

Original Communications.

LETTERS FROM A GARRET.—IV.

MR. EDITOR:—An old tea-chest, like this one reposing under the eaves, has a value never put upon it by the "India merchant" who sold it long ago, full of the herb which "cheers but not inebriates." It is one of the often mentioned occasions of regret in Philadelphia, that one of the most honored of its fathers in the ministry, consigned, in his later days, great piles of his manuscript sermons to the hands of his church sexton, that he might "make light of them," even at the mouth of the furnace. The manuscripts found their way, I believe, to the vats of a paper-maker, and thus furnished, perhaps, a sort of palimpsest, on which far poorer sermons were written by younger men.

Now, this tea-chest does not contain one sermon, yet it overflows with papers which many a Bridget would readily consign to the kitchen-stove o' mornings. Far be it from me to suffer such a profanation. For these papers are letters, written mostly by hands which have lost their cunning. They are as yellow as if steeped in saffron. Tied in bundles, they are regularly filed, the names of their authors being inscribed upon them in the familiar penmanship of one whom I have always honored with filial reverence. What a strange feeling one experiences as he takes up such old papers, reflecting that those who traced their lines are no more among the living on the earth! There are all the evidences of thought and feeling in these pages; sometimes of thought so full of life that it seems yet to palpitate, and of feeling so strong that it seems yet to burn. How could a man now lie still beneath his monument in the cemetery, after writing so nimbly and with such intelligence? Or how could one who does lie thus mute, ever have been capable of what is here left to show his fulness of life? Oh, mystery of life, of death, of immortality!

The world would lose but little in the destruction of these old letters. Hundreds as valuable are burned every day; but there is a kind of sacredness imparted to these yellow papers by association, which renders one loth to see them injured. They were written, many of them, by men whose praise is in all the Churches—some of them by men whose names are in the annals of worldly renown. This is from the pen of the historian, Bancroft. This was written by Daniel Webster; this by Roger Sherman; this by Jeremiah Everts; this by President Day; these by Lyman Beecher; these by the sainted Nettleton. What hosts of familiar names are here! How the giant figure of President Griffin rises before the fancy as we read this bold chirography! We never saw him in the flesh, but we know that he must have stood in the pulpit as a prince, while we read his mighty sentences. And as we see how this epistle is blotted by erasures and interlineations, we smile at recalling the anecdote attributing to him the answer, "I am hetchelling," to a curious child who saw him one Sunday morning, blotting out whole sentences in his sermon, and asked him what he was doing.

Here, too, are letters from men now on earth, too well known to allow one glimpse of the contents through the columns of the AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN. But perhaps it will be no violation of propriety if we open some of those on which the names of the living dead are inscribed, and examine them as if the world were peeping over our shoulders.

JOHN ANGELL JAMES.

First in the file, is one from Rev. John Angell James. It is dated Edgarton, Sept. 5, 1835. The chirography is smooth, but runs on in angular sweeps in a peculiarly English style. Have you never noticed that one's hand writing betrays his nationality as well as something of his individual characteristics? This letter is mainly on business; but it closes with a sentence full of the lowly spirit of the man who wrote "The Anxious Inquirer" and "The Church in Earnest."

"O blessed Christianity that makes us one, and notwithstanding the separation by oceans and by death, keeps us one forever!"

HORACE MANN.

Next we have a letter from this side of the sea, and from one who had all the earnestness of Mr. James, though not agreeing with him, wholly, in theology—Horace Mann. His chirography is as nearly like that of Mr. James as possible, considering his nationality, having the same easy flow; but suggesting Boston rather than Birmingham. The whole letter is so characteristic, the mind of the author flashes as through it so continually; and it is withal so interesting that I will copy the most of it.

Boston, Jan. 18, 1839.

Dear Sir:—Messrs. M. C. & L. have put into my hands a letter lately received by them from you, in which you have done me the honor to mention my name in regard to the selection of a subject for one of the volumes of the Massachusetts Common School Library.

I feel, dear sir, a diffidence in making a suggestion to yourself so important a matter; but as I have long cherished an idea respecting a book which I once dreamed that I might undertake for myself—but for which I have now no hope—I will venture to throw it out for your consideration. I can express this idea no better than by the phrase "The Moral Aspects of Political Economy and Legislation."

