





William Ward Wight.



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**WILLIAM WARD WIGHT**  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin  
1849-1931  
President of the Society  
1904-1910

In Memoriam.

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Fay Ambrose Wight, D. D.

Born,

September 12, 1811.

Died,

November 13, 1889.

Aged,

78 Years, 2 Months, 1 Day.

*From the Library of*  
WILLIAM WARD WIGHT

## Autobiographic.

REV. J. AMBROSE WIGHT, of Bay City, was the youngest son of Jabez and Mary Wight (nee Bancroft). The home of the family was Norwich, Hampshire County, Massachusetts. They had just removed to Floyd, Oneida County, New York, when the father was lost. J. Ambrose was born after this event, September 12, 1811. The mother took her brood of eight children—the oldest fourteen years, and the youngest three months—and returned to Norwich. Being unable to support and train her family, she put them to trades or in care of other families to be “brought up.” The lot of young Ambrose was cast with Mr. John Wright, of Easthampton, a good man with a good family. His training here in farm-work, with three months in district school annually, lasted about nine years. In the fifteenth year of his age he left, and lived with a nurseryman named Tracy, in Norwich, where he learned garden and nursery work. When sixteen years of age, by counsel of his oldest brother, he went to Long Island, New York, where he engaged for two years in teaching in a public school; then, for more instruction, he found his way to Bennington Academy, Vermont. Here occurred what shaped his after-life—a change in his religious character; and in September, 1832, he entered Williams College, aiding his finances by farm-work in “haying-time,” and in teaching,—a year at Lanesboro and five months at Pittsfield,—keeping with his classes in college, and graduating August, 1836, giving a “poem” as his graduating address. He had for a classmate one Walter Wright, whose home was Chicago. Though offered many situations as teacher, he preferred seeking his fortune in the West; and in one week started, and in fourteen days (counting two Sundays when he did not travel) he saw Chicago, with no acquaintance and without money. He found his classmate’s father, was invited home with him, and remained some ten days, making himself useful in harvesting Mr. Wright’s garden, and securing a good supply of potatoes and other vegetables—and very luckily; for the next day the ground froze, and did not unlock until



spring. The best crop of this effort was the good-will of the Wright household. So, after a three weeks' work with the surveying party on the Illinois and Michigan Canal, where a permanent situation was offered him, he accepted a proposal of Mr. Wright to join him in a mercantile venture, going into the country, selling the goods, and investing in wild lands. The store was located at Rockton, Illinois, on the Rock River, he finding his way there on foot—one hundred miles. Here, until 1841, he remained, Mr. Wright dying in 1839, when he removed to Rockford, and was admitted to the bar as attorney. But some gentleman persuaded him to enter upon a newspaper enterprise, and he commenced the *Winnebago Forum*, now, in its succession, the *Rockford Register*. The *Forum* was a losing venture, and in six months was turned over to a practical printer, Mr. Wight being in the meantime invited to the editorship of the *Prairie Farmer*, an agricultural, horticultural, and educational monthly, established in 1841 by John S. Wright, Esq., at Chicago. In the editorship, and in good part the publication of this journal, he continued till the close of 1856. This paper performed an important service in settling the various new experiences of farm and orchard work, in entirely new conditions. Mr. Wight also used it in materially assisting in shaping a public-school system in the State. In August, 1849, Mr. Wight, in company with Hon. William Bross, purchased the *Herald of the Prairies*, which was published jointly two and one-half years, and a year longer by Mr. Wight alone. It was a joint organ of the New School Presbyterians and Congregationalists, which Churches found such differences, in the boiling period of the slavery discussion and other matters, that they pulled apart. The *Herald* fell between them. Mr. Wight thereupon turned to his original purpose of preaching the gospel, and was licensed, April, 1855, by the Presbytery of Chicago. He commenced his work as city missionary, under the auspices of a body of young men; but at the close of the year his efforts resulted in the organization of a small Church, which was called the Olivet, and he was pastor of this Church seven years. It was the period of the financial cyclone of 1856, lasting till the war. Two Churches came of the effort—the Olivet and the Calvary; the first of which was joined with the Second Presbyterian Church in 1870; and the latter to the First Presbyterian. Mr. Wight employed the year 1864 in work upon the editorial staff of the Chicago *Tribune*, and

in preaching when wanted ; but in the winter of 1864-5 was invited to Bay City, Michigan, where he entered upon the care of the First Presbyterian Church in May, and was installed as pastor in November, 1865. Here he continued until May, 1888 — twenty-three full years. He then resigned the active pastorate, and was elected pastor emeritus. He died November 13, 1889.

Mr. Wight was married to Caroline E. Adams, daughter of Rev. William M. Adams, at Rockton, Illinois, May 31, 1840. She is the mother of seven children — four sons and three daughters. Four are living — Rev. A. S. Wight, of Linden, Michigan ; Mrs. A. J. Cooke, of Bay City ; and Sophia and William A., unmarried. The first son and second daughter died in infancy ; the third son, James M., a master in the United States navy, educated at Annapolis, perished with the steamer *Huron*, off North Carolina, November 24, 1877, being in his twenty-seventh year, devoted to his profession, correct in his life, and much esteemed in the service.

In addition to other work, Mr. Wight was for nearly sixty years a writer for newspapers. He began it in 1830, and no year since passed without work of this sort. Editorially he had connection with six journals, and as a correspondent with as many others. He wrote steadily for the New York *Evangelist* over thirty years. He published some pamphlets, historic sketches, sermons, and review articles ; but most of his writing was for present consumption. His bound books are the volumes of the *Prairie Farmer* and *Herald of the Prairies*. He was an honorable member of the Wisconsin Historical Society. He received the degree of A. B. at graduating ; of A. M., three years after ; and in 1876, that of D. D., from Williams College. He attributed whatever of success he attained in life, under God, to that prince of teachers, Mark Hopkins.

The remains of the late Dr. J. Ambrose Wight lay in the parlor of the home Friday morning, November 15, and many friends called to look for the last time upon the face of the loved pastor and friend. Although the request was made that flowers should not be sent, the room was fragrant with the lavish gifts of more intimate friends. A sheaf of wheat lay upon the casket, and at its head a desk of flowers was placed, holding an open Bible, with the place of the text—John xi:25—in purple immortelles. In the afternoon the Session of the Church, the

ministers, and a few intimate friends gathered at the home. The choir of the Presbyterian Church sang

“At evening time there shall be light.”

A selection from the Scriptures was read, and Dr. Hunting, President of Alma College, offered prayer. The remains were then borne to the church at the hands of the old Session, Messrs. F. A. Bancroft, John L. Dolsen, Hon. N. B. Bradley, Jesse F. Romer, John McEwan and D. C. Smalley. The church had been lavishly and beautifully trimmed with flowers, and was filled with friends and parishioners, old pioneers and prominent citizens gathered to pay the last tribute of respect to one who had been so long identified with the best life of the city and the valley, and had had no small share in moulding it for good. The formal tribute from the Session was read, prayer was offered, the choir sung, never more sweetly, “Hush, blessed are the dead,” “My feet are weary with the march,” and “Lead, kindly light,” and Dr. J. T. Oxtoby, of East Saginaw, delivered the address. After the benediction, the remains were borne to the Michigan Central Depot, and accompanied by the family, left the city for Chicago, to find interment in Rose Hill Cemetery, beside the children buried there in former years.

#### ACTION OF THE SESSION OF THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF BAY CITY.

The Session of the First Presbyterian Church of Bay City, Mich., desiring to express and record their high appreciation of the faithful services and Christian character of him who, for many faithful years, held the pastorate of this church, and has now “entered into his rest,” adopt and order spread upon the Session’s record the following minute :

It has pleased Almighty God to call from earth and receive into His most glorious presence the Reverend J. Ambrose Wight, D. D., who had been for nearly a quarter of a century the beloved and efficient pastor of this church and congregation. Through his correspondence “Ambrose” has become known through the Presbyterian Church in this country as an able and practical thinker on all subjects that touch the interests, not alone of Presbyterianism, but of humanity. By his wise and judicious policy, conservative where conservatism was needful, yet liberal in an eminent degree where liberality could

be shown without weakening a principle, Doctor Wight has been a power in the counsels of the church, the presbytery, and the synod with which he has been connected during so many years of affectionate fellowship. His relations to this Session have been such as to inspire and perpetuate confidence, respect, esteem and tender regard. The church which he has built up is itself a monument to his wisdom, his earnestness, and to his generous Christian personality. While mourning our own loss, the love which we bore Doctor Wight would express itself in tender and affectionate sympathy with the bereaved family. "Blessed be the God and father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in Heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."

ADDRESS BY REV. JOHN T. OXTOBY, D. D.

Delivered November 15, 1889.

2 Sam. III:38.—"Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel?"

There are various ideas of greatness in this world. That man is great, in the thought of some, who has led great armies to victory. That man is great, who is a Hercules in bearing the burdens of trade on his shoulders, or figuring out the problems of finance. Too much this world asks when we gather on these sad occasions, "How much did he leave behind him?" meaning how much money did he accumulate. To others, no men are great, save those who stand high on the roll of honor, or of fame.

These are great men, so we are accustomed to think and they are not to be despised. He is great who understands the art of war, like Grant. He is great who knows the laws of trade, like Astor, and steps in and secures the prize while others are shivering beside the brink of some possible opportunity. The great man is he who does. The great man is he who thinks greater thoughts than his fellows, especially who lives a nobler life than the ordinary. The poor girl who died in the swamps of Florida, where she went to teach a poor colored child the

Word of God, will stand high on the roll of the redeemed, when some millionaire who lived without God in the world will be utterly forgotten. The missionary who heralded the Christ in India and went to glory, followed by the prayers of thousands of converts, will be great when many titled ones are receiving rewards for their deeds.

This prince Abner, over whom David mourned, was a mighty man of war, who befriended David when he needed a friend. So, when violent death comes, David calls attention: "Do ye not know?" Ye ought to know, that this is not a time for eating and drinking, a mighty one is fallen, a prince and a great man is fallen in the kingdom.

These words sounded in my ears when the despatch came that he whom I loved had gone into the Father's house with the many mansions. "Know ye not?" I seemed to hear it whispered. "Know ye not," O men of the Valley, a great man has fallen asleep,— a prince among his fellows has taken his departure, has been loosed from the shores of time and anchored within the veil? "Know ye not?" I seemed to hear it in the autumn winds as they whistled and in the rain,— "a great man has fallen," not one who slaughtered, but one who was instrumental in saving; not one who laid up treasures on earth, but who laid up treasures in Heaven, one who thought Bible thoughts and gave utterance to them, who told of the love of Christ and exemplified it in his daily life. A great man is fallen, — "Know ye not?"— Ye ought to know it, and you do know it. The city is moved, the life of the city seemed stopped, when news first came of his illness. About a week ago I came down to see the Doctor. As I was leaving, one said: "Have you been to see Dr. Wight? How is he?" There was a moment when the city was thrilled, not at the death, but when it was first known that there was a summons, that there was a probability that the end of mortal life had come for him.

Who can measure the influence of him whom we — I will not say mourn — but I will say whom we revere.

I well remember how we became acquainted; we seemed to take to each other from the first. We respected each other's differences, and knew that these very differences accent and perpetuate friendship.

As a *Presbyter*, he stood at the front. All these years, our Presbytery has felt the touch of his thought and the guidance of

his hand. For several years he was Stated Clerk, and for all these years he has been the leader. Honored by all, he was the counselor to whom we always listened, and his voice was ever for what he believed to be right. Even when we differed from him we were pained, but none was ever more ready to submit to the final verdict. He never appealed or complained ; he was too loyal to the brethren to do that.

As a *Pastor*, I am assured he was exemplary in the days when his physical powers enabled him to do the work for which he longed. He was so wise, so tender, so felicitous in the sick room, so apt with the right word, so ready to administer comfort. There are many to testify to his fitness in idea and fullness in performance.

As a *Preacher*, who does not know his power ? Let a pastor-ate of nearly a quarter of a century tell its own story. Could any except a talented preacher fill a pulpit in this growing, enterprising city, and stay long enough to baptize the second generation, without being an excellent preacher ? As a preacher he was marked by his knowledge of the Scriptures, by his knowledge of men, and by his adaptation of one to the other. Good sense, a clear perception of truth, saying the right thing at the right time, these were the characteristics of that preaching which has been a power, and which shall long be perpetuated in this church and city.

Some are fine preachers, who are poor pastors. Some are good pastors, who are poor preachers. Some can talk and some can visit. Some are good advisers, who are imperfect in practice. Some are good scholars, who are most impracticable men. Some know the world, but are strangers to books. Some are too redolent of the book, and ignorant of the world.

Dr. Wight was one of those well-rounded men, a pleasant speaker, yet who commanded attention by what he said rather than by the way he said it, wise in counsel and excellent in execution. It was said of a certain king, that he never said a foolish thing and never did a wise one. Not so with Dr. Wight, he was wise as strong, he could do as well as say. He knew men as well as he knew books. As the counselor of his flock, his judgment was excellent ; he never did foolish things and he never said silly things. Tender with the youngest brethren, he was companionable with all. Not of a demonstrative nature, he often gave proof that he had strong feelings, yet held them in



reserve. There were times when he was delightfully reminiscent and confiding, but he knew when and where to do such things. While he wore not his heart on his sleeve, yet he had a warm heart in his bosom, as many have found out when they were in trouble. Ask these missionary churches in Northern Michigan where they got their help : — did he ever turn them away with mere words? Who was it felt so deeply for our missions that he went into business houses and offices and so presented the cause, that a large draft went into New York, in one of the extremities of the Board? Who secured that check for Alma College which made that college a possibility and an actuality? Pitt used to say that it was dangerous for him to speak when state secrets were in his keeping, for he never could keep back anything when once he was on his feet. So, I am afraid to speak of things I know, lest I may be too personal and may say things that it were breaking privacy to make known, so I will say no more.

As to my personal relations with Dr. Wight, I dare not speak a word, save that we were as confidential as our different ages would permit. He has told me things which are not for publicity, all of which were noble and pure, of his great sorrow, of his early trials, of his hopes and fears, and of his great joy in preaching the Gospel.

“O, honor higher, truer far  
Than earthly fame could bring,  
Thus to be used, in work like this,  
So long, by such a King.”

Who can compute the influence of a ministry like this for nearly twenty-five years?

Think of the changes which he saw in this city, of the funerals he has attended, of the marriages he has solemnized, of the tears he has wiped away, of the prayers he has offered and of the sermons he has preached.

I would like to ask those business men who so honored Dr. Wight, what they think has been the masterful force of this community in these years? Who has been your leader in lines of morals and of religion? Bankers have made many tremble when they said: “You can have no more money.” Mill men have had their influence as they passed in checks for thousands upon thousands; but who can estimate the power of the pulpit on the hearts of an entire generation?

I do not belittle any forces that have been operating here during more than twenty years, when I say that the power of this pulpit has been one of the mighty factors of this community. Eternity only can reveal its full power. While Bay City has its place along the river, so long shall be felt the touch of his mind and the thrill of his mental power, whom none knew but to love or revere.

A great man has been called into the light where all the dark-nesses of earth shall be cleared up. We are lost in awe when we think of the large vacancy which he leaves. True, we were in a measure prepared for it, so gradually was the life-work given up.

You as a church, did a noble thing when you made Dr. Wight pastor emeritus. You honored him not only, you honored yourselves. I rejoice that he almost died in the harness.

Life was pleasant to him whom we honor. God called him into his vineyard, provided him with a good field and gave him many years to till it. The church he loved lavished its honors upon him. In Presbytery, in Synod, and in General Assembly, everywhere, he was a prince and a leader. Caring little for the frippery or show of life, he was yet ready to perform any task to which he was appointed. There was no sham about him, but of the real stuff of life there was an abundance. Fuss and feathers he despised, but he delighted in real manhood, and abounded in good works.

Cowper's picture of the Paul-like preacher, we may say without fear of exaggeration, you have had held up before you, these many years, in this pulpit:

" Simple, grave, sincere ;

In doctrine incorrupt : in language plain,  
And plain in manner : decent, solemn, chaste,  
And natural in gesture ; much impressed  
Himself, as conscious of his awful charge,  
And anxious mainly, that the flock he feeds  
May feel it too ; affectionate in look,  
And tender in address, as well becomes  
A messenger of grace to gUILTY men.

And when the end came, it was almost ideal. Ample time was given to say farewell to his friends, to make arrangements for his funeral, and to say those final words about which hearts cluster. If he had been consulted as to the mode of his departure, it is not likely there would have been any difference. It

was not death, it was simply a going to sleep, a going to rest on the bosom of the Father and elder brother, Redeemer. We can never express the hush and sweetness of those days when we gathered about the couch where lay the great man and prince of Israel.

So we leave that side of the picture, too beautiful for description, impossible to be told in words. We are not stoics, but followers of Him who wept beside a tomb — but we mourn not as those who have no hope. We mourn, if we mourn at all, simply because we shall see him no more in our walk and warfare beneath the stars. But we feel sure that he is beside the river and the tree of life, where there is no sorrow, nor sin, nor death, nor any crying, but where God wipes away all tears, and the Lamb is the light forever, oh forever.

“Two spirits met ;  
One was dismantled, and was from the clime  
Where dwell the just who pass the bounds of time  
And earthly pangs forget :  
' And knowest thou not,' said he with joyous air,  
To one who had not passed earth's bound of care,  
' That this is a high day,  
And that our realms are ringing with delight ?  
For lo! an heir of Heaven — a child of light,  
Borne through the ethereal way,  
Came to the joyous presence of our King,  
And now through all our blissful realms doth ring  
A greeting, welcome lay.'  
But ah! a pall that told of much despair  
Hung, curtain-like, around that child of care,  
As weepingly he said :  
' And know'st thou not, that Earth doth mourn ?  
That while thou joyest for a seraph born,  
Earth mourns a champion dead ?  
He was a burning light, faith fed the blaze,  
And though we gloried in the lucent rays,  
As from Heaven's altar lent,  
And knew from whence he came — from whence it burned,  
And that it would be to its source returned,  
Yet its extinguishment  
On earth we mourn : ' tis thus that in one day  
Ye sing a seraph-born, and we a weeping lay.' ”

Yes, while we are still in “earth's bound of care” lamenting

that our leader is gone, yet we know that he is promoted, and that while on earth we sing a "weeping lay," yet there is up yonder that "greeting, welcome lay."

Only admit that there is a God—only admit, in addition, that there is a soul to save, then it follows as night the day, that this life was well expended in this work of the Christian ministry.

There have been some in the pulpit, I am sorry to believe, who may be compared to an electric light, whose brilliancy startled for a time, but soon grew pale and faded into darkness, because the connection was broken between the Saviour and the soul and they preferred shining before men to holding up the light of Divine truth. As I think of Dr. Wight and his work, not only as affecting this church, but as affecting all who dwell in this city, I would compare him to some Doric pillar, as substantial as solid, and as symmetrical as substantial. His character was massive, like a monument of granite, not showy but strong, dignified, firm and abiding. Picture some massive, granite pillar, about which the sun is smiling in his beauty and might, and you have an idea of that to which I would compare the life and power, the walk and work of Dr. Wight, of which all will grow more and more proud as the years go by. For, in time to come, that peaceful face upon which we have looked for the last time, will grow more and more hallowed in our recollection, and we will realize that the memory of the just *is* blessed.

So I will only say, as I close, let us follow him as he followed Christ.

#### ACTION OF THE PRESBYTERY OF SAGINAW.

*The Presbytery of Saginaw* desire to put on record its estimate of the character and services of Rev. Dr. J. Ambrose Wight, late pastor of the First Church, of Bay City.

Dr. Wight became a member of this Presbytery on the 22d day of November, 1865, and from that day to the day of his death, Nov. 13, 1889, he was an important part and parcel of its doing. From the first he was a leader, and his shaping hand is to be traced in all its history, since his coming into our bounds.

