THE DAILY PITTSBURGH GAZETTE AND COMMERCIAL JOURNAL.

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SATURDAY MORNING, JULY 12.

THE FOURTH PENNSYLVANIA CAVALRY.

WASHINGTON CITY, July 7, 1862.

EDITORS GAZETTE: Among the numerous and somewhat conflicting reports of the terrible and sanguinary battles on the Peninsula, I have looked in vain for some notice of the part taken in them by the 4th Pennsylvania Volunteer Cavalry. While I must confess that it would have been a difficult task, under the circumstances, to have given special notice of each and every regiment engaged, during that long and bloody struggle, yet, I think it a little strange that this regiment should be entirely overlooked, when it is considered that it took part in nearly every battle from the first to the last, and vied with the other brave troops of McCall's division, in enduring fatigue and privation.

Your gallant Col. J. H. Childs, with three companies, arrived near the scene of action on Wednesday, the 25th ult., and joined the five companies that had come on before, leaving four companies behind, under command of Lieutenant Colonel J. K. Korr, who was prevented from joining the regiment by communication being cut off with White House Landing.

On the day following, (Thursday, June 26th) the battle was fought near Mechanicsville. Companies E and F, Capts. Herron and Weidman, were out on picket duty, and, in company with the Bucktails, were the first to receive the attack. And they performed important service by keeping the General posted with regard to the movements of the enemy, and only retired from their dangerous post, after having been nearly surrounded by the rebels, when they were ordered to do so. On as important scouting expedition, to note the movements of the enemy on our right flank, while the rest of the regiment, under command of Col. Childs and Major Covode, was drawn up in line of battle to await further orders, and having in the meantime been joined by companies E and F, they remained at their post all night. In the morning, Friday, June 27th, they were ordered to march to the neighborhood of Gaine's Bridge, and take their position on the field, where, from after regard the bloody strife in all its fearful terrors. During the afternoon, they were joined by Company C, Capt. McCollough, and though our brave officers and men were not ordered to take any other part in this terrible battle than simply to stand at their post, they performed this duty with remarkable coolness and bravery. Directly under the fire of the enemy, who approached them over a hill (and whose aim was doubtless too high, otherwise our noble regiment must have been almost exterminated,) they stood their ground and not an officer or man flinched from his duty, while our gallant Colonel rode along the lines, cheering and encouraging his brave men. After a long and desperate struggle, our lines were overpowered by superior numbers, exhausted by severe marching and hard fighting (which had now continued for about forty-eight hours) and became panic stricken and began to fall back. The 4th Pennsylvania Cavalry stopped their retreat, rallied them again to the conflict, and thus saved our brave and exausted troops from being driven by their enemies into the Chickahominy swamp, where they would have been literally butchered. And when, by the almost too late arrival of Meagher's Irish Brigade, the enemy was held in check, and our troops were ordered from the field, the 4th Pennsylvania Cavalry was the last to retire, and, as they slowly and quietly marched from the field, they were greeted by the hearty cheers of the Irish Brigade, who duly appreciated the coolness and intrepidity of our noble little band. Our loss on this memorable battle field was one killed and four or five slightly wounded.

Without referring to the events that occurred in connection with the rapid retreat of our right wing of our army, it is sufficient to say that the 4th Pennsylvania Cavalry occupied a very important and dangerous position in the terrible battle of Monday, June 30th. They were posted just to the rear of the left wing of McCall's Division, and in full range of the artillery and musketry of the enemy. And when our left wing was overpowered, they fell back and formed in the rear of our lines, where they remained until our brave troops drove the enemy from the field.

It is impossible to tell the number of casualties during this truly awful battle, but, according to my judgment, was the most hotly contested and horrible in its issue of any one of the series. However, we had a number of men killed and missing. Adjutant Biddle was severely wounded in the leg, and in our hasty retreat we were compelled to leave him with Surgeon N. F. Marsh in the hospital, and they doubtless fell into the hands of the enemy. Capt. Taylor and his company were acting as Gen. McCall's bodyguard, and I hope they all came off safely.

