

Original Communications.

REV. A. M. STEWART'S LETTERS.—XXIX.  
Austin, Nevada, January, 1869.  
BETTING.

You Bet—with a peculiar jerking accent on both these monosyllables, is now, on the Pacific coast, and especially in Nevada, a pet provincialism. To a new comer, and on the first hearing, there is an entire bewilderment as to its intended meaning. The writer first encountered it at the western base of the Sierras, when making inquiry of a man, who had just come from the Eastern side, as to whether the mountain crossings were still rugged and difficult on account of remaining snow, although the first of June. His simple reply was, "You Bet." "Bet what," I inquired. "Stranger," said he, looking at me very earnestly, "ain't you green?" "Certainly, and very green at that; yet nevertheless, what did you want me to bet?" "Nothing; I meant to say, and did say, that the passage is very rugged and difficult." I saw it, and meeting it daily, thereafter, in response to almost any special inquiry, had no farther difficulty in comprehending its import. You Bet, is a vigorous and emphatic affirmative to your query.

HOW STARTED.

Such provincialisms usually have their origin in some well-known and familiar habit or business among the people. You bet, is big with philosophy; it conveys a volume of meaning, giving a more distinct conception of Pacific society in a very important aspect than could be furnished by a hundred labored essays. Betting, is a business here. Everybody bets. Many seem to do nothing but bet. Betting has become an important ingredient in social life; a canker which has eaten deep into the vitals of society; is fearfully assisting to undermine confidence between man and man; and largely helping to obliterate all moral distinction between mine and thine.

Men, women and children bet even about the most trivial things. You are surprised to hear persons of acknowledged respectability in society, and mutual friends also, when differing in opinion, it may be, about the most insignificant matter—one saying, "I'll bet you so much"—"Done," says the other. Each has his hand in his pocket in an instant for the gold piece or pieces named, which are generally headed to a third person. When the controversy is decided, the winner takes the money, as perfectly legitimate gain and without a seeming thought of wrong doing. It seemed, therefore, fitting there should be something in the vernacular to indicate so common a business of life—hence, "You Bet."

This demoralizing habit grows legitimately among the adventurous multitude who are on the Pacific slope. There exists a wide-spread, inordinate and too often unscrupulous desire to become suddenly rich; and this without the toil, the care, the time and prudent industry usually demanded in the acquisition of honest wealth. Mine-prospecting with its marvellous uncertainties; buying and selling undeveloped mines; stock jobbing; Eastern Companies represented by unscrupulous agents—all foster the spirit of betting; as they are generally mere gambling operations under assumed names.

Under such conditions the "appetite grows by what it feeds upon." The gaming table is merely the consummation, and no more dishonest nor unmanly than many another betting scheme under more plausible appellations. With such surroundings the minds of men become at length so stimulated, that no venture or speculation is looked upon as too large.

POLITICAL BETTING.

The most reliable newspapers of California give it as their judgment that between one and two millions in coin changed hands in that State alone on the decision of the late Presidential election,—an enormous sum, no doubt proving a far greater curse to those who won, than inconvenience and suffering to those who lost.

Betting is not, however, a speciality here nor confined to the Pacific coast. This is merely an outgrowth and imitation of that greatest combination of Betters and Blacklegs—Wall Street. The contagion from that fountain head of all dishonesty seems to be spreading, and threatens speedily to poison our entire community; turning us into a nation of betters and money gamblers. Not even the Church in some of her schemes for money-getting seems altogether free from the contamination of betting. The Catholic Church carries on her schemes of extension and aggrandizement almost wholly by betting.

REMEDY.

Is there any remedy against this wide-spread and still increasing canker of money gambling? Or must its slang phrases become a part of our English vocabulary; and the next edition of Webster have introduced into it, "You Bet?" There certainly exists no remedy in the disease itself. Like cures not like in such a fatality. No hope from Wall Street—none from our mining interests—none from the mercantile world—none from our habits as a people—none from our laws, as our legislators are pioneers and adepts in betting. The mere moral reformer is compelled to sit down in impotent despair when attempting to battle against this inordinate love of money, which is the root of all this dangerous malady.

Shall we, however, as Christians be content with imbecile complaints and inactive hopeless-

ness, like our secular journals seem to do? Thanks be to God, there is a remedy, one only, for this and all other maladies which debase our race—a remedy sure and perfect: *The true Gospel leaven.* These sinners must be born again ere they leave off their betting. If we who preach had but faith as a grain of mustard seed, this mountain would soon become a plain before the onward movements of Christ's kingdom. Yet is not this devil cast out save by prayer and fasting.