As a Presbyter, he was noted for ability, frankness, wisdom, and capacity to understand and direct its business. He was highly esteemed even when we differed from him, as we rarely did, and on his judgment, Presbytery greatly relied.

We grieve over his departure, for we lose a brother beloved and capable; but we rejoice to feel that our loss is his gain, as we feel that he has entered into rest after his arduous labors. We shall long cherish his memory, and desire to assure his widow and children that they have our hearty sympathy in their great bereavement.

The stated clerk is ordered to send a copy of this minute to Mrs. Wight, with the kindly greetings and best wishes of the Presbytery of Saginaw for her and her children.

JOHN S. OXTOBY,  
*Stated Clerk.*

#### ACTION OF THE PASTORS OF THE BAY CITY CHURCHES.

“WHEREAS, it has pleased God, our Heavenly Father, in His all-wise and loving Providence to remove from our midst the Rev. J. Ambrose Wight, D. D., pastor emeritus of the First Presbyterian Church in this city, we, the pastors of Bay City and vicinity, deem it proper to adopt and place on record the following minute :

That while we bow in trustful and loving submission to the will of the great head of the Church in thus taking to Himself our beloved fellow-laborer and brother in the Lord Jesus Christ, and while we sorrow because of this bereavement, yet we rejoice in the precious thought that he has gone to be with his Saviour whom he loved and in whose ministry he served for so many years.

That in our official and personal relations with our departed brother, we ever found him the genial friend and the Christian gentleman ; a firm, yet modest defender of “the faith once delivered to the saint,” and a faithful counselor in times of difficulty and trial.

Our brother and fellow-laborer in the gospel of Christ has gone up higher, and we cherish his memory as one who exemplified in his life the gospel he proclaimed to others. He wrote and preached as a highly cultured and experienced divine ; and he labored as a faithful pastor in the congregation which he served for so many years. “He, being dead, yet speaketh.”

We commend his bereaved family to the care of a covenant-keeping God and Father, and pray for rich blessings to rest upon the Church and congregation of which he was the honored pastor.

*Resolved*, That a copy of this minute be transmitted to the family of Dr. Wight, also to the Session of the Church, and that a copy be furnished for publication in the city papers.

WILLIAM W. LYLE,  
*Moderator.*

BAY CITY, MICH., November 21, 1889.



# Tributes of Friends.

FROM REV. ROBERT W. PALTERSON, D. D.

In the death of the Rev. J. Ambrose Wight, D. D., the Presbyterian Church has lost one of its brightest ornaments. But his memory still lives, and will live.

His death occurred on Wednesday evening, November 13, 1889, at his home in Bay City, when his age was just seventy-eight years and two months. His companion of forty-nine years, two sons, and two daughters survive him. The funeral was held at the Church of which Dr. Wight was so long the pastor, on the afternoon of November 15, Rev. Drs. Hunting and Oxtoby conducting the services. The burial took place at Rosehill Cemetery, in Chicago, on Saturday, November 16, the services being conducted by the present writer, the pastor of Dr. Wight during all the earlier years of his life in Chicago.

The dates of the principal events in the life of Dr. Wight have already been given in *The Evangelist*, but the object of this notice is to call special attention to his traits of character.

He possessed a mind of unusual activity, and was singularly incisive in his thinking. In considering questions both theoretical and practical, he was accustomed to seize at once upon the fundamental principles involved, and to follow them out to their legitimate applications and results. This must have been observed by all thoughtful readers of his articles in *The Evangelist*, over the signature of "Ambrose."

He took a wide range for his inquiries and reflections. He dealt with a great variety of subjects — historical, economical, scientific, educational, religious. This was the result both of his natural mental tendencies and of his experience in several departments of activity and in two or three professions — law, journalism, and the ministry. His reading and information pertained to affairs of State, Church, and human Society at large. He lived in the whole world.

Dr. Wight's judgments of men and affairs were discriminating, philosophical, and fair. He had a great contempt for pre-

tenders and shams, while he exercised a broad charity for human weaknesses and shortcomings of good men. His discriminating philosophy and analyzing mental peculiarities were often manifested in striking ways. An example of this may be recorded here. The writer went with him to hear a lecture from Ralph Waldo Emerson. The lecture exhibited Emerson's usual brilliancy, powers of intuition, and disconnection of paragraphs. On coming out, after a considerable pause, Dr. Wight remarked, "Well, he is undoubtedly a man of genius, but he narrowly escaped being a natural fool." But he was not accustomed to indulge in severe criticisms.

Dr. Wight's education was not scholastic, but broad and practical. He was a good student in college, and became a special favorite of President Mark Hopkins. His theology was drawn from the Bible, from conversations, and from books. He never attended any theological seminary, but became a thoroughly biblical theologian. In his theology he was at once independent and conservative. He neither rejected the old because it was old, nor the new because it was new. He was educated both in college and in the school of experience.

He was deeply interested in the affairs and progress of the Redeemer's Kingdom far and near. When an elder in the Second Church of Chicago, he delighted the people by his instructive remarks in the weekly prayer-meeting, and especially in the monthly concert. And his general and accurate knowledge of current events in the Church and the Christian world was always a source of power in his ministrations.

As an elder, a preacher, and a pastor he won and maintained a conspicuous position by doing everything well. He was a leading and honored elder, a sound, instructive, and impressive preacher, and faithful at all times in the pastoral work till near the end of his long life. Few men in the West have spent twenty-three years in the same pastorate, as he did, giving up his work only because of advanced age and bodily infirmities.

In ecclesiastical meetings, Presbytery, Synod, and General Assembly, he was an esteemed and useful leader. No man in Michigan has done more for the Church in that State according to his position and opportunities. He was recognized on all hands as a wise adviser and a ready helper of his brethren and of the Churches, and his labors and influence were by no

means confined to his own denomination. He was a judicious friend of temperance, a supporter of the American Sabbath, and a practical friend of every human enterprise.

Dr. Wight had many friends in the Church and out of it. He was genial, warm-hearted, helpful in all the relations of life, a steadfast friend, a humble Christian, more in practice than profession; an example of fidelity sincerity and truthfulness at home and among the people.

His faith in Christ was strong and abiding through all of his many useful years, and in his last hours of mental clearness he was able to say with emphasis, "Whether living or dying, I am the Lord's." It must be that the society of the redeemed in glory is richer for his accession to its eternal fellowship.

REV. HENRY M. FIELD, D. D.

Editorial, New York *Evangelist*, November 21, 1889.

OUR BELOVED BROTHER "AMBROSE."

He is gone! And in him has passed away one of the most accomplished of writers, and one of the dearest of friends. He was a man of rare gifts in many directions; of a quickness and versatility of mind that made him a successful editor (as he was for ten years), and an admirable writer for the press as long as he lived. He had a keen wit and a sharp pen when he chose to use it, which was not often, for his humor was apt to be more of the gentle and playful kind, and with all his wit he had the tenderest heart. He was one of the few men in this world whom it is permitted to us to love, for our own feeling for him was quite beyond that of mere friendship. It began more than fifty years ago, when we were students together in Williams College, and it continued till his last hour. One of the most precious memories connected with him, is a message of affection received from him when on his death-bed. Dear Ambrose! We loved him to the end, and we love him still.

FROM HON. JOHN D. SHERWOOD.

Among the elaborate wreaths that have already been, and will yet be, placed over the honored grave of the beloved "Ambrose" by his fellow-workers in the ministry and in council, and by his

admiring readers of his terse, picturesque, and remarkably common-sense letters to this journal, I desire to lay my little sprig of willow.

It was my good fortune to be placed, now fifty-four years ago, in a small, select family school, whose pupils, limited to twenty-five, where, with the exception of three or four day scholars, inmates of the principal's residence and part of his household.

Mr. J. Ambrose Wight, then an undergraduate and member of the Senior Class of Williams College, was the classical teacher in the school, thereby gaining the means of paying his way in college. Of all the teachers and pupils in that Lanesboro School, only two besides myself now survive. In the Latin and Greek classes taught by Mr. Wight, were with myself and fitting for college, Jonathan Trotter, afterwards Mayor of Brooklyn, and John Lorimer Graham, who subsequently, in the Mexican War, achieved such an honorable fame as a dashing, brave and daring cavalry officer, more than once at the head of his small regiment cutting his way, sword in hand, through thousands of beleaguering Mexicans.

And so it seems left to me to say a few words of our beloved teacher. Dean Stanley, in pathetic and most touching language, and John Lothrop Motley, in eloquent and heartfelt words, have described their relations to their teachers, and the many virtues and intellectual qualities and accomplishments of those teachers—words that I would fain apply to our loved teacher, who brought into daily intercourse with us, grew very soon to be a friend as well as teacher, our companion in our outdoor plays, our fellow walker, and in the long winter evenings by turn the reader and listener around the lamp-lit center-table.

Perhaps Mr. Wight's most obvious characteristic was his *gentleness* of manner, voice and speech. However much he must necessarily he must have been tried by many of us boys, some of whom were at times a little thoughtless or rough, he was never provoked into doing or saying anything harsh or sharp. His manner, voice, and temper were uniformly serene and gentle.

Allied to, and shading into it, was his *patience*. This quality, too, was often tried by thoughtlessness, stupidity, or an undue familiarity; but with him "patience had her perfect work." Serene, gentle, quiet, and dignified, he bore with the stupid and thoughtless, and thought best to overlook the unmeaning

familiarity. In and by this gentle patience he quickened the slow, stimulated the unthinking, and kept his own true position towards all. His winsome and unruffled manner never failed to attract and attach to himself all the pupils of the classes which he taught, and in fact all the pupils who came in contact with him in any way.

He was eminently *faithful* in all his duties and responsibilities. Intellectually acute, of keen perceptions, and logical, he gave himself to his duties as teacher without regard to his own comfort or ease. A shirk he could not be ; all his instincts and habits forbade it. Always neat in his dress, courteous in his bearing towards all, old and young, he was an exemplar to all those with whom he had intercourse in or out of the school.

He was a *Christlike* man in all his actions, and in all the relations of life. As one of the boys bluntly expressed it, after coming from a private interview with him, in which he had been gently reminded of a series of delinquencies ; "By George, Mr. Wight doesn't know how to get mad or scold !"

As a teacher, he was exact and thorough. He had conscientiously qualified himself in all the details of the studies taught by him, and could impart his instruction in precise and fitting language, and in a kindly manner, which won the confidence and inspired the enthusiasm of his pupils. Such a teacher was invaluable as an instructor and a teacher for the young in his example, language and manner out of the recitation-room, in all ways and at all times. All his pupils became, and ever remained, his attached friends, interested in his work and success as teacher, minister, editor, and writer, esteeming it a favor to correspond with or to receive a visit from him. This was my privilege, and I shall long remember the visit made to me in my house in Englewood sixteen years ago ; a visit of which he wrote very pleasantly a long account in *The Evangelist* at the time.

I might add other characteristics of our much-loved friend ; but I have said enough to indicate his leading traits as a teacher.

From the *N. Y. Evangelist*.

ENGLEWOOD, N. J., Nov. 29, 1889.

FROM HON. WM. BROSS, CHICAGO, IN PRAIRIE FARMER.

Nov. 30, 1889.

He was for thirteen years, I believe, editor of *The Prairie Farmer*. When he came here the whole Northwest was new, and, of course,

undeveloped. Agricultural methods and implements were crude and unsatisfactory. With the appliances then at hand, farmers could not plow the prairie. The mold-boards would flur up with weeds, and the sticky nature of the soil was a great drawback. Then some one invented a steel-clipper plow with a steel mold-board, ground smooth so that it would clear itself. Mr. Wight was the man that brought this invention prominently before the public. This was the beginning of that vast success in agriculture which has furnished the Board of Trade and the great elevators of Chicago their business. His services in this single respect are beyond all praise. In that early day there were all sorts of humbugs in the shape of worthless machinery and appliances imposed on the farmers. Mr. Wight's broad culture and excellent sense enabled him to put his foot down on all such humbugs and save the people from being cheated. No man at that early day had such a controlling influence upon the farming interests, the commercial welfare and prosperity of the Northwest and of Chicago. This I know personally, because I was with him.

In the same way Mr. Wight recognized the excellence of the early harvesting and threshing machines. He recommended the reapers, mowers and threshers, as he did all inventions that would do their work for the farmers, but all frauds and humbugs were crushed by his powerful pen. Men who had such machinery to sell would come into his office ready to take his head off, but he was firm as a rock.

The whole system of elevators was indorsed and promoted by him from the first. He investigated the merits of the best strains of stock and recommended them to the farmers. The opening of railways that brought the produce of the farmers to Chicago cheaply was also largely favored by *The Prairie Farmer*. The educational institutions of the west were largely influenced by his pen.

After he went to Michigan he became a correspondent of the New York *Evangelist*, contributing some excellent articles to that paper under the signature of "Ambrose." He was a remarkable able man—in fact, it was always my luck to have the smartest men for partners. Too much can not be said in praise of his ability and influence. As a writer he was master of a pungent, direct style. He was remarkable for his faculty of daguerreotyping his thought on any subject so that a man who runs may read. He was not particularly flowery in expression, but was always



nervous and direct. He graduated two years before me at Williams. He was always entertaining in conversation. He liked to get the boys around him, and was sure to say something good. I remember a remark he once dropped, though I cannot repeat the exact language. Pointing up to the sky, he said that this blue canopy overhead was full of little holes through which light was let down so as to give us glimpses of heaven. I thought this conception of the stars highly poetic.

To show how valuable *The Prairie Farmer* was to the country, and the wide extent of its circulation: In those days we used to get the President's message first along about New Year's. Exchanges kept coming, each containing the President's message, until along in February or March. I heard him remark, "That's about the 200th President's message we have received." The exchanges were from New England to Washington Territory. What I have told you shows both the slowness of the message in coming, and the circulation of the paper.

The death of Mr. Wight greatly affects me, because he is the second old friend to die within a week. My old friend Asa L. Abbott died in New York a few days ago, at the age of 84. He was, I think, the most learned man alive in his specialty—biblical antiquities and history. But we must all go soon.

FROM REV. THOS. WRIGHT, FENTON, MICH.

My first acquaintance with Dr. Wight was at Williams College in 1834. During that year we both roomed in the old West College, when I belonged to the sophomore class and he to the freshman. \* \* While in college he was among the most self-poised and happy of men; his cheery voice of song resounding through the corridors still resounds in my ears after the lapse of nearly sixty years. He allowed no discouragements to stand in the way of attaining to thorough scholarship. I well remember an incident in illustration of this fact. He had arranged with one of his classmates to read Homer with him, and to secure ample time for the purpose, young Wight was to go up to his classmate's room at, say, four o'clock in the morning. He was better than his word, for when he had roused from sleep and rapped at the door of his friend to meet his engagement it was but eleven o'clock. His partner in study had not yet retired for the night. Out of such enthusiasm what less could be expected

than a good Greek scholar, and a continual familiarity with the old classic tongue to the end of his life.

The character and reputation of Dr. Wight rested on a solid foundation, which grew stronger and broader with advancing years. An abounding, sanctified common sense was the corner stone. His experience in pioneer life at Chicago and the West had made him acquainted with all sides of the world, and on several sides of it he was a living actor. He showed commendable ambition for usefulness in becoming the editor and proprietor of a religious newspaper, but sunk his earthly fortune in the enterprise. He engaged for a while in mercantile pursuits with a college classmate for partner. He studied law and was admitted to practice in the highest court of the country. These varied occupations gave him a manifold knowledge of men and affairs which became of untold value to him through life, imparting to him breadth of understanding and soundness of judgment that greatly increased his usefulness and influence in the ministry and society at large.

FROM E. R. B. SACKET, MEADVILLE, PA.

From a Private Letter to Dr. Henry M. Field.

“We were very much pained and shocked to read in your last (Nov. 21st) the melancholy words “Our Beloved Brother Ambrose” “He is gone!” To us it was very sad, and I may say distressing, to learn that this dearly beloved friend has passed away. Among all your *able* correspondents none were so dear to us as Dr. Jay Ambrose Wight. We loved him because of his rare gifts as a minister, a writer, and also because we knew him when a small boy and lived with his mother in the same town of Norwich and neighborhood that we did. My wife indulges in a pardonable pride that he was one of her pupils in one of the schools she taught. When he went to Easthampton he lived in the family of one of her uncles. While in Bay City we corresponded with him, and now that he has gone above, and we shall see no more of his sprightly and deeply interesting letters, we shall feel lonely and sorrowful and mourn his unexpected departure almost as we should if he had been a member of our own family.”

FROM REV. HENRY KENDALL, D. D., NEW YORK.

I have known him for long years and greatly enjoyed the

meeting of Synod two years ago when I was a guest at your father's house. The old friends are passing away. I had a good many questions to ask your father to confirm my remembrance of things so long ago that nearly everybody else had died that knew about them, and I found your father remembered them distinctly and well. That he remembered me at the last and sent his "Loving remembrance and good-bye" affects me tenderly. I am glad that Dr. Field and Dr. Patterson gave us such kindly words with regard to him.

FROM MR. JOHN H. DEY OF THE N. Y. EVANGELIST.

In common with Dr. Field and so many others, I sincerely regret your father's death. Yet I cannot doubt it was well and timely at death.

He was among the few writers whose manuscript could go to the printer without a second look at it. Then I always enjoyed reading the proofs; or if something prevented, reading him later on in the printed columns. He was never more influential with our readers than when he died, and I believe he did much for Alma College the last years, so that, aside from his pastorate, it may be truly said that his last years were his best years.

We have had his picture here in the office for many years, I myself getting it framed, and it will abide as long as I may continue.

I congratulate you and yours on the goodly record so peacefully closed.

FROM REV. GEO. D. BAKER, D.D., PHILADELPHIA, PA.

"I cannot tell how much I prize the message sent me by your dear father, as his beautiful spirit was pluming his wings for the heavenly flight.

"I loved him—I do love him—I shall love him. I will keep his memory green for the joy of it and the inspiration. \* \* \* He knew that I loved him."

FROM REV. WILLARD K. SPENCER, ADRIAN, MICH.

"So the old veteran has put off his armor and received his reward. I count it a happy thing that he was able to be with us at the last Synod; and that now we mourn the loss of

a man who was still useful and at labor when he was summoned to higher service."

FROM REV. GEO. F. HUNTING, D. D., PRESIDENT  
OF ALMA COLLEGE.

Rev. J. Ambrose Wight, D. D., who has just passed away, was among the earliest friends of our college. It was largely as the result of his wise words in the Synod of Michigan, in 1885, that the first committee was appointed to inquire into the advisability of founding a college; and it was his report of that meeting of Synod which induced Alexander Folsom to give the first \$50,000 toward establishing the college.

The death of such a man is a loss to the world, for such as he are not so plenty that we can afford to spare them. The community where the influence of Dr. Wight has been felt for well nigh a quarter of a century is, indeed, bereaved. Bay City owes much to his moulding power. His influence was always in the side of right. He was thoroughly conservative where conservation was wise, but could be radical when it was necessary; and whatever his position he was fearless and outspoken in defending it against all comers. His skill as a manager of men, especially in ecclesiastical assemblies, was marked. When in the midst of spirited debate his brethren had been a little carried off their feet, this rare man could say, and did say, just the right thing, and by a few direct pointed sentences, whose staple was simple common sense, he hushed them all, and set them upon so complete and easy a solution of their difficulty, that they all wondered they had not seen it before. There ran thro' all Dr. Wight's conversation, and his public addresses, and letters as well, a wonderfully pleasing vein of humor, which gave a charm to all he said or wrote. Those who heard his after supper talk at Michigan Seminary a month ago, will never forget the happy manner in which he cleared away any possible clouds of unpleasant jealousy between our seminary and our college. It was most cleverly done, and our hearts all thanked him for it.

