleman—Francis S. Key, Esq., of Georgetown—had left Baltimore in (sic) again a flag of truce for the purpose of getting released from the British fleet, a friend of his who had been captured at Marlborough. He went as far as the mouth of the Patuxent, and was not permitted to return, lest the intended attack on Baltimore should be disclosed. He was, therefore, brought up to the Bay, to the mouth of the Patuxent, where the flag-vessel was kept under the guns of the frigate, and he was compelled to witness the bombardment of Fort McHenry, which the admiral had boasted that he would carry in a few hours, and that the city must fall. He watched the flag at the Fort through the whole day, with an anxiety that can be better felt than described, until the night prevented him from seeing it. In the night he watched the bomb-shells, and at an early dawn his eye was again greeted by the proudly waving flag of his country."

The bad writing of the preface will not prevent some, to whom this account of the occasion of the song may be new, from feeling a fresh interest in the poem itself.

I am conscious in the extracts I have made above, I have done but feeble justice to the religious department of this journal. In this, which is by far the largest department of the paper, great attention is paid to all the important religious movements of the day. Most interesting accounts are given of the organization of benevolent associations, like the American Bible Society. Large space is given to Missionary Intelligence from all parts of the world. As the paper improves by age, editorial paragraphs, which as I wrote in a previous letter, were at first merely nominal, increase in frequency and length; until in the second volume they become quite respectable in their amount, their value and their spirit. All moral subjects are judiciously treated, and one is impressed with the conviction that The Recorder was really a most beneficent power in the land. These old folios shall be taken from the garret and preserved as no mean mementos of the past in the library of your correspondent. Z. M. H. Pittsfield, Mass., Sept. 1, 1868.

THE UPPER MISSISSIPPI.

Letter from G. W. M. Falls of St. Anthony, Minnesota, August 20, 1868.

DEAR EDITOR:—When I was a boy I saw a painting of the Falls of St. Anthony, but it never occurred to me that in after years I should visit them, and send you one of my hurried sketches from this vicinity.

In those days we supposed the Falls were somewhere about the head waters of the Mississippi among the Indians, and very far away from the home of white men. It was so then no doubt; but now, the people about here think themselves not at all far distant from the centre of our good land—and they talk of the far West of the country beyond, quite freely. The improvements in this vicinity, the cities, the manufacturing and commercial centres we find here, so thriving and vigorous, remind us at once that we are not on the frontiers by any means.

ST. PAUL. We find to be a city of over 20,000 inhabitants; beautifully situated on a high bluff on the east side of the Mississippi river, and at the head of navigation. Large steamers from St. Louis arrive and depart, two every day, besides smaller boats at irregular intervals. The water is generally high enough to keep the communication constant through the summer. Besides this, there is a railroad, 400 miles long, to Milwaukee, by which two trains arrive daily. We were not a little surprised to find four other railroads rapidly being built: one north to Lake Superior, another north west to join the future Northern Pacific near the British American line, another west, and still another south-west, along the valley of the Minnesota river towards Sioux city on the Mississippi, and finally to join the Pacific railroad. The North-western road is already running to St. Cloud, eighty miles distant, and the South-western is also completed eighty-five miles.

LAND-GRANTS TO RAILROADS.

These roads all have land-grants from the government of alternate sections of land, and as

rapidly as they open the country, settlers buy the land, and in one year are raising crops on it, which find a market by the road, giving employment to its cars. It is the land-grants to the railroad which enable them to be built and cause the rapid development of these far off regions. Then the land itself, as I told you in my last, is rich beyond belief, and so easily tilled, that settlers are encouraged to buy it. This week, a large farmer, twenty miles from here, down the river, sold his crop, 40,000 bushels of wheat at \$1.50 per bushel, on the farm. He had nine reaping machines going at once, and now has three threshing machines constantly at work. Our Pennsylvania farmers will call this wholesale farming. Yet only two or three years since, this man bought his land, all wild prairie, and there are millions of acres just like it lying here waiting for purchasers.

We find many fine buildings in this young city—large stores, in fine blocks built of limestone, in beautiful architectural style. We saw several banks and a number of wholesale drug, grocery, hardware and dry-goods establishments;—beautiful retail stores too with fine displays of goods.

CHURCHES OF ST. PAUL.

