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## AFTER RE-UNION, WHAT?

In all probability record will be formally made and official notice given next November of the Union of two branches of the Presbyterian church. The veriest doubter must have tenacious grasp of his doubt, to hold it amidst such signs as we have to-day. Already the streams touch each other and are mingling. In sixty days their separate identity will be lost. What then? The question for the entire Church is this. Every member of our communion is bound to give it thoughtful and prayerful heed. It is not a question to be left to the clergy. Nor to the Fathers. Nor to Boards and Committees. The entire living membership of the body of Christ, constituting the churches that are to share in the approaching nuptials, must answer this question, and with some regard to the obligations assumed, the responsibilities imposed, and privileges vouchsafed, if answer is to be given to the glory of God. Re-union accomplished, What then?

It has been longed for and prayed for by good men. The heralding of its nearer and nearer approach has been received by thousands as tidings of great joy. The trumpets of it have been big with prophecy and promise. It has been claimed to be the ushering in of a new era. Shall it be seen that we have been imitating the example of some authors, who thunder only in the index? Is our apparent zeal for the glory of God to have "the lame and impotent conclusion" of a great zeal for the glory of denominationalism? Or is there to issue out of re-union that which shall be a justification of our joy at its coming, and a fulfillment of the best prophecy on record of its beneficent results?

There is no power in great ecclesiastical size. Bigness needs other qualities to make itself felt. Nor shall we get any such momentum from the mere junction of our forces as will carry us very far forward in the widening grooves of evangelistic effort. Union alone will endow us with no projective force. Indeed, we shall lose somewhat by Union. We shall lose the spur and stimulus that came from a competing organization, marshalled under the same banners and holding the same symbols. Doubtless something for Christ, by each branch of the Church, has been done, and something has been given, that would not have been done and would not have been given, had it not been for the spirit of emulation, moving us to seek to surpass each other in Christian activity and benevolence. Doubtless we have stirred each other up to love and good works. Whatever may be said of the quality of the inspiration that has thus given impetus to our evangelical activity, it has had its place and made itself felt. And we are to lose it. It will drop out of the list of incentives to toil when we are one again.

On the other hand, there will doubtless be a gain. A gain in the economic use of funds—in the economic employment of agency—in the economic distribution of our evangelistic force. But if this be all, it will be a most meagre thing and utterly beneath our privilege and our obligation. To be content with making just such record of increase and efficiency, of toil and triumph, united, as we made apart, will not answer. Something better, and higher, and grander, is demanded of us. The possibility is the call of God. It is ours to make the possible, actual. There never was a more glorious possibility. Church of Christ never had clearer divine call. We shall court the smiting of God to spiritual leanness and barrenness, if we do not heed it. We shall merit severe rebuke. We shall be chargeable with using great swelling words of promise, filled only with wind and vanity. The united Church must be what the two Branches of the Church never were, in life and labor and liberality. The old standards of Christian giving must be lifted away from their present altitude, and set furlongs higher in the scale of obligation. The old grooves of Christian effort must give way to others, in and through which there may be room for the play and sweep of greatly vitalized and enlarged activities. While our life—our spiritual life, with God and in God, must be more vivid and intensely real. It must be closer and deeper, increasing the clearness of our conception, and the firmness of our grasp, and the fervor of our love, of things spiritual.

A more blast of trumpets sounding a call to something great in the way of beneficence as a thank-offering, will only lead to a fitful and spasmodic effort. And our last state will be worse than the first. First of all, therefore, paramount to every other thing we have to do, vital in order to such fruit of Union as may be, and ought to be, brought forth to the glory of God—first of all, every where, throughout our entire borders, by the least and the greatest, by every individual member of our communion, there should be renewed commitment and consecration to Christ. As a basis for anything like permanence in activ-

ity and continuance in liberality, this is essential. The whole Church must needs get closer to God. The currents of our spiritual life must go deeper than they do. If our Union is to make its impress on the world, compelling men to believe that God is in it, answering to this extent at least his Son's intercessory prayers, it must be a union signalized, most of all, alike as a product and as promotive of spirituality and Christ-likeness. Let this be the burden of our prayer and the substance of our talk in all the gatherings held to consider the great measure. Let the current of desire bear restlessly in this direction in all our approaching Presbyterian meetings. Let the potent religious press sound the call to this higher spiritual life. Let pastors and people be urged to closet themselves with God, so that we shall not only be kept from the pride of Babel or Babylon builders, but brought into such close alliance with the Master and into such close sympathy with his out-reaching and world-embracing spirit as our Church has never known. And let us have a day for this—a day of special consecration by appointment of the Assemblies about to meet in Pittsburgh, when our four thousand pulpits shall seek simultaneously to interpret God's voice in this matter, preaching to our four thousand congregations on the one great theme, pressing home the responsibilities imposed upon them, and summoning them with whole-hearted and unreserved surrender to take a new departure, and in the name of the Lord of hosts to "go through the gates" and possess the land for Christ. And then, if it be thought best, let that day be a gift day as well: when we shall give of our substance as well as give our hearts: when the generous largeness of our contributions to the treasury of the Church shall prove the affluence of our love for Christ: when some good round millions shall testify to our enlarged conception of the importance of the great evangelism, and our deepened interest in its prosecution.

