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Presbyterian Banner.

VOL. X., NO. 15. PITTSBURGH, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 28, 1861. WHOLE NO. 483.

THE PRESBYTERIAN BANNER
Publication Office:
GAZETTE BUILDINGS, 84 Fifth St., Pittsburgh, Pa.
Philadelphia, South-West Cor. of 7th and Chestnut

ADVERTISEMENTS.
TERMS IN ADVANCE.
A Square, (8 lines or less,) one insertion, 50 cents; each subsequent insertion, 40 cents; each line beyond eight, 5 cts
A Square per quarter, $4.00; each line additional, 33 cents
A Reduction made to advertisers by the year.
BUSINESS NOTICES of Ten lines or less, $1.00 each additional line, 10 cents.
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Proprietors and Publishers.

[Original.]

The Absent.

BY A SOLDIER.

Away from home and friends most dear,
In this disastrous day,
Far off toward the rising sun,
Eight hundred miles away.

Chorus—Eight hundred miles away,
Eight hundred miles away,
Far off toward the rising sun,
Eight hundred miles away.

Along with those whose hearts are brave,
My country's call t' obey,
I grasp the deadly firelock,
Eight hundred miles away.

Chorus—Eight hundred, &c.

While dangers threat and duty calls,
'T is here I mean to stay,
Prepared to fight the enemy,
Eight hundred miles away.

Chorus—Eight hundred, &c.

But while upon Potomac's bank
I'm called awhile to stay,
Can I forget the ones I love,
Eight hundred miles away?

Chorus—Eight hundred, &c.

Can I forget the partner dear,
With whom I used to stay;
The many joyful hours we passed,
Eight hundred miles away?

Chorus—Eight hundred, &c.

And then those prattling cherubs who,
Amid their childish play,
Have often swelled my heart with joy,
Eight hundred miles away.

Chorus—Eight hundred, &c.

Ah, no! While life's warm currents gush,
And cause this heart to play,
I'll not forget the ones I love,
Eight hundred miles away.

Chorus—Eight hundred, &c.

And while beneath an Eastern sky
An exile I shall stay,
I know I'm thought of oft by those
Eight hundred miles away.

Chorus—Eight hundred, &c.

But should disease or rebel foe
Strike down this feeble clay;
Or should death's shafts be hurled at those
Eight hundred miles away:

Chorus—Eight hundred, &c.

Still there's a home, a blissful home,
Within the realms of day,
Where they and I shall meet again,
In heaven, far, far away.

Chorus—In heaven, far, far away,
In heaven, far, far away,
Where they and I shall meet again,
In heaven, far, far away.

H. H.

For the Presbyterian Banner.

The Christian Race.

Illustration gives us clearer views of truth, and causes it to make deeper impressions. Paul knew this well, and he most happily alludes to things with which men are familiar, that he may both convince and excite. Among the honorable and popular contests, of the day in which he lived and the people to whom he wrote, is the *foot race*. The course is prepared. The prize is set forth. The athletæ are enrolled, trained and ready. Tens of thousands of people are collected. The signal is given, and the eager expectants of glory and reward, spring at the instant, and press forward in the course. The mighty multitude look on with breathless attention, as one and another lag behind or fall by the way. At length one has reached the distant goal, his name is shouted by the public herald, and his temples encircled by the hard-earned crown. The palm branch is placed in his right hand, in token of victory, and his native city, exulting in the honor of her successful son, conducts him home with the most extravagant demonstrations of joy.

Such was the Grecian race, and such its reward. Now we will look at the Christian's race, and the reward he shall receive. In his course are many difficulties, but he must "run with patience," not heeding the siren tongue of temptation which would induce him to loiter, or altogether turn aside from the way. Think you the athleta, as he strove for the crown, cared for aught else? Did he stop to pluck the wayside flower, or encumber himself with particles of shining dust? No; he ever pressed on, disdaining even to glance at any thing of minor importance. So the Christian, disdaining the petty and dangerous enjoyments of earth, must ever look forward, fixing his eye with an unflinching gaze on the pleasures of eternity.

He, too, is surrounded by "a cloud of witnesses," who watch every movement with intense interest. I have often thought if we could but realize this, what a great influence it must exert on our daily life. Not only are human friends and enemies watching over every step with closest scrutiny, either wishing us "God speed" or rejoicing in our halting, but other eyes are upon us; some of spirits dark and malignant, who busy themselves in placing stumbling-blocks in our way, and whispering evil thoughts and blasphemies in our ears; others of spirits bright and pure, who have charge over us, and by high and holy motives incite us to persevere.