I confess that I feel proud of the 4th Pennsylvania Cavalry, and I do think that the brave officers and soldiers of this regiment, in connection with the other noble fellows who fought side by side with them, should have their due meed of praise, for they have truly proved themselves worthy of the noble State whose troops have borne so conspicuous and honorable a part in this unnatural and wicked war. And I am sure that the Pennsylvania Reserve Corps, (McCall's Division) their noble General, and all the officers and men who fought so bravely and endured fatigue and privation so patiently, during that long and bloody week, and lost so many of their gallant officers and brave men, are entitled to the lasting gratitude of our whole country, and should, and doubtless will, receive the credit due to their heroic deeds of valor.

CHAPLAIN.

[Blairsville *Record* and Franklin *Citizen* please copy.]

Mr. Stanton.

The New York *Tribune*, in an article defending Mr. STANTON from the assaults of the *Herald* and *World*, says:

We ask in vain for specification—for facts. It is assumed that there were troops somewhere that might have been safely spared to reinforce Gen. McClellan, but no one tells us where they were to be found, nor is there a particle of evidence that, if such there were, the Secretary is responsible for withholding them. It is assumed, indeed, that Secretary Stanton is responsible for the division of commands in Virginia; but this assertion is utterly unsupported and explicitly contradicted. That division is an inevitable consequence of the selection of Fortress Monroe as the base and the Yorktown Peninsula as the starting-point of the advance upon Richmond. No bly conduct the operations necessary to the defense of Washington and the Shenandoah Valley. Napoleon or Wellington would have peremptorily refused to undertake it. We know not who is responsible for the grave mistake involved in the approach to Richmond by way of Yorktown and Williamsburg rather than the Rappahannock and Fredericksburg; but this has not even been charged upon Secretary Stanton; and it is this which compelled a division of forces, and commands that necessarily weakened the column operating against Richmond.

The President is solely responsible to the nation for the correct and efficient prosecution of the war, and we have no advice to give him as to the composition of his Cabinet. If he believes the country can be better served by a recast or modification of his Cabinet, so be it; we have nothing to say on that point. But we *do* protest, most determinedly, against the whole scapegoat theory of government—against the sacrifice of any capable functionary to groundless and unjust clamor.

[For the Pittsburgh Gazette.]

Case of the Central Church, Allegheny City.

As you have noticed at considerable length, though *unofficially*, the recent action of the Presbytery of Allegheny city, in relation to the Central church and its difficulties, please do that Presbytery the favor to publish the enclosed abstract of their proceedings in that painful case. It is perhaps only fair that their action should be laid before your numerous readers in the precise form which has received the approval of their Stated and Temporary Clerks.

Respectfully yours,
W. ANNAN, Stated Clerk.
ELLIOT E. SWIFT, Temp'y Clerk.

At the meeting of the Presbytery of Allegheny City, on the 8th of July, to consider the report of a Committee appointed to visit the Central church, and if possible to heal the dissensions which have arisen therein, the following action was taken; and the Temporary and Stated Clerks were directed to publish in the *Presbyterian Banner* the documents which are necessary to place the subject clearly before the public.

The first of these documents is the Report of the Committee appointed at the meeting of June 10th, through their Chairman, the Rev. Dr. Swift, as follows:

"The committee appointed to confer with the memorialists and the other part of the congregation of the Central church of Allegheny City, in reference to the difficulties existing in the said church, would respectfully present to Presbytery the following report of their proceedings, and the results of them:

"Your committee met at the Central church, agreeably to appointment, and both parties being duly and fully represented by their respective committees, proceeded to hear both, as to the nature and extent of their existing difficulties and the possibility of an amicable adjustment. Having spent some hours in this way, on the day designated, they, by adjournment, met there a second time, on the 3d inst., when the following results were attained:

"Your committee deemed it a matter of importance in the outset of their proceedings to ascertain the extent of the dissatisfaction existing in the congregation, or in other words, the comparative strength of the respective parties. So far as this could be determined, it was found that there were 174 of the members and pewholders, who adhere to the pastor and congregation, and 91 with the memorialists—that for the restoration of the church edifice, the former paid $3,463, and the latter $4,927, and the amount of the pew-rents of the former is $1,113, and the latter $1,099 2-12.