H. J.

## A CONSCIENTIOUS POLITICIAN.

Those who have faith that the American people are yet sound at the core and mean to do justice in spite of the corrupting arts of politicians, find obsequious confirmation of their views in the late letter of General Rosecrans to the Democratic leaders of Ohio. These leaders have fallen into the not uncommon error of base men; that of overestimating the strength of the base passions of their fellow-men, and of taking altogether too little account of the power of conscience in a substantially Christian people. Downright villains deny the existence of virtue in others. Corrupt politicians believe the people also to be corrupt. And they consider it a shrewd artifice, a wise political move, to pander to this public corruption, by the more or less open advocacy of some course which would be highly convenient, if it were not wrong. General Rosecrans' letter is the revolt of the sound American heart against such disgraceful proposals. A member of the Democratic party, and having been nominated as the candidate of that party for Governor of the State of Ohio, he frankly and unsparingly proclaims the antagonism of their platform to the principles of justice and right. He insists upon the principle of political equality of the different races as one to be accepted all around, and as the only genuine Democratic principle; and he insists upon fidelity to the national obligations in the fullest sense, and upon a return to specie payments, that the whole debt may be paid in coin or its equivalent. Such brave and wholesome words were needed in the din of a political strife, which has threatened to involve and endanger the plainest principles of morality. They are needed to bring Democrats and Republicans to their senses. They are a voice from the inner depths of the public conscience. In reading them, politicians will see that there is a limit to their bids for the racial-sympathies of our nature; and that they cannot carry a governing mass of their fellow men in the maintenance of a creed, which has wholesale robbery, oppression and retrogression for its leading articles.

Meanwhile Democrats like General Rosecrans—and may his tribe increase—and honest men of all parties behold, with inexpressible satisfaction, the steady and rapid course of the government in lessening the public debt, its policy of retrenchment and its demand for competence and fidelity among all its subordinate officers. This illustrious example in behalf of the eighth commandment must have a highly re-assuring effect, and must be promotive of fair dealing between man and man everywhere. A purer air will breathe through all the avenues of commerce. The public conscience will be reinforced. But if the men against whom Gen. Rosecrans writes, get into power, it will carry us no short stride towards anarchy and barbarism.

## INTEREST AND STUDY.

Our U. P. brethren, who edit *The Evangelical Repository*, have a review of Prof. Hodge's "Commentary on the Westminster Confession." They say:

The author, in his preface, says, "At the present time, two great denominations, having discarded all defining clauses, seem likely to unite on the basis of these 'standards pure and simple.' We hail this with pleasure and gratefully anticipate a largely increased interest [in] and study of these standards on every side. It will certainly rejoice us should we find that the expectations of the respected author are not groundless; but we utterly fail to perceive that these anticipations rest upon any solid ground. We venture to affirm that there is not a New School man who looks upon the phrase 'pure and simple,' of which so much seems to be made, as amounting to anything more than an approval of the Confession as containing a system of doctrines taught in the Scriptures; and has there been, for the last thirty [two] years a single Presbyterian in the New School; Presbyterian Church that did not demand such a declaration of approval on the part of all those whom it ordained to the office of the ministry and the eldership? If these anticipations of the author are well founded, they must rest upon some other ground than the agreement, on their part, to receive the Confession as pure and simple."

1. The above is rather severe upon our O. S. brethren. No O. S. Presbyterian has ever demanded acknowledgment of the standards more explicit than the N. S. one here condemned as too lax. The constitutional question in regard to the standards is the same in the two Churches, and is couched in these very terms. This question, therefore, according to *The Repository* gives us no security that the standards command any great degree of "interest and study" in the ministry and eldership of the O. S. body. How ungenerous to strike O. S. brethren in Israel over the heads of N. S. Samaritans in this style!

2. *The Repository's* comment shows how consonant to the practice and constitution of the Presbyterian Church of America, is the toleration and forbearance of the New School in matters of doctrine. Here is an impartial and unbiased critical opinion. This U. P. editor singles out as distinctively New School the doctrinal formula of the undivided Church, and of both branches, since the division—as it will be of the United Church. We rejoice at this new light that has come to these brethren, as it will obviate the necessity for any further solemn warnings to our O. S. brethren from that quarter. Since the O. S. Church has nothing to lose doctrinally by Re-union, and since her own formulae provide for all the liberty asked by N. S. Presbyterians, the movement will effect no doctrinal disaster.