Political economy and legislation belong to the same category. The former is the root, the latter the trunk and branches. Both have hitherto been treated almost solely as a pecuniary, a grossly utilitarian matter. The advancement of the rental, the extension of commerce, the increase of revenue

have been regarded only as means to beget rental, commerce and revenue again. Lands, ships, treasures, even among civilized nations, have been regarded as of indefinitely higher value than peasantry, mariners, subjects. The latter have been treated as made for the former. Mines of silver and gold have been sought out and wrought; but those of intellect and morals, though lying hardly beneath the surface, have been disregarded; nay covered up by the rubbish thrown from the former. What doth it profit a nation to flourish in useful arts, at the expense of a meagre, half-dead population? What progress is made towards civilization, if for every pound of revenue collected, a perjury is committed? Heathen West India islands, resounding with the clank of chains and with the whip of the task-master, just to raise a commodity, which, after passing through certain processes of manufacture, makes a multitude of consumers even more deplorable than the multitude of producers!

But I will not run on. These things have always struck me as a thousand times more marvelous and monstrous than fabled Minotaur, and, my dear sir, I wish you might be the Theseus to free the world from them. It is said that Mr. Mann once half-excused the glow of his style by saying that when he sat down to write, images so thronged upon his pen, that his difficulty was to reject rather than to use them. It is certain that few have ever written more fervidly, his townsmen Rufus Choate and Theo. Parker having much of his tropical fire and luxuriance.

CHIROGRAPHY OF DISTINGUISHED PERSONS.

The chirography of Daniel Webster as displayed in the note before me, dated April 5, 1824, is more round and deliberate than that of Mr. Mann. The note itself is of little importance, as it is simply a polite excuse for not accepting a literary invitation. Here are letters from a number of College Presidents. Pres. Day writes, while still Mr. Day, in 1816, describing peculiar spots he had observed on the sun. As President in 1831, his manuscript presents a somewhat disjointed and jerky appearance, as if it were determined to remind one as much as possible of a mathematical problem in solution. Pres. Wayland wrote in 1829 in a hand whose characteristics present the blended qualities of that of Mr. Mann and Daniel Webster. In later years his smoothness was partially lost. Pres. Lord, in 1829, wrote as neatly as a clerk. Pres. Moore would seem to have made George Washington his model. Miss Mary Lyon, worthy of a place among the Presidents, wrote as if her fingers held the pen firmly and were guided by a will impatient of delicate strokes. Yet the lines run on, without mistake, without interlineation, without erasure.

LYMAN BEECHER.

Dr. Lyman Beecher wrote in a hand almost as nervous as his style. The following was written in 1827, while the controversy respecting Revival Measures was waged between and about Dr. Nettleton and Mr. Finney.

NORTHAMPTON, July 13.

Dear Brother—Mr. Edwards, of Andover, and myself, are on our way to Albany to see and consult preparatory to a meeting of ministers to be held on Wednesday the 18th, (next week) at New Lebanon, at 10 o'clock, A. M., to endeavor to settle the difficulties about revivals, &c. You are one of those agreed upon, and last by any means your notification should have failed I send you this. * * * This probably may be the most important meeting to be held in fifty years, and nothing must prevent you coming on. No, nothing! for if we succeed, members are important, and if we differ, members on the right side are pre-eminently important. Besides, I have good reason to believe it is —'s purpose to make a push at Nettleton and endeavor to roll odium from himself on our dear Brother. He has dared to write me a letter indicating nearly all this, and I have written to — to come on without fail, and bring a good man with him; for Nettleton, who has breathed the storm, is not now to be left. No, never! Upon your honor and friendship, conscience and piety, and love for the Church, I charge you not to fail, if you have breath and being. No excuse can be accepted, if you are able to get there; because such a crisis may never arise again, and your simple absence or presence may shut out or let in interminable evils.

LYMAN BEECHER.

DR. GRIFFIN.

Here is a letter from Dr. Griffin, dated Williams College, March 15, 1822. I quote a portion of it, not so much as representing the man, as the times, and the cost of a College education in the earlier days of the Institution, of which he was then President.