These are thoughts which might well induce us to take heed how we run; and above all, did we but remember that "our heavenly Father" is ever present, chiding and bringing us back when we stray, or with his strong and gentle hand raising and strengthening us when we stumble and fall. Surely such a consideration would compel us to watch each step as we press forward. But is there no reward offered in this race? Are we to have the toil, and pain, and strife for nought? Yes! Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory, there is a reward offered; one which far exceeds all we can conceive; for we run not to obtain perishable crowns and withering palms, but those that are incorruptible. In the language of one of Zion's sweetest songs,

"Palms of glory, raiment bright,
Crowns that never fade away,
Gird and deck the saints in light,
Priests, and kings, and conquerers they."

When we shall stand within the walls of the New Jerusalem, and "look o'er life's finished story," all aglow with the bright beatitude, we shall almost forget the trials of the way; while

"On a green and flowery mount,
Our happy souls shall sit,
And with transporting joy recount
The labors of our feet.

"Eternal glory to the King,
Who safely brought us through;
Our tongues shall never cease to sing,
And endless praise renew."

M.

Man is like a snowball; leave him lying in idleness, against the sunny face of prosperity, and all the good that is in him melts away; but let the jealous and envious persecute him, and it gathers strength at every revolution, till it grows to an avalanche.

EUROPEAN CORRESPONDENCE.

The "Trent" Boarded, and the Southern Commissioners Arrested—Opinions of the Press—A United States Vessel Burnt by the "Nashville"—Free Church Conference at Edinburgh—Foreign Missions and Lack of Volunteers—Dr. Duff and his Grand Idea—Dr. Tweedie's Exposition of it—Education and Evangelization in India—Dr. Candlish and his Address—Dr. Duff's Letter Analyzed—The Educated Hindoos, and Infidelity—Government Schools and Colleges—New Plan for the Education of Foreign Missionaries—The Post Office and its Statistics.

LONDON, Nov. 30, 1861.

The Seizure of the Southern Commissioners by a United States vessel, on board the *Trent*, West India Royal Mail Packet, has awakened a profound sensation here and all over the kingdom. Happily we have amongst us such a man as Mr. Adams, the United States Ambassador, who, at the Mansion House Dinner, justly said that one great duty devolving on diplomatists like himself was to give explanations, and smooth the path of peace and brotherhood. A painful feeling exists in some breasts, from the idea that Mr. Seward seeks a quarrel with Great Britain. I trust it is not so. The *Times* and *Daily Telegraph* both calm the public mind, while yet indicating the tendency of such events. They show, as does the *Morning Star*, that, strictly speaking, the right of search on the high seas does exist, and quote both American and British jurists on the question; but then, that *this* case is not within the rule. They evidently write in harmony with the views of the Government, which studiously desires to keep the peace; and it will be a woful day for both nations if ever they shall be hurried into actual collision. May God forbid it! and let all good men, in spite of the preachers of antipathies, revenges, and "satisfaction," say Amen. The *Times'* leader, on the day after the news arrived, was studiously calming in its style. The *Daily Telegraph* wrote in a similar strain, and the *Morning Star* said: "It is at any rate to be desired that questions of this sort should be discussed without heat, and decided without haste. If it should turn out that the *San Jacinto* has exceeded the authority which the law of nations concedes to belligerents over the ordinary rights of neutrals, we doubt not the United States Government will disclaim the act, and refuse to take advantage of its performance." The Conservative *Standard*, which represents a party which likes fighting more than others, was quite vehement. I have great hopes that by the spirit of Mr. Adams, and his conveyance to the President of the reasons of the British Cabinet's decision, as well as by Lord Russel's own letter, peace may be preserved.

Last week we had the first realization of the American contest, as brought very near to us, in the appearing on the Southampton bars of the Southern ship *Nashville*, having on board the officers and crew of a merchant Federal ship, which had been seized and burnt at sea.

The dismissal of General Fremont, and the avowal of the Government that slaves in the South would not be emancipated, but that those employed would be returned to loyal owners and their services paid for—while more easily understood by yourself and other friends of the negro than by English people—have undoubtedly dashed the hopes of those who were looking at the war as likely to have an anti-slavery issue. But the end is not yet; and who shall venture to say whether the abomination may not, in spite of human calculations or counsels, have an issue which will destroy forever the plan of those who so long sought extension of slavery? The reported speech of Col. Cochrane, and his proposal—so vehemently applauded—of putting arms into the hands of the slaves, seems to indicate tendencies which may end in all that has been hoped for by philanthropists. The difficulties surrounding the whole question of slavery, can only be appreciated by yourselves.*

A Mission Conference has just been held at Edinburgh, in connexion with the meeting of the Commission of the Free Church of Scotland. A serious diminution in the number of laborers in the Indian field has taken place. Dr. Duff, and those who remain at their posts, are overworked, and there has not been that promptitude of volunteering on the part of the students, licentiates, and ordained ministers, at home, which might have been anticipated. It was felt that a free and full conference at Edinburgh might be the means of giving information as to the actual condition of things, both discouraging and encouraging, as well as of rousing a spirit of prayerful zeal and self-consecration. It is well known that the Mission work of the Free Church has from the first been largely and directly educational. This was the grand idea of Alexander Duff, years ago, and the great men of the past. Chalmers and others thoroughly and heartily endorsed it. This feature is still to be preserved. And as Dr. Tweedie said at the opening of the Commission, their institutions are educational, but it is for a purpose, or rather for a crowd of purposes. These purposes are as follows:

"First, to train up a native ministry and native teachers for India, as the grace of God shall prepare converts for the work. For reasons which it would be superfluous to explain, that is one of our great aims, and in that aim we have been blessed in no common degree. The converts laboring in connexion with our missions as teachers, catechists, preachers, and ordained ministers, are such as prove to some minds that the Spirit of God has blessed of a truth the labors of our missionaries. But besides the aim now referred to, our missions keep in view another vital object, the grand terminus of all mission work—*viz.*, the converting of souls to God. In the class-room, in the chapel, in private intercourse—in short, in season and out of season, that is kept in view, and, as the result, 110 have been baptized in our mission at Madras on a profession of faith in the Saviour; 137 have been baptized at Calcutta; 51 at Nagpore; 88 at Poonah; and 115 at Bombay—making 501 in all, mainly the fruits of the Spirit's blessing on the labors of our missionaries among the young. This is no doubt only 'the day of small things.' But Omniscience itself, Omnipotence itself, asks the question—'Who hath despised the day?' It assures us of a brighter day to come. But our missions are more than this. They have other work in hand along with that now mentioned. They are in principle and in practice evangelistic also—they are so, I venture humbly to think, far more than is commonly known. In considering this point, we have to keep in view that for some months in the year, firstly, that by reason of the heat, and secondly, by reason of the rains, it is impossible for Europeans to itinerate and preach in India with safety; and making allowance for that, I for one am of opinion that our home church has not, as a whole, understood the extent to which preaching the Gospel, even in the usual technical sense of the Word, has been going on. There are some of our missionaries still alive, and some who have gone to their rest, who gave themselves heart and soul to the work. One of the missionaries of this Church—the late Rev. R. Nisbet—took his place among the foremost Mahratta speakers and preachers in India. Others have preached, and do preach in Bengali, in Tamie, in Telugu, and other Indian tongues—not merely in schools—though these are one special agency; but, moreover, in long tours, from time to time, the Gospel is preached, discussions are held, and all the usual appliances are employed for winning souls to the Saviour. On the one hand, and I crave special attention to the fact—other Christian bodies in India are largely adopting the system in our schools, as fitted to undermine the stupendous superstitions of India; and on the other, our missions are from year to year expanding in the direction of preaching. At Madras this is signally the case. At Bombay, Poonah, and Nagpore, it has always been the case. At Calcutta, where the educational element is so prominent, there has been far more of direct preaching, I believe, than the home church at all supposes. And slowly, but steadfastly, that is extending. Regarding the preaching of the Gospel in every possible form—to young and to old, to Baboo and to Pariah—as the grand result of all our missionary undertakings as a missionary Church, the end is kept in view; too tardily for the Church's longings, but yet according to the means which are put at our disposal. For years past it has been the aim of the Committee and of the missionaries to extend it more and more."

It will be observed from the foregoing, that it *education* is the *means*, *evangelization* is the *end* in view; so that this grand end is every year more largely aimed at and attained. "The system is outspreading—preaching the Gospel is its necessary terminus." Besides this, several of the Free Church missionaries have been employed with other missionaries in revising, translating, or perfecting translations of the Scriptures, along with other bodies, into some of the dialects of India. Some of them also are the authors of books and tracts bearing upon local superstitions. The Free Church has also Missions directly Evangelistic, among the Caffres and Fingoes of Africa. Dr. Candlish, Moderator of the Assembly, delivered the first address, or rather, as a lengthened and very important letter had just arrived from Dr. Duff, he analyzed the letter, and expounded it as bearing on the theme which he himself had undertaken to speak upon, namely, the Constitution of the Missions of the Free Church, especially as regards the central institutions in India. Dr. Duff's letter began thus: "Our system ought to be judged of, not with regard to heathen nations generally, and least of all, barbarous and savage tribes, *but with reference to the special peculiarities of Hindoo society, and providential circumstances connected with its government by Great Britain.*"

Starting from this, Dr. Duff proceeded to argue that the great object of all Evangelical Missions is to save sinners, and that out of this arises the question, How is this end to be most satisfactory accomplished? To begin with schools among savage tribes, *would* be absurd; but in the case of Hindoostan, with whom for the last three thousand years there has been a knowledge both of reading and writing, we may safely begin by educational appliances. Dr. Duff's second proposition was as follows: "Although we may begin at once with the multitudes of the young, we must do what we can for adults." And he affirms that the Free Church system of Missions, contrary to what has been sometimes supposed or said, "was deliberately planned to be an all-embracing system." "If all the parts," he continues, "did not come into immediate operation, it was because time was wanted for their development—even as all the parts of an oak, or of a cedar of Lebanon, are not developed when the seedling is committed to the ground." He then points out that "the main strength of the European agents hitherto has, doubtless, been given to teach, convert, and then train converts for the office of teachers and preachers, believing that in this way they were multiplying their own personal agency; believing that if God thus enabled them to train *even a few* of well-qualified native teachers and preachers, it was doing more for the evangelization of India than if they spent the whole of their own time and strength in directly attempting to preach through the vernacular to adults."