The churches are not as handsome as the stores, having been built earlier and probably before it was thought worth while to employ an architect to design the plan. An exception, however, we noticed in a beautiful, new, Episcopalian church, with two towers, built of the fine limestone of the neighborhood. We counted no less than twenty churches in this city. On the highest ground, in the centre of the place, the Roman Catholics have built a grand cathedral in which they are now placing a fine new organ; they have beside, an Irish and a German church. The Presbyterians have three churches: two of our branch and one of the other. Rev. John Mattocks is pastor of the First church, located in the centre of the city. In a new district, the "House of Hope," under the charge of Rev. F. W. Flint, formerly of Cohoes, N. Y., is the other church of our branch. We visited their Sabbath school and found it well filled and with a strong corps of twenty-five active working teachers. Having such a school, we can readily predict the future of this young, growing church. Dr. Herick Johnson's former charge in Pittsburg, called Rev. F. A. Noble from this very "House of Hope." He came to St. Paul for his health, some years ago, and was so improved as to be able to accept the call of the large and important Third church of Pittsburg.

SCANDINAVIANS.

There are many Scandinavians, Swedes and Norwegians in this north-western country. They are all of the Protestant faith—Lutheran generally—some Methodists. They have a Lutheran and a Methodist church here to which these people go, beside another Lutheran and two other Methodist churches. "We noticed in a store window, a card—"Ici on parle Francaise," and below it, "Norsk tales her," showing that French or Norwegian speaking customers would find salesmen inside who could talk to them in their own language. "Scandinavian saloon" is not an uncommon sign on the restaurants in these north-western cities. We saw a car load of these hardy Norwegians on their way up the Minnesota valley. They appeared to be well able to subdue the soil and make thrifty citizens in this rich region.

There are many invalids living here who have come from all parts of the land. The hotels accommodate quite a number and are always full in the travelling season. Not less than two hundred were at the International where we stopped—a number of them out of health. Many recover so completely here, that all traces of their infirmities are gone. We are informed that fully one fourth of those who reside, and do business here are men who came out of health. Back of the town, on the second bluff, are many fine residences; as fine as some of our seven-gable and tower villas in West Philadelphia. A number of these are owned by persons who cannot live out of this climate, though from their ruddy complexion and healthy appearance you would not suspect them of any disease.

The town sits on a high bluff and is approached by a bridge spanning the river, 1700 feet long and 90 feet high at the bluff, though it slants down to the level of the river on the opposite side. On Sunday afternoon there was street preaching on the levee, by the agent of the Western Seaman's Friend Society. A good company of men from the steamers and others from the town attended. In the evening after church, the company in the parlor of the hotel got to singing familiar Sunday-school and prayer-meeting hymns. A good quartette of gentlemen, one of whom played an accompaniment on the piano, led off and we had a very pleasant time. A drive of seven miles up the river brings us to

FORT SNELLING.

perched on a bluff about 200 feet above the river and at the junction of the Minnesota, which comes in from the south-west, with the Mississippi. This fort was built about 1817, and was long the farthest off point among the western wilds where Uncle Sam's stars and stripes floated. It is now a supplying centre for other forts 500 to 1000 miles further north and west. Many an Indian negotiation has been held here; many a treaty formed, and many of Uncle Sam's blankets, beads, hatchets, and rifles been distributed to the red men, but they are all gone now. A straggling squaw now and then comes in to sell trinkets, or a few of them jabber and grimace together as they visit the cities near by. The massacre that occurred some thirty or forty miles back, a few years ago, is still fresh in the memory of the community. Governor Stephen Miller promptly hung thirty-eight of the savages, which was a lesson their friends have not forgotten and they keep their distance. We were told that an Indian man wearing a blanket, would be shot immediately. If they want to come about at all, they must wear white men's clothes and conduct themselves very circumspectly. We had expected to meet a good many Indians in this frontier country, either about the towns, or encamped in the fields; but we were quite disappointed. Not one have we met, either in St. Paul or Minneapolis, and none about the falls of Minne-ha-ha, selling their trinkets to travellers as they do at Niagara. Three squaws we met in a little town, offering two of their Indian tanned deer-skins for sale, and as we whirled by on the train, a few miles below Fort Snelling, we passed

three wigwags made of poles converging towards the top, and covered with some old soiled canvas. Two Indian children stood on the bank, watching the train go by. They were ragged and dirty, wearing tattered civilized garments.

The view from the lookout of the fort is one of the finest in the country, taking in the winding valleys of the two rivers as they join and flow on together toward the far off sea. The high bluffs, the wooded knolls, the prairies waving and flowery, the broad river and its ferry boat with the long-curving tressel-work of the railroads at our feet, combine to make a view of surpassing loveliness and variety. A few miles farther up we enter the enclosure above the

FALLS OF MINNE-HA-HA.