REV. AND DEAR SIR—I received your favor of Feb. 21st, containing a number of inquiries respecting the expenses at this College, and what we can do for indigent and pious students, requesting at the same time to make the information public, as a general answer to the questions which are frequently put to you and your friends. As a partial answer, I send you a copy of the printed statement prepared by the Faculty and published with the annual Catalogue, which is as follows:

"The tuition for each term is \$7.50. The term bills including tuition, room-rent, library charges, ordinary repairs, &c., amount to about \$30 a year. The price of board is from one dollar to one dollar thirty-four cents. Good board may be had for a dollar by walking a mile. The best wood is sold for one dollar and fifty cents a cord. From twelve to fifteen cents a week is paid for washing. The income of the charity funds is sufficient to pay the term-bills of twenty-five students and is applied to the payment of them, in whole or in part, according to the necessities of students. Half of this is alike applicable to all indigent young men of merit, whether designed for the Christian ministry or not. Indigent students are also supplied in part with books, &c. To young men designed for the ministry further assistance is given in board, money and clothing, by the aid of charitable societies in Williamstown and other places. Young men who need it have the privilege of keeping school in winter."

Contrast the above with the experience of educating a boy in these days at Yale or Harvard or Princeton, or at Williams itself.

A CURIOSITY.

My letter has already grown to an undue length; but I cannot close it without giving you one more specimen from the tea chest. It is a circular, and is viewed as "A Curiosity." What would some of our guardians of the pulpit say to a similar circular now?

Boston, Dec. 19, 1848.

Dear Sir—The committee appointed by the Western Railroad Corporation to assist the Directors in their application to the Legislature, for an act to finish the Road to the Western line of the State, have thought that the surest way to obtain their object would be to bring the importance of Railroads before the whole people of our beloved Commonwealth. Its importance to our worldly pros-

perity we point out by an address circulated extensively throughout the State. But we are desirous to spread far and wide the moral effects of Railroads on our wide spread country. This we think can best be done from the pulpit. In this behalf we take leave most respectfully, but earnestly to ask you to take an early opportunity to deliver a Discourse before your congregation on the moral effect of Railroads in our wide extended country. Trusting that the great importance of the subject to every inhabitant of this country will be a sufficient apology for asking your assistance in this great work, I have the honor to be, &c., &c.

Sorry I am, Mr. Editor, to say, that while the materials of further letters from this Garret are so abundant, this must, for the present, close the series. Perhaps your readers will not sympathize in my regret. The duties of the city call me. I must leave the dust of antiquity for that of the life of to-day. Z. M. H. Pittsfield, Mass., Sept. 8, 1868.

LETTER FROM THE MISSISSIPPI VALLEY.

St. Louis, Aug. 26, 1868. ST. PAUL TO ST. LOUIS. St. Louis, August 26th, 1868.

DEAR EDITOR:—I took leave of you a few days ago, six or eight hundred miles north of this. On our way down from St. Paul we stopped over night at a bright little Minnesota town called FARIBAULT.

sitting on the edge of a broad prairie some fifty miles below St. Paul. It is not far from the eastern edge of a large forest, running one hundred miles or more west, with a breadth of thirty miles. It is a town of 3500 inhabitants, the centre of a rich farming district, and contains many comfortable residences and good stores. The Episcopal bishop of the diocese resides here and has built a fine cathedral church of limestone, in the old English Gothic style, costing \$100,000. He has also built a fine college, a grammar school, and also a ladies' seminary. These buildings have been put up mostly with money subscribed in the Eastern States. They show the wise forethought of an energetic and denominationally unscrupulous bishop. The Congregationalists have two churches here, one of them of stone, now being completed.

We entered the town on a Wednesday evening, and met a large crowd on the main street listening to a man preaching from a wagon. We were informed that on Wednesday evenings the denominations by turns hold a street service, so while supper was preparing we went out to hear what kind of instruction the people were receiving in this Episcopal City, when lo! we found an English man, abusing the Christian religion and preaching infidelity with great vigor. Our heart burned with a strong desire to mount another wagon near by and answer his sophisms; but we had to be satisfied to leave the religious instruction of the community in the hands of the Bishop and others, better known to the people.