Our good doctor was a graduate of Williams College, and was, as all Williams' Alumni are, a most enthusiastic admirer of Mark Hopkins. He was never tired of talking of his illustrious friend, and among the most discriminating of the many memorial addresses at the time of the death of Dr. Hopkins, was that of Dr. Wight.

FROM REV. DOUGLAS P. PUTNAM, D.D., LOGANSPORT, IND.

AMBROSE.

A SPRIG OF MYRTLE FOR HIS MEMORY.

A few days since, while busy at work, a friend called my attention to a despatch in a Chicago paper announcing the death of Dr. J. Ambrose Wight of Bay City. I had seen the notice of his serious illness, but his death came upon me like a sudden pain and personal loss. When I first met him, more than fifteen years ago, he was in the prime of his ripened manhood.

Those were splendid and profitable meetings of Synod which we held in the Peninsula State during the decade from '71 to '81. There was the ever restless, sometimes erratic, but always earnest and useful, A. T. Pierson, and with him his true yoke-fellow and friend in the Detroit pulpit, G. D. Baker, calm, conservative and faithful; there were the Duffields, son and grandson of the elder Dr. Duffield, poetic and emotional; there was the keen-minded Fred. T. Brown, able in debate and sometimes frigid as an iceberg, though he carried a warm heart for his friends; there was the judicial, unbiassed and steady-going W. S. Taylor, who has this year retired from his twenty-seven years as Stated Clerk of the Synod; there were also the two Marsh brothers, and Northrop, active on mission fields. But among all these and many other good and true men there was no one to whom we all listened with so much attention and deference as to dear, good, true, manly "Ambrose"!

It would be entirely superfluous to speak to the readers of *The Evangelist* of him as a writer always chaste and racy, and sometimes brilliant and witty. They knew him through his pen; but many who thus knew him have never seen that little, large-round head that sat down so snugly on a compact body which became so familiar to us by his faithful attendance at Synod. How well do I recall his peculiar walk, which was always deliberate and taken with a peculiar swing, and with longer strides than his short limbs seemed capable of. He was never in a hurry, either in movement of body or of tongue, but his mental activity, his quick wit and his ready apt way of putting things, and his readiness to "see a point," were all in contrast with his deliberation in bodily movement and in speech.

We all loved him; he was so genial and kindly! We all trusted him; he was so even and true! We all regarded what-

ever he said, for he never spoke without saying something! We did not always agree with him, but we could be sure that when he took a position it would be one to be considered. He could show that he was sometimes nettled by what others thought and said. I have seen him sit as if on pins and needles for a whole hour, listening to some brother whose extreme and ill-considered views were offensive to him, yet no resentment or angry retort would come from him at such a time. What he once said in these columns of others was true of himself, that he was "not capable of doing any mortal a conscious damage; at least a conscious wrong."

Six years ago last summer four of *The Evangelist's* correspondents met at the Assembly at Saratoga, and each of us wrote of the Assembly. I was much the youngest of the four. The other three are now gone to the better world in this order, Dr. Smyth, "Clement," and "Ambrose." Dr. Breed is also with them. How strange it seems! Can we think of these men as *not being*? Certain ancient philosophers used to complain that "the sun and moon could set and rise again; but that man, when his day was set, must lie down in darkness and sleep forever." Our Christian Faith teaches us better than this: that death is simply the dark hour that comes just before the dawn of God's eternal day of life and joy and service.

To-day I would join the thousands of *The Evangelist's* readers and I would plant my sprig of myrtle on the newly made grave on the shore of Lake Michigan. The winter's snows may cover and hide it for awhile, but the springtime will come again, and then the myrtle will grow fresher and greener. God's springtime is before us all, and when that comes, these Christian friendships will be renewed to grow fresher and brighter than ever they were in this world!

*N. Y. Evangelist.*

Dec. 12, 1889.

FROM REV. JAMES REID, DEER LODGE, MONTANA.

*Dear Evangelist:* I only give expression to the feelings of many hearts at present in referring to the loss the Church has sustained in the death of "Ambrose."

Much as his practical, racy letters have been appreciated by your readers, "Ambrose," could be fully appreciated as you



knew the *man*. My first acquaintance with him began in the winter of '81-2, when I was a student in Edinburgh, Scotland. I was more or less intimately associated with him until 1886.

Only those who knew him personally in his study, his home, and his work, could appreciate fully the letter of his old pastor, Dr. Patterson.

I have never known a man who had a richer fund of humor than Dr. Wight, which as your readers know, he used at times with great effect.

Having had the privilege of hearing him preach frequently, I can testify as to his power as a practical preacher. He studied the needs of the time, and his early education as journalist, editor, and lawyer, gave him the faculty of looking at all questions, not from one angle of vision as the preacher is apt to do, but of viewing it from all sides.

Few men of his time had greater acuteness of vision, or greater breadth of culture. While the conservative predominated in his nature, yet he was a progressive thinker. His theology was Biblical, and it was thoroughly evangelical and Christological to the core.

“Ambrose” never lost sight of the interests of his parish, and even when the infirmities of age began to be felt, he resisted all temptations to a life of ease. His ambition was to “die in the harness.”

His influence for good in the community where he spent nearly a quarter of a century of his ministry, cannot be estimated. How old associations rushed upon me as I read a letter received since his death, saying “He wished to give you his ‘Goodbye, with loving remembrances,’ and as his final message, the words of Paul to the Roman Church: ‘Whether we live, therefore, or die, we are the Lord’s.’”

Dr. Wight had an unbounded respect for “manliness,” which was only equalled by his contempt for conceit or sham.

His ideal of the Christian scholar was Dr. Mark Hopkins, and I never realized so much the untold power of a great personality as I often did when I saw how the inspiration of that great teacher lived in the character and work of “Ambrose.” I have wished that the letters of Dr. Wight, and a choice selection of his sermons could be published in a volume. I have no doubt whatever that such a memorial of Dr. Wight would be greatly

appreciated by his many personal friends, and by thousands of those who have known him in *The Evangelist* as "Ambrose."

Dec. 26, 1889.

*N. Y. Evangelist.*

FROM REV. S. W. PRATT, CAMPBELL, N. Y.

The news which the last *Evangelist* brought of the death of "Ambrose" comes to every minister of the Synod of Michigan with a sense of personal bereavement, and every reader of the *Evangelist* will also sorrow as he looks in vain for his well-known pseudonym. He was a brother whom all revered and trusted and loved. In times of doubt or trouble we turned to him for wise counsel. Sanctified common sense characterized whatever he said or did. He saw things as they were and met them practically. Intemperance existed in Bay City and he would use measures that would stop or stay the curse in Bay City as fast and far as possible. He loved to look back to his pioneer days in Chicago and rejoiced in some of the foundations he laid there. And he was none the less a pioneer in the Saginaw Valley and laid foundations there and was still doing this when his call came. Men put money into his hands to use as he thought best for the special needs of the feeble churches round about and of their ministers. Thus it came to pass that he was the counselor of his brethren and the leader in that valley and region. One of the last if not the best things he did, the credit of which he shares with Rev. A. F. Bruske of Saginaw, was the founding of Alma College, of whose executive committee he was a member. He was also as broad in his intelligence and his sympathies as the land or the world. Himself a founder of churches, some of the largest gifts for foreign missions came through his influence.

When the Synod met at Monroe he preached its fiftieth anniversary sermon, which was not confined simply to the growth of the Presbyterian church in Michigan, but treated of its growth and influence as it related to all the great questions which affected the growth of our country during those years.

That he built up and held until beyond his three score and ten such a church as that at Bay City proves that he was a preacher of no common ability. Not caring for the graces of oratory he was an able and instructive preacher, and if to convince is to be eloquent he was also eloquent. His style was clear and vigorous, which enabled him to say just what he thought so

that no one could doubt his meaning, and when he pleased his pen was as sharp and keen as the best. Like Paul, his bodily presence was weak, if not to tower like Saul is weakness, but his speech was not contemptible.

To have been the life-long friend and correspondent of President Mark Hopkins, and the editor of *The Evangelist*, gives his true rank among men as a man and a thinker and a friend.

Riding with him last summer on the way to Alma to the meeting of the trustees of the college, he told us the story of his life and work, and let us see into his great mind and warm heart; and we could but admire and love a man to whom God had given such a privilege and life. We cannot make him dead. Such a man cannot die. He lives and will live in this world even when all who saw his face have joined him in another life. Servant of God, well done!

THE ROCKFORD REGISTER, NOV. 16, 1889.

Mayor Sherratt has just received tidings of the death of a distinguished relative, Rev. J. Ambrose Wight. He was a brother of James M. Wight, who was the father of Mrs. Sherratt. Together the Wight's practiced law in this city along in the 40's, The subject of this present notice came to this region in 1836. In February, 1843, he established the old Rockford *Forum*, a Whig paper, which, after a number of changes, was finally merged into the Rockford *Register*. In August of the same year he sold the *Forum* to Austin Colton. Today's Chicago *Tribune* gives other facts in his career which show that he was a man of much culture and distinction.

THE CHICAGO TRIBUNE, NOV. 16, 1889.

The Rev. Dr. J. Ambrose Wight, once a well-known journalist of this city, died at his home in Bay City, Mich., last Tuesday after a brief illness. The remains will reach Chicago this morning and be interred at Rosehill Cemetery. Dr. Wight was 78 years old and was a native of Oneida County, New York. He attended the academy at Bennington, Vt., and had Henry Ward Beecher and Dr. E. H. Chapin, the Universalist divine, for classmates. He was graduated from Williams College in 1836. His alma mater made him a D. D. in 1871. Immediately after graduation Mr. Wight removed to Illinois. After a few years in business he was admitted to the bar in 1841. Two years later

he removed to Chicago to take charge of the *Prairie Farmer*, continuing in this position thirteen years. The paper, under his management, achieved a remarkable success. In 1849 Mr. Wight was associated with Mr. William Bross in the editorial management of the *Herald of the Prairies*, the Western organ of the Congregational and Presbyterian denominations. He bought out Mr. Bross in 1851, and two years later sold his own interest. In 1856 he entered the ministry, becoming pastor of Olivet Presbyterian Church, continuing there until forced by ill-health to resign in 1863. In 1864 he was an editorial writer on *The Tribune* staff. In 1865 he accepted a call from the First Presbyterian Church of Bay City, Mich., where he remained until worn out by his untiring labor. He resigned this pastorate May 2, 1888. Dr. Wight leaves a widow and four children. Mr. Bross, who was in college with Dr. Wight and was his life-long friend, gives him credit for doing more towards the development of agriculture in this part of the country than any other man. He also says: "No man at that early day had such a controlling influence on the farming interests, the commercial welfare and prosperity of the Northwest and of Chicago."

THE DETROIT TRIBUNE, NOV. 17, 1889.

The death of Rev. Dr. J. Ambrose Wight of Bay City removes one of the ablest and best ministers in the denomination in Michigan. He had an unusual store of "horse sense," and was endowed besides with a gift of humor, always used in a quiet, inoffensive way and never with bitterness, that made all that he said and wrote exceedingly racy and readable. He was good and kindly in all his relations as pastor and citizen, and was sincerely respected and beloved by all.

# Poems.

## SONGS OF THE RIVERS.

We have come from the tops of the mountains afar,  
Where the couches of snow and of hailstorms are,  
Where they nestle on high their infant limbs,  
With the war of volcano for cradle-hymns.  
Jasper and crystal are down for their beds,  
And diamonds are pillows beneath their heads;  
But we stole away and left them there,  
Alone in their fathomless home of air:  
We broke not their deepened slumbers among  
Their curtains of clouds, where they sleep yet long,  
Till they rise to leap down in the avalanche path  
Or to ride on the neck of the wind in its wrath.  
For onward and onward our journey must be  
To our kindred ones, where they sleep in the sea.

Where the mountains and skies clasp each other and kiss,  
We have looked from the top of the precipice,  
Till dizzy we grew and leaped down the track  
Deliriously of the cataract:  
Till lilies and violets we saw by our side,  
And meadows of green all sunny and wide.  
But we cared not to stop, for onward must be  
Our wanderings still, till we sleep in the sea.

We passed thro' the valley—the sunbeams came  
To quench in our breast their golden flame.  
But we dashed them back and hurried away,  
Their dalliance could not lengthen our stay:  
A bank of green hung o'er our face,  
We tore it away from its dwelling place;  
A glorious tree grew by our side,  
But we plucked it down from its height of pride;  
A gallant ship came with us far,  
Its flag was rich with many a star,  
But its mast and keel away we wrung,  
And away on the tide its timbers flung;  
Would you see where that vessel's fragments are?  
Look to the deep—you will find them there!  
But question us not, for we will not stay—  
Our course is onward. Away! Away!

With our feathery wing, we have rode on the blast,  
 As it swept from the north, like a thunderbolt past.  
 In vapor invisible often at even,  
 We have rode on the sunbeams upward to heaven.  
 Darker than night we have been the throne,  
 Of the rainbow to sit in its glory alone—  
 Often our folds have enturbaned the crown  
 Of the sceptered hills, as we brooded down  
 Round their hoary heads, and drank at its birth  
 Each sunbeam that sped on its journey to earth.  
 Ah! have ye not felt the dread of our might?  
 And have ye not deemed us a glorious sight?  
 Yet glad have we left those stations of pride,  
 To dwell in the depths of the ocean-tide—  
 But there will ye walk o'er our bosoms and deem  
 Our sleep is a sleep unbroken by dream?  
 Ah no! ye shall find we are ever the same,  
 And that ages of rest our force will not tame.  
 For many a ship that shall tread o'er our face,  
 Shall sleep with us there, in our cold embrace;  
 For rich shall the spoils of our anger be,  
 Low in the caves of the fathomless sea.

Though old are we now, yet once we were young,  
 Though weak were we then, yet now are we strong,  
 Though dim is our visage, it is not with tears,  
 Though furrowed it be, 'tis not with years—  
 For joyous as ever we meet our fall,  
 And strong we sink to our burial.  
 Man of a day! Why standest thou there?  
 To meet with thy doom, why dost not prepare?  
 For thou goest like us, to a fathomless bourne,  
 Yet thou, from its bosom, will never return;  
 For onward and onward thy journey shall be,  
 As thou threadest the vales of eternity!  
 Yet we shall again revisit our source,  
 And again shall we track to the ocean our course.  
 Then sunny and glad let our journeyings be,  
 As onward we move—Hurra for the sea!

PSALM XCIII—3.

BY J. A. WIGHT.

The floods lift up their voice!  
 Deep from all old Ocean's caves  
 Breaks the thunder of the waves—  
 Hark! How they rejoice!  
 Low 'mong Ocean's valleys creeping,  
 High into the Heavens leaping;  
 Now they mirror forth the skies,

Now they shed the rainbow's dyes;  
Rearing, bounding, laughing, glancing,  
Foaming, curling, marching, dancing;  
Still they lift their voice on high,  
Still they thunder to the sky;  
And for ever is the theme,  
The glory of the Great Supreme.

    Their voice in joy doth burst:  
The song which through their caverns rang,  
When the young stars of morning sang—

    They heard it at the first:  
And though that tune was changed to woe,  
By dark rebellion, long ago,  
Its first tones faintly echo now,  
As when, among a thousand strings,  
    Which breathe in harmony each tone,  
One only jars, and wildly flings  
    Forth on the air notes all its own,  
Yet notes so sweet, they seem to be  
Tones of some long lost minstrelsy;  
    Such notes of joy do rise  
    From Ocean to the skies.

    The dark floods speak in wrath!  
Down on their face the thunders spring,  
And o'er them with its scorching wing

    The lightning makes his path.  
The strong winds leap upon the deep,  
The wild tornadoes madly sweep,  
And the proud billows heed the nod,  
To do the vengeful work of God.  
Far down upon their floor of stone  
The fragments of their wrath lie strown;  
While ever, o'er their peaceful sleep,  
The roaring, chafing waters sweep,  
And wrathfully deep calls to deep.

    The waters speak of love;  
While on their breast the winds lie sighing,  
Faint, as the breath of dying:

    How wantonly they move!  
So sweet and quiet is their rest,  
The stars are pillowed in their breast;  
The ship across their surface flies,  
Bearing unnumbered destinies;  
And fins of speckled monsters shine,  
Glancing through the laughing brine;  
Many a bird, like some sea blossom,  
Skims in quiet o'er its bosom;



All is peaceful, gentle motion,  
 Boundless, glorious, sleeping Ocean!  
 To Man thou givest stores of wealth;  
 To him thy breath gives joy and health.  
     Ah, yes, in love  
     Thy voice doth move!  
 And yet, when tempests make their path  
 Across thy face, thou hast a voice for wrath;  
 But still whate'er thy tones may be,  
 They ever thunder forth, Great God! the praise of Thee!

PECATONICA, SEPT. 8, 1840.

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ADVANCING LIFE.

"It is in many ways good for us to feel that we are going on, passing from the things that surround us, advancing into the undefined future, into the unknown land. And I think that sometimes we all have vivid flashes of such a conviction."—*Country Parson*.

My earthly days are growing few,  
 My sun is sinking low:  
 But on beyond the western blue  
 I strive to look the concave through,  
     Where skies celestial glow.

The strength and speed of hand and limb  
 Are slackened with life's toil;  
 But the soul's eyesight is not dim,  
 And Hope sings on her joyous hymn,  
     And Heart knows no recoil.

Backward I scan life's weary way;  
 It seems a turbid sea,  
 A circling round of weary day  
 And night, with now and then a ray  
     Of heavenly light on me.

A life beginning with a wail,  
 Must follow on with tears;  
 And how can sunny days avail,  
 Though gilding life's propelling gale,  
     To sanctify our years.

And yet it were ingratitude  
 To think of life alone  
 With rayless gloom and grief endued;  
 For God sends many an interlude  
     Of music from His throne.

And he who waits with willing ear  
 Amid his daily toil,  
 The heavenly symphony may hear,

Trilling the heavenly atmosphere  
That broods the earthly soil.

And though my sun be sinking low,  
And days on earth be few,  
Immortal life can never know  
A line that bounds its being so—  
Its days are ever new.

And there are realms that God has made  
Beyond what we have known,  
Where light is shining without shade,  
And suns unnumbered are displayed  
Around the turning throne:

A land of which no tongue can tell,  
Where the Great Father is;  
The pure in heart with Him may dwell,  
And look on the ineffable,  
In rapturous endless bliss.

Then let the waning sun go down;  
The sunset is but night;  
And the brief shades of midnight brown  
Are the days prelude and shall crown  
The morn with endless light.

And ye to whom the time is noon,  
Your day is passing on;  
And ye shall reach the end full soon,  
For flies as swift the evening moon  
As comes the morning sun.

#### GROWN AND GONE.

We two at table sit alone  
As in the days of yore,  
The birds which fluttered here are grown  
And out into the world are flown  
And haunt the nest no more.

Time was when nuptial life was new  
And the soft radiant skies,  
Infolding many a heavenly hue,  
Their light of hope upon us threw  
With floods of rainbow dyes.

We sat at the table then as now,  
Careless of future years;  
Gay were the curls and light the brow—  
And soft eyes kindled with the glow  
Born of life's earlier years.

And memory now the years takes in  
When other voices came.

When infant wails and childhood's din  
Made bright this dreary realm of sin  
And hope was lit aflame.

And growth and life and laugh and shout  
Yet mixed, alas, with tears,  
Turned the brief decades fast about,  
While some came in and then passed out  
Where time counts not by years.

And there was one whose life was bent,  
As youth to manhood grew,  
To serve the state—who came and went  
Circling for her the firmament,  
Whom the mad ocean slew.