A. M. STEWART.

THE FIFTY-THIRD ANNIVERSARY OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL OF THE FIRST CHURCH, HARRISBURG.

The School is not so large in numbers as some others in our city, nor as earnest and active. It might safely confess to many shortcomings, but in years it is among our seniors, having entered on its fifty-fourth year. For two-thirds of its life it has been under the wise and admirable superintendency of its present veteran leader, and all do most heartily wish that thirty-four more years could be added to his past term of service, and then in 1903, and in the 87th year of its age, what an Anniversary would it celebrate!

We do not at all think that Anniversaries are the forte of this School, yet would we be glad to hear of anything more beautiful, instructive and impressive than were the exercises of the late Anniversary. An attempt was made to render Bunyan's immortal work, the Pilgrim's Progress, by hymns, recitation, and illustrations with the Magic Lantern. Dr. John Curven, the obliging and gentlemanly Physician of the Insane Asylum furnished the Camera and Pictures, and himself, at great trouble, exhibited them. The Superintendent of the School, with two or three assistants, prepared the School for its part. For the Programme of Exercises, we were very largely indebted to Rev. W. E. Knox, D.D., of Rome, N. Y. We simply made alterations and improvements—we think—of what was furnished by Mr. Kuox.

The church was most beautifully decorated for the occasion. The pulpit was removed, and the large platform, built for the General Assembly, was again erected. The pillars of the pulpit recess were tastefully dressed with evergreen, and against the wall of the pulpit recess, above the words "The Pilgrimage," was hung an evergreen Cross, surmounted by a Crown. A profusion of the choicest flowers graced the whole scenery. The large platform was assigned to a select Choir of twenty or thirty from the Sunday-school, and to a band of young men who took care of the recitations. The main body of the School, who sang in the choruses and many of the hymns, occupied the central portion of the church.

At the appointed hour, the church was crowded by spectators. The room was darkened, and a marble statue of John Bunyan, of life size and exquisite workmanship, appeared on the wall of the pulpit recess. Then the choir of leading singers with the young speakers, came marching in with most admirable precision and singing—

"We are marching on, with shield and banner bright."

This opening scene could hardly be surpassed for beauty and impressiveness. Every heart was thrilled.

Then followed a brief prayer by the Pastor, and from that moment to the close of the exercises the interest deepened. The recitations from Bunyan and from the Scriptures were given clearly and impressively. The illustrations were generally of life size, or very nearly so, and most aptly represented the different periods in the journey of the Pilgrim. The first represented Christian groaning under his burden, and not knowing whither to flee; the second, Christian and Evangelist; the third, Christian at the wicket gate, then Christian at the Cross, and the three shining ones; Christian drawing near to the House Beautiful; Christian receiving his Armor, &c., &c. The recitations by the young men, the singing by the choir, and by the school, the solos, duets, and responses, the darkened room, the illuminated pictures, all served to make the occasion one of the most impressive, as well as instructive, ever known to us. All who were present in the crowded house followed the Pilgrim from the city of Destruction, heard his cries for help in the plaintive song, "O what shall I do to be saved?" beheld the perils, the struggles and fightings of his way, heard his song of deliverance, until passing through the dark river of death "he went in at the gate" and was welcomed by the shining angels. And then appeared on the wall the final and most exquisite of all the illustrations, that of a radiant triumphing Angel bearing to the skies the form of a ransomed child. And as the golden gates closed, and the Pilgrim passed out of sight, the whole School rose and sang the familiar song—to new music—

"Around the throne of God in Heaven."  
It was an occasion long to be remembered, and one, it is hoped, of happy and hallowed influences on the minds of both young and old. The conception of the programme was a most happy one. The execution of it, in singing, recitations and illustrations, gave most complete satisfaction and pleasure to all who were privileged to see it. The exercises were only too brief. The Superintendent reported that the contributions of the School, for the year 1868, amounted to \$625, of which \$500 had been already appropriated to the support of two Home Missionaries.

QUIET.  
I am not so young as I once was. No one will question the truth of this statement, although everybody does not realize it as I do. One evidence of the fact impresses me, as I see it in myself. I love quiet so much more than I did in my younger days. I can remember when I thought it rather stupid to be without excitement of some kind, for any length of time. I should not, by any means, have thought mere quietness and peace a very great blessing. Now, I count them as good a boon as I can ask or receive.