"The first question which properly came before your committee was whether by any means of mutual explanation and fraternal conference, these two parties could be amicably reunited in their existing pastoral relations. Both sides expressed their belief that there were no personal feelings or alienations which would prevent their harmonious union and co-operation under a different relation, but while the majority expressed their steadfast adherence to their pastor, the minority alleged that they could not be induced to remain under his ministry, while he continued in words to avow, and in action to express, as they believed, his unwillingness to pray for the success of our arms, and a blessing upon the efforts of our Government to suppress the rebellion. On this subject it was found that there had been, and could apparently be, no change on either side, and your committee accordingly proceeded to a second inquiry which they had presented, viz., what terms the parties would respectively propose for an amicable adjustment of their pecuniary and other claims, in case a division of the congregation should be deemed necessary. The memorialists proposed at the first meeting either to refund to the other part of the congregation all they had paid for the erection of the church-edifice, and so retain possession of the building and the church charter; or, if the others preferred it, they would on being reimbursed in the sum they had paid, relinquish all their claims to the church property and charter. At the second meeting the majority acceded to the first of these alternatives, and proposed to refund to the memorialists, the amount of their entire outlay, amounting to $4,927, in monthly payments, if as trustees and individual claimed, they would give them the exclusive and peaceable possession of the property. The memorialists, on the one side, and the committee of the congregation on the other, unanimously assented to this agreement, and the conference was then closed.

"It will be seen that this adjustment proposed by the memorialists, and accepted by the 'church,' has reference simply to the 'pecuniary and other claims involved in the separation;' while the duty prescribed by the Presbytery, was that the Committee should, if possible, reconcile the 'differences' existing between the two parties in the church. The preservation of the unity of the church as far as Presbytery is concerned is the paramount desideratum; and this arrangement of the pecuniary question does not seem to have resulted, as of course it did not contemplate, the accomplishment of anything toward a reconciliation of differences. The two parties in the congregation are separated as widely as ever; and an important post in the church is weakened to a serious extent. If it be that the pastor is a 'stumbling-block' in the way of a reconciliation, should not a sincere regard for the interests of the church be a sufficient motive to induce Presbytery to recommend to the resignation of the pastoral charge of that congregation.

"The Committee, therefore, submit to Presbytery the adoption of one or the other of the following alternatives, viz:

"1. That inasmuch as the continuance of the present pastoral relation involves the unjust exclusion from their rights of so large a number of members of this congregation who, although numerically in a minority, have much the largest pecuniary interest in the church building; and that, inasmuch as the preservation of the unity and integrity of this large and important congregation is of much more consequence than the interests of an individual pastor, therefore the Presbytery earnestly recommend to Dr. Plumer the resignation of his pastoral charge.

"2. The second alternative which the Committee recommend, in case Presbytery should not deem it expedient to adopt the course just stated is, that they assent to the pecuniary arrangement agreed to by the parties, and that measures be taken for the organization of the minority into a new congregation, in case they are not prepared at present to go into such an organization, that the money to be refunded by the majority be invested and held for the erection of a new Presbyterian church at some future time, in the city of Allegheny.

"Should this alternative be adoped by Presbytery, the Committee would suggest, that in view of the causes of this contemplated division and the danger of a misconstruction of the aims of Presbytery in assenting to it, the brethren of that congregation be carefully and kindly reminded of the high ground which, with vast unanimity, our Church has taken on the obligations of our people to a becoming loyalty to our Government, and sympathy with it in its efforts to suppress the existing rebellion; that care should be taken by them to discountenance all disloyal sentiments, and to be united with all our churches in maintaining and giving utterance to that sacred and noble adherence to the Constitution of this Republic, and the integrity of this nation, for which the Presbyterian Church has ever been distinguished; and that it is in the full persuasion that our brethren of that church will kindly receive and faithfully heed this Presbyterial counsel, that we now sanction this arrangement, and division of the congregation.