But not for us is childhood's time;  
Nor for itself is given,  
'Tis but the prelude of its prime,  
Seeking to reach a happier clime,  
The perfect growth in heaven.

Yet life is not to sit and mourn.  
What if time's tide shall cease?  
Forward our glance is to the bourne,  
Whence there is not for us return  
But where is rest and peace.

For there a table still is spread,  
Ah, may each find a seat!  
And never absent is the Head,  
Nor fails the feeblest to be fed  
Where that great household meet.

BAY CITY, May, 1887.

# Letters.

## THIS UNDERTAKING.

It was announced in the last number of this paper, that the undersigned had become connected with it. I may say that this connection was not of my own seeking, my experience in the control of the Press, in any shape, I have long regarded as done with, forever; the reasons of which, I may be permitted to state. Some of the readers of this paper have possibly a partial acquaintance with me, as an editor; others may not have such. To them I would say, that editorial duty has consumed the equivalent of sixteen years of my life. Twelve of these were given to the *Prairie Farmer*, and three and a half to a paper of which I desire to speak with the charity due to the dead—*nil mortuis nisi bonum*. The labor of the *Prairie Farmer* was for many years a pleasant work, but it was relinquished for various reasons, the chief of which was, an irrepressible longing for the ministerial office, which the Providence of God finally threw open to me. Failing health, and no satisfactory inducement in the work itself, had something also to do with it. Of the other paper, viz., the Religious one—the *Prairie Herald*—peace to its ashes—I may also say, that my connection with it was not of my seeking. It was undertaken by advice, and yet with an ardent desire to be connected with a religious paper, as a mode of preaching the gospel. Never has an act of this personal life been performed with more conscientiousness, than the editorial conduct of that paper was entered upon; and yet never did a silly sheep go to slaughter with more utter ignorance of what was in store.

The paper was, at the start, a union concern between the N. S. Presbyterians and the Congregationalists, as all religious undertakings of that day, in which either of those parties were engaged, were. Their relations had hitherto been harmonious; but the *N. Y. Independent* had just been started, for the express purpose of putting the denominations asunder. And no sooner was my seat taken in the editorial chair, than each shot of that paper took effect upon some western victim. The Congregationalists were unsettled by appeals to their denominational feeling, and the Presbyterians by attacks upon their policy, men and

measures; and the two were made inharmonious, if not hostile towards each other, by an unceasing agitation of denominational matters between them; much as the wheels of a piece of machinery are made to run uneasily or are thrown out of gear by putting gravel among the cogs. All this, that paper had a right to do, for aught I know; but it has not the right, and never had, to attribute the results of its own work to others. Added to this, the *Herald* had become a partnership with the Baptists; its subscription list had been pushed by an agent and was made up largely of Methodists, and every sort of *ists* besides. It represented also conservatives and radicals of every stripe in each and every denomination.

A question is, how had a paper been conducted to get and keep such a medley of interests together? That is easily answered. It had been edited on the "*Ledger*" principle. Its articles were mostly of the neutral order, suited to boarding school misses and the people who "see men as trees walking." The only exception to this was, that in the matter of slavery, which was then the standing bone of contention, it uttered the ultra-radical sentiment, then prevalent in Northern Ohio, in entire disregard of its conservative supporters, who had got it up, and given most of the money to start it; they being deemed, apparently, good, easy, thick hided souls, whom it was a virtue to sting.

The writer of this had no notion of conducting a paper in that way. He would have thought himself as well employed in tending a lightning rod. The living questions in which people were really interested, whether they knew it or not, seemed to him to be the fit topics of discussion, and in regard to which the news needed to be given, and wilder tone of anti-slavery utterances to be under the circumstance, the becoming one. But he soon found himself like a boor in a printing office, among standing type, every brush of whose sleeve, and every swing of whose skirt, brings down a column or two. One article knocked down a row of Methodist subscribers; every article scattered the story readers; and it was soon demonstrated that the list of subscribers was, with a limited exception, good for nothing. They took the paper to please the agent; and kept it to read its scraps and stories; as for paying for it, that was another matter.

Besides, from the day of my entrance upon the work, there was a fierce buzzing in the hornet's nest, in a certain quarter; nameless now, but forgotten never; and the insects were scurry-

ing to and fro, getting ready their stings, and in due time down they came, and *did their best*. More actual torment, more hard sweats, and sleepless nights, perhaps, never beset one mortal out of the inquisition than followed in my shadow through those three and a half years. And yet, most of the obstacles were surmounted, but one. The denominations pulled apart, and the paper *came down between them*. Its list, consisting of 2,700 names, and a little more, was sold to the Congregationalists for \$1,000, and the money paid for them; my supposition being that of the list, about 1,500 to 1,800 would be retained to the purchasers; as I presume was the case. The *Congregational Herald* is still alive. It has been printed neatly and edited with taste and ability. But it has the feeling towards Presbyterians which John Randolph had toward wool, and which led him never to pass a sheep unkicked. Its tone, denominationally, has been bitter, and, generally, in the articles I have read, unfair and relentless. But it has doubtless done its denomination a good work, though at a serious cost; having been published, until recently, where I have no information, at an expense above its receipts, of from \$1,000 to \$2,000 per annum, to its owners.

But to return—the *Prairie Herald* died; having no party behind it ready to hold it up, and, the home, which six years hard toil had earned, being consumed in it, with no further means to be sacrificed. Seven thousand dollars due as subscriptions to it are still unpaid, being scattered up and down these western prairies, in sums from one shilling to sixteen dollars, each, peace to them all; I rejoice to say to the debtors that I long since ceased to scan the list, and know none of them *but one*; him I meet now and then on our streets, a well fed man. Of him my agent was so accustomed to complain, that he has got stuck in my memory. But if he will move out of town, I will promise to forget him, if possible. But he and all the rest are welcome to what they owe me—farewell. But this seven thousand dollars is not the whole expense, by any means; the absolute loss was about fifteen thousand dollars; though counting opportunities of property, merely kept from that time to this, it was scarcely less than forty thousand dollars; and counting the opportunities of increase by investment, not less than sixty thousand dollars. It swept away one well earned home, followed on, and swept another, and a better one no longer ago than last fall, which God had given to other efforts, and promises yet some further tortures in the near future.

As offset to all this, I tried for a long time to solace myself with the thought of having done some good in the way of holding things in place, and otherwise, but an increasing skepticism as to this, has long been settling over me, and I am inclined now to reckon it as a simple waste of money and toil.

I make these statements, not in the way of complaint, but from a conviction that history has demands on this sort of failure, in the line of religious newspapers. It is also pertinent in its relations to my connection with this paper. It has taught me some lessons not in the editorial or publishing line.

A good deal is said now of union and co-operation, and the like. I have come to the conclusion, by the experience of the last fifteen years, that the best sort of union and co-operation is that secured by every denomination minding its own business ; and this most especially in regard to all new undertakings. Those who do this can preserve candor and fairness towards others, while those who *mix up* in unsuitable partnerships, will soon find themselves holding a wolf by the ears. If anybody, however, is anxious to be yoked in, even with the bulls of Bashan, from the love of their sort of music, and with the impression that the dust that they kick up is an adjunct of a pleasant atmosphere, the hope is, that all such expectations will be realized. My idea is, to seek agreement where it is likely to be found ; and to agree to disagree with others. The world is broad enough for several denominations of Christians. Let each work its own machinery ; asking of all others only that which it claims for itself ; and being ready to do *to* others, that which it seeks on their parts.

As to my connection with the *Reporter*, it seems necessary that some one, resident here, should exercise a concern for it, in the frequent absence of its former owner, in pursuit of the objects of his new mission. I have nothing to promise and nothing to ask in relation to it. I have the hope that it will so far serve the uses of a local paper in this place, as to make its subscribers feel that it pays for the small outlay of one dollar per annum ; and that there will be enough such to keep the breath of life in it as long as it shall please God. All that can be done here at present, is to sustain a paper published monthly, and that is probably all that is really required. If more were demanded, I could not by any possibility be connected with it, since I have other duties demanding my first attention. The time of my connection with it will depend on the uses subserved by it. If any



end is answered, the labor required will be cheerfully performed; but if it amounts to nothing, I intend no contest with Providence in holding up any paper.

Dear reader, will you pardon this bit of reminiscence? for without it I could hardly begin. Yours in the Gospel.

—From the *Presbytery Reporter*, December, 1859.

FROM THE NEW YORK EVANGELIST.

### CYPRIPEDIUMS.

KALAMAZOO, June, 1878.

They have them here at Kalamazoo, at this seminary, in great profusion, and as fresh as June, large as the eggs of hens, with banner in addition. And did the divine hand ever invent and construct a finer blossom? But the floral glories are not restricted to these. Humanity is in bloom here; and these are the days of mental fragrances, giving the usual promise of fruitage in good life work, such as the world and the divine kingdom on earth demand. I have been listening to the recitations of these young ladies, hearing their essays, and wondering that I remember so little of what I once learned; and, in fact, that I know so very little now. And then how they sung! And the way their fingers skip over the piano keys; and the way these elephantine boxes respond in all manner of musical echoes! I didn't know there was so much music in the world. It is a marvel how these young creatures got hold of it. And such a troop of pretty girls! of all the types of young beauty—the tall and the slim, the short and the thick, the blonde and brunette—crowned with woman's glory of all shades and degrees of profusion. It is a renewal of one's life to come here. And of course the girls did well. I never knew them do any better. And I know of no better school for young ladies than the "Michigan Female Seminary," at Kalamazoo; though I did not invent its title, not being of the belief that a seminary is male or female.

The address was given by Rev. Frank T. Bayley, of Westminster church, Detroit, where he succeeds our old friend, Rev. Wm. Aikman. His address was a model one, both in manner and matter, being salutary truth well put, clear, articulated and logical; sound philosophically and spiritually. I am sure I have never heard a better. I hear that Mr. Bayley is succeeding grandly in the Westminster.

Of Kalamazoo, I have before said, that it is one of our most beautiful Michigan villages. I am reminded of the village of Stockbridge, Mass., as you look at it from a certain elevation, of which something is known at the *Evangelist* office. A river winds through this, as through that, with a circular sweep; and beyond, a range of hills bounds the river, not quite as high here as there, forming a bosom in which the town nestles; while on the hill summits a sprinkle of buildings raise their roofs among the tree-tops. Either this or that is beautiful enough. Amid this fine scenery, and with this corps of teachers, some sixty daughters are in training. Nor do I know of any place where they get a better. I regret to see that while the young ladies bloom like cypripediums, the principal, Miss Fisher, is not in perfect health. It is hoped that the rest of the vacation may restore her.

I had almost forgotten to speak of what touched me, in the decorations which the young ladies had devised in connection with their commencement exercises. The full-sized portraits of the two poets they most admired were hung one on either side of the door entering their recitation hall—Longfellow to the left, and Bryant to the right; the latter draped, with an inscription in letters of green, "The Good Gray Head that All Men Knew." Possibly you of the *Evangelist* have seen that before. I was told that his death affected the young ladies here as if they had personally known him.

This portrait looks more as Mr. Bryant looked when I saw him two years ago at Williams College, than do those in the books. Irenæus says, in the *Observer*, that it was *four* years ago; for his reference is to the same occasion. But Irenæus has been off in Europe, where, perhaps, time goes twice as fast as here. It was centennial year, 1876.

#### WORDS, ETC.

As to Mr. Bryant's list of rejected words, in which he is *endorsed*—there is one of them!—by the *Evangelist* editor, a little something can be said on either side. Mr. Bryant abhorred all *cant* phrases. And a new word is apt to take the public's fancy, and to become *cant*; and so used to supply, or conceal poverty of thought. Such words and phrases are extremely unpleasant to people who do their own thinking. "All right!" shouts the railroad man to indicate that he is ready to proceed. It is his way of saving words, and is a convenience to him. But the

phrase is taken up and used in application to all matters ; and where it is simply a lie ; and a canting lie is the most offensive of all the brood. But new words are a necessity of growth ; and a language will as surely grow as the people who use it. And an inventive mind will as surely invent new words and phrases, as it acts. No one thing so well describes the difference of different authors, as their different vocabularies. One uses but a small list of words, no matter how voluminous his writing. Another, though he writes less, will employ a large circle of words. If all men were to be restricted to Mr. Bryant's list, you could not have Mr. Longfellow. While we admire Mr. Bryant, we cannot all be tied up to his severity, in the employ of words. Hopkins and Hickok must each have elbow room.

#### • DUST EXPLOSIONS.

Coming to Kalamazoo, I sat in the cars with a man engaged in flour making. I doubt if many people, not connected with the business, have any idea of its magnitude in this country ; or of the tug and tussle going on in connection with it about patents and modes of manufacture. This gentleman showed me a paper, as large as the *Independent*, published at Chicago, devoted wholly to milling. He stated that it is no new thing that mill dust is explosive, with men who are versed in the business ; and, that with the improved process of manufacture, the danger is much increased. Invention is now alert to discover an economical mode of counteraction. A patent is already out for this end. The method is to secure a perfect ventilation, so that the peculiar gas constituting the danger, shall not be allowed to accumulate. So we see that every useful and good invention or discovery, involves and develops a new corresponding evil or danger. You cannot have the good without the evil ; never since our venerated but foolish Mother Eve would know good and evil. And the discovery of a useful process involves the immediate necessity of search for some mode of heading off the new danger.

#### GENERAL ASSEMBLY REPRESENTATION.

One thing I take to be settled, which is, that we are to have a smaller assembly ; if not in one way then in another. The body costs too much ; nobody wants it, or will any longer have it, on the old basis. And it is, not the larger and older Presbyteries alone which complain of the expense of travel and enter-

tainment both. It comes heavily on some of us of the smaller Presbyteries. Nor do I see any need of getting worked up into a nervous and cerebral tempest, as our friend "Western" seems to be doing, under the idea that our frontier Presbyteries are to be greatly wronged by reducing their representation. I belong to a frontier Presbytery. Last year we had four delegates to twenty-five ministers; two of the delegates represented twenty-four ministers, and two represented one minister. This year we had two delegates; and I am unable to see that we were not just as well cared for by the two, as by the four; and I fully believe that one would have done the business precisely as well as the two, or as the four. It may be a nice thing to go to the assembly—for *those who like it*. And men who seem to themselves to be in a sort of banishment in their western work, naturally feel glad to mingle with their brethren in a full congregation. Their work, too, looks large to them, as it is, and they wish to get it before the assembled church. But their object is defeated by the size of the body. So much eloquence clogs its own passage. Men are in each other's way. And a surfeit does not digest. One man can as well represent all northern Michigan, or one half of Kansas, or the whole of Montana, as ten can do it, and better, for he might be heard. This whole earth is not very large, but it is too big to get in a ten acre lot. And if the attempt is to get it into that, I should prefer to be one of those left outside.

#### THE SEASON.

It is suspected that our season is very much like yours. From February into May, mild; from that to the last week of June, wet and cool, with occasional frosts; the last week of June, hot. The crops are usually large, especially wheat, fruits, etc. Till last week the corn was behind; but with the mercury in the nineties, corn has nothing to do but to grow. It seems their are berries and birds up in Maine. So are there here. And, as there, the robins delight in strawberries, so do they beneath my window. Great is their jubilation over the Wilsons every hot morning. But there are enough to divide. Let the birds eat and sing.

Yours, AMBROSE.

#### ENGLEWOOD.

ENGLEWOOD, N. J., August, 1880.

When one comes from far and begins to write of things in or near the city of New York to a paper published there, a first

thought may be that he is talking of matters which the paper and its readers may know more of than does the writer. But a second and more correct thought is that the great body of the readers of *The Evangelist* do not live in, nor very near to, New York City; and possibly such matters may be as interesting to them as those concerning any other region.

I date at Englewood, N. J., though there is more of New York than New Jersey about it—for the state line cuts close to it, and its people are mainly New Yorkers, doing business in the city. I am quite uncertain of the derivation of this favorite suburban city name. Possibly it should be Engel-wood (that is angelwood) from the idea that it is a place suitable to such occupants. Yet, though it may, and I hope does, receive the visits of such, it is not likely that any have been seen except of the kind mentioned by Carlyle—that is, “earth-angels.” There are indications of such. True, it might be originally Anglewood, in allusion to an English parentage, or even as containing some piscatory allusion, though I see no indication of either fact.

It is a beautifully picturesque *settlement*; for beyond the original cluster of dwellings, grown into a village and supplying local wants, it is not a town, but its dwellings are scattered over a wide region of hill and dale, and lift their heads out from the trees on every hill-crest and slope. They are largely built of stone; of which several varieties, such as trap, sandstone, and granite, form the foundations of the land they stand on. They are such buildings as New York bankers, lawyers, merchants, millionaires, philanthropists, and philosophers naturally choose. The place is behind and upon the Palisades, which extend along the Hudson River about fifteen miles, being a perpendicular trap rock six hundred feet in height directly from the water. New York Island lies opposite, and the city begins and thickens away southward to the bay and the ocean.

Englewood has a great hotel on the crown of the Palisades, four hundred feet in length and four stories in height, filled with people having time and money to spend. Strolling into one of the great parlors of this hotel, the thing which attracted my attention was, in one corner, a huge stack of the “Songs of the Sanctuary.” It meant daily worship here, for the books showed use. I felt better; for neither mammon nor fashion are sole occupants.

Englewood has its supply of churches—Reformed Dutch,

Methodist, Episcopal and Presbyterian ; the latter, I am told, including four-fifths of the people. Is not New Jersey the Presbyterian state ? The pastor here is Dr. H. M. Booth, whose brother is Dr. Robert R. Booth, of the University-place church, New York, now in Europe ; a long sufferer from typhoid fever and its sequels. I hear that he is slowly gaining in health. The church here numbers over four hundred members. Its edifice is of stone, solid, chaste and agreeable to the sight. It was full of people last Sabbath morning, though many—its pastor included—are away. The audience room might be improved in one particular : *i. e.*, by a little more light at the desk, by which the gift to the minister might gain *from* him a little more for the people. These dark pulpits are a common fault of city churches. But city people, when in the country, are entitled to as much light as others. Indeed, as in the city, they, by necessity, dwell much in darkness, they ought, when out in the places of God's sunshine, to get a little more than others.

The beautiful chapel added to the church, fitted up with all needful appliances for prayer-meeting and Sunday-school uses, was built by a lady, and given entire to the church. Her name is Brinkerhoff. (See discussion of nomenclature at the commencement of this letter.)

My stay here is with John D. Sherwood, Esq., lawyer, literary man and traveler. In younger days I essayed to be his pilot through the Greek reader, preparatory to his entrance at Yale. He graduated with the honors, in 1830, practiced law in New York City for some years, and traveled all over Europe. He is now retired from his profession, but not from active life, for he is the busiest of men in local matters of church and state, and in literature so far as health allows. He has published a good deal, and has a good deal laid up unpublished. Of his published articles there are two which, in their way, are gems. One is entitled "What I saw of the Battle of Kissengen." This battle, it will be remembered, took place in 1866, between the Prussians and Bavarians, after the great battle of Sadowa. Mr. Sherwood's description was not made from hearsay, nor safe observation, for, with another gentleman and a lady, he was caught in it, and held for some hours between the contending forces, and in momentary danger of being shot and trampled over. His account of it is as graphic a piece of word painting, and gives as tangible an idea of a battle as I have ever read. It was published originally in



*Hours at Home*, and is now a classic of one of the school readers (No. 5). The other production of his, to which I refer, is a little *poem*, published in *Harper's Magazine*, entitled "The Silent City at Greenwood," and beginning:

"There's a city, vast, yet voiceless, growing ever, street on street ;  
Whither friends with friends ever meeting, ever meeting, never greet."

