

Original Communications.

LETTER FROM THE HILLS. III.

While nearly every leading town in the interior of our great State is occupied by some denominational college, the two leading cities of the Commonwealth are occupied by institutions of a more general character, which bear in common the name "University of Pennsylvania."

The University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, ranks in point of seniority, fourth among our American Colleges,—Harvard, Yale and New Brunswick taking the lead. Its Western namesake, "The Western University of Pennsylvania," at Pittsburgh, stands on the slope of the hill up which Fifth Avenue leads. Though much younger than our University, it has yet been in existence for a good while. Some fifteen years ago, Rev. Dr. Woods was called to its Presidency. The institution, when he took charge of it, had run down a good deal. Its order was that of the proverbial "bear garden;" respectable people would rather not have their children pass it, much less attend its classes. Dr. Woods is not one of the Goliaths of earth, but there is a deal of work in him, and he has made a pretty thorough change in all things. I can imagine the long, dreary pull that his presidency was in those fifteen years. An institution with little of a good name or of popular esteem, situated in a city unusually indifferent to the ends for which it existed, was competing with a dozen others for what scanty patronage there was, while those dozen could appeal to selfish motives to which it could not. His fifteen years have not been lost. All is not clear yet, but the day is breaking. The public interest has been measurably awakened, as is evident both from the assaults of foes and the kind words of friends in the newspaper world. Smoky Pittsburgh, which cares too much for money and "the main chance," to have a public park or a promenade street, or a fine hall, actually begins to feel some sort of pride in the institution. The people who have learned to spend as well as to gather, are awake to its existence. One man at least in the Third Presbyterian Church does not need to be thawed out of any frosty indifference in the matter. Efforts are making to put the college on a better financial basis, and to awaken public men to some sense of their responsibility and their best interests.

The patronage enjoyed by the institution shows a very fair increase. Last year all departments, Collegiate, Scientific, Commercial and Preparatory, had an aggregate of 427 students. The present year opens with promise of still better things, and recent additions to the working force and apparatus are among the hopeful signs.

On my way to Newcastle I was permitted to be present soon after the Christmas term began. The building, though as smoked as everything in Pittsburgh is, I thought in many respects a fine one, much more convenient indeed than the venerable edifices on Ninth street in our own city, as being of course much more modern. The classes ranged around the chairs were large and intelligent-looking, and I could say with Paul—"I joyed beholding [their] order." My welcome—when introduced by "J. S. T." as from the University of Pennsylvania—was cordial in the extreme. Dr. Woods, whom I had met before, evinced great interest in the movements making in Philadelphia for new University accommodations, and in the details of the management of the older institution. I gathered from his questions that some utilitarian or Puritan Pittsburghers are much opposed to anything like scholastic display, and would have the commencements held quietly in a church without music, or the grace of scholastic robes. He was especially interested in the effort in progress to make our University a centre of sound teaching on Protection by endowing a chair of Social Science, and calling Dr. M'Ilvaine of Princeton, to fill it. He had hitherto used Prof. Latham Perry's Manual in teaching on that subject, adding always such running comments as would furnish a Protectionist antidote to the free trade notions, but after hearing one of that gentleman's demagogic speeches to the workmen—in which taxes were denounced as an outrage—he had decided to employ some other book.

In the scientific department we found a large collection of fossils and other minerals, which had just been secured, spread out on the tables before arrangement in their cabinets. A college in this mountain region, where nature has broken up her strata to display her cabinets of wonders to man, ought to be especially rich in this department. On one table in a glass case, two large and ugly rattle-snakes were lazily twisting themselves about. One of them had almost interrupted a recitation that morning by his noisy rage when the professor moved his pencil too near the case.

On the whole we saw abundant reason to congratulate Pittsburgh on the possession of "The Western University of Pennsylvania," and nothing to make our own *Alma Mater* ashamed of such a younger sister and name-sake. Dr. Woods has certainly not mispent those fifteen years of hard effort. His heart is clearly in the work, as was seen in his refusal of a tempting offer from a denominational institution near Chicago. He would have had much to gain personally by the change, but what he had done would have perhaps come to nought, so he refused. May the

people of Pittsburgh abundantly appreciate and reward the sacrifice.