"All of which is respectfully submitted.

"E. P. SWIFT,
"R. L. MCANDY,
"A. WILLIAMS,
"A. CAMERON,
"THOS. H. NEVIN,
} Committee."

The Presbytery approved of the preamble of the report, containing a narrative of proceedings; and a motion was made to adopt the first alternative, closing thus: "that the Presbytery earnestly recommend to Dr. Plumer the resignation of his pastoral charge." After free and full interchange of sentiment by the members of the Presbytery, including Dr. Plumer, who made several of the Memorialists and other members of the congregation, the vote was taken and resulted in a tie, as follows:

Yeas—J. F. McLaren, D. D., A. Williams, D. D., W. Annan, L. L. Conrad, E. E. Swift, T. H. Nevin.

Nays—L. R. McAboy, D. D., D. E. Nevin, J. Launitz, A. Cameron, J. D. Stokes, R. H. Davis.

Rev. Dr. Elliot asked to be excused from voting, owing to his official relations to Dr. P., as Professor in the Seminary. Rev. Dr. Swift voted *non liquet*. Mr. Richard Bard, the elder from the Central church, and one of the memorialists complaining of Dr. Plumer's disloyalty, declined voting on account of these relations. Rev. John Brown does not seem to have been present.

The Moderator, Rev. D. A. Cunningham, gave the casting vote in the negative, thus deciding the question in favor of continuing the pastoral relation of Dr. P. with the Central church.

Presbytery now had a recess.

After recess, the subject was resumed; and on motion the *second* alternative was amended by striking out all after the words, "agreed to by the parties," in the last paragraph but one; and it was then adopted with great unanimity. By this action the Presbytery gave their sanction "to the pecuniary arrangement agreed to by the parties," as it is concisely stated in the narrative prefixed to the Report of the Committee.

The Rev. Dr. Williams, in order to prevent public misconception, as to the true position occupied by the Presbytery, and more fully to make known their views, now presented the following paper:

"As an expression of the views of Presbytery, in regard to our pending National difficulties, the following action is hereby adopted, viz:

"1st, *Resolved*, That the present rebellion, in which a portion of the people of the Southern States have risen up in arms against the Government of these United States, and have forced upon us the alternative of yielding to their demands, or defending our very existence as a nation, by a most deplorable civil war, is wholly without excuse, and desperately wicked.

"2. *Resolved*, That the success of this rebellion, involving, as it would, the establishment of an independent and necessarily hostile confederacy, based avowedly upon the perpetuation of human slavery as its 'cornerstone,' would be ruinous to our nation, and disastrous to the human race; and therefore, it is our duty, as citizens and Christians, to seek its overthrow by whatever expenditure of treasure or of blood may be found necessary.

"3. *Resolved*, That it is the duty of all ministers to instruct their people as to their duty in this terrible crisis; and in conducting the dedication of the sanctuary, to pray earnestly to God for his help in this time of trial; that he may sustain our Government; that he may give success to our armies; that he would frustrate the devices of our enemies, and finally forgive their sin and give them a better mind; that he would remove the causes of this great controversy; and, in his own time and way, restore to us unity and peace as a people."

On the adoption of this paper, the yeas and nays were called, and resulted as follows:

Yeas—E. E. Swift, D. D.; J. F. McLaren, D. D.; W. Annan; D. A. Cunningham; L. L. Conrad; Elliott E. Swift; John Launitz. Elders—Alex. Cameron, R. H. Davis, Richard Bard; John D. Stokes, Theo. H. Nevin.

Nays—None.