It was also published in the *Evangelist*, but some years since. The solemn measure and the solemn thought seem to me never to have been more fitly joined. Placed by the side of Bryant's "Thanatopsis," it certainly would not suffer. Two men's reputations rest on the multitude of their works. Byron was made by his "Childe Harold," Bryant by his "Thanatopsis." He really needed to write nothing more, for this is what is always quoted in his memory. There is a Greek fable, in which a lioness is reproached for producing but one young. "Yes," she replied; "one, but a *lion*." The two pieces alone ought to make Mr. Sherwood known.

Well, I am staying here for a few days in great quiet, doing a great deal of nothing, looking over the lawns, green and shaven and beautiful, dotted here and there with beds of petunias and portulaccas and geraniums, alternating with coleus and cannas and pampas grass. I look through the trees—maple, elm and cherry—and I take notice here are red cedars, older than any man, and never decaying; and ancient chestnut trees, scarcely seen since I ran in barefoot boyhood over their burrs, and ate of their then inestimable nuts. I rejoice in this bevy of nimble-footed girls. How they run! They carry one back to the time when my years numbered only ten—twelve; and I could run, too. Other running is for me now, such as Paul talks of.

Here at Englewood I am amid royal surroundings, and sleep in a royal bed—not such figuratively, but actually. Upon this couch rested the Prince of Wales for a fortnight, in 1860. At this washstand his princely ablutions were performed. In this mirror he saw his royal figure, and I hope it seemed more royal to him than to me, as I saw him in Chicago. In this wardrobe his royal garments were hung. They all bear his royal feather, with other and elaborate carvings, all being of Canadian cherry, and made purposely for him by his most loyal subjects of Canada, that he might use furniture not desecrated by vulgar contact. Alas! he will never know, I fear, that I have followed him.



In truth (privately) I have followed him as far as I wish; I do not desire the use of his footsteps.

I met here Rev. Dr. E. Taylor, once of our state, at Kalamazoo, in the Congregational connection, and go, by his politeness, over to the ancient town of Hackensack. Now it is New Jersey, with its quaint Dutch names, its ancient houses shingled on the sides and its stone Dutch church of some two hundred years' standing. We pass the long, picturesque mansion of Hon. W. W. Phelps, member of Congress, with its beautiful surroundings. We cross the Hackensack river, up which comes ocean merchandise. In the rich orchards and grain field we are impressed anew with the fact that the Dutch fathers knew the good places.

If anybody wishes to come to Englewood, it can be reached from the city of New York by way of the Northern Railroad of New Jersey, sixteen miles, and running parallel with the river; or they may come, as I did, down the river to Nyack, the northern end of this railroad. Our boat down the Hudson was the "Albany," a new water-going palace, long, wide and high, with all manner of conveniences—not as the boats of other days, gaudy with saloon gilt, but richly and chastely finished and alive with people. This surprised me, for I had supposed the railroad had killed the river, as to commerce and travel, and in fact I saw but little sail on it and we met but two or three boats in the day. It was many years since making a water trip on this river. My first one was in the days when all went by it and our boat carried "for a dollar and *found*." The "*found*" was where the interest came in. At dinner it resembled a frontier hotel, with twenty plates and fifty hungry eaters. It is to be seen to be understood. The fare now on this wide craft is but \$2, and the arrangements for the *finding* (extra, of course) are excellent.

The scenery down the river is, as of old, as God made it; but with man's adjustments. Nothing earthly of which I know excels it. The towns, as seen from the river, with little exception, have not grown in forty years, except in ice-houses, which seem to connect with the chief business of the stream. These are many and vast and do not cease till West Point, or below. I saw the place just above, where our friend, Rev. E. P. Roe, writes novels and grows berries. His novels, by their sales, are in esteem; his berries, I know, from trial, to be good.

For a space below Albany the rocks find their use, in giving as such literature as "Gargling Oil, Castoria, Pills, Powders, Liniment," etc., in great letters. Such advertising is now, I learn rejoicingly, illegal, with high penalty. Neither is it lawful at the Palisades to throw down a stone, to which all boys of all ages fell tempted. It might crack a skull below. The rock advertisements, too, might do even worse. Who says that legislation does not advance?

Well, Englewood must be left; for that is true of all things earthly. So I leave the royal chamber, and shall know no other royal thing, except the Royal Baking Powder, henceforth. The bell in the stone tower of this hospitable castle, which rung its welcome when I came, neither rings nor tolls when I depart. The huge oak door of 1,400 pounds weight, swings on its hinges, and old friends and new fade from sight. May we meet again!

AMBROSE.

FROM THE N. Y. EVANGELIST.

Another Style of Vacation.

BAY CITY, MICH., August, 1882.

There has been such a volume of vacation literature in the columns of *The Evangelist* of late, that I hesitate to add to it. And yet it seems to be read, with more or less of interest; and perhaps an additional letter may be pardoned. My last was from St. Louis. The mention of that spring seems to have stirred other springs to flowing; and Dr. Cuyler asks for "peace." Yes, good brother, there shall be peace.

After St. Louis, I had intended a visit to upper Michigan—say Petosky, Mackinac, and beyond—inasmuch as now we have railroads there and thence; and did go to Sheboygan, and saw some beautiful forest and lakes in that upper region; and if anything in this world is beautiful, it is a clean wild forest, where the desolating axe has left no trace of its havoc. But different conditions involve different procedures, and so I am at home for these resting weeks. And lest some of the vacation-phobists be in danger of a spasm over the idea of a "shut-up church," our services go on weekly, by the help of our young brother Reid, together with prayer-meetings and Sabbath-schools. Not that I feel any more compunction for resting, when rest is demanded, than for eating when hungry. But what shall one do, in the way of nothing, at home, in vacation time? Well I sit under the shade

of this beautiful oak, with shape unlike that of any other I ever saw—a perfect umbrella over me, and flanked by that majestic maple, grown now since I knew it, from a mere staddle, the admired of admirers. The green carpet about me is new mown, and of gorgeous softness. If I have any thoughts, they can find me here. If I wish to read, there is no better place for it. And if I just wish for sensation, what will produce it if not the whispering air in these green leaves about me? Did you ever think of that wisdom which has made the growing world *green*, my friend? Suppose, instead, it were staring white, or flaming red, or sickly violet, or a stark yellow. Yes, you say, but it is white in the winter. True; but then the sun is low and the light faint, and the white is then a help. Was it evolution, or God?—meaning by evolution, a self-acting force, of course.

But even now the daily light diminishes; the days are grinding off at each end. That old “Pole,” which Dr. Kane and John Franklin and Leigh Smith have so tried to get hold of, and couldn’t, is tipping down again, and the days of darkness are coming. But sufficient to the day is the evil thereof.

I must look through this daily paper, of course, to see how the world is going. As to *reading* it, I should as soon think of eating a wheat field, stubble and all. To say nothing of the great spaces of business statistics, useful to those concerned, there are immense areas of paper, covered now with the incubations of a new Congress. Of course a Congress must be had, and in due time it will get itself hatched. But all the inceptive processes put in use by Hon. Mr. This, and Esq. That, to get position as Law-maker, cannot be of interest to any mortal. Yet here are great pages of it over all the States of this large country. It is simply good for skipping.

Then there are metaphorical acres taken up with rowing, ball-playing, horse-running, etc. Of what use or interest? Skip it, as a colt leaps a bed of hot ashes. Even the news from Egypt is a tangled mess, contradictory, inept, and vapid, designed, as a doctor’s potions to a dyspeptic, simply to amuse. The truth is, war is the art of getting ready; and that is what the Egyptian armies are at. Let us hope that when the clouds are fairly gathered and charged, the thunderbolts will clear the sky at once. The British armies have my sympathies entire. Has not the time come for all that Shemitic and Hamitic savagery to be taking itself away? The Gospel will do a part; but God’s universe

has law as well as Gospel. You have seen Sinai, Mr. Editor, and will not forget.

So we are through with the daily, and here is the weekly, the good old *Evangelist*; and I go roaming with you. But that climbing up Serbal tired me. It was a terrible risk. I shall not forget my own climb up that hill in Massachusetts, to see where Mary Lyon was born; nor the chill and fever afterward. Some "life-ologist" says a man of fifty should never *run*. Should a man of sixty then *climb* Serbal? I go off with Dr. Cuyler out to Montana, and with Brother Putnam through Missouri, and with the other brethren in their rambles; and I enjoy their leisure as my own. And here is *The Interior* lit up with scintillations. Then *The Foreign Missionary* must be read, every word. Nor will I neglect the old *Missionary Herald*, whose files are on my shelves, from 1823, mother of all the missionary papers in this land. Nor can my friend on that Boulder drive me from *The Record*. I wish to see not merely the small returns from my church; but what is the Church at large doing for foreign and home missions, for education, and to help our secretary of church erection, who thinks that the beggar ought to be the giver—that our "Burnt District" should not only swallow some thousands, but pour out as many in return? And are publication, the old ministers and widows, and the freedmen, getting anything? *The Record* tells me every month, and nobody else does. Then here is "The Gospel for all Lands," and I get a view of the wonderful, soul-cheering work of all the churches in all the world—a knowledge I have desired for years, but till these three or four, could not get. Ah, what a work that church missionary society, dispensing a million of dollars annually, and that London society using half as much, and the Scotch and Wesleyan churches, to say nothing of those on the Continent—what a work are they doing, girdling the globe, and already getting into all the dark corners of it. Nor have I omitted *The Home Missionary Monthly* of 23 Center street, by any means.

But weakness tires of reading, and takes to seeing. The sights are neither novel nor grand, but they are pleasing. There is that coleus bed in the greenwood, with its tall canna in the center. It has lighted its lamps at the top of its stalks. Mr. Vick, of floral memory, says, "it is no great of a flower." But it is unlike any other. A humming-bird with a vesture of green, purple, and gold, is standing on his wings, and tasting its honey

—looking like a blossom of the air. The curious upright leaves which gird the stems, carry me off to Egypt again; for they look like the donkey's ears, such as serve as banners in a ride to the Pyramids. And those coleus plants of all hues, striped, spotted, splashed—whence are they? Each leaf is a blossom. Ten years ago there were none. And those portulaca, with their thousands of blooms, of seven colors, does any one tire of them? When the sun shines, they shine; but they refuse without him. And even if he shine, with a rain-storm near, they will not come out. How do they know?

But time would fail to tell of the petunias, climbing over the stones; of the phloxes, geraniums, and bashful pansies. That lobelia cardinalis, though, does not mean to be overlooked. It lays hold on your eyesight; *will ye, will ye*—reminding you of Dr. Thompson and the popish conclave, all at once.

The birds, too, are my companions. Here is Mr. Wren—not Christopher, but one as full of business, and twice as chirpy. Along too comes robin, looking for earth-worms. Close by is his offspring as large as himself, but insisting that he ought to be fed, as if a baby; hopping up nimbly, whipping his wings, and opening his mouth as often as the parent detects a morsel. And here are other strange chirpers, among which the cat-bird is conspicuous by its cacophonous note. And out in the street in the dirt, are the sparrows, dozens of them, disregarding horse hoofs and wheels. I poked my cane at one the other day, and he only hopped a few inches beyond it. He agrees with some other people from across the ocean, that this is his native land.

It is not without thought and amusement that one watches the street, and its ceaseless and varied tide of inhabitants. Here come a bevy of school children, with eager clatter of piping voices. Do they know why they go to school? Doubtful. Then there rush by some girls on horseback, riding like troopers. That teaching of John B. Gough was not needed in these parts at least. He represented women as restrained by “You mustn’t and you mustn’t, and you mustn’t”; giving exhibition of the way they were taught to walk, with a mincing half step; and then showing how they ought to walk with a free, swinging gait. Women in these parts are not much under the dominion of *mustn’t*; they train under the banner of *may* and *will*.

But here go great loads of something in bales, huge in dimension. It is not cotton; it might be wool, but the bales are

oo large. A friend helps me out by saying they are *oat hulls*. But what are oat hulls, and whence such hills of them? Why, in Illinois, oats are made into meal for human eating. But each oat has a husk larger than itself. Those are not thrown away; they are ground with corn, and the mixture is a provender for beasts. The purchaser, perhaps, thinks he is buying corn and oats, ground together. He is buying corn and husks. Is not this world given to lying? Will there be very long any truth left in it?

Among the passers-by not to be overlooked, are those curiously dressed women, who wear the garb of fifty and a hundred years ago. They are the strong female stalwarts of Continental Europe — Poles, Belgians, Swedes, etc. The French women of the same class are more advanced. They have been here longer, and have got on the toggery of modern days. Nor is dress the only reminder of the olden time. People did not often ride, fifty years ago, in such carriages as these, nor were they drawn by such horses; and these belong simply to our well-to-do people.

And these baby carriages! for our town is inhabited by many very young people. They are rigged with springs, shades of all patterns, gilt, and mounted as few carriages for adults were a few years ago; and the cost is that of many a larger vehicle.

But here goes a man on a cart-wheel, or what seems such. How he sails along through the air! It stirs my blood to look at him. The bicycle has verily come to stay. Let every young man learn to ride it. And the ladies? Well, they must have tri-cycles.

I confess to a degree of amusement at the dogs I see in the street; for our city (with all the imposing of muzzles, taxes, and what not) is as free to the canine world as Constantinople. Among the multitude of them I select two. One is a dog of duty, the other wholly given to enjoyment.

The first, for two or three years has been the attendant, guard, and helper, of a sort of dray, or truck wagon, drawn by an old nag, which sadly needs help. The help which the dog renders is given by a general and special supervision. As that vehicle passes each day, that dog is both the forerunner and the rearsunner. He looks that no obstacle is in its path; sees that no ambitious rival crowds on its rear. He circles round it; goes under it, gives a voice of warning to all who approach, not to infringe it, and continually helps on that old horse, by voice and act. I have no doubt he thinks himself essential to that establishment. He pays

no regard to other dogs; is not turned aside for a moment, by blandishment or fear. He is a small, spotted, and ordinary looking animal; but if not faithful of heart, I despair of seeing it.

The dog of pleasure has his enjoyment in *running*. There is nothing for him to run for—he simply runs. Let the boys come upon the street with their noise, and this brown spaniel is on hand. Up the street he goes, two or three blocks; wheels, and back again, as far in the other direction. All you see as he goes, is a *streak*. What the idea of that dog is, I confess I don't know, but I have seen people very much like him.

But the dew is falling, and so, *vale*.

AMBROSE.



# Sermons.

## THE HAND.

Delivered at Bay City, March 15, 1885.

MARK 8, 23.—And he took hold of the blind man by the hand, and brought him out of the village; and when he had spit on his eyes, and laid his hands upon him—he asked him, “See'st thou aught?”

I have chosen this passage because of its use of a single word. That word is the *hand*. I might surprise one who had not thought of it, to see how many times, and with what variety of application, this word, hand, is used in the scriptures. I find it more than a thousand times, so common a matter of course. It is sometimes the hand of man; sometimes the hand of God, or the Lord; and sometimes the hand of angels. But I find no such thing as the hand of Satan, or of the Devil.

The use of the word is scattered through nearly, or quite, all the books of the Bible. When a thing is done by any one, it is done, not by him, but by his *hand*. Thus, where Adam is banished from Eden, his return there is forbidden, lest he put forth *his hand* and take of the tree of life. Moses takes the rod of God, in his hand, and stretches it out over the sea, or toward heaven; or smites with it, the rock. David is said to take his life in his hand and to strengthen his hand in God. So, if one falls into the power of another, he falls into his hand. If God puts forth any exercise of his power, whether of vengeance, or of mercy, it is by his *hand* that it is done.

May not a word so much employed suggest some useful lessons? A marked distinction, too, is made between the right hand and the left; and the distinction applies to God, as to man. “The right hand of the Lord doeth valiantly.” “The right hand of the Lord is exalted.” “The Lord hath sworn by his right hand.” “Ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of Power.” “Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.” Indeed, the greater number of the applications of this phrase, “the right hand,”—are to God, and not to man.

But, I do not propose to traverse all these uses of the word. I allude to them, to show what a place the hand has, in the

economy of things—how it holds, and controls, and moves things, in the earth beneath, and in the heavens above; what uses it may have, in the human economy, and in that which is divine. Of course, in speaking of the hand of God, the use of the phrase is figurative; or what the scholars call anthropomorphic! that is, God is represented, in form, as man; and God became man, you know, in Christ. And such representations, so constantly used, are full of reality.

Turn your thought, then, to this fact: That where an aim or object is sought, there must be to it a medium of connection. The soul would reach forth to God; it would seek him. But how shall it reach God? The scripture tells us how. But their direction accommodates itself both to the fact, and to our conceptions of things. They do not teach that you can go to God irrespective of some medium of approach. Nor do they at all admit you into the inner sanctuary of God's being, for God shrouds or veils himself from human sight, or contact, by his own inscrutability. "He makes darkness his pavilion round about him." But he reaches forth, in the imagery of the Scripture, he reaches forth *his hand*. Into his hand you may commit yourself; and while that hand holds you forth from his person, it touches you, cares for you, protects you; leads you in the way you ought to go; and in all things blesses you. And that hand holds you. It stretches forth from the heart of God, and its pulsations you may feel. But it may keep you far from the inner home of the heavenly household for a time. It may appoint you a service in a far off part of God's vineyard. But the arm of the Lord is a long arm, and it will never lose its grasp on him who commits himself to it; it will hold you wherever you are.

A single step in the imagery takes us into another of the great facts of our religion. A medium for finding God is a mediator, Christ Jesus stands between God and man for their reconciliation, and the restoration of man to God. But here I do not propose to dwell. Yet this is God's reaching forth to man to save him. And so, again, as we already see, when God is represented as doing any thing, it is always, or nearly so, by an instrument; and this fact is one which is set forth in symbol, when his hand is so exhibited. It is God's hand that creates and arranges. "Hath not my hand made all these things? The heavens are the work of thy fingers." And thus is shown, not only that he works by instruments, but that he works among particulars, and dis-

poses of the minutiae of things. The finger of God can touch the smallest thing. It can dispose of and arrange the most delicate of materials. The color of a flower, or, of an insect's wing, are not beneath the notice, or the manipulation of the creating hand. Thus the Divine aim is to bring God near to one's apprehension, by the use of this imagery. You may think it fancy: but the fancy touches facts. The world's mind is often averse to consider God, as doing anything in this world. It is extremely anxious, in our days, to banish God, as a providential worker, from our world, altogether. Does God concern himself in our paltry affairs? they say. They will not see him, in the judgments, which his word declares him to execute. The fire, the flood, the hurricane, the pestilence, are not His; for, will God leave the throne of His holiness to come here, for such a work, it is asked? No! God will not leave His throne, and the Scriptures do not represent Him as doing any such thing. He never deserts His place in the heavens to come here for any work. He merely stretches forth His hand, and "He touches the hills, and they smoke." His hand doeth all this. But I turn from this figure of God's hand, thus exhibited, to the hand of man, with whom it is a physical reality, and not a figure. Let us contemplate it for a few moments,—as a work of God; and as a thing of uses, and of misuses, also.

What a thing is this human hand; so complex, and yet so single; so sensitive to touch, yet so strong to grasp and to hold; so various and versatile in its movements; so skillful in its numberless uses. What, after all, is it for?

You have seen the hand of an infant child, and must have wondered at its early perfectness. The attention of the little brother or sister, who sees it for the first time, is instantly fixed on the little hand, with its pulpy palm and its perfect fingers, each in due symmetry and finish. Was anything ever so wonderful. Take the hand of a little girl, say three years of age, examine it attentively, the rounded and slender and taper fingers, with each delicate nail the veins faintly showing their color, in the living marble of the skin; the dimpled joints, and the waxy palm. Was anything ever more beautiful? Certainly God has never made anything else on earth like it. Painters and sculptors have made it a life-long study; and he who can exhibit it, with a fair exactness, is master of his art. Such wondrous beauty was never lavished on a thing that did not point to important uses. But

what is it good for? Well, it can grasp and hold. When a little fellow puts it out to you and you drop into it the little coin, as he feels it in his little palm, and his fingers close upon it, you see his eye sparkle, and his whole face kindled with a glow; you have reached his heart; you have come into a new and closer relation with than before. By the little hand he may then be led.