3. How do our brethren of *The Repository* propose to excite that degree of "study and interest" which Presbyterians ought to evince? Is it by adopting the U. P. method? Is it by setting up a modern Testimony along side the old Confession, around which the doctrinal life and interest of the Church shall cluster? Is it by stereotyping the shibboleths and narrow traditions of a small sect, and binding upon men's shoulders burdens which they are unable to bear, until they cry out against all Creeds and Confessions as an unchristian innovation on the Church's freedom? These methods have been exemplified in our minor Presbyterian bodies, and we cannot forget that *The Repository* sustained its own denomination in condemning and driving from its ministry a worthy servant of Christ,—Rev. W. McCune—because he held (against the U. P. Testimony) the doctrine of the Westminster Confession on the subject of Christian Communion. This fact is worth remembering, when the organs of that branch (or twig) bewail Presbyterian neglect of the Westminster Standards.

## A RUN THROUGH NEW ENGLAND.—II.

At Keene, N. H., the Congregational Association of the State was in session. It is composed of clerical and lay delegates from the local conferences, and numbers about fifty members. A new constitution was adopted during the sessions, providing for a larger ratio of representation, as well as for a more thorough and satisfactory collection of statistics, and for measures adapted to increase the interest of the meetings.

The children of the churches of Keene were assembled when we arrived, and some hours of the crowded session were cheerfully given to exercises for their profit and entertainment.

The pastor of the First church in Keene, Rev. Wm. Karr, is in nominal connection with the New School body, having but a few years ago been pastor in one of the Brooklyn churches. He is a workman of whom his former associates need not be ashamed, and he seemed to be completely at home in his new ecclesiastical surround-

ings. His *impromptu* part of the Sunday-school exercises was, in our judgment, the best.

An important part of the proceedings was the Anniversary of the New Hampshire Home Missionary Society, which, with reading of Secretary's and Treasurer's reports, and addresses, occupied a large part of one of the morning sessions. The report showed that a greater sum had been contributed the last than in any previous year. There was a sad picture drawn of home destitutions, and of the culpable lack of practical proofs of interest in maintaining the institutions of the Gospel in rural districts and old churches, from which the strength has been drawn by emigration. The course of emigration in the farming regions is described as first carrying the young people out West; and then, the old people feeling lonely, sell out the farm, or make arrangements by which they can move into the nearest and most thriving settlement in the neighborhood. Thus the churches in the outskirts of the county die, or languish, and sometimes tilled fields are abandoned to the encroachments of the forest; and the built up towns gain strength at the loss of the small districts. And yet it is difficult to stir up a due degree of interest in these larger towns, in behalf of the parishes which are transferring their strength to the towns. The growing town of Keene, with its two churches, was gently exorcised by one of the speakers for giving less than \$100 last year for State evangelization. Much of the money acknowledged by the New Hampshire Society, it should be stated, is given for the general work of the American Home Missionary Society. An extremely neglected out-of-the-world sort of population; on the narrow strip of sea coast belonging to New Hampshire, had lately been reached through the zeal of a young soldier who had been converted in the Union army, and who came home, as so many of our disbanded soldiers did, not to curse but to bless the country which their arms had helped to save. The degraded, ignorant people of this coast, who, within a few hours ride from Boston and Salem, were, like some on the Atlantic coast near Philadelphia, and New York, practically heathen, have been perceptibly raised in morals and thrift through the labors of this young self-denying missionary. He has been ordained for the work among them, on the advice of the Missionary Society and the Council, without going through a course of theological study. He has stirred them up, with assistance from abroad, to build a church, in the rearing of which the people labored with their own hands.

The question of the maintenance of the New England type of character in thrift, in contented struggles with the hard, grudging soil, in morals, and in strong religious convictions, is too large to be considered here. Emigration to the remote and fertile regions of the West has already, in no small degree, transferred that type of character to those regions, and the whole policy of the nation feels to day the tremendous power of New England in the Northwest. And the original New England, depleted year by year of its best native elements, beholds its great manufacturing centres and its large cities thronged with foreigners, who already threaten to take political control of these centres of population and influence. As yet, we believe, quite enough of the old stock remains to give character to the whole. That little territory may still remain, sublime in its ruggedness, the nurse of heroic colonists, the mother of statesmen, the motto "Dirigo," "I direct," of the northernmost State, a truth for the future as for the past of the nation; provided its present inhabitants courageously maintain its institutions, and provided the prosperous churches of its towns and cities watch and cherish the feebly burning sparks of life in the regions around. The power of a living Christianity, which preserves the old elements, will also be effective to assimilate the new. Such societies as this of New Hampshire are instrumentalities of the highest importance in maintaining the New-England character.