There are few thoughtful Christian ministers and people who do not increasingly feel that a *native ministry* is the grand hope of blessing to heathen nations, wherever they are found. If Judson were living now; if the living, loving, laborious Lodiana band; if those who, like Anderson, of Madras, died in the fullness of their strength upon the field, but who had the joy of seeing such a preacher as Rajah Go-Paul declare the glad tidings with a freedom, force, and fullness to which after a quarter of a century probably no Anglo-Saxon missionary could attain—were these able or alive to testify, surely their verdict would be unanimous. *Even with Jews* in Europe, we find that to deal with them most effectually we must have converts from among themselves, fired with zeal, full of love to Christ, and able to deal in a way almost impossible for a Gentile, with their Rabbinical prejudices on the one hand, and their Rationalistic tendencies on the other. And thus it is that by far the majority of the various agents of modern Missions to the Jews—Episcopal and Nonconformist, Home and Foreign—have found their missionaries mercifully raised up for them from among the *first fruits*—from the *early* converts. This, too, must be the hope of India.

Infidelity is not, as has been sometimes said or insinuated, the result of the system of teaching in English literature, science, &c., introduced to India by Dr. Duff. On the contrary, he writes as follows:

"Our Central Institution, in Calcutta, has been greatly blessed of God, as a counteractive to the rampant infidelising tendencies so rampant around us. It is a simple fact, that comparatively very few, indeed, of those trained in it have openly joined the anti-Christian infidel ranks. Many years ago, when the infidel host, under chosen leaders, openly challenged me, and we met, week after week, in assemblies of between five hundred and one thousand, for public discussion, it is a fact, that not one educated in our institution was found associated with the leaders, or taking any active part in favor of their cause. On the contrary, again and again did some one student—who, though he had not openly embraced Christianity, was fully alive to the fallacies in the arguments of its opponents, from the instruction he had received in our Institution—rise up, and boldly, in the presence of assembled hundreds of his countrymen, deal out the most triumphant refutation of their sophistries! The immediate effect was quite electrical, and the result, as regards the Christian or Bible cause, in a general way, unspeakably beneficial. As time rolled on, atheism, under the assaults made upon it, fell into discount. Young men, educated in Government institutions, ignorant of, yet hating Christianity, but feeling the want of some religion, fell back on the supposed Monotheism of their own ancient Vedas. But here, again, the effect of the teaching in our Institution became very noticeable. Accustomed as our young men were to the examination of historic and other Christian evidences, they saw and could prove that the Vedas had not a shred of solid evidence to vindicate their Divine authority. Accordingly, very few indeed from our Institution, either directly or indirectly, joined the ranks of the great and numerous Vedantic party. At last, the real nature of these books and their contents—often as puerile and false as the popular Puranic fables—came to be better known, and it was felt that their high pretensions were untenable. Then they entered on a new career, and formed a new-fangled system of 'theism,' still erroneously styling it Vedantism, but to which we gave the name of New Vedantism, to distinguish it from the Old, as also from any definite European system of theism. For several years they kept tinkering at their new theism; but it was found to be very cold, and left many wants and cravings of nature unsupplied. Well, they did keep drifting about very strangely. And not later than last year they got into what they now reckon their final haven. And what is that? The haven of intuitional religion! On this new light, which they have obtained from the spiritual Pantheists of Europe and America, they have published a large series of tracts, alike in Bengali and English. They have renounced the name of Vedantism, and substituted that of 'Brahmism'—Brahma, in its neuter form, being the term of the supreme impersonal essence of old Vedantism. Brahma they have connected with personality of some sort, and all the truths concerning him, and our relation to him, are discoverable, not by reasoning or revelation, but by intuition. 'When religion,' say they, 'lies in our intuitive consciousness, its truths we directly perceive, we require no argumentation, they approach us as self-evident realities. They are; spontaneous, instinctive, involuntary, practical, universal, primitive, original, self-evident, axiomatic,' &c., &c. All this, and much more, they attempt elaborately to illustrate, and in so doing, furnish long corroborative quotations from the writings of Parker, Emerson, Morell, Nelson, Foxton, Greg, Francis Newman, Sir William Hamilton, Kent, Cousin, and many others. For aggressive purposes, they have for years past been organized into a regular Society; they have their house or temple for weekly worship; they have a subscription fund for the sending out of preaching agents and the establishment of propagandist schools; they have classes of disciples and inquirers, and a large body of full or initiated and recognized members, gathered from the higher and wealthier educated classes—their influence is at once persuasive and powerful.