In one point the Western University is far ahead of our own. On the hills above Allegheny it has secured—through the munificence, I believe, of friends already referred to—a fine observatory edifice with a collection of astronomical instruments, which, if not yet complete, is a worthy beginning, and is far ahead of our own. To Prof. Langley I am indebted for an opportunity of examining these in detail, and although not profoundly versed in the science, I was interested to a degree that I would gladly impart to your readers. But that for my next.

ON THE WING.

THE RELATION OF THE SABBATH SCHOOL TO THE CHURCH.

A Select Committee of the Third Presbytery of Philadelphia, consisting of Rev. Drs. Geo. F. Wiswell, Daniel March, and John W. Mears, reported the following paper to the Presbytery at its session October 6, 1869. The Presbytery thereupon adopted it, and directed that it be printed and laid before its churches. Pastors and Sessions to whom the paper is sent with this article marked, are requested to receive it as coming from the Presbytery.

B. B. HOTCHKIN, Stated Clerk.

The Committee on Sabbath Schools have given a somewhat careful consideration to the subject committed to them, and are prepared to report that they find a growing interest in the whole matter of Sabbath Schools throughout the churches of this Presbytery.

Though there may not have been any very marked and glaring demonstration of this interest, as in many parts of the great vineyard, yet there is a thoughtful and conscientious regard, in all the churches, for the advancement of the Sabbath School cause upon the soundest Christian basis. With our present knowledge and experience, were the work of organization to be commenced anew, we should be decidedly in favor of keeping the Sabbath School strictly within the sphere intended by its projectors. It was for the instruction of such children as would otherwise be destitute of all Christian training; not for the children of the Church. It never proposed to relieve the godly from the duty of instructing their children in the things of the Kingdom at home, but it would gather the poor and outcast of this world, and tell them of a Saviour's love.

The question now, however, is not one of beginning, but how shall the Church best direct and control this institution? How shall the Sabbath School be made to subservise the highest welfare of religion? And the interests at stake are far too important to be neglected. The force is far too great to be undirected.

In the first place, the Sabbath School must be regarded as an institution of the Church. It was the outgrowth of the piety of the Church. It came in to meet the pressing want of those who sought the salvation of the poor—the outcast and the perishing of this world. And as an institution of the Church it is subordinate and under its control. No organization within the Church, can be either superior or foreign to it. And those who have the spiritual oversight of the "flock of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood," are responsible for the care, culture and efficiency of the Sabbath School. The appointment of teachers, and the choice and selection of text books, and the whole reading matter of the Sabbath Schools, are subjects that should come immediately under the control and direction of our Church Sessions. Any other course is clearly un-*Presbyterian* and unsafe.

On another point your committee are clear, viz: that just in so far as the existence of the Sabbath School is made the occasion of relieving Christian parents and guardians of a sense of obligation to train and educate their children at home in doctrinal knowledge and practical Christian duty, it is an injury rather than a blessing. To far too great an extent we fear it has had this effect. Quite contrary to its original intent, it has diminished household training, and hence to this extent has enervated the piety of the "household of faith." We should guard against this by frequent and careful instruction as to the true sphere and purpose of the Sabbath School, and urging parents to the duty of training those committed to them, in the "nurture and admonition of the Lord."

The Sabbath School must be kept close to the heart of the Church. No other instrumentality is so powerful and so vital as the Sabbath School when the Church uses it as she ought. And the Sabbath School will be efficient and productive as it is the outgrowth of the spiritual life and fervor of the people of God. As a potent appliance for the salvation of the world, it must not be foreign to the sympathies and prayers, the watch and care of the Church; but daily must it feel the warm throb and thrill of the great heart of Zion beating close to its own, encouraging, stimulating and strengthening all who are engaged in its labors of love. Too often do Christian parents commit their children to the Sabbath School teachers with the feeling which is expressed in words would be, "Take this child and nurse it for me and I will give thee thy wages," and afterward, so little interest do they seem to have that they even refuse the wages. Let Christian parents follow their children into the Sabbath School. Let them know to whom they are committed. Let them, by their frequent

presence, and words of cheer, make it known to those thus engaged, that their hearts are enlisted on their behalf.