The visit of the Delegate from the General Assembly, charged with the Christian salutations of the body to the Association, was most cordially received, especially as the sending of such a delegate was among the last of the acts of the distinctively New School Church. It was an illustration of love to the end. The New School branch, in agreeing to terms of Union with the Old, thus forestalled the suggestion of a loss or decline of her traditional attachment to New England. Her admiration for the best theology, the Christian enterprise, the virtues, the thrift, the cultivated intelligence and the great names of the Church of New England was thus known to be unabated. Her hope of the continuance of this intercourse under the new circumstances would be gratified by news of the appointment of a delegate from the New Hampshire body, to the General Assembly of the united Church

to meet in 1870; an appointment which had been made among the earlier proceedings of the body.

It may turn out that in this question of maintaining official intercourse with the Congregational bodies of New England, a pretty certain test of the sympathies and tendencies of the united body will be found.

We shall remember with interest the cordiality of these brethren towards a representative of the New School Church; the fine devotional spirit of their prayer-meeting; the single-hearted earnestness of the sea-coast missionary; the venerable form of father Barstow, who for half a century had been pastor of the first church of Keene, who not long ago celebrated his golden wedding, and who took a vigorous part in all the business of the Sessions; and it was with real regret we took leave of them to enter upon our homeward journey.

Down the valley of one of the rapid tributaries of the Connecticut—the Ashuelot—lay our route; a streamlet made to pay toll to the genius of industry that had seized the available points on its banks, before it went to join the main stream in rendering similar but greater services. We soon debouched into the beautiful broad valley of the Connecticut, green, fair and fertile, brightened by the flashing waters of the crystal clear river, and bordered on either hand by a range of hills of picturesque outline. There was no lack of moisture here. The landscape shone fair and glorious. Health and good spirits were wafted on the charmed air. Towns famous in the Indian Wars of the Colony were announced by the conductor, blending a sad and softened romance with the harsh tones and dissonant roar of the modern railway.

Mr. HOLYOKE.

At Mt. Tom Station, we took a little steamer of eight horse power and 23½ inches draft. Certainly we had touched the two extremes; we had come from Broddignag to Lilliput. From 2800 horse power on the Sound to 8 horse power on the Connecticut river; from an engine as huge as a church, to one which we could have carried under our arm—this was no trifling transition. We enjoyed ourselves quite as well on one, as on the other. Landed at the foot of Mt. Holyoke, we were driven as far towards the summit as was practicable for carriages, and then took a railway car which was drawn by means of an endless rope and horse power to the top, one thousand feet in all from the Connecticut river.

What a spectacle was that which burst upon our sight! We stood at the centre of a circle of vision nearly seventy miles in diameter, and had the populous heart of New England at our feet. Right before us lay Northampton; to the North was Amherst, to the South Springfield; near by in the South-east was South Hadley and the Seminary; Wachusett Mountain shimmered faintly on the East, Greylock and the Green mountains rimmed the West; and ever present Monadnoc lay sleeping upon the summits of the Northern circle of hills. Amid all, wound the bright Connecticut; its many graceful curves suggesting a reluctance too soon to quit the charming region. We gazed and wondered and tried to find room for the novel and delightful sensations that crowded into the mind. We asked the question then, and ask it now, whether another spot so privileged, and so well worth the sight-seer's visit is to be found in America; a spot raised a thousand feet high, in the midst of a region, which, on all accounts, one would so much covet to see at such an advantage in position. A few hours afterwards we stood on top of Springfield Arsenal. The view from that point, so famous and so really beautiful, seemed tame in the comparison.

An unpleasant feature in the agriculture of Connecticut River Valley to our eye was the extensive culture of the tobacco plant. For miles, a patch of tobacco would alternate regularly with the potato patch and the corn field. It is an evil omen. We do not believe the material interests of the community will be promoted by the raising of such a crop. Its broad, heavy leaves have a weedy look which contrasts it at once with the wholesomer crops which it is beginning to rival. We fully sympathize with the strong resolution of the New Hampshire Association dissuading the people from the culture of tobacco.

—Mr. Mitchell, General Agent for Freedmen of our Committee of Home Missions, is in this city calling for immediate aid to the empty treasury of this department. The Freedmen's Bureau has ceased to furnish transportation, and a very superior class of teachers is now offering for the Committee's work. Thirty students from Lincoln University have been kept employed during the vacation by the Committee, in preaching and teaching. Mr. Mitchell calls for immediate contributions from Sunday-schools, churches and individuals.