It will be observed how "intuitional religion," under the name of Christianity, and as now with hellish subtlety affecting many minds on both sides of the Atlantic, (as indicated toward the close of the above passage from Dr. Duff's letter,) has assumed an associated form, full of evil and danger. But says Dr. Duff, "I have been watching the effect of all this on the minds of young men admitted into our institution. Of the number who have joined their ranks must be small indeed." In fact after close investigation it has been found that "only an infinitesimal fraction of Free Church students and ex-students are members of the Samaj. This is a very telling statement, because that "During the last thirty years there must have gone forth at least about a fifth of the educated youth of Calcutta, and that they are to be found in all the mercantile and government offices in Calcutta. It is "the Government Schools and Colleges" (wherein Christian and Bible teaching is excluded!) "which almost exclusively furnish the leaders and members of the Brahman Samaj." Dr. Duff, therefore, argues for an extension and elevation, rather than a diminution and lowering of the system of educational institutes in Calcutta. Dr. Candlish thoroughly agrees with his views.

It now appears, as indicated by Mr. Braidwood, that the Wesleyan Society has established an institution of this kind at Madras, that the Church of England has laid it down as a rule, that an educated native ministry is essential to success, and that a missionary of the London Society had established a school in the heart of a native town on the Free Church principle. Doctor Duff says: "Many of our young men are in that state of mind and of actual knowledge, that in a day of the Spirits outpouring, hundreds of them might at once be awakened, quickened, and led joyfully to embrace the truth as it is in Jesus, becoming at once a well-equipped and well-furnished host of believers."

In the course of the conference, the Rev. Mr. Johnston very ably showed that the Free Church Missions would be quite inadequate, and as to their educational aspect, scarcely defensible—as souls needed immediate attention all around—but that they formed a part of a great catholic whole. And so we regard them the more complacently when we find that in India there are now four hundred European and American missionaries, forty-eight native evangelists, seven hundred catechists, three hundred and thirty-one native churches, eight thousand five hundred communicants, one hundred thousand converts, one thousand three hundred and fifty vernacular schools, ninety-three boarding schools, one hundred and two boarding schools for girls, one hundred and twenty-six English schools, three hundred and fifty day schools for girls. Besides these agencies there are twenty-five printing presses and several other means for translating and publishing the Scriptures in native languages.

The Rev. Dr. Wood, ex-Moderator of the Free Church, and one of the holiest and best of men, spoke admirably on the absolute necessity of raising up a native ministry by educational institutes, and also showed that in teaching there was really evangelistic work: "I confess I have no sympathy with any brother who can find no evangelistic work in our missionary education in India. My missionary brother may have no genius for mathematics or metaphysics; but with his warm loving heart, he will hardly fail in finding congenial work in leading to Jesus, by various paths of knowledge, the youths who come day after day, to listen to his instruction." As to the future of Christianity in India, Dr. Wood said: "I have long had a conviction that in some such way as this will India be Christianized; an extensive spread of the Gospel, without many conversions first, and then a sudden extension, a glorious day—nations born in a day."

The "Mode of Training for the Mission Field," formed a second theme for conference and was discussed at length along with kindred topics, by Principal Cunningham. He referred to the fact that among students at home there were "qualified men," but that these do not seem willing to embrace the opportunity, or listen to God's call." He does not consider that young men who are willing to be missionaries should be sent out "too early," or "educated apart." The solution of the difficulty as to fresh laborers, must be found in looking to the Lord of the harvest himself, and thus both educational and evangelistic work would go forth to the satisfaction of all.

Dr. Begg thought that the health and lives of many missionary volunteers might be spared if they were kept long enough in this country "until at least they had acquired a knowledge of the Sanscrit." There should also be experienced retired missionaries near the students in their preliminary preparations. Dr. Begg also referred to the number of the young men in Scotland, who had been converted in recent revivals, and who were full of love and zeal. He considered that special training might be given these, and a shorter term of study be recognised; provided they were found otherwise adapted to missionary work. As it is likely that Scotchmen will go out as Colonists, for the cultivation of cotton in India, and that among these and for the benefit of the natives employed by them, the converts who were not to study in the regular way, might at once take an important position, and acquire an immense influence. An intelligent gentleman, in a very prominent position in India, had written him (Dr. Begg,) in answer to his inquiries, that he believed that "a very large infusion of Christian life might be directed to India at the present moment, in connexion with this movement."

Mr. McIntosh, of Madras, gave some very gratifying facts to show that at Madras a large amount of directly evangelistic effort was being carried on.