It is unquestionable that the Sabbath School should be amply furnished and sustained by the liberality of the Church. In many of our churches it has formerly been the practice, not only to allow those who, often through much self-denial, instruct in the Sabbath School to pay for its support; but it is rather expected that this burden should fall upon them. In some of the churches not a dollar is contributed from year to year, for this most essential work. And this tax often falls heavily upon those who, having willing hearts, have but limited pecuniary resources. All this is clearly wrong. The Church is under the most solemn obligations to see that the Sabbath School has ample support.

The Church should see to it that she keeps fully abreast of the times in the instruction and care of her children and all the young she can bring under her influence. All modern appliances for making the Sabbath School attractive, so far as they are sensible and reasonable, should be used. There are, and are likely to be, some extravagances of Sabbath School reform and progress (falsely so called) that our ministry and eldership intrusted with the supervision of so great an interest, should wisely avoid, sifting the precious from the vile, reaping the good but throwing the bad away. The Sabbath School may be run into a mere secular exhibition, and it may be doubted whether, just now, there is not a tendency to worldly conformity in this direction. Your committee would simply call the attention of brethren to this drift of things, quite assured that sound, discriminating judgment in reference to all these matters will prevail, and while we neglect no means by which the power of the Sabbath School may be augmented—using all appropriate helps—we shall avoid the extreme of letting down the standard to meet the tastes of the children of this world.

There is a single subject to which, though not formally coming within the sphere of this report, your committee will barely refer, viz., the use of the Shorter Catechism as a text Book in all our Sabbath Schools, some portion of the time of each month. No better formula of Christian doctrine can be recommended to give direction to young minds in pursuit of scriptural truth. We commend its use.

Resolved, That it be urgently recommended to those churches where the Sabbath School is not under Sessional control, to secure such amendment at the earliest period practicable.

Resolved, That it is the solemn duty of all the churches to give the Sabbath Schools their cordial sympathy and all needed pecuniary support.

TROUBLE IN THE MISSIONS TO THE COLES.

From your issue of July 1st, just at hand, I perceive that European prints have not given you altogether correct views of the lamentable rupture in the Mission among the Coles of central India. The Mission was founded by dear old *Papa Gassner*, of Berlin, and the laborers he sent out, whether of a "high grade of culture and ability" or not, have the seal of God's rich blessing in a remarkable degree—having gathered around them some twelve to fifteen thousand hopeful converts—not all communicants, but professed adherents, having abjured idolatry and heathen superstitions—since the origin of the Mission, about 1846, I believe.

Nor were these old Missionaries jealous of younger laborers, but anxious to have them come and share in the burdens, toils and joys of their work. But, of course, they would have young Missionaries placed on an equality with themselves—not above them. And when the Home Committee, or "Curatorium," sent out a young man of no Indian or Missionary experience whatever, clothed with full authority to upturn and remodel the plans, policy and working of the Mission, irrespective of the views, feelings and convictions of these old laborers, who had borne the burden and heat of the day, what wonder there was a "rupture." The act of the "Curatorium" was an outrage—a rash violation of the fundamental principles of true wisdom and Christian courtesy. I think it would have been wiser, and better every way, if the old Missionaries had quietly and firmly remonstrated, and then stood firmly at their posts of duty, letting the obstinate "Curatorium" cut off all their home funds and supplies, and casting themselves and their work wholly on the Lord and the generosity of His people; but all men have not faith. It is not strange that these old toil-worn Missionaries, in such an emergency, looked about for some strong society to help to support them and their impoverished families; nor is it strange that the Christian sympathies of Bishop Milman, and others like-minded, were moved to extend the needed help.

In setting back the interests of the Mission, retarding a glorious work, and furnishing a stumbling-block, or ground of reproach and triumph to infidels and worldlings, the rupture is disastrous and woful in the extreme. But as I view the case, and as all Christian men here in India view it, so far as I am informed, the responsibility of all this mischief—of all the evil results of the rupture—rests wholly with the "Curatorium" and the young man they sent over with arbitrary power to "lord it over God's heritage," which he had borne no part in gathering.