You have, perhaps, when weary with thought or care, been pacing up and down your room, with hands behind you; and suddenly have been aware of a soft and little hand placed in your own. As you turn and see little eyes looking up, to see if you are taking heed and are welcoming the companionship, did not a streak of sunshine go through your soul? Those moments may be more precious than you are aware. They may contain the seeds of a life-long impression; they may give direction to a path that shall be followed for a life time and beyond it. In truth, there may be a mutual leading; hand may lead hand, the older and the younger each.

Is it a fact, too, far off, to be symbolized in this, that God's hand is ready for the hand of his child, no matter how weak? And that, "the walking with God" is not a mere fancy, but a scriptural fact. And is there a thought more tender and precious, than that we may walk hand in hand with God? Yes, the child's hand can grasp and hold and be led and lead, for here scripture comes again to our aid, "a little child shall lead them."

Why do we shake hands when meet? Why does your physician take your hand and feel its pulse? Because the hand is the readiest connection with the heart; and when we join hands in our greeting, we say, in act, my heart is with your heart. The physician knows the heart's action, by the wrist's pulsations. The whole circulating system is thus revealed to him; and he marks its deviations from the normal condition.

Let us turn our thought to another phase of the theme. This world is for men, and there is work to be done in it. Bread is to be gotten for millions of mouths, and it is a daily bread that is to be gotten. To clear the forests and drain the soil of the wilderness; to fence the land; to break up the unwilling sod; to reduce it to a pulverized tilth; to sow the seed, to guard and culture the crop; to harvest and thresh the grain; to pulverize, and to prepare and bake the bread—what a series of labors; what a continuation of toil. Then, to get ready all the varied implements by which this is done; the axes, and plows, and mattocks,

and harvesting, and threshing implements; the mills to grind; the chemics of bread-making; the ovens to bake; and the knives to cut—and, each one involving a system, or series of arts, to produce it—what a complication of labors. The axe, the chopper wields—whence is that? It is a history by itself. Not till this nineteenth century, was it completed, as we have it? It is the product of varied material—of iron dug from the deep earth—then coal and limestone to smelt it; the steel to give it edge; the steel, itself, a series of experiments and inventions, in which many a brain has passed weeks and months of thinkings. And, now, weighted and balanced upon its helve, deftly, and curiously prepared, and made sharp with grinding, it attacks the forest giants; giants, which have dared the blasts of the centuries—with never a conqueror before; then, prone with the earth, and the acres of wild wood, impenetrable since the flood, are laid bare to the sun and to the harvests.

Nor is it bread alone that is wanted. Houses are to be built and furnished. Temples, for God, and stores, for mammon, must fill the cities and villages; and furniture, for use and comfort, must fill them.

And the world must be clad. The wool, the cotton, the linen, the silk; what a world of textures, of strength, of beauty, of fineness, they yield.

Work? why this is a world of work. What a wondrous complication of arts is a civilized and christianized society! How different from the savage! What more beautiful to behold than a well-balanced, peaceful and pious industry! It is the very union of heaven and earth. This subduing the earth to the uses of comfort and culture, as God's servant, so that it shall minister to the well-being of the world's millions and God's glory,—it is what man was put on the earth to do. To use its products, its forests, its soil, its mines, its vegetation, its animal life,—its elements,—its heats, water, wood, electric and magnetic forces. What an employ for the highest of the earth's intelligences!

Nor is this world of work all for the grosser needs of man. Much of it is for the body, but not all. The soul and spirit claim their share. Art, and thought, and skill, address themselves to the tastes. Love and a heaven-born benevolence have their works, and they bless the poor; they seek out the sinful; they build Christ's kingdom; they encircle the globe with His gospel.

We are apt to think of all this, as a toil and drudgery; and

there is a constant struggle to get away from it, to escape from work, as from bondage. So men "haste to be rich," that they may be free from work; rich, by speculation; rich, by what they call "luck;" rich, by unlawful pursuit; rich, by gambling, by fraud, by theft; but the end of all this is disorder. The necessity of employ is in the muscles and bone and brain and heart of universal man. And if he will not do honest work, there is only dishonest work left. If man will not serve God, the Devil claims his service without waiting for his consent, and gets it. The man, that will be idle, dies, and he dies childless; or his children die, too. Only honest work succeeds in this world. The Devil always cheats his servant.

But our present matter of thought is not of the work itself, but of the instrument of it. And I only touch upon the work, to exhibit the power and use of the instrument. The instrument is the human hand. The hand slays the forest, wakes up the soil, feeds the millions, clothes them, builds them houses, gets them comforts. By it the axe, the hammer, the plane, the saw, the loom, are created and wielded, or made to move. It creates and points the telescope to the heavens. It touches the wires it has made and stretched around the globe, and a current of thought flows through the air, and under the ocean, and meets the thought of other continents from the other side of the globe. The hand moves the pen that puts soul and spirit upon paper. It makes the types talk to all the world, and to thousands of generations. It utters the praises of God, and sends blessings to men it has never seen and never will, upon earth, see. About all that men do, in some way, is done by or gives employ to the hand.

Looking at the little instrument, you would not think it could build the block of massive stone you see yonder, or send the steamship across the ocean. Look at the train of cars thundering over a continent. Can human hand make such a thing as that. Examine a piece of silk, or a web of lace. Can a hand produce a thing so beautiful? Go into the great city; see its streets of massive brick and stone; its stores and shops, filled with all the product of skill and labor; its dwellings, rich in that which meets and ministers to human desire. Did a human hand produce all this? There seems, indeed, but slight connection between the instrument and the product. Were these things put before our eyes, and the hand with them, and with no experi-



ence or knowledge as to how they had been produced by it; but were we simply told that this hand had produced these things not a man on the earth would believe it. Is the declared fact that God created the earth a harder problem than that? Look, you who claim to be atheist and skeptic, you know that man has wrought these things with his hands. Did the earth produce itself, then? Or, what if you do not see the exact way in which God produces the things He is said to do? And if the hand, itself so weak, so seeming inadequate to what we see it to do, what shall we say of the hand's maker—creating a thing so weak, yet so mighty!

Looking upon an instrument of such amazing resources, yet all unseen, what unimagined resources, then, hidden with its Inventor! These uses must have been in His mind who created. Need we even stagger at His promise of developments, because its instruments seem unpromising. How far indeed may reach the meanings which God has planted in feeble seemings! What possibilities for the human soul!

Come back to this human hand, itself, once more, and look at it; with the thought, how much it may mean. It means all manner of skill. It means food and comfort. It means all labor by which the world of things is subdued; the world of toil employed; the world of taste gratified; the world of mind expressed in activities. Shall it then be godly or sinful? Open it, and it means giving to the needy. Grasp with it the hand of a fellow, and it means friendship and confidence; clasp it, and it means defiance and hate. Holding the hammer, it is an emblem of industry. Holding the sword, it speaks bloodshed, and war, and death. Armed with the pen, it symbolizes the flow of thought and the spread of intelligence. Uplifted, it speaks of God and appeals to His righteousness. Spread forth, it invokes God's mercies upon sinners. Thus comes this meaning into the words of an apostle: "Lifting up holy hands." So, the consecrated bread is broken; so the baptismal water symbolizes the purified heart. "Holy hands"? Yes; think of that term! It was the hand of Paul that shook off the serpent into the fire; and the same hand was laid upon Publius to heal him; a hand that shunned and shed the evil, but was full of blessings for the worthy or the needy. But, after all is said, it is only an instrument. True; that is all. But what an instrument? And what a soul to be provided with such an instrument? For the hand is the servant; and the servant of the soul



and spirit; and the master is greater than the servant. What the hand does, the soul and spirit do. By the work of men's hands, you know their hearts. Is it honest toil they are doing? Are those honest gains which are grasped? Do they make the widow and the orphan glad? Do they feed the hungry and clothe the naked? Do they give as well as take? Do they work righteousness? Do they carry the bread of life to the spiritually starving? Do they build the walls of Jerusalem? Do they know the labors which Christ's vineyard demands? There is good work for all manner of hands. "To build" is a phrase which involves delving, and lifting, and striking. Such work gives strong bones and tough sinews and palms hard and horny.

Building Christ's kingdom involves all those. Such hands may be defiled with the dirt and soot of contact with rough materials; but Christ counts such toil worthy of its honor and its reward. Yes, hard hands are wanted. To build the walls of Jerusalem, calls, sometimes, for the trowel in one hand and the sword in the other. The soft and the smooth will not do now. But ere the temple is finished, work of skill and beauty will be called for, and softer palms and delicate and nimble fingers, such as wrought the fine twined linen, the blue and the purple of the tabernacle will have employ. The soft hand is the one that is wanted to smooth the brow that is burning with fever, and to strew the couch of the dying. God has work, I say, for all hands, the strong and the weak, the hard and the soft.

But do not forget that the hand is an instrument of evil, also. Keep watch and turn it away. Our mother Eve "put forth her hand" to take the forbidden fruit; and Cain "lifted up his hand," and slew his brother. And ever since the hand has been doing the wrong. It smites the brother; it steals his money; it wields the pen that forges the draft; it puts the thought on paper that blasphemes God and curses man; it gives to the neighbor the cup that maddens him; it clutches at dishonest gains; it is lifted to perjure the soul before God; it breaks all of God's commandments. There is no evil work that does not use the hand in the doing of it. Beware, then, of all such!

The hand of man can bless and can curse as the spirit and soul shall direct. It can work the will of God or the will of the Devil. It can shape for itself the future of an angel or of a fiend. It can make of this world an Eden or a Pandemonium.

To do its true work rightly, it needs to be placed in the hand of God. Man's hand grows weak in time, and after due labor it is pulseless and still upon his breast. But the hand of God is never weary; it is always full of blessings. It will never be taken from the head of weak and penitent love, nor refuse its aid to courageous faith and humble obedience. It will hold the head of sickness, and to the trust which says, "Into thy hands I commend my spirit"—it will bear it through the grave and to the world of light beyond it.

#### DIED IN FAITH.

Delivered at Bay City, May 13, 1888.

HEB. XI, 16. "But now they desire a better country, that is a heavenly; wherefore God is not ashamed of them to be called their God, for He hath prepared for them a city."

The eleventh chapter of Hebrews gives a brief glimpse of a list of people stretching over a long period of time. It begins with Abel; but at the point of the text has named only five persons, though the period is two thousand or more years and continues long afterward. The declaration that "they desire a better country, even an heavenly" includes, doubtless, the whole list of such as "died in faith," as those thus far named are said to do, though the designation of "pilgrims and strangers" applies more directly to Abraham and his more immediate family, inasmuch as their life was a continuous pilgrimage, beginning in Ur of the Chaldees, extending thence to Haran, thence to Canaan, thence to Egypt and back to Philistia. For hundreds of years they were "strangers and pilgrims," and well might they desire a "better country." And very comforting is it to read that God did not overlook their desire, nor was ashamed of them, but had "prepared for them a city."

It was long ago that they lived, so long that the eye can take them in at one glance, however spread over the years their history is. Blending thus in one picture, though so varied in experience, they give us example and incitement as one party. Thirty-six hundred and ninety-five years ago, if our chronology be correct, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were alive together, Abraham one hundred and sixty-seven years old, Isaac sixty-seven years; Jacob a lad of seven years. Sarah had been dead thirty years. The family lived in the south of Canaan, in tents, pasturing their flocks and moving from place to place as pasturage or water were plenty or scarce.

They were seemingly like other people of their race and time. They went through the various transitions of an earthly life—birth, infancy, childhood, youth. They grew mature and finally old. And as they passed along in life, the acts and passions, common to our humanity, characterized them. They laughed and wept, they were angry and glad. They crept as infants, toddled as children, learned sounds and then words, and so talked in the Hebrew tongue. The vivacity and the roguery of youth were theirs. Doubtless, the boisterous hilarity of children was not unknown to them.

They wooed and married and took on them the cares and duties of household and family life. They desired property and gained it. They grew rich in cattle and flocks and their tents multiplied, as family and dependents increased. And they spread themselves over hill and valley, till the family became a town and then a tribe and finally a nation. They became hundreds and thousands of souls.

When pasture and water grew scarce, a whole village struck tents and moved on. When they stopped each knew his place. Their municipal regulations were well understood. Their sheik, Abraham, took his place and his spear told the relative positions of the rest in due order.

And they worshipped the God of Abraham. As the tents were pitched, there rose the altar of earth and stones. The animals were slain, the fire was kindled, the smoke went upward and the Patriarch stood forth, as the appointed priest of the household, and before the great congregation, called upon the God of heaven—the Creator, the Revealer, the Covenant-maker and Keeper.

Thus they lived. They bought and they sold, though their wants were few. There were Midianites and merchant men passing to and from Egypt. And Abraham grew great, not only in cattle and flocks, but in gold and silver, and when the time for sepulture came, he had the silver to buy the place for the burial of the wife of his youth.

But life was not all smooth to them, more than to us. They had their foibles and their jealousies and their disagreements and their quarrels. They divided. Separate interests drove them asunder. Lot went by himself and we know his history. Esau and Jacob were two from their birth. Family history has been repeating itself ever since their day. New wives brought new

jealousies. Irregularities in wedded life added new pangs to those of its necessities and laid up accumulated sorrows for after years, which became an inheritance and passed over to to children and children's children.

As time wore on, individual character stood out, conspicuously in its own development, and stands out, historically, for our inspection. Abraham was great and just and God-fearing. He was driven hither and thither. Famine pursued him and drove him to Egypt and over among the Philistines, and he committed some errors under fear; but he kept his heart and never seriously compromised his character. He stands forth through the ages, "The Father of the Faithful."

And as Abraham was, such was Sarah. She bore the honors of his house, fed his guests, shared his trials and was the mother of the son through whom a race like the stars for multitude have sprung, including Him, in Whom all the families of the earth are blessed.

Isaac was a mild, peace-loving man, silent and industrious, but weaker than his father. He dwelt at home, digged wells, to be robbed of them; increased his flocks, to become vastly rich, and was managed by his beautiful and crafty wife, and distressed by his wayward and quarrelsome boys.

And such as the mother, such was the son Jacob. His life was full of the stirring experiences of ambition; of successes obtained by cunning and unscrupulousness; poisoned at the end, as scorpions wear their stings; of sorrows, self inflicted; overreaching and being overreached; of conscience, acting in conflict with shrewdness and covetousness; of the fear of God, along with the love of the world; of piety, grafted into an active, aspiring and worldly mind; yet gradually subduing it, and shining out of and above it, and reaching the haven of peace, in a clear and serene sky, the sun going down in beauty and radiance.

I need not extend the picture. This was the life of the olden time. Its circumstances and surroundings are greatly unlike ours. But the sum and the substance are much the same. The mental and moral experience are, in quality, greatly alike. The real pattern of a just, true and Godly life and character are the same then as now. They are given us for monition and in their own limits, for example. As they lived, so do others. A tide of life has flowed down the centuries from them to us, and is lived over again.

Yet, what is it to live? What was it to the patriarchs? And is it more to us? When Jacob stood before Pharaoh, one hundred and thirty years old, he declared "the days of his life to be few and evil." As said, the mode of life is changed, but do we get more out of it, reckoned on the scale of being, than they did? Man has explored and rules the world, as he did not then. We put our knowledge in books for keeping, instead of carrying it in the changeful memory. We ride in rail cars, instead of upon camels. We send letters by lightning, instead of post. We make steam toil for us. The sun makes our pictures. We force the soil to give us bread and with God's blessing make famine impossible. Our modern commerce surrounds the world. We have a thousand comforts and conveniences to their one. But we do not live as long. Do we, spiritually and actually, live better? Do comforts and conveniences actually give us more content, or advance, as a fact, our real well being? Our industry, measured on the scale of the Eastern world, is marvelous. But does it change for the better, the substantial facts of our existence?

We concede that it may. But the evil grows along with the good. Vice and crime advance, as a part of and with the means of our material progress. Suffering increases, as wealth increases. Sickness loves that which we love. It invades the dwellings of statesmen and of kings. Families, which have conquered poverty and are envied for their display, yet disappear. No children continue to wear their names, and their places are taken by those who dwelt but lately in hovels. Society toils and mixes and overturns continually. Does the desirable come upper most?

We look back on these pastoral people of three or four thousand years ago and think their lives very coarse and rude, and rejoice to be rid of such conditions. They had family feuds, were guilty of injustices, and divided. Do we have no family feuds now? Does wealth and prosperity exclude over-reaching and injustice to-day? We see and know that increase of possessions, and advancement in facilities do not satisfy. Desire grows by what it feeds upon. We never have enough.

The real question is not answered in this direction. But do we fear and serve God better? Are we more just, more honest, more truthful, more righteous? For the kingdom of God consists in righteousness and in peace and in joy, yet joy, which is peculiar in its description, for it is joy "in the Holy Spirit."

That is the joy that pleases God, and has the sanction and inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

If the balance in the moral scale is in our favor, then we have the advantage of these. If not, I do not see that we have gained anything of any value. What advantage is it to be able to get drunk on a gill of brandy, instead of having to drink a quart or a gallon of wine, to reach the same result? Does it improve a thief, or secure society, that he can ride forty miles an hour on a rail train, instead of fleeing on a camel four miles an hour? Is lock-picking the bank vault, fortified with modern machinery, any better than digging through an adobe wall, to get at the hidden treasure? Does it conduce to a virtuous and lovely character, that a woman be covered over with a blaze of diamonds?

Men are weighed in different sorts of scales. Daniel Lambert and the fat woman at the circus are the heroes of physical weight. Napoleon Bonaparte, Lord Byron and Voltaire tip the beam in the mental balances. But Fairbank's scales and Robert Ingersoll as weighmaster, whatever be their value or ability in in testing men, stop short of the great want of our poor humanity. Their scales do not weigh righteousness. Something that reaches further into the future is needed. Nay, something that gives the better flavor to human life, even now, is called for.

Suppose a man to stop and make an estimate of himself, looking backward and then looking forward. "I have gotten so much of property, I have eaten and drank and worn so much—now all gone. So many days and nights I have given to folly. Then and then did I do a mean thing—would I could forget it. Then and then did I do a wicked thing. Will God forget that? And now what have I, were God to call me?"

Suppose life to go on, till age comes over him. These are the days which the wise man calls "the evil days," the days in which is "no pleasure." The sun and the moon and the stars have lost the light and the beauty they had in his youth, and are dark now. "The clouds return after the rain—to rain again, instead of passing away, leaving the sky blue and bright, as in early life. "The keepers of the house"—the hands—"tremble," "The strong men"—the limbs—"bow themselves," "the grinders"—the teeth—cease for fewness. "They that look out of the windows"—the eyes—are dim. "And there are fears of that which is high, the almond tree flourishes, and the grass-



hopper is a burden, and desire fails, and man goes to his long home.”

So we read of these patriarchs that they all died. Some had lived hard on to a thousand years. Abraham saw one hundred and seventy-five, Isaac followed in one hundred and five more, and Jacob followed after twenty-seven years more. So have all the multitude of their successors gone hence. Xerxes looked over his millions and wept, that in a hundred years not one of them would be alive upon the earth.

There may be now somewhere alive a person or two, who saw the beginning of our revolution in 1776, but such are curiosities, not to last much longer. There will come the time when of all in this house to-day, all to-day in the churches of this city, nay, of all in the city itself, not one will remain. It may be written of us, as of the patriarchs, they all died. Men live to die. The waves roll down the current of Niagara continually. Each one takes the leap. So rolls forward the human tide. The gates into the other world are never shut by day or by night and are never without travellers passing through.