and we tread lightly, for we are on enchanted ground. We are all prepared for a disappointment, for never did poet sing of waterfall or haunted spring but he over-painted his picture and compelled a disappointment in less imaginative minds. But here is an exception. The loveliest, wildest ravine that laughing brook ever wound through is here: its sides all covered with tangle and underbrush, its bottom washed with a rippling, glancing, babbling stream tumbling over a rocky bed. One side of the dell is a semi-circular wall, not perpendicular, but shelving out at the top, and over its sharp edge tumbles this prettiest of all waterfalls, forty or fifty feet broad, with a fall of sixty or seventy feet. A thin, broad sheet of water comes tumbling beautifully, gracefully, merrily down into the little lake below. The sheet is kept quite even, not breaking into spray, and not disturbed in its downward course by any projecting rock. The roar at the bottom, where all is transformed into foam, is not deafening, but somewhat gentle. Altogether, the fall is unlike any that I have ever seen. Those among the Alps are gently broken into a thousand cascades by projecting rocks, or divided into fine spray in their immense fall, but this keeps a pretty, uniform picture before the eye. The rock shelves out so far that we walked clear under the fall from one side to the other, without being wet at all, the water being two or three yards in front of us. Below the fall a prettily bridge crosses the stream, and we are told that parties have often gone there in the moonlight to be married. A more romantic place could no where be found on earth. A few miles further up the river we come to the young city of

MINNEAPOLIS.

with 10,000 inhabitants,—a busy, driving, thriving place, upon the Falls of St. Anthony. Some of the largest saw-mills in the country are here, built right over the falls, and having their machinery turned by the water. The logs are brought from the upper river, and here sawed into boards, and floated down the Mississippi on rafts, or distributed through the country by rail. There are also extensive flouring mills here all driven by the Falls. They have a capacity of making three thousand barrels per day, enough to supply the whole city of Philadelphia with bread. There are also large woolen mills here, four and five story stone buildings, complete and thorough as any in the country; also machine shops, and a large car-building establishment. This little infant city sends abroad yearly not less than seven millions of dollars worth of manufactures, all the product of this region. The country raises three million bushels of wheat, the river brings down more logs than they can saw, and the farmers produce more wool than they can manufacture. Surely the elements of wealth, long-continued, lasting wealth, are here in flowing abundance.

The beauty of the falls is much marred by the mills, but they are still a glorious sight. The water falls some 18 feet over a sharp edge of rock, broken in a zig-zag path-way, and forming a fine contrast with the other part, which falls over a long straight edge. About two hundred yards of the fall can be seen in one view, between an island in the middle and the edge of the river. The mills hide most of the remainder. Above and below the falls, a rapid boiling current adds grandeur to the view. The whole descent, including the rapids, is some 750 feet, all of which will some day be turned into use, to drive machinery, which will all be wanted when the State fills up. Ex-Governor Stephen Miller, a Christian gentleman, who bravely led a regiment of the sturdy pioneers of Minnesota through the war, and who sacrificed his son on the nation's grand altar, at Gettysburg, expects to see the day when this infant State of Minnesota will yield one hundred millions of bushels of wheat in a year. It now yields from fifteen to twenty millions, and it is only the Eastern edge of the State that is improved. The Ex-Governor took us to the State Capitol while in St. Paul, and introduced us to the present Governor, Marshall, a quiet gentleman of high intelligence, who was one of the officers of Gov. Miller's regiment during the war. He also showed us how this infant State preserves the memory of the brave deeds of her sons who fell for the nation, by keeping their tattered battle-flags under which they fought, in a large glass case in the main hall of the Capitol. They are silent reminders of the brave men, who fell upholding them, while the rebel rags, amongst them tell of the victories they won. We also visited the State library, under the care of an accomplished lady, whose husband fell while fighting for his country.

This young, vigorous city of Minneapolis is a beautiful place, with fine blocks of stores, good, substantial banks, beautiful residences and fine churches. The principal hotel, the Nicolet, is one of the very best in the North-west. Around the city are beautiful drives, and not far off, are delightful lakes, abounding in fish. If I had the time, I could spend a month here, and enjoy myself highly every day. Professor Agassiz, with Hon. Roscoe Conkling, of New York, are here with a large party. Last week, J. Edgar Thompson, S. M. Fulton, and a large party of Philadelphians were having a fine time here.

But I must close this long letter or you will begin to believe that I am in love with this delightful country. I am seeing it in its short summer when its breezes fan me with softest balmy air that mortal ever breathed, when its prairies are a vast flower-bed, and its wheat and corn fields are vast rolling billows of verdure or of golden glow. There is a long, hard winter to follow all this beautiful picture, when the pretty dell of Minnehaha is the home of the frost-king, and when St. Anthony's roar is stifled under impenetrable beds of ice and frozen foam. Then I don't want to be here, to watch the thermometer sink

down to —43°, though old Philadelphians tell me that they feel the dry, clear, cold air far less than we do the cloudy chill of our winters at home. I am content, however, that they should make the observations, without my assistance.