The Earl of Dalhousie was present at the Conference. Lieutenant Colonel Davidson delivered an address on "The Duty of the Church to the heathen, and especially India, and the best modes for calling forth sympathy for the cause." He referred to the self-sacrifice of the Haldanes, as to evangelistic work in dead times, in Scotland. He dwelt on the duty of parents to consecrate their sons, and not to hinder them going forth to the missionary field. He related the case of a young man of promise, who was willing to go to India, but whose mother hindered him, and how a friend had remarked: "It is not heathen mothers only who are hindrances to the Gospel in India." Intercessory prayer, also, as an all important means of securing blessings, was specially dwelt upon. As the Old School and other Presbyterian Churches, have missions in India, and as I have given this full analysis of the Conference at Edinburgh, that as many as possible both of the ministers and churches at home, and the American missionaries abroad may have accurate information, let me give you the concluding portion of Col. Davidson's address—adding that as a reference is made to the Lodiana missionaries, and past responses to their invitations to a New Year's Concert of Prayer, that I trust and believe that special prayer for India, in January, 1862, will be one of the happy issues of this Conference at Edinburgh. Col. Davidson said:

"There is another important, *all-important* subject on which, if time admitted, I should wish to say a word; but as it is to be spoken to especially by my esteemed and respected friend, the Rev. Mr. Charles Brown, I cannot do better than leave it in his hands. The subject I refer to is intercessory prayer for India. Much has been said about the character and fitness of our missionary machinery; and it is important to look to it, and see that it is framed according to the apostolic model, and impelled by a real love to souls and love to God; but be our machinery ever so perfect, it will not do its work unless God is pleased to pour out the influence of his blessed Spirit. In this view I believe the most important question for the consideration of this Conference is, whether the extension of the Gospel by means of our missionaries in India is not hindered by the restraining of prayers on the part of those who send them forth. Might not something be done in the way of making our prayers for India more special than they are at present? Individual missions, particular localities, and particular efforts might be especially prayed for. We have had in our own land many precious examples of God's readiness to hear and answer prayer for the outpouring of his Spirit. A very striking instance of this in India is related by Mr. Morrison, of Lodiana, which, in conclusion, I will lay before the Conference. You are aware that Mr. Morrison is that missionary from whom originated that work of intercessory prayer for India, which was responded to throughout America, and also in this country. In a sermon of Mr. Morrison's, the following passage occurs:—'It would appear that in consequence of the appeal to America, unknown to the missionaries in India, the first Monday in January, 1858, was set apart for special prayer, for humiliation before God, and prayer for the misssonary work in India. Now, one of the missionaries at a station in India on that very same day makes the following entry in his journal, perfectly unaware of the pleading on behalf of missions that was taking place:—'This has been the most solemn and interesting day I have witnessed in India. At our morning prayers in the native language, three strangers were present, who said they had come to inquire about the new way. I found, on inquiry, that two of these were the parents of a blind man, in the asylum, who had expressed a desire publicly to profess Christ. 'Our son,' said they, 'has been blind from his birth, but now he says that he can see us.' A heavenly influence, I am persuaded, is with us; our Christian friends in America must be praying for us.'" This is a most encouraging evidence of the power of prayer; and can we despair of the power of prayer for India? I trust that one result of this Conference will be, that there will be humiliation and prayer throughout the churches—earnest prayer to God that he may pour out his Spirit upon us—that he would thrust forth laborers into his harvest, for truly the harvest is great, but the laborers are few. (Cheers,)

It appears certain that one of Dr. Begg's practical suggestions, namely, that mission students should, in the Summer vacation, undergo special training by retired missionaries, will be adopted. Dr. Candlish emphatically endorsed the idea. And as to the result of the Conference, he joyfully said that there had been a large measure of unanimity, and "we are all with one heart and one soul, determined to support our laborers out in India—Dr. Duff, Dr. Wilson, and the others—to the utmost, in their labors, which have been so manifestly owned and blessed of God in times past."

The Post Office Annual Report is a remarkable document, as illustrative of the working of a machine especially identified with, and essential to, the development of modern civilization. Last year the number of post offices in the United Kingdom was increased by 29, making the whole present number 11,441; of which 818 are head offices, and 10,623 sub-post offices. To these must be added *road letter* boxes, (pillars in the streets,) 515 of which were erected last year. Thus the whole number of receptacles for letters is nearly 14,000, while before the establishment of the penny postage, they did not much exceed 4,000.

The number of letters delivered through the Post Office in England in 1860, was 462,000,000, which is at the rate of twenty-two letters for every man, woman and child. In Ireland the number was 48,000,000, being at the rate of eight for each person; in Scotland, 54,000,000, being at the rate of seventeen to each person. In the United Kingdom, there were 564,000,000 letters delivered, which is 19,000,000 more than in the previous year. This increase is at the rate of 3½ per cent. for the United Kingdom; and it is pleasing to observe that Ireland participates in the increase to the extent of 3 per cent. In Liverpool the proportion is 27 letters to each person; in Birmingham and Manchester, 28; in Dublin, 34; in Edinburgh, 36; and in London, 43.