An all-day ride by rail brought us to Prairie du Chien on the Mississippi river, where at a fine, large, well-kept hotel we had a good supper of prairie chickens and entered the cars for an all-night ride to Milwaukee.

It is a long ride from Milwaukee through Chicago to St. Louis by rail. Much of the route passes through a continuous succession of Illinois corn fields. We pass on the route the Joliet and Lockport quarries, whence the fine stone of which Chicago is built, is brought. We pass also the State Penitentiary, the front of the large enclosure being of attractive architectural appearance. We see the convicts, with their peculiar uniform of black and white stripes, working in the stone quarries.

An extra car is added to the train and one hundred young men in high glee, join us. They are all dressed in bright scarlet zouave pants and blue coats, have drums and fife with them and are on their way to a Republican meeting at Springfield, one hundred miles South. Their enthusiasm rises to a high pitch, as they approach the various stations where they meet friends, who join them.

Late in the day we pass the beautiful city of Springfield, the resting place of the Chief Martyr to Freedom in our generation. Many very handsome residences are seen from the cars; one in particular, that of ex-Governor Madison, a fine villa, with tower and observatory, surrounded with a wealth of flowers, grape-vines and fine conservatories, indicating a home of wealth and refinement.

ST. LOUIS.

We find to be a much larger city and more substantially built and handsomely laid out than we had any idea of—a crowd of boats along the levee, a crowd of goods of all descriptions piled in every direction, a crowd of drays and wagons in the streets, a crowd of passers-by hurrying hither and thither, are more than we had looked for. Long rows of wholesale stores, block after block, banks and insurance offices too numerous for a stranger to begin to get the run of, indicate large and substantial wealth. The crowd of merchants on change, not less than fifteen hundred of them, every day for nearly two hours, with samples of wheat, corn, flour, &c., ad infinitum, buying and selling, dealing, and bargaining—was more than we expected.

Quite a number of rebel officers are daily in the throng. We noticed the name of Sterling Price & Co., on one card, Marmaduke & Brown on another, with Burbridge and several others in like positions. These rebel generals come to St. Louis and do business for their friends in the South, with whom they are popular, and they count on this popularity largely for their mercantile success. Solid merchants say they would much prefer their staying at home.

There is much rebel leaning in all circles, mercantile and professional, and nothing but time and the complete success of the Republican cause in the country, will ever cause it to die out and be forgotten.

THE SABBATH.

On the Sabbath, the city is quiet and orderly. The Germans who compose a large element in the population go out to their beer gardens, where they have music and lager to their heart's content. The stores are all closed—save the liquor, beer and cigar shops. These poor traders, like those we noticed in Chicago and St. Paul, make such small profits in their work, that they seem

to require a day more than other honest people to make their living in. We visited

THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, supplied, since Doctor Nelson left it, by Dr. Curtis of Galesburg, Ills., who preached an excellent sermon to a large congregation. The singing was excellent, by a choir of about ten voices supported by a large and well managed organ, the congregation joining quite freely. The church is the handsomest in the city, with a spire of about two hundred feet in height. The ornamentation both outside and inside the building is in full old English Gothic and quite harmonious throughout. The audience room is lofty, with no side galleries, the fine stained windows adding to the pleasing effect. Altogether the interior is less severe in style than our Calvary church in Philadelphia, but less rich in upholstery and general effect; the broad centre aisle of Calvary being wanting. There are few handsomer churches in the West than this First church of our branch in St. Louis.

MR. DOWNING'S MISSION-SCHOOL.

In the afternoon I visited the Southern part of the city. About eight hundred children were present, half of them in the infant schools which were separated by movable sashes from the main room. A fine piano with a first rate tenor singer, assists the superintendent in the music, and as the first half hour is generally spent in singing, the school attains quite a good degree of perfection in this important part of mission-school work.

Mr. Downing is a wealthy merchant and he takes great interest in the school. He told us that the average attendance, all the year, except in the warm weather, was between 1,200 and 1,500, taking good days with bad. About one hundred teachers help him in his work, many of whom are ardent and laborious in their visiting, and they are blessed by seeing their scholars come forward and join the church. Forty of these did so in the last few months.