But the patriarchs named not only departed, but “they died in faith,” and faith ever looks forward. They “looked for a better country,” that is, “an heavenly.” Abraham and his had been looking all their lives for a better country, but they did not cease their search when leaving the world. They lived a life which did not leave them with departure from time. There was still an inheritance which they did not reach in this world. There were promises beneath them on which they still relied. There was One to come, in Whom all the families of the earth were to be blessed. And the depth and extent of that promise, Abraham had never fathomed. Our Savior’s interpretation of the divine declaration, as being “the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob” is, that He is the God of the living; and the life that was in God’s promises and declarations had in it a breadth and depth which Abraham did not fathom, but rested in, with expectancy, nevertheless.

*This faith*—of trust, obedience and expectation is that for which the whole story is written. There is absolutely nothing else of the least importance in the life of any of these persons, nor any reason for which their history, even though but in outline, should have been written. Why keep on record these four thousand years, this story of Abraham and his wife and sons? What care



you or I for any of them, except as exemplars of faith and godliness? True Abraham was strong and unselfish, but these are a part of his religion. But of what importance is the good-natured and simple-minded Isaac, or the wily, over-reaching Jacob, if you take away this thing of trust in God? A million of patriarchs of whom nobody ever heard, beyond their grandsons, sleep these four thousand years, in the soil of Syria and Mesopotamia, as good as they were other than this. And a thousand of bearded sheiks and emirs roam the Bedouin deserts to-day on camels, with tongues as smooth and hearts as false and hands as swift to shed blood, and not a whit more so, once divest them of their faith.

Taken together, they were by no means examples in their lives at other than this point. They were polygamists; they were guilty of falsehood; they cheated. Women abused their housemaids. Why should inspiration trouble itself to transmit to the ages such people? Not surely as models of excellence in other than this one thing.

We have plenty of such people yet, such in all but their godliness. We are not without men who excel in all that is mean and false and corrupting. We have more Mormons than we want.

But these men show us what faith did in that olden time, in its grapple with the sins of the world. It lifted these above the rest. Their godliness bore the fruits of righteousness. In this they were separated from their fellows. Their faith grappled with the actual sins and sinners of the world, grew into, and overwrapped and struggled mightily with their selfish meannesses, and overcame them, ripened and mellowed them as life wore on and age crept over them and bore them up in the dying hour and carried them out of the world, its spiritual conquerors, to step into the chariot of fire, waiting invisibly outside their tent, to wing them away to the better country, for which they looked.

For God was not ashamed of them, though so rude in their life and manners, though so far from perfection. It is for this that their travels are recorded. For this their bargains, fair and mean, their well diggings, their sheep keepings, their family feuds—all to show us what material faith takes hold of and how it acts upon, moulds and transforms it. Religion was and is for sinners. "I came not to call the righteous," says Jesus. Could you find any such? "But I came to call these publicans, these harlots,

these oppressors and cheats, these that lie and defraud and are drunken. I came for these."

Are you good enough already? Christ did not die for you. Go and tell God how good you are, as the Pharisee did at the temple. But Christ did come for Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and the like incipient idolators, polygamists, selfish over-reachers of their brothers. And this faith, which works to their cure and which is all the good there is in them, is the product of his coming as to them. It bore them above and away from their sins, personal and social. True, they lived a wandering life, in tents, among goats and sheep and cattle, eating, drinking, wearing, trading like other men, like the men and women of today. But the designation of them, in Scripture, is that of "saints." For they lived in faith, believing that God had for them something better, and in this faith they died. By it they were saved.

And the substantial of their faith are that of the saints of all ages. It was not of this world. This life is a sort of husk or shell, rough on the outside, dry, innutritious, astringent. What is it good for? Of itself and alone, nothing. But it protects the fruit within. When that has sufficiently grown, the husk falls off and decays. But what if there be no fruit within?

Worldly men dispute the question "whether life is worth living." No wonder if their view is confined to the present world. Look at these patriarchs in their later years, those in which the preacher declares there is no pleasure, "when the sun and moon and stars are dark and the clouds keep returning after the rain." It is only faith that looks out beyond the sun, where the sun of righteousness is in the heavens, and through the clouds where the fair blue sky is gleaming celestially serene. "The strong men bow themselves," but the soul stands upright; "the grinding is low," but the Spirit of God gives sustenance; "the windows are dark," but the eye of the soul is clear and steady; "the grasshopper is a burden and desire fails," but the inner man is "renewed day by day." Faith renews the youth of age. For what is this brief term of mortality compared with what is still before us?

When Wilberforce was old, his only surviving daughter died. "I have often heard," he said, "that sailors on a voyage will drink to 'friends astern,' till half-way over, and then it is to 'friends ahead.' With me it is this long time 'Friends ahead.'"

Yet it is not all anticipation. The soul anchored in faith is

not left empty of comfort even now. An old man in Scotland sat alone in his leaky cabin, with the rain dripping in streams all about him, with his Bible on his knee. "What are you doing here?" said a stranger. "I am sitting under His shadow with great delight," was the answer, "and His fruit is sweet to my taste." The worldling could, of course, see no meaning in such a reply. But it was a reality with that old saint. He was looking "for a better country." But his desire and his hope were to him a present joy. And the joy is well founded, for God is not only "not ashamed of them to be called their God, but has prepared for them a city." They shall dwell together, with homes and heavenly facilities. And the Revelator tells us what kind of a city, a city of gold with foundations, jasper walls with gates of pearls, a city without sun, with God and the Lamb for its temple and its light, with gates never shut, but into which shall in no wise enter "anything that defileth, or worketh abomination or maketh a lie." But its inhabitants are such as are "written in the Lamb's book of life."

#### CÆSAR AND GOD.

Delivered at Bay City, June 23, 1889.

MATT. XXII, 20. "And he saith unto them, 'Whose is this image and super-  
scription?'"

If you examine any of our silver coins, you will notice upon one side of them a human face and on one side, or both, an inscription of some sort. Coins have been thus stamped for some thousands of years, perhaps ever since coins were made.

Cuts of the Roman coins, bearing the faces of the Cæsars, are now plenty in the books, bearing the name of the particular emperor, in whose reign they were uttered. The coins themselves are in the museums. The British Museum contains many of these Roman coins. At the time this conversation with Christ was had, two unfriendly parties—the Pharisees and the Herodians—were joined in it. Their question was 'Is it lawful or not to give tribute to Cæsar?' The reply of Christ is 'show me the tribute money.' And they bring to Him the denarius, that is, the penny, which was the coin demanded by the Romans and customarily paid to the government by the Jews.

Now comes the question of Christ, "Whose is this image upon the coin, and whose is this epigraph or inscription?" Cæsar's. "Render then to Cæsar that which is Cæsar's, and to God that which is God's."

Luke informs us that the Pharisees had been greatly angered by a parable of the Savior's and sought to lay hands on him, but they feared the people, who were very much won to Christ. They must therefore make him unpopular, so that they could destroy him. How should they do it?

The people hated the Roman government, and most especially this tribute, which they paid to it. Yet there was a party, called Herodians, or the friends of Herod, the Roman governor. This party was, of course, intensely hateful to the Pharisees, but for the sake of entrapping Jesus they make friends of them, for the occasion, as did Pilate and Herod afterward, and joining with a number of them, they come to Jesus with their question, aiming thus to put him between two fires, in such a way, that, if one missed, the other should hit him. If Jesus answered that it was *not* lawful to pay the tribute, he might be accused to Herod as guilty of sedition against the Roman government, and the Herodians would be the witnesses. But if he should say it was to be paid, then the Pharisees would report it to the people as showing favor on the part of Christ to the hated Roman government. The answer of Christ defeats their aim. "Render to Cæsar that which is his. If this be his coin, which you yourselves acknowledge by receiving and paying it, then you are your own witnesses, that it is to be paid, so long as you are Cæsar's subjects. But you are not to stop with this acknowledgment of Cæsar. There is another ruler, whose subjects you are, and you are also to render to him that which is his due. Give also to God his own.

The rule which Christ here brings into view is good for all time. It exhibits the fact of diverse, yet coherent relations, obligating accordant duties. It is a declaration of subjection to all rightful authority, human and divine. It declares the obligation to give obedience and support to human government. And even though that government be distasteful or even hated, that fact does not give release from obedience, so long as it exists, as our government.

It is not to be understood that Christ enjoins a continued subjection of the Jews to the Romans. As to that he says nothing. But while you are so subject tribute is due. Whether you shall cut loose from it, is another question, not raised in his answer.

But I do not use this text for the purpose of discussing the political question which it contains. I wish to turn our thought

to the second clause of the answer, "Render to God that which is God's."

Why does the Savior so say? What connection has it with the thing disputed? What does the Savior mean by that? What is there of God's to be rendered to Him as His property? The reply is evident—that what bears His image and epigraph, that upon which His form is stamped and His name written, as Cæsar's was upon the denarius.

Is there any doubt as to what this is? If we open to the account of the creation in the Genesis, we shall find written that "*God made man in His own image.*" Man is then God's coin, stamped with His image and inscribed with His name. He is, of course, God's property and is to be paid to Him as the tribute or revenue of this part of His empire. Man belongs to God as His property by the same rule as the denarius belonged to the Roman government. He is God's utterance and is to serve His uses as the coin served the uses of Cæsar.

When the Roman emperor uttered this coin, it went abroad and carried to the remotest corner of his empire, a rough portrait of his person and his printed name and title, thus proclaiming to all his subjects his authority and giving thus notice to all the world of his claim. When the money was returned into his treasury, in the way of revenue, it was an acknowledgment of the emperor's claim. It was a tribute of fealty to him, acknowledging his right to rule and a confession of obedience. It conceded his right to military service and to the pecuniary support of his administration by all his subjects.

In the mean time it was not a mere confession, theoretically, to these things. It was of great and constant use to all the people, as the money of the realm, being employed for the transactions of business, making purchases, paying debts and thus being the instrument by which food, clothing and the needs of daily life were procured for all the multitudes who made up the empire.

The analogy is well nigh perfect. God put His own image upon man when He made and uttered him, that he might carry everywhere the notice of his sovereign and owner. The image was intended to show who had sent him forth and to whom he belonged. He carried always and everywhere in God's intention a proclamation of God. And then he is also God's tribute, to be paid back to him, as the declaration of his fealty, and as a con-

fession of God's ownership. Thus he is to render to God that which is God's. And again, as the coin in circulation serves the uses of the world, so man is the agent of all intelligent life, with all its wonderful processes in the uses of the world, carrying forward a vast circle of activities of all kinds known in this lower part of the universe of God. He is thus, so to speak, God's coin, to carry God's name, to be used for God's purposes in carrying on the world and to be returned to God as His tribute.

How and in what manner does man, as a fact, carry out these divine aims concerning him? Is he true money or counterfeit? Is the image kept clear and clean, so that it appears at sight whom it stands for and represents? Is the epigraph legible? Is the coinage in such state that all beholders know the money at sight?

Bad money is only an annoyance and loss. Our country, in other days, suffered much. Those whose memories go back to our modes of business before the war will recollect, that in handling money, it was necessary to subscribe to a *Counterfeit Detector* of frequent issue and voluminous pages, to escape the risks of bad money and all who had such experience know what a vexation it was and what losses were still incurred. In truth, there is scarcely such an annoyance in business as bad money. What if God's issue prove bad all over the earth, so that a really bright and eligible coin is only an exception? What if upon the really true coin you cannot see the image or read the superscription, so defaced is it with rust and dirt. What if payment into his treasury be refused, and while Cæsar's dues are scrupulously rendered, those to God are denied or ignored and continue thus from year to year.

The force of the case is that God created man to be like Himself; to be for Himself and to be with Himself. And He had in view three essential objects: first, His own satisfaction, or as our older theologians phrase it, His own glory; second, He had in view man's well being; and third, the uses and well being of the universe, as man is related to it. There is, I know, a feeling abroad in the world, that God cares nothing for man on His own account and that whatever solicitude God exhibits for us is on our account, but that He is above all feeling as to Himself. No such idea is taught in God's revelation. God represents Himself as wronged by man's sin. Just as if a mechanic builds a steam-engine, which will not run when finished. Now does he care nothing



for it on his own account? Is all his solicitude for the engine itself or for its purchasers? Is not his own reputation at stake and is that of no value to him? Will he send out worthless work and care nothing for it?

God is dishonored by the spoiling of His work. He is honored, glorified by its success. "Man's chief end," says the Catechism, "is to glorify God." How to glorify Him, if not by answering the ends for which God made him? "God is angry," says the Scripture, "with the wicked every day." Why is He thus angry? Is it because man is so foolish as to destroy himself by his wickedness? God is a Father, and a father is, of course, displeased with the disobedience of his children and that for many reasons. And one reason is, that he himself is dishonored by the ill-conduct of his children. A true father regards it as his right to require of his children that they shall conduct themselves rightly. And the very first act of good conduct in a child is obedience to the parent. "If I be a Father," says Jehovah, by the prophet Jeremiah, "where is mine honor?" In truth, no greater indignity is possible toward God, than that the works of His hands shall fail of His intent by disobediences, by disregard of his commands and wishes, by an utter neglect of Him and of His words. That He should care nothing for all this is all but inconceivable, if it be true that man was made in His image, for man everywhere resents such treatment of himself. And the more perfectly man apprehends what is right, the more keenly does he resent it.

That is, the more nearly we approach to God in character, the more nearly we feel as He does in regard to wrong. This is at once a proof of the Scripture declaration that man was made in God's image. For otherwise, how should we know anything of God at all? We know of Him by being like Him in some measure. The beast was not made in God's image and of consequence knows nothing of God.

We see thus at once the infinite consequence of having the image of God stamped upon us. By preserving it, by restoring it when obliterated, by keeping it bright and clear from all defacements, we come into the fellowship with God, we apprehend and in measure understand Him, because we become like Him. We are thus able to reason, from ourselves up to God, as well as from God down to ourselves. If there be in us a sense of right and justice, we are able to apprehend right and justice in God.



But if we have in ourselves no sense of right, how can we understand it in God? How can the horse know anything of God's justice? He has no sense of it in himself. And God has put in us that moral sense, which, when cultured, we call conscience, in order that we may know it in Him. And knowing it in Him, we reason from Him to ourselves, and we correct and strengthen our sense of right by His.

In the same way we know many of God's attributes by His having given the sense of them to us. We understand something of God's mercy, by the sentiment of it planted in us. We have a perception of truth and are thus able to know what Christ means when He declares Himself to be "the Truth." Justice, truth, mercy, love and many other faculties and affections, belong to God as the great attributes of His being, are also planted in our being and constitute the image of God in us. They are His stamp upon His coin. By this stamp is His coin known, through His universe.

Now is it difficult for us to apprehend that God's honor is concerned in maintaining that stamp and superscription? Why, there is not a government on earth that does not resent as a crime of prime magnitude an offence against its coin. If I am not mistaken, such offences incur the penalty of death, by statutes yet upon the statute books of the British government. It did inflict that penalty for centuries. The honor and well-being of the government and the nation are concerned in maintaining its integrity at this point. And has God no concern about a like crime against Himself? Shall we then deface God's coin?

For His honor at this point is joined with our well-being. How has God exalted and put honor upon man, by bestowing upon him His own image? That is, by planting in our souls such sentiments and perceptions as those of truth, justice, mercy, love—His own high and glorious attributes, so that by these, in ourselves, we may know Him and be like Him and have communion and fellowship with Him. For, as already said, if there be nothing in common between us, how can there be any fellowship? How can we, in fact, at all understand each other?

These considerations prepare us, I think, to have some conception of the awful guilt of those who deliberately destroy God's image in themselves. For their sin lies against all the parties with whom they have relations. It is an offence against God, as we readily see. It is an offence against themselves, for it de-

stroys in them that which is noblest and best. It is also an offence against our fellow men, because these qualities which are shared with God are necessary alike to all men. They are such as society and nations must have, or go to disintegration and destruction.

Consider again what they are—truth, justice, mercy, love. How can society exist without them? How can you or I prosper without them? And without these among us, God's aim in the creation of man is threatened and overturned. God and man both suffer.

“Who denies it?” I fancy some one may ask. Well, it would require much of hardihood to deny it in words. But every one of these things is discarded and dishonored by sin. Look abroad! Do you not see justice violated every day? Is not truth discarded for falsehood, and that continually? Are mercy and love the constant law of life with us all? Righteousness is the enactment of the laws which belong to these things. Is righteousness the continuous habit of our times and of our people? If I violate truth, or justice, or mercy, or the law of love, I am the person who is defacing God's image. Wrong in any shape, anywhere, by anyone, defaces it. And every defacement of the image is a failure to render unto God the things that are God's. Ah, how is God's image destroyed! And thus His own property made to belong to another! We have before stated that all sin is against God, no matter against whom it is primarily committed. If it be crime against a neighbor, it is still against God, for it injures His property. If it be against self, it is still against God, for it still injures His property. Are we guilty thus of defacing God's coin? Do we keep back from Him His tribute money? Do we use it for His purposes while in circulation? Are we using it to forward His aims in the world? That is, are we using ourselves as God directs, for our own highest good, to bless our fellows, instead of injuring them, and to promote God's glory in the world?

We know that God's image has been defiled and defaced by all our race. It was dimmed and lost by the great transgression.

But it is restored by Christ. Have we applied to Him for the restoring work to be accomplished in ourselves? Do we care to see it restored in others? We have some apprehension of the difference between a pure and exalted character and one that is debased and ruined by an evil life. “The beauty of holiness”

is not wholly an unrecognized thing with us. If it be gone from us, so that we can see nothing attractive or worthy of admiration in holiness, alas for us! How can we then think ever to reach it? But I warn you, that a life in sin is ever tending to such a condition, and if not aware of it, the greater the danger. It is surely the case that we are tending one way or the other. If our course be not upward then surely it is downward, A life which forgets God, or which remembering Him, is passed in disobedience, is surely on the downward way. If insensible of this fact, the danger may be all the greater. The stream which runs smoothly, may nevertheless run with a current which is strong.

The great point, first to be determined, is, whether our course be right. Is it in the right direction? If it be, our attention may be given to the attainment of progress in it.

The first thing, for the sinner, is the application of God's remedy. Christ is our salvation. Of ourselves alone, we cannot work it out. God's image is restored in Him. Away from Him, we only wander more and more; for the mazes of impenitence are endless; and sin blinds the eyes to the truth; so then, if the true way be exhibited, it is not recognized.

Render then to God, the things that be God's—life, person, property, *self*. Christ commands it, God claims it. Refusing this what can you do with self?

Can the immortal spirit feed upon and be satisfied with the husks of this world? The worldly good perishes with the using. The mortal life will soon be over. If then the image of God be found bright, and clear upon the spirit,—if it has drank into His knowledge—if its mind be like His mind—if it thinks as He thinks—feels as God feels—loves what He loves, and hates what He hates—then it is prepared to be where He is, and to have partnership with Him. Then will the spirit be at home with God.

But if the spirit hate what God loves, and loves what He hates—if it be at disagreement with Him, at all points, how can it bear His presence? Will it not go on to hate Him? Can any be happy hating God!

#### ANNUAL SERMON.

Delivered in Bay City, May 6, 1888.

I COR. III, 10-12. "But if any man buildeth on the foundation, gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay, stubble; each man's work shall be made

manifest; for the day shall declare it, because it is revealed in fire; and the fire itself shall prove each man's work, of what sort it is."

I shall attempt at this time no full exposition of this passage. It is sufficient for our purpose to say, that it sets forth Jesus Christ as the foundation of Christian life and Christian endeavor. The word foundation implies Him as just exhibited. What men do, in the way of Christian effort, in forming opinions, in adopting principles and in realizing them in action, is here called building. The representation is, that the work built, may be good or poor, though on this true and right foundation. One may use gold, silver or precious stones in the structure. Or he may get up some sort of an edifice, in the building of which he shall use hay, or wood or stubble.