The facility of postal communication contributes powerfully to enhance these figures. Thus of the 19,000,000 of additional letters in London, 3½ were London *local* letters—that is to say, *written in London*, as well as delivered there in one or other district or suburb in the Metropolitan postal area, extending in some cases ten miles from Charing Cross.

Nearly 71,000,000 newspapers were delivered last year, and about 11,700,000 book packets. The increase in book packets was 700,000; of newspapers, 450,000. Of the book packets, half a million deliveries took place in London alone.

Failures in delivery, from the fault of the writers, in part at least, were startlingly extensive. Thus, nearly *two millions* of letters, or one in 286 of the whole, were returned to the writers, owing to failures in attempts to deliver them. Three out of four of these failures arose from insufficient or incorrect addresses, and more than 10,000 were posted without any address at all. "More than 20,000 letters now arrive daily in London, bearing only the name of the addressee, with the simple addition of London." Of these last I may say, a *considerable* number will reach their destination, because the names will be found in the Trades, Commercial, and "Court Guide" Lists—the last comprising a large proportion of the *upper* middle class, as also clergy, ministers, &c. But others will be irrevocably sent to the *Limbus literarum*, (to coin a phrase,) or "Dead Letter" office, or else sent back, after opening, to the writers. There are many letters which come to "London" which must drive the postmen almost to despair—particularly if addressed to "Mr. Jones," "Mr. Brown," and "Mr. Robinson," or "Mr. Thompson." But the *Smith* family are even larger than that of *Thompson*, otherwise called by the tormented Frenchman lodging in London, knocked up so often—"*Monsieur Tonson.*"

Mr. Punch once said that the greatest misfortune for a stranger arriving on *Saturday night* in London, and without any money in his pocket, would be that of a man who had an introductory letter to "—— Smith, Esq."

But returning from this digression to the matter of letters, let me close the statistical record by adding, that for the distribution of this mass of correspondence, the mails are conveyed every week-day over above 144,000 miles, namely, 39,047 by railway, 32,297 by mail-coaches and mail-carts, 69,994 miles on foot, and 2,838 miles by packets and boats. There was an increase in 1859 of 4,000 miles of railway conveyance. The staff of officers in the British Isles is 25,192, of whom 11,298 are postmasters, and 11,880 carriers and messengers.

The gross revenue of the Post Office in 1860 was £3,267,662 from postages, and £121,693 from commissions, or money-riders. £1,066,920 was disbursed in salaries and pensions. Nearly the whole net revenue was derived from inland letters. For the sake of trade, and for political and other reasons, it is considered necessary to carry on the foreign and colonial correspondence at a loss. We are told that if the whole of the cost were charged, not only would the sea-postage be absorbed, but the operation would show such a loss as amounted last year to £410,000. On each letter to the Cape of Good Hope there is a loss of about 9d.; on each letter to the West Indies, a loss of 1s.; on each leater to the West Coast of Africa, a loss of about 1s. 8d.; on each letter to the United States, *via* Galway, (a bad prospect for Father Daly to get the Port Office contract made permanent,) a loss of about 6 shillings.

J. W.

*This last remark is judicious. Surely no Christian, understanding the state of affairs, could recommend the sudden emancipation and general arming of the slaves. In freeing the *slaves of rebels*, it is necessary to give them employment, and to govern them; and circumstances may show it to be both needful and wise, for a time, to enroll a portion of them as a military corps, to aid in erecting and guarding fortifications, and thus to be under more perfect government. We trust that those who would turn them loose, uncared for—to suffer and cause suffering—are but few in number.—Eds.]

Origin of Hymns.

The origin of a hymn, or of any literary production, is often the source of the highest interest. If we but knew the biography of the sacred songs which are the favorites of the churches, we might frequently see, at a glance, the explanation of their power, and of the strong hold they have upon the heart. As deep feeling in the orator kindles deep feeling in his hearers, so the personal experience, or irrepressible emotion of the sacred poet, poured forth in the hymn, perpetuates itself in the hearts of multitudes, who feel its power, though they think not of its source.

The deep solemnity of the hymn,

"When rising from the bed of death,
O'erwhelmed with guilt and fear,"

came, beyond question, from the circumstances in which Addison wrote it, just as he was recovering from a dangerous sickness, in which he had gone to the very verge of eternity, and looked over upon its realities. And so that beautiful and impressive hymn of Cowper,

"God moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform,"

had its origin in the mysterious dealings of God with his own spirit, and in the faith that, in the darkest hour, could say, "It will all yet be well." Both these hymns were wrought out from the experience of their authors, and thus clothed with their singular and wonderful power to thousands, to whom the names, even, of those authors were never known.

As other illustrations of the same general truth, it is said that the beautiful and touching lines,

"I would not live away,"

were written just after the death of the lovely and accomplished lady who was soon to have been the wife of its author; and that it was when Cowper had taken refuge from a terrific storm, in a cottage, that he penned the hymn,

"Jesus, Saviour of my soul."