Let me not be understood as justifying

Bishop Milman, as so suddenly taking over, and reorganizing the old Missionaries. Generous help, by voluntary contributions, to enable them to tide over the difficulty, will still free to become reconciled to their "Curatorium," would doubtless have been more magnanimous on the Bishop's part. But all errors in the subsequent details are trifling compared to the first astounding mistake of the "Curatorium." The act can claim no precedent in the days of the Apostles, or from that time to this, outside of Rome at least, or no precedent but what has developed like lamentable results. R. G. WILDER.

THE PARABLES.

Very few persons seem competent to give an intelligent reason why Christ spake to the people in parables. It seems to be commonly supposed that His design was merely to better enforce His teachings upon their minds, by means of those outward illustrations with which they were familiar. But is it not often the case that illustrations lead the mind away from the truth, and that we childishly are picking out the stories and similes of the writer or speaker, like plums from a pudding, leaving the plainer and more nutritious food behind? What reader has not skimmed good books to find out the smallest moiety of a story, skipping all the edifying remainder?

We can best understand Christ's purpose by remembering that He was the Word by whom all things were made. He stands now in visible form among the works of His own hands. With every blade of grass beneath His feet He was familiar. He knew it before its existence, traced its every line, rounded its every curve. He stands now the artist in His gallery to explain the purpose and meaning of His works to the only one of them that was capable of comprehending His purpose, and of entering into sympathy with Himself. He speaks to man, the priest as well as the king of creation, whose duty it is to gather into one grand center of thought and word the praises of all creation, and to present them before the throne of God.

He had made man in His own image, but He had also made other things "after their kind." What was this "kind" which preceded created things, which, in God's thought, all these things came after? Some have said: "These things that we see around us, are not realities, but there is a reality which underlies them. This visible and phenomenal world reflects an unseen world of spirits, in which all things are real, are the very thought of God. The one world corresponds to the other both as wholes and in their several parts. These are the *kinds* after which God made all things, the *ideas* (Plato called them) from which visible things are copied."

How far does Christ's teaching justify these guesses? He certainly came to teach of an unseen world of reality. He called it the kingdom of heaven. He said that men who lived only in and for these outward and seen things were misled by them,—that they were blind leaders of the blind. He certainly also spoke of things in the unseen world which corresponded to things in the seen world. He talked of a *water of life* to one who busied herself in drawing the earthly water. He spoke of a bread of life to those who followed Him because they did eat of the loaves and were filled. He looked around among the works of His hands to see which he should choose and select as representing the most apposite truth of the unseen world, saying: "Whereunto shall I liken the kingdom of heaven, and with what comparison shall I compare it?" When He found men's hearts closed to the truth conveyed by these outward symbols, He exclaimed that it were useless to speak to them of the naked realities,— "If I have told you earthly things and ye believed not, how shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things?"

Thus did He go to and fro among the works of His creative power, recognizing the deep meaning and divine purpose which underlay them all, showing us in wondrous speech how these would be open to us, if the kingdom of heaven had come in its power within us. Under His lightest word lay a deep philosophy; His words are spirit and they are life.

And He pointed out also the truth, that the occupations and business of men are providentially ordained as signs of the same kingdom of heaven; that the works of men like the works of God, are spiritually significant. God who has ordained man's wants and the means of their supply, and has given the skill of the workman and the craft of the artificer, has in these also spoken, to every open ear, of the truths that are eternal. The building of houses, the pruning of vines, the mending of garments, the fulling of cloth, the dragging of nets, the planting of trees, the searching after treasure, the sowing of seed, the ingathering of the harvest, the buying and selling of the market-place, all these and all man's manifold labors are ordained as signs and witnesses of the things that are unseen and eternal.

And above all, He proclaims that the social relations of life are thus anti-types of the eternal relations which exist between the Godhead and the creation, and within the Godhead itself. Earthly sonship speaks of the Eternal Son, and of the sonship which we men share with that Elder Brother. Earthly fatherhood speaks of a Father in heaven who has a father's heart for us. Earthly brotherhood tells of a friend that sticketh closer than a brother. Earthly com-

munion of spirit with spirit tells of a communion with a Spirit that is divine. The earthly family betokens another and wider, that is of God. The earthly kingdom is the outward sign of the kingdom of God, the kingdom of heaven. R. E. T.