My young friend who reads this, may imagine that I am either dozing away my days in the easy chair of second childhood, or that I have had a very stormy life, and am thankful for a little rest at its close. But neither of these is the case. The utmost which I am willing to admit concerning my age, is the statement with which I began these thoughts, i. e. that I am not as young as I was once.

And my life has been a quiet and happy one, with very gentle discipline from my Father's hand. More and more, however, do I love the quiet that comes from experience of God's goodness, sure trust in His mercy through Christ, and undoubting belief that "all things work together for good" to me. Enjoyment may yet be keen, and excitement may sometimes still delight; but it wearies more than it is used to do, and the disposition waxes strong to fall back gratefully into the rest of daily, peaceful life. Home and friends are dearer and more satisfying, if one is blessed with a happy home and loving friends. It is needful often even to strive against the indulgence of too strong an inclination to shut out our fellow-creatures from the sympathies and interests of our hearts.

This is a compensation for the loss of some of the pleasures and capabilities of earlier life. Perhaps we do not always estimate it highly enough. There are sad instances of women who, in middle life, or even in old age, seek happiness still in the excitements of gay society and amusements—who condemn quiet as humdrum, and think to keep off advancing years by clinging to all that belongs to youth. It is usually a vain, as well as sad effort, disappointing the soul in the present, besides unfitting it for the future.

"Quiet from fear of evil." This is said by Solomon to be the blessed condition of those who "hearken to the Lord." What a blissful state! Not only to be protected from all real evil, but from even the fear of it. How the little child nestles into his mother's arms, and looks out upon the world, "quiet from fear of evil!" Why should he fear? Has he not a blessed belief that no harm can reach him there?

And surely the Christian who has lived long enough to know how the dear Father above guides and guards His children, turning what seems evil into good, and many a time saving from expected harm, should so far trust Him as to be "quiet from fear of evil." It is distrust to be fearful—it is trust to be quiet.

Yet many who are strong and calm when sorrow or danger is really present, torment themselves and others by a constant fear of coming evil—hardly enjoying blessings in possession, for dread of losing them—ever anticipating some calamity or some disturbance of their peace. They have never yet learned the joy of being "quiet from fear of evil."

The "effect of righteousness"—faith in Christ and service for Him—"is quietness and assurance for ever." Who would want a better portion for his soul, than this, promised by God through His servant Isaiah?

DORCAS HICKS.

THE OLD CONGRESS BIBLE.

[REPRINTED FROM AN OLD NO. BY REQUEST.]  
A copy of this rare and interesting volume having fallen into the hands of one of the Editors of the *American Presbyterian*, we have supposed that a transcript of the title page and preface to the work would prove interesting to our readers. Here it is:

THE HOLY BIBLE.

Containing the Old and New Testaments, newly translated out of the Original Tongues, and with the former translations diligently compared and revised.



PHILADELPHIA.

Printed and sold by R. AITKEN, at the Pope's Head, three doors above the Coffee House, Market St.

1782.

[Preface.]

BY THE UNITED STATES IN CONGRESS ASSEMBLED, SEPT. 12th, 1782.

The Committee to whom was referred a memorial of Robert Aitken, Printer, dated 21st Jan., 1781, respecting an edition of the Holy Scriptures, report, "That Mr. Aitken has, at great expense, now finished an American edition of the Holy Scriptures in English; that the Committee have, from time to time, attended to his progress in the work; that they also recommended it to the two Chaplains in Congress, to examine and give their opinion of the execution, who have accordingly reported thereon: the recommendation and report being as follows:

PHILADELPHIA, Sept. 1st, 1782.

Reverend Gentlemen:  
Our knowledge of your piety and public spirit leads us, without apology, to recommend to your

particular attention the edition of the Holy Scriptures, published by Mr. Aitken. He undertook this expensive work at a time when, from the circumstances of the war, an English edition of the Bible could not be imported, nor any opinion formed how long the obstruction might continue. On this account he deserves applause and encouragement. We, therefore, wish you, Reverend Gentlemen, to examine the execution of the work, and if approved, to give it the sanction of your judgment, and the weight of your recommendation. We are, with very great respect,

Your most obedient, humble servants,  
(Signed,) JAMES DUANE,  
Chairman, in behalf of a Committee of Congress, on Mr. Aitken's Memorial.

Rev. Dr. White, and Rev. Mr. Duffield, Chaplains of the United States, in Congress assembled:

Report—Gentlemen:

Agreeably to your desire, we have paid attention to Mr. Robert Aitken's impression of the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. Having selected and examined a variety of passages throughout the work, we are of opinion that it is executed with great accuracy as to the sense, and with as few grammatical and typographical errors as could be expected in an undertaking of such magnitude. Being ourselves witnesses of the demand for this invaluable book, we rejoice in present prospect of a supply; hoping that it will prove as advantageous as it is honorable to the gentleman who has exerted himself to furnish it, at the evident risk of private fortune. We are, gentlemen,

Your very respectful and humble servants,  
(Signed,) WILLIAM WHITE,  
GEO. DUFFIELD.