Morrison's Mission we did not get to see; it was too far distant—though I met Bro. Morrison on change next day, where four or five of us, all superintendents of schools, had a pleasant chat for a quarter of an hour. Not about wheat, but about the one question above all others, now-a-days to some men,—how best to run a Sunday School. Yours truly, G. W. M.

REV. A. M. STEWART'S LETTERS.—XV.

Nevada, Aug. 1868.

WESTERN CHARACTER.

The term Western, after long instability and migration towards the setting sun, is about to have its proper acceptance in American speech, as meaning that portion of our territory adjacent to the Pacific coast,—this definitely so soon as the overland railroad is complete.

The characteristics of Nevada Society, as here-in described, will be limited to our observation as a Missionary. Were this a political excursion or a money-hunting tour, an essay in connection with each might be written of much interest. At present, we give only some personal and social traits on which the labors of a Gospel minister must needs impinge; and things which it behoves him to know, in order to greater success in his work. We write also with the hope that the Church may better understand what agents are best suited to accomplish her great work.

The people of Nevada dwell almost exclusively in towns or small colonies, and these far separated. Almost every one is directly or remotely connected with silver mining. The people are nearly as unsettled as tribes of Bedouins or Western Indians. They are largely American, with a mixture from almost every nationality. They are adventurers in the proper sense of the term. All have come to get money, and when it is got, they go elsewhere to spend it. So eager for speedy gains are they, that the money-getting codes here appear somewhat different from those of other localities. The mass of the people are poor, and likely to remain thus, as in every mining region. Though so eager and reckless in obtaining money, yet they are utterly prodigal in its use. They are rugged, toil-worn, and weary-looking; and as a class, becoming prematurely old. They exhibit a reckless independence. They are jealous of personal rights, ready and fierce to resent a supposed insult, suspicious of strangers and intelligent with respect to human character and local interests. The male population is largely in excess, hence various and serious social evils. It is not an infrequent thing to find, thus hidden away as far as possible from former relations, one man living with another man's wife, his own abandoned—a woman living with another man, her husband forsaken—these perhaps under the semblance of divorce. Here sadly, the harlot has also found her way into every town and hamlet, and in luxurious riot has opened her speedy pathway to hell.

The pure, the noble, the Christian individual and family, who have wandered far away here and are acting as a leaven, have been noticed in a former letter, and are again gladly chronicled.

The religious tenets of the people are almost as varied as their personalities; looseness and infidelity are in excess. There is a profane, and reckless independence about the interests of the soul, which I scarcely saw equalled while in the army. The substance of a conversation lately held with a pure specimen of unsettled California and Nevada character, may give some idea of my meaning. As I learned from him, he had been at twenty different employments during his eighteen years on the Pacific coast; and at the time was driving a stage on the overland route. Seated with him on the box for an out-ride between two stations, he was, before and after starting, cursing without seeming provocation. So soon as convenient the inquiry was made whether he could not drive his horses without the extra language of oaths.

Turning quickly his face towards me and without apparent offence, he enquired: "Don't you swear?"

I was thankful to say, I did not.

"Then you have not been long in Nevada."

"No; but is it a necessity, that all should swear?"

"Certainly; we all swear."

My response was a hope that he was mistaken; with a reference also to a period not far distant,

when he and I would be done with stage-driving and riding, and forced to a strict accountability for the use of language.

Turning quickly towards me as before, and with apparent bravado, his quaint and startling rejoinder was: "If God Almighty has any better or different business for me than stage-driving in the other world, I am ready without any regrets to throw down whip and rein and be off to-night."

Hard to reach with Gospel arguments and persuasives, are characters who have become so reckless. In the bearing of many to whom I have preached during the past months, and who were evidently intending to be respectful, there was yet that same independent swagger, with respect to divine things, fully manifest. Nor need such a peculiar type of opposition to the Gospel be wondered at, when the conditions of the people are considered. Almost every one, years ago, and in other localities, had been under more or less influence from religious teaching—many were professors; but in the workings of worldliness, have removed beyond the reach of ordinances, leaving them behind, and here manifest an evident reluctance to be again trammelled by religious restraints—yea, even a greater repugnance than those who have never been under the power of the Gospel. The stage-driver referred to, assured me in a continued conversation, he had once been a professor of religion in a named Eastern locality.