I shall be off in a day or two for warmer climes. Yours, G. W. M.

REV. A. M. STEWART'S LETTERS—XIV. Nevada, Aug. 1868.

MY RECREATIONS.

Never before the present season has aught like a summer vacation been enjoyed by your correspondent, nor even now is there any relaxation from preaching twice or thrice each Sabbath, and more or less every day of the week, in conveying the gospel from house to house,—or in the language of the country; from ranch to ranch and cabin to cabin. Yet do the conditions of this active July and August pastoral labor render it more interesting and inspiring than ordinary vacation from ministerial toil.

Hear, ye furloughed, sore-throated dyspeptic, pleasured and health-seeking pastor, merchant or manufacturer, my opportunities and facilities for profitable and pleasurable summer recreation in this far interior of far-off Nevada.

The lowest place on which foot can plant itself in all this vast region is six thousand feet above the level of the sea—atmosferae disenchantedly clear—rays of the sun unobstructed—nights more brilliant than those of Italy or Syria—air so light that the arms need sometimes to be thrown back, chest extended and a long inspiration taken to fill the lungs with oxygen—feelings in consequence so buoyant that at the rising of day it seems as if one might really take the wings of the morning and fly from mountain-top to mountain-top.

At one time, in full miner's dress, I descended with careful guidance, to the bottom of a deep mine, and was shown all the underground wonders of silver-hunting.

Again, I was shown through a mining company's works and had explained the long, laborious and delicate processes employed in extracting the precious metals from the crude ore. On another day, I started on a strong, sound-winded horse, under guidance of Capt. Robinson of Ophir, Nev., for the highest mountain peak in the region. Our place of starting was seven thousand feet above the sea—our destination eleven thousand. Summer flowers were in our pathway at starting, soon early spring flowers; after these snow—great banks of snow twenty feet deep; yet so compact that by dismounting and leading our horses we were able to scramble over them,—on and up until the summit was finally reached. If all the kingdoms of the world were not visible from our exaltation, at least all the interior of the United States seemed spread out in panorama. As we slowly clambered up the mountain, my escort prophesied a thunder-storm. And sure enough, as we flungered upon the summit, a thick cloud suddenly enveloped us. It thundered and lightened and rained above us—around us, beneath us—a scene awfully, sublimely grand.

On another occasion, I rode on horseback a score of miles, to visit the hot springs of Great Smoky Valley. Five miles before reaching these wonders of nature, the steam from the springs was visible.

There are about two acres of ground a little mound-shaped, in the great valley, from which between twenty and thirty large springs bubble, hissing and steaming, hotter if possible than scalding water. The central spring is a great caldron, a rod in diameter, boiling so furiously as to throw the water up as high as a man's head; and where half a dozen slaughtered oxen might be cooked at once and at the shortest notice. I followed the scalding stream of water, as it flowed away across the valley, until it became sufficiently cool for me to venture in, and took a grand, splashing, hot bath, with seeming efficacy to steam out all unhealthy juices and vapors of the body. A fig henceforth for all cramped up, artificial steam and hot baths.

Riding at another time with a quaint, taciturn frontier character we skirted along the foot hills of a high mountain range, down whose sides from the melting snows above, there flowed into the dry valley beneath occasional streams of clear, cold sparkling water. Dismounting and standing beside one of these streams, and casting my eye away up as it dashed down from the snow and rocks, I read without introduction or comment from my pocket-Bible: "Will a man leave the snow of Lebanon which cometh from the rook of the field? or shall the cold flowing waters that come from another place be forsaken?" "As streams from Lebanon." "A pure river of water of life clear as crystal." "What book is that?" half muttered my escort.

"The Bible." "Curious old book, ain't it?" was his only rejoinder.

I was riding again with the same escort in an open buggy, across a valley twenty miles wide without house, or tree, or shade. The sun had become oppressively hot as we neared the foothills of the opposite mountains. Here, by some volcanic eruption long ago, had been thrown up a great mass of rock a hundred feet high; which as we neared and were about to pass through a most inviting shade opposite the sun. "Stop," said I.

"What now?" he slowly murmured. I had bothered him by stopping half a dozen times while crossing the valley, to examine a lizard, horned toad, curious insect or desert flower.

Jumping out and running beneath the grateful shade of the immense boulder, the little Bible was again opened and read as before without comment.

"As the shadow of a great rock in a weary land."

"And what book's that?"

"The Bible."

"Why," ejaculated he with great energy, "was that old Book written here?" But enough, although my summer recreations are not half told. Let no friend or brother minister become envious; but if spared until another hot season take the Pacific Railroad—then to be finished—and make a like preaching tour amid nature's wild freaks and strange wonders in far off Nevada. A. M. STEWART.