We have lately met with the history of another hymn—one of Wesley's—that is sung in every quarter of the globe; and though it originated rather in a *locality*, than *personal experience*, yet that locality was such as to give to a *truth* all the vividness of an *experience*, and clothe its expression with a thrilling and heartfelt power. At Land's End, on the Westernmost point of England, where a high and narrow cliff of granite stretches out into the broad Atlantic, while the boundless sea is on either side, the Bishop of Litchfield was told by his guide, a Cornish miner, "It was here that Wesley wrote his famous hymn." "What hymn?" asked the Bishop. Surprised at his ignorance, the man replied, "Why, the hymn on the sixty-first page!" as if all the world must, of course, know what that was. And the prelate was struck with the pertinency of the anecdote, when he found it was the hymn beginning,

"Lo! on a narrow neck of land,
'Twixt two unbounded seas I stand,
Secure, insensible;
A point of time, a moment's space,
Removes me to that heavenly place,
Or shuts me up in hell."

And so, doubtless, almost every striking and impressive hymn has its history, which, if known, would reveal the secret of its popularity and power over the soul. Such hymns as

"Just as I am, without one plea;"
"Rise my soul, and stretch thy wings;"
"Rock of ages, cleft for me;"

and many others that might be mentioned, each probably, had something peculiar in its origin, clothing it with its peculiar interest to Christian hearts and for every age. Would that all these histories might be searched and written, and thus made permanent for the Church. Who will give us some of them?—*Boston Recorder.*

Pulpit Oratory.

Rev. William Taylor, in the "Model Preacher," dwells much upon the power of "surprises" as a means of gaining and keeping the attention of an audience. In the form of letters to a brother he writes, after speaking of the difficulty of arresting attention: "You have no right to complain of their inattention, and it will do no good to scold them about it. It is your business to arrest them, knock their thoughts and reveries into *pi*, and, sweeping them away, insert your theme into their minds and hearts. To do this you must wake them up, stir the sympathies of their souls, and thrill them by all sorts of unanticipated means." He further shows this "surprise power is abundantly used in "nature, providence and inspired word," and illustrates its appropriate use by instances from common life. His suggestions on this point are original and striking. A remedy is here proposed for a wide-spread evil. The *eccentric* preacher carries out this plan to extremes, but he wins attention. Others in shunning his errors, should learn wisdom by his success in this respect. A good conversationalist will *vary* both his matter and manner, and when he finds his friend wearying of one subject he will adroitly turn the conversation into a new channel; but the *preacher* talks on and on in the same unvarying strain, though his congregation yawn and sleep; no pleasant turns nor unexpected openings into fresh fields of beauty and of wisdom. Where is the use of preaching when the people do not hear? If the truth is important they *ought* to hear every word; and if the fault is the minister's, great is his responsibility! When preaching no longer interests but only palls, it is time that the sermon should be brought to a speedy close.

When thought and expression have both received due attention, it remains that the *manner of delivery* should be a subject of the utmost care. "The basis of delivery in preaching should be a dignified and earnest conversational tone." If men speak as they would *talk* to us, we listen with interest; but in the wide range of truth to be used by a preacher of the Gospel, and the manifold varieties of form in which it exists, there is much to call for the exercise of the highest *art* in order to present truth most effectually. "Sometimes men will tell us," says a writer before quoted, "that they prefer a *natural* and *artless* eloquence, and that very diligent preparation is inconsistent with such qualities. We verily believe that this fallacy, though it lurks under an almost transparent ambiguity, is of most prejudicial consequence. Nature and art, so far from being always opposed, are often the very same thing. * * * It is *natural* for a man who feels that he has not given adequate expression to a thought, though he may have used the first words suggested, to attempt it again and again. He each times approximates nearer to the mark, and at length desists, satisfied either that he has done what he wishes, or that he cannot perfectly do it, as the case may be. A writer with this end is continually transposing clauses, reconstructing sentences, striking out one word and putting in another. All this may be said to be *art*, or the deliberate application of means to ends; but is it art inconsistent with nature? It is just such art as this that we ask of the preacher, and no other; simply that he shall take diligent head to do what he has to do as well as he can. Let him depend upon it that no such art as this will ever make him appear the less natural."

We think Archbishop Whately, in his admirable treatise on Rhetoric, has inclined too much toward discouraging a proper attention to preparation for public speaking. After comparing the natural and artificial methods of reading and speaking, and very properly deciding in favor of the former, he thus writes: "The practical rule then to be adopted in confirmity with the principles here maintained is, not only to pay no studied attention to the voice, but studiously to *withdraw* the thoughts from it, and to dwell as intently as possible on the sense, trusting to nature to suggest spontaneously the proper emphasis and tones." This is a different conclusion from what we arrive at by hearing of Demosthenes in a cave by the sea-side, declaiming with pebbles in his mouth, and of some of our most eminent orators gesticulating before the mirror. Unless public speaking be an exception to most desirable accomplishments, excellence therein must be attained through effort and c