GAMES, RACES AND FIGHTS.

THEIR SIGNIFICANCE.

John Brown, the devoted "friend" of "Rab," first saw this heroic animal in a fight:—

"A dog-fight!" shouted Bab, and he was off and so was I, both of us all but praying that it might not be over before we got up.

And the genial author goes on to justify even the love of witnessing a chance dog fight where no human cruelty had caused it—but only the native appetite of the animals. His justification is not so much because dogs like fighting, or as Watts has it, because they "delight to bark and bite," as because in the sharp exercise which delights them, one sees "the three great cardinal virtues of dog or man—courage, endurance and skill—in intense action."

But whether any one agrees with this genial writer or not, no one, I think, can dispute the fact, that there is in human nature a string which vibrates with keen pleasure in the presence of a doubtful contest. And still further, the capacity to enjoy the view of a struggle between opposing parties, is a good capacity, however much it may be abused. A good rifle may do foul work in a bandit's hand, but it is a good rifle still. And the contest-loving faculty may do the bad work of fostering gambling, as at Baden-Baden—or of encouraging bull-fights, as in Spain and Cuba—or man-fights, as in ancient Rome—or horse-racing, as in England and the United States—but it is a good faculty which is thus abused. The love of contest gives tone and vigor to all human pursuits.

Rising above the grosser exhibitions of this tendency, we find in the financial and business struggles of men, the keenest joy, not in the successful result, but in the sharp struggle to win.

The same is true of intellectual contests and rivalries. Those who strive in the intellectual race, for victories in literature and science, have a joy in the contest which is an abundant reward.

A wonderful, and no doubt healthy, interest has gathered recently about a boat race on the Thames. Uncounted throngs witnessed the contest, and millions waited to hear of the issue, and debated and discussed the whole affair. How wonderful the interest in so trivial an event. Four men from Harvard, were testing their strength with four from Oxford, and forty millions of people were looking on with curious interest.

It was because of the innate love in human nature for all such trials of strength.

But all the while so many millions of minds were busy with this unimportant struggle between two boats' crews, another struggle was observed, perhaps, by millions of angels—a struggle not yet ended and of inconceivable importance.

While all these millions have fixed their eyes on the Thames, there is feason to believe that millions of angels have been looking down on the United States, and asking the question, not whether four men from Harvard could out-row four men from Oxford, but whether the Christianity of America is muscular enough to win in the race against the materialism—the infidelity—the popery—of America.

Watching the greatest contest the world ever saw, they have wondered how the race would end, whether evangelical Christianity would carry off the crown or fall behind in the course.

The contest, when the infant Church grappled with the discouraged idolatry and the depravity of the Roman empire, was not superior in interest or importance to this in which we are engaged. Here we are set down in these days of telegraphs and railways, and books and newspapers, and ocean steamers, to grapple with the world which is coming to us from the East and from the West. Here on our own soil is a race for the goal of supremacy. Here is going on a contest for Gospel institutions, for quiet Sabbaths, for Christian civilization, for moral control. And, I believe, it is to those, who see it clearly, more exciting and engrossing than any contest ever seen on this world before.

But we do not see the whole significance of the contest-loving nature which God has given us, until we take in all the proportions, both in space and time, of the great struggle with moral evil which is going on in the universe. Every man was made to take part in this great contest—to join with God—against the forces of evil. This is the noblest development which this capacity unfolds.

Here on this higher ground, side by side with Christ, the Captain of our salvation, fighting evil and winning victories for God, it was designed to give the love of contest freest play. And wherever are seen men taking keen interest in debasing games and cruel sports, and low contests, it is only a proof that they ought to be arrayed in the ranks of moral contestants in this great struggle against sin.

The poor bloated frequenters of the dog-pit are only abusing a faculty which might, if rightly used, place them in the same ranks with Michael and Gabriel, and all the mighty heroes of the faith.

Estranged from God, all this love of base games, and fights, and races, is only the bad action of one of the noblest faculties of human nature. C. C. K.