Each and all these diverse articles are used in different buildings, especially in the East. In the Temple at Jerusalem, for instance, gold was freely used. Silver was also employed in the structure of its furniture. And goodly stones formed its walls.

But one need not go far from the Temple, to see dwellings of wood; and also of mud, in which tenacity was imparted to the walls, by mixtures of hay or reeds, and of stubble gathered from the fields. Thousands of such buildings are seen in the East at present, and building with wood is common with us.

These diverse sorts of buildings are used by the Apostle in his representation of the different kinds of work which men do in building the Kingdom of Christ; both of organized bodies and public workers; and of individual Christians in their personal efforts. But the work of each, to be in any sense Christian at all, must be on the right foundation. "Other foundation can no man lay." But the work on this foundation may vary greatly in value, as in fact it obviously does. You remember that Christ's representation of the good ground was, that while some produced one hundred fold, other gave only thirty fold.

We are witnesses, in these days, of a great variety of Christian work; and its value obviously varies indefinitely. The good work differs in goodness. Poor work may have in it some elements of value. And the better is often mixed with the worse, and sometimes even imparts to it a measure of value. The hovel of mud, held together and covered by the hay and stubble, may shelter a family through some years of dry weather, at least,

But the Apostle's declaration will hold good of all work with whatever material, that its value will be tested. "The day"

will declare or proclaim it. Some will be tested as time goes on; and if not before, the final day will show of what sort it is. For the fire is to be its final test; and wood, hay and stubble will disappear in the searching scrutiny.

The time to-day invites to retrospection and scrutiny, in some cursory and modified degree, as to what we have been doing during these past twenty-three years of church and pastoral life together.

The very first question which meets us is, are we building on the right foundation? Is Christ Jesus beneath our efforts, in what we are doing as a church? Do we build on Him our personal hopes? Do we fully accept the apostle's declaration that "There is none other name, under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved."

We shall assume, that this is our adopted foundation. We are not conscious of trying to lay any other. We want none other.

But whether we work wisely, diligently, effectively is a fair question and important to consider.

The Apostle Paul warrants us in stating our aims; and in defending, if there be need of it, our position. For again and again does he maintain his right of apostleship and recount his personal endeavors and experiences in his ministry. We have, of course, no such experiences to recount as his; and our work may be of poorer material than his.

But I may say of our aim, what perhaps I have said before, that so far as I am concerned, it has been my aim from the first, to maintain an even, steadfast and consistent course of Christian life in this city. Our Sunday-school lesson the other day treated of readiness to meet the Master's coming. This implies a constancy of watchfulness and every-day work in the service; and constant service is a condition of watchfulness requisite to it. Remissness and neglect at one time, may not be made up, or excused as a thing of course, by a superior activity at another time; inasmuch as He is liable to come at the time of neglect or disorder; or "as a thief comes in the night" unexpectedly.

I know very well that the aim of steadiness and conservation is liable to its own abuses. It may grow into inefficiency. It may form to itself ruts, and run in them. It may grow into utter impgression. And though it join in harmony a healthy progress with conservative steadiness, it is liable still to the charge of "doing nothing," by the impulsive and enterprising

and inventive. There are those whose natures impel to enterprise and exertion. They cannot rest in steady every-day and familiar work. Their demand is for the new and the daring. I may say that my own early impulses were in this direction. But the times, in former years, brought us such a flood of new and crude proposals of all sorts, reformatory, religious and moral; I saw so many such fail and sometimes go to wreck, that the conviction came upon me with force that our restless, inventive and unsettled methods of doing things demanded, in the church and out of it, a return to steady and settled modes of life—Christian life included. This course, it is true, as a policy, does not show so many brilliant successes to take the public eye, as another may do; but it saves their reactions, which discourage, and in the long run it may show equal or greater results.

Under this aim then, this church has grown from seventy-nine members in 1865 to six hundred and twenty-eight in all. Of these fifty have departed this life. Two hundred and twenty-four have been dismissed to other churches. There are now three hundred and five recognized members of the church; and twenty-five whose residence is unknown, but whose church connection is still with us, making three hundred and thirty in all. This drip out of the church recognition is one of the unavoidable evils of our restless and moving city life. It is not peculiar to us. Often the faster a church grows, the greater the drip is. I know of a church which received one hundred members in one year and dismissed one hundred; and of another of two thousand members reduced to twelve hundred by scrutiny of its roll. But how many escaped in the same time leaving no record of their departure. I do not know. But that there were some, is the next thing to a certainty. It exhibits the light esteem in which church membership is often held. For if one values, with any suitableness, a place in the church of Christ, he will surely take a letter of dismissal to another church, in case of removal.

I repeat, we have tried to keep the light burning here through these twenty-three years. With the exception of four or five Sabbaths per year, as a vacation, which have been sometimes filled, the weekly worship on the Sabbath and the weekly gathering for devotion during the week, have been maintained with very little change. I count this something. And I have been absent by sickness but two Sabbaths in the twenty-three years.



As to the work which the church has done by its membership, a number of things may be said.

The ideal, adopted from an early date, was, that each member of the church might have something to do. Yet it has seemed to me the better way that each person select his or her own line of effort, with only suggestion; so that each may do that for which fitness and preference shall be the preparation. For, in religion, I hold it to be desirable that the individual impulse and choice have play, and better, as a rule, than that the direction and control be that of another. If Christians learn, intelligently, to stand on their own feet, they are less easily overthrown, and better prepared to move, than if depending on another. "Stand," says the apostle, and having done all, "stand." This ideal may help to shape the work of the minister, which is essentially the work of teaching, his text book and authority being the Word of God. And not as a Romish priest who has the keeping of the individual conscience.

Dr. Hall says, some young people came to him to ask him if they might dance. "Bring me no such question as that," says the doctor. "Form your own conscience, in the Word of God, and I am all the time trying to help you do that, and you will not ask me what you may do." It is quite a saving of trouble to have another keep your conscience for you.

Concerning work, the old idea of religious duty was that it consisted in going to meeting and simply hearing, and to a degree it is so yet. But the practice is now much changed from that in the church generally.

Besides the Sabbath worship, we have weekly meetings for devotion, and these by many are regarded as fully obligatory as the Sabbath worship. But beyond these, we have various activities. Perhaps we may overlook the support of the church boards as one of these activities. But that is a part of the work of the whole church, in which we are united with the whole, as a part of it. We work here in giving, collecting and distributing money. Some prefer to work only by their money; but it is desirable, if possible, to join giving with personal exertion. Both are joined and enjoined in the Scripture. But either is better than nothing.

But we do not stop with these ordinary endeavors. In a city a great many things demand attention and effort. The whole



church cannot move together in each matter. Nor is it desirable that it should. A division of labor is a gain in all sorts of business. Some matters require but few persons. Others demand all the church.

We have two Sabbath schools, which together require a goodly number of persons and give ground for study and teaching combined. One of these schools is as old as the church. The other has been in operation about seventeen years. I have seldom known the time when in one or both these schools there has not been a demand for "more teachers," and a still greater demand for more intelligent study on the part of many teachers, as well as pupils. A Sabbath school means work and money too, and plenty of it.

Beyond this there are organizations for missionary effort, by the boards or without them. There is the Woman's Missionary Society, embracing a large number of the women of the church, meeting monthly and prosecuting from year to year their work with energy and thoroughness, in aid of home and foreign missions. There is the organization also of misses and young ladies, called the "Wight Mission Band," organized by Mrs. Mary Plum some dozen or more years ago and having for a time various fortunes, but now, for some years, working with decided success. It has for its whole time supported a pupil in Persia. Then comes that of the lads, who call themselves "Rope Holders," now two years old and doing excellent work.

Then there is the Woman's Aid Society which aims to engage all the women of the congregation in promoting acquaintance and social fellowship in the congregation and in securing funds for future use in the furnishing of a church edifice. The upholsterings, lights, carpets of this room, and chairs and carpets of the lecture room—the whole furniture of the church—are the testimonies to the past endeavors of this organization. It has now, I am told, a respectable sum in waiting for the right employ, when the opportunity comes, if it does come.

Nor shall I omit some other endeavors, because they engage but few persons. Why omit the choir, though now but five persons, the past year a dozen. To lead in the music of the congregation and the devotional meetings and the Sunday school worship, is labor. For these demand a constant effort with the employ of skill and the sacrifice of time, in good weather and foul, through the whole year. Nor will I omit the effort of the

ladies, to furnish flowers, to make cheerful our worship and then the care of distributing these among the sick afterward.

So far these various forms of organized work belong to to this church by itself. But there is the new Society of Christian Endeavor, of which I am not quite sure how far it has relations to other churches, but suppose it to embrace primarily only members of this congregation, though the scope of its work may be wider or narrower, according to demand and ability.

But there are various activities, in which we participate with others, demanding both money and work, and often some very hard work. There is the Woman's Charitable Union, looking after the worthy poor of the city; a self-denying, laborious endeavor, and taxing judgment and discrimination, so as not to make and promote pauperism and begging, while giving relief.

The Young Men's Christian Association, now three or four years old—though it is the fourth attempt to establish that institution in the city, has met with a degree of success at last, and with the Woman's Auxiliary, demands both money and work from year to year.

The Old Ladies' Home has, within two years, laid its claims upon us and been cheerfully responded to. Jail visitation has made but a limited claim upon us for persons. It is the remnant of our third attempt to establish a Y. M. C. A.; and has been steadily prosecuted for ten or a dozen years. A limited number of women have also given aid to the Woman's Christian Temperance Union. Recently has been added aid to a city mission work; with the endeavor to reach the habitual neglecters of the worship of God; and as far as possible the habits of the saloon and the haunts of vice.

Here then we have sixteen forms of organized endeavor in Gospel work. Here, it seems to me, is sufficient opportunity for any person, who desires it, to put forth effort. I have not mentioned the work of the trustees; nor the responsibilities of the session; but such things exist and demand time, care and attention.

Yet I suppose there may be idle persons in the church, notwithstanding all these opportunities; and if there are such they would be very apt to say, that "the church is doing nothing," or "is doing no good." Possibly we may have heard such declarations. I have sometimes. Yet I know that a great deal of very hard work has been done. Nor is it confined to any one person, or any circle of persons.

We have no wish to parade our efforts. But I think it proper to mention results to some extent, and none the less that it is common work such as it is our duty to do and keep doing. In the way of monies there has been contributed the past year as follows: To the centennial fund, \$927.00, about \$200.00 of which was for ministerial relief, the rest to educational institutions. The congregation has given, by its Sabbath collections, to the boards \$491.61. To miscellaneous objects there have been contributed \$3,682.00. Our congregational expenses have been \$4,682.00.

The money given by Sabbath collections and otherwise to mission work, has been distributed as follows: To home missions, \$565; to foreign missions, \$324; to ministerial education, \$529; to publication and Sunday-school, \$116; to church erection, \$739; to ministerial relief, \$276; to freedmen, \$136; to sustentation, \$12; to aid to colleges and academies \$12; besides \$29 for general assembly.

In addition [to congregational collections for the boards, the woman's society have collected \$314.19 for home missions and foreign missions; for the centennial fund, home missions, \$63.38; for the relief fund, \$17.67, and special collection \$43.00. The Girls' Mission Band have given to foreign missions \$50.00 cash and \$90.00 in clothing to a freedmen's church in North Carolina. The boys have raised for foreign missions, \$25.51. The Sabbath-schools have contributed for different objects: The church school, \$186.00; the chapel school, \$164.00; the church school gave to relief \$32.00, to the Alaskan mission \$60.00 and also a Christmas gift to foreign missions \$13.10. The chapel school gave to home missions \$31.35. The Woman's Aid Society have raised \$739.00, of which \$178.00 was given to the Charitable Union and \$39.00 to the Y. M. C. A. For the latter organization, the men of the congregation have paid \$805.00. The women have raised for the Old Ladies' Home \$807.00. About \$200.00 have been given for the city mission work.

The Sunday-schools include as follows: Church school two hundred and thirty-eight persons; the chapel school three hundred and twenty-five persons; in all five hundred and sixty-three.

Thus the congregation has contributed for the work which the boards carry on, though not all through the boards themselves,

\$2,709.00; to miscellaneous objects, \$3,711, and for congregational expenses, \$4,682, or together, \$11,102 for religion and benevolence. These are sums of which I have knowledge, but I probably do not know of all contributed for various purposes.

I have said we are working or aiding in *sixteen* organized methods of benevolent and Christian Endeavor. Some of these are, of course, the ordinary business of the church, if it is to support the claim to be a church of Christ. But most of them are voluntary endeavor, undertaken because duty demands it. Possibly we may have too many objects before us. Yet all have demands which are thought important, and the more forms of work, naturally, more workers. Yet no one person can well be engaged in them all, at least otherwise than in giving them money. But all can give something to every worthy object, if but little.

But we are now confronted with an object which has already waited too long, and which we have two or three times tried to begin. I have so many times urged it, that I hesitate whether I am called upon to speak of it again; yet I am encouraged to make the effort once more. You all know I mean the building of a church edifice. Some of us thought we were ready to begin a year ago, perhaps longer. But time, whose tooth constantly works to the unfitness of this edifice, calls with more of distinctness to rise up and build. Shall we not do it?

The last obstacle was the site of a new building. Our congregation stretches from the south end of South Bay City to Essexville, and from Essexville across the river into West Bay City. Of course there is plenty of room for difference of opinion about site, and if we wait till all opinion harmonize before beginning, we shall wait forever. But I shall expect to see substantial harmony when once we enter on the work. We have tried to settle on a site by vote of the congregation—a difficult matter. This house seats six hundred people, and though that number is never here at once, except on a special occasion there attend here in a year, twice or thrice, six hundred different persons. I mention this to show how difficult it may be to settle such a question as the site of an edifice, by a vote of the congregation. Who are the voters? The law tells us, but the law does not generally decide it. For when you come to vote no one wishes to raise the question of law. To do that is often to make a quarrel out of a difference. I have known some of the worst of church quarrels

to grow out of this endeavor to decide "who shall vote" as a member of the congregation.

I think we have voted here, sufficiently, to see how difficult it is to decide such a question in that way. There is just one way out of this difficulty, and it is to *follow your trustees*. Let them select a site according to their best judgment. There may be at first some grumbling at their decision. But it is the privilege of Americans to grumble, and grumbling soon ceases with a forward movement. What are the trustees of a congregation for, if not to decide just such questions? You have chosen seven representative men. Had I a question of difficulty and I wished the judgment of other men upon it, I think I would as soon submit it to a seven of your choice as any other seven in the city. You have selected them; give them your confidence; put down your money and ask them if need be to proceed. At all events give them your confidence! There is positively no other way.

When it is decided to proceed, and a beginning is made, I wish, if acceptable, to say a few things in regard to the structure itself. At present, I only remark, that in my opinion that it is desirable to build of sufficient size, to allow this congregation to grow. I have heretofore maintained that we ought to be able to give seatings in its Auditorium for about one thousand persons, with other room usable for extra occasions. Our neighbors, both at Saginaw City and Flint, have built good churches, but too small. Modern arrangement allows of more sitting room than that common thirty years ago when churches were shaped differently. Large churches are now the style; and a thousand sittings, in a city, is by no means a very large church. The population increases, and there are more attendents, and we are not ready yet to divide with any hope of success. Could this room be extended in the proportions it now has, to hold four hundred more persons than it seats to-day, it would not be a difficult thing to see and to hear all that is said and done in it more than now. A small, or suitable elevation of the rear and outside seats, brings their occupants practically nearer together, and nearer the desk.

I do not care to dwell on this matter further till the work is begun. The items of beginning are—a site,—a plan, a subscription and a foundation. To build a church a resolute beginning has to be made. It requires energy, enthusiasm and faith in

God and man. I deem it an essential thing to begin. Hon. Horace Greeley said, when the country was debating and hesitating over the resumption of specie payments—to find “some way to do it”—that “the way to resume was to resume.” A beginning will never come by waiting for it.

I have had some experience, and more observation, in church finances, for over forty years; and if it is of any value, it is, that it is easier far to get money, under motion, than to collect it before hand. Business men do not love to give, till they see it necessary, They want to use their money in their business. Our trial heretofore, teaches us that Methodist brethren, Baptist brethren build churches. We can do it. It is a shame if we cannot. It has been said to me many times “Your church is the strongest in the city.” I do not say that. But it is strong enough to build and will be no stronger till we do.

I have said little of the events of the past year. Nor need I say much. They are recent or existent. Twenty-four have been added to the church; five dismissed to other churches. Four adults have been baptized and seventeen infants.

Three members of the church have passed away: Mr. Fred R. Romer, Mrs. Martha J. Dolsen, and Mrs. Mary McIntosh. Mr. Romer, a young man of twenty years, in the very prime of his early life, a man of unimpeachable character, as a man and a Christian; in the early course of a university education; with a life before him full of hope and promise, was taken in a moment; yet with this all sufficient consolation, that he was ready, though not expecting to go.

Mrs. Dolsen, at the very tenderest period of domestic life, departed as unexpectedly, almost as suddenly. Her life with us had not been long; but she had exhibited a disposition to usefulness in the church, which had warmly commended her to our affections, and excited keenly our sympathies with those of her immediate relationship in their loss.

Mrs. McIntosh had reached the allotted period of human life, seventy years. She had been with us eleven years. She departed leaving four living children, three of whom are, or have been, active and useful members of this church. She died in the faith which she had manifested in her life.

Mrs. A. S. Munger and Mrs. J. W. Hatch, though not members of this church, had both made profession of their faith, in



other connections, and had been more or less of this congregation, and had long lived with us in esteem. Both were in advanced years, Mrs. Hatch being seventy-seven.

Mrs. Catherine McDonald had reached the age of seventy-four, but had been long in failing health and but little known among us. Mr. S. S. Campbell, first judge of probate in this county and one of the first settlers here, had reached the age of seventy-eight. He was formerly a pew holder in this church, but had been in bad health for many years. Two very young children have been among those taken; one of the family of Mr. F. S. McGraw and one of Mr. F. W. Bradley. They were young, but such as the Savior took in his arms and blessed.

There are a few others who have died; Mrs. Chase had been a recent attendant upon our worship, but was little known to the congregation. Mr. Howard attended her funeral. Mr. Peter Beith was buried from his saloon, on Water street, June 5, aged sixty. I have been in official attendance at eleven funerals in the year. Mr. Howard at others.

As to other pastoral duty I have little to say. I have not been much in the way of dwelling upon it in these discourses in past years. But I may say, that during the year I have visited through the congregation as fully as usual. But I must add that years tell their story, whether agreeable to us or not, and I have not been able always to respond to the demand for pastoral work, as I have desired, especially in cases of sickness; and I have no expectation of ability to improve upon my former poor measure of it, in time to come.

I therefore think it fit to return to your hands the trust so long, so patiently and so kindly continued to me. I cannot longer go in and out, as the needs of this congregation demand, as its pastor. This pastoral charge therefore I return to you; to be in effect from this time; that you may be able to take such steps in its behalf, as the church demands.

I wish to say, however, that I am ready to continue such labor with you, as will be agreeable to the congregation, and as God shall give me strength to perform. At the same time, I do not wish to stand in the way of any arrangement you may find it necessary to make for the welfare of this church and congregation.

I have no idea that this announcement will take anyone by surprise. I did not intend that it should. The facts have been



for a good while, obvious, and changes, in the Providence of God, are inevitable. Men come and go. And the only strange thing now is, that this relation has lasted so long—may I say—so happily long.

But churches live through generations. This church has now in it but a few persons which belonged to it twenty-three years ago. Not one of them will probably remain twenty-three years to come. But all will meet again. Godgrant it be on the right hand.

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