Philadelphia, Sept 10th, 1782.

Hon. James Duane, Chairman, and the other Honorable Gentlemen of the Committee of Congress, on Mr. Aitken's memorial.

WHEREUPON, Resolved, That the United States, in Congress assembled, highly approve the pious and laudable undertaking of Mr. Aitken, as subservient to the interests of religion, as well as an instance of the progress of arts in this country, and being satisfied, from the above report, of his care and accuracy in the execution of the work, they recommend this edition of the Bible to the inhabitants of the United States, and hereby authorize him to publish this recommendation in the manner he shall think proper.

(Signed,) CHAS. THOMSON, Sec'y.

DR. BACON ON THE ASSEMBLY OF 1831.

From his review of Dr. Baird's (so-called) History of the New School.

The General Assembly of 1831 was in some respects a very provoking affair to the party represented by our author,—the Immoderates—the sectarian party—the party opposed to any toleration of theological differences. Never had an avowed Hopkinsian been made Moderator of that high court. But the Moderator in 1831 was Dr. Beman, in whose little book on the Atonement, as our author testifies with orthodox abhorrence, "the scheme of the younger Edwards is explicitly developed and defended;" and the only other candidate nominated or voted for was Dr. Gardiner Spring, whose hereditary and notorious Hopkinsianism in theology had not (certainly at that time) been purged away. The case of Mr. Barnes came on in the regular course of judicial business. According to the programme reported by the Judicial Committee, all the papers and documents pertaining to the case were read, including the famous sermon. The session was held in the First church, and Mr. Barnes, though not a party in the case, was called upon to read the sermon. Happening to be in the pulpit, when the pamphlet was handed to him, he read it from that position to a great and seriously attentive congregation. After the reading, a recess was had for a few moments, and Dr. Spring, in going out, remarked to one who had been in the same pew with him, "I stand or fall with that sermon." The next thing, in regular order, would have been to hear the parties, namely the complaining minority and the Presbytery. But Dr. Miller, "the prince of peace men," interposed with a motion for a committee, who, with the consent of the parties, should take the whole affair into consideration, and report what the Assembly ought to do. He offered that motion, as he said, "with a view to save time, prevent angry and useless discussion, and with the hope that an amicable adjustment of the whole difficulty might be effected." The consent of the parties was necessary, and (after a little hesitation on the part of the gentlemen who represented the Presbytery) was yielded. Dr. Miller was of course, the chairman of the committee, and with him were associated three doctors as little tainted with New England as he was, two who were pretty widely known as Hopkinsians, one younger minister who had studied at Andover and settled in South Carolina, and two lay elders—one with a Connecticut name, from the region of fair Wyoming, the other with a Scotch name, from the city of Charleston. The tenth member of the Committee was one of the delegates from the General Association of Connecticut; for as a matter of courtesy between the Assembly and the Association, delegates from either body had always, till that time, been accustomed to serve on important committees in the other. We mention these particulars, because, in this part of the story, we are not simply following Dr. Baird, but are telling some things which have not been told in print before.

In the meeting of that committee, the Connecticut delegate, having told them that he regarded himself as in some sort a stranger there, and his appointment as an act of courtesy toward the body which he represented rather than a recognition of his personal fitness to judge in such a matter, and that, therefore, their report, whatever it might be, must be made without counting his vote, took the liberty of suggesting the very obvious view that the question to be fairly met and settled in disposing of the case was nothing else than the question, whether and how far the Presbyterian Church can permit a minister to dissent from any theological statement contained in its doctrinal formularies. Dr. Miller,

immediately, with one of his blindest smiles, yet not without some transient expression of anxiety in his countenance, replied that it would be unwise and dangerous to raise such a question; and nothing more was said on that point. At that first interview, they seemed to be well agreed in thinking that what they were appointed for was, to evade and indefinitely postpone that dangerous question rather than to answer it. What the report should be, in substance, was settled in a very harmonious, but devoutly serious conversation, and Dr. Miller's draught was afterwards agreed to with only some slight alteration, and was presented, we believe, as the unanimous report of the committee. Certainly it was almost unanimously adopted by the Assembly. The Presbytery was complimented for its "conscientious zeal for the purity of the Church;" the sermon was judged to contain "a number of unguarded and objectionable passages;" and the opinion was delivered that, "especially after the explanations" which Mr. Barnes had made, "the Presbytery ought to have suffered the whole to pass without further notice."