The keeper of a restaurant in one of these mining towns told me he had witnessed men come into his saloon, order a meal, and when ready, join with maudlin blasphemy in asking blessings thereon—that others would call for a bottle of wine, and in solemn mockery, go through the ceremonies pertaining to the sacrament of the Supper—and gave it moreover as his opinion, that these men had all been professors of religion. This is altogether probable. The betrayer of Jesus must needs belong to His family.

It is in history concerning the beginning of David's military power, while exiled in the wilderness—"That every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented gathered themselves unto him." Rather a doubtful beginning for stable military and civil greatness. Yet under the powers of the son of Jesse, that seemingly unmanageable mass, grew eventually into the grandest, the best disciplined, and most effective army the world has ever had in it. So under the generalship of David's Son and Lord, by means of effective Missionary work, may this wonderfully interesting conglomerate of humanity be speedily moulded, trained, and elevated into a power for good even above its compeers, and ever be found contending faithfully for all the crown rights and royal prerogatives of our Prince Emmanuel. A. M. STEWART.

OUGHT WE TO PREACH IN ENGLISH?

MR. EDITOR:—I think we ought, and I have no doubt, if you are as sensible a man as an editor ought to be, you will agree with me, and publish my article as an argument in favor of the affirmative. A short time since, I attended an installation, and the sermon preached on that occasion, strangely enough, started the above question. There was something so foreign in the language of the sermon, that whenever I fixed my mind on the words, I seemed to hear nothing but a bastard Latin. I pulled out my pencil and jotted down the following words and phrases, and now send them to you. If your readers are in the habit of listening to such language from the pulpit, I have no doubt they think they understand it, but I have no doubt they are very much mistaken. But to those words, some of which I copied:

"Contemporaneous generations—ascetic life—dread demon of melancholy (bis)—representative of the truth—traduce—extenuate—credence—deery—cavilling characters—malignant—mortification—ostentation—calumny—notorious facts—tanets—truth is harmonious—premises—plausibility in the inference deduced—unity in diversity, diversity in unity—formulas—non-essentials—metaphysical distinctions—fabric of religion—dictates of fallible reason—combination of appearances—cordial unanimity—natural sequence of the preceding proposition—accepts the theory of fatalism—resistless agent—ignoring all responsibility—visible results—transforming power (bis)—ignored—sordid principles—lines are sublime—revolutionizing and reforming power—logical demonstration (bis)—converted into admiration and applause—representative character—emulate—carp—cayil—irrelevant question—extenuation—super-human source."

Here are seventy-five or eighty foreign words, only ten of which are known to our translators, and yet all these strange, long, hard words were used in a sermon of thirty minutes, and on a plain gospel subject.

I said the people do not understand this language. I do not mean, that on reflection, they cannot tell what it means, but what I say is, that they have first to turn it into household English before the idea comes to them clearly. But while they are doing this translating, the preacher goes on giving out more hard words, and so keeping the poor folk translating words and phrases all the time; instead of getting ideas. How much of the preacher's power is lost to such hearers. The first principle of a perfect style, as to words and sentences, is simplicity, transparency, distinctness. Everything must tend towards economizing the hearers' attention.

We speak of clothing our ideas in language—the figure is a blunder, and the more clothes men put on their ideas, the less the ideas are seen. Ideas are to be expressed, revealed, uttered (out-ered) not in, nor under words, but by words. Ideas are to be put under glass—not ground, or hammered glass, but clear English crown, with out spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing—then they can be seen at first sight.

Now, Mr. Editor, won't you pull out your pencil the next time you "go to meetin'" and find out whether your minister speaks English, for it takes a pencil to find it out,—and won't you advise some of your "numerous and intelligent readers" to do the same, and if you and they should conclude that "stated preaching" should be in English, why let us say so, and I have no doubt our clergy can well acquire that language of which "five words" are better for the common people than "ten thousand words in an unknown, (or four thousand in a half-known) tongue."