Rev. Dr. Elliott was necessarily absent, and by permission of Presbytery. Rev. Dr. Plumer, when his name was called, declined voting, and assigned reasons for this course. Rev. D. E. Nevin and Rev. John Brown were also absent, though they had previously been enrolled.

The following ministers were not present at any of the sessions, viz.: Revs. N. Todd, E. Drake, John Davis, James Allison, M. L. Wortman, and John M. Smith.

The result of the vote was *fourteen* yeas; *none*; one declined voting, and *three* were absent.

W. ANNAN, Stated Clerk.
E. E. SWIFT, Temp. Clerk.

The Allegheny City Presbytery.

EDITORS GAZETTE—Your report of, and your editorial remarks on the proceedings of the Allegheny City Presbytery, are, in the main, correct, as to the facts. But your inferences, and the application of them, convey a wrong and injurious impression. I respectfully offer the following remarks, hoping to efface that impression, which is anything but creditable or agreeable to our loyalty:

1. The meeting of Presbytery was an unusually small one. The Presbytery contains twenty ministers and is entitled to fourteen elders—in all thirty-four. All the ministers except one, a foreign missionary, are accustomed to attend the meetings. The being out of this missionary and not counting Dr. Plumer in this case, we might have thirty-two votes on any question. But on the question in which you say the Presbytery *sustained* Dr. P. only seven votes were given that seemed to accord with his wishes. True, it was a majority of those voting, but should it, *before the public*, implicate the other *twenty-five*, providentially absent or not voting, or voting on the other side, in the blame which is attached to the idea of "sustaining" Dr. P.? I think not.

2. The vote was taken unexpectedly, just at the close of the afternoon session, when there was some confusion by persons leaving the house, and when some of the members, supposing that the session was ended, had reached the door, and when some had gone from the house altogether.

3. The vote, at any rate, was not a test of the views of members as to Dr. P.'s loyalty. Two or three of them were explicitly stated that they differed from him on that point. I was not one of the seven, but voted on the other side. Yet I deem it but just to say for them, that they might have many other reasons for voting as they did on the specific point of the pastoral relation, and that, while this is the case, they ought not, and much regarded as endorsing, sustaining, or in any way or measure, sympathizing with Dr. P.'s alleged sentiments on the state of the country.

4. Your introduction, into your editorial, of the resolution read by me, accompanied by the remark that it did not even obtain a seconder, though true in fact, is liable to be misunderstood, and to confirm the wrong impression, which I fear the rest of your article will make. There were plenty of persons who would have seconded it, and I think, enough to have carried it had it been formally offered. I read it merely to express my views of the sentiment to which it refers, but I was satisfied with the resolutions of Dr. Williams instead, which were carried *unanimously*, Dr. P. alone declining to vote. I believe my resolution, had not Dr. W.'s not been introduced, would have carried almost as unanimously. Had Dr. W.'s resolutions, *with the vote*, been introduced into your article, better justice to the Presbytery would have stood, in the view of your readers, in a better, because a fairer position.

Very respectfully,
J. P. MCLAREN.

DR. PLUMER NOT "SUSTAINED" BY THE PRESBYTERY.

EDITORS GAZETTE—The representation of the Plumer case, given in your editorials and in the communication of "Ops," do great injustice to the Presbytery of Allegheny city. It was wholly on *ecclesiastical* grounds that the relation between Dr. Plumer and his congregation was not dissolved. This will be seen from the strong resolutions on the state of the country, which were adopted *unanimously* by the Presbytery. The last of these resolutions was intended directly to condemn Dr. Plumer's course in the matter complained of by the memorialists, but as he was not on *trial*, and no request had been made for the dissolution of the pastoral relation, it would have been contrary to ecclesiastical usage for the Presbytery to have dissolved the relation in these circumstances. There was no motion for the dissolution of the relation, but only to *advise* Dr. P. to resign.

So also in regard to Dr. McLaren's paper. It was not seconded, because Dr. Williams' resolutions, which were still