The wise men of that Assembly thought that a great difficulty had been disposed of, and were devoutly thankful. It was thought that much had been gained for evangelical truth and freedom, and Catholic influence in the Presbyterian body. Had not the supreme judicatory taken a most important step in the way to a comprehensive union? Had it not pronounced distinctly and with unexpected unanimity against the narrow and divisive notions of the Philadelphia Presbytery? Was it not fairly settled that a minister holding such views in theology as Mr. Barnes held, might, with a good conscience, and without incurring the charge of perjury or hypocrisy, profess to "receive and adopt the Confession of Faith as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures?" Alas! they had not learned, what many good and wise men have not learned even now after thirty-eight years more of history, that the sectarian element in Presbyterianism—the element which instead of seeking the union of Christians as Christians, seeks to divide Christians from Christians—is mighty and will prevail. From the General Assembly of 1831, and particularly from its decision in the case of Mr. Barnes—a decision so well intended, so unanimously adopted, so thankfully rejoiced in—begins the story of that disruption which Dr. Miller and his brother Moderates were so desirous to avoid, and at which they trembled as they seemed to see its shadow in the distance.—*The New Englander*, for January.

Foreign.

The Orange Party in Ulster (as we foretold a month ago) seems hopelessly split up by the election of Mr. Johnstone for Belfast. A section of this party has become thoroughly democratic. It is determined on the establishment of satisfactory laws as to tenant right, and refuses to be dictated to by landlord influence. As the interests of the landlords and tenants are, to all appearance, opposed on this question, it is not likely that there will be a reconciliation. If the present Government introduce a tenant-right bill, they will secure the permanent support of a large section of the Orangemen of the North, and thereby alienate a strong wing of the High Church party in Ireland.

The Pope's health is very precarious, still he moves about industriously. He lately visited Civita Vecchia, where he was very coldly received. Before leaving he expressed himself in very different terms from those of his recent mild letter "to all Protestants." He relieved himself by uttering such words as the following: "You know in what state the world now is, where on the one side there are men who do not care to labor with energy, and, on the other, there are those who wish to destroy everything. I pray God to give to the first light and strength, and to the second repentance, for if they change not they will assuredly be punished. The patience of God has limits, and if they will not be converted, and if he has decreed to punish them, I, as Pope, say let them be punished, for it is time that the world should enter the way of order and duty." He administered, through the English, and in presence of the Danish, consuls, a very sensible rebuke to England for not taking the part of Denmark in the Schleswig and Holstein war.

Lay Evangelists for the Continent.—In the present state of French and Belgian Protestantism, with pastors underpaid and thinly scattered, it has been felt by many that the creation of a class of pious schoolmaster-evangelists might, under God, prove of great utility—such men earning their bread as schoolmasters, and at the same time laboring to spread the gospel, according to the opportunities afforded to them.—Monsieur Aimé Humbert, late ambassador extraordinary from Switzerland to Japan, and at present rector of the Academy of Neuchâtel, and Professor R. W. Mossell, of the same Academy are now attempting to meet this want. They take under their care young men of tried piety, who board with Christian families, pursue their secular studies in the pedagogic section of the academy, where, after two years, if well employed, they can obtain a diploma, and receive religious and theological instruction from Professor Mossell. The more advanced will be occasionally employed as evangelists in the neighborhood, and they all meet a first trial of their principles in the midst of above a hundred fellow-students. This institution is in its infancy. It has just begun with a class of five students—a Canadian, a Spaniard, and three Swiss—but it can be largely increased if funds are forthcoming. Each student will cost about £10 for board, academical fees, books, and theological lessons.

Comparative Statistics.—A recent writer in the *London Examiner* gives some statistics which he says are copied from "the most reliable authority." In these it is found that the proportion of murders to the population is:—In England, 1 in every 198,000; in Holland, 1 in every 163,000; in Prussia, 1 in every 100,000; in Austria, 1 in every 77,000; in Spain, 1 in every 4,113; in Naples, 1 in every 2,750; and in Rome and the Papal States, 1 in every 750—showing thus that far the best state of things is in Protestant England, and far the worst in Roman Catholic Rome. In regard to the marriage relation the statistics are that the percentage of illegitimate births is:—In London 4; in Paris 48; in Brussels, 53; in Vienna, 118; and in Rome, 243!