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Richardson & Southall,
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CORRESPONDENCE.

Presbyterianism in Gloucester County, Virginia.

Messrs. Editors.—Having recently paid a visit to Gloucester, whither Rev. Alfred Jones and myself went for the purpose of organizing a church by authority of Presbytery, I will now fulfil a promise recently made to you by giving you some account of that field and of the results thus far accomplished by the blessing of God. Elder William D. Reynolds, who was also a member of the committee, was prevented, by pressing business engagements, from accompanying us, much to his regret and ours. I will just state here at the outset that Mr. Walter H. Robertson, a member of the last graduating class at Union Seminary, and a licentiate, has been in charge of this field since May last; and though he has had many difficulties to contend with, he has succeeded in doing a good work as well as in winning the confidence and affection of the people.

When we reflect upon the remarkable natural advantages of this county in respect to climate, soil, and geographical position, and upon the fact that it has been inhabited for more than two hundred years by a well-to-do, law-abiding, and intelligent people, we are filled with surprise to be informed that never has there been a Presbyterian church edifice or organization, or even stated Presbyterian preaching, within its present limits, prior to its recent occupation by our Presbytery (East Hanover). I cannot certainly verify this assertion, but after some careful investigations and inquiries, I am persuaded it is correct. I was told by Dr. Walter Jones, a leading physician of the county, that the only Presbyterian minister he had ever heard of as making a visit for the purpose of preaching there was Dr. A. W. Miller, who visited Gloucester while he was the pastor of the Tabb Street church of Petersburg, Va., and spent one Sabbath. Dr. Jones, years ago, lived in Petersburg, and his wife and daughters belonged to the Tabb Street church; and my having heard of his family about eighteen months ago as a Presbyterian family at Gloucester C. H., was what led me to make my first missionary visit to this field in August, 1879.

As far back as 1747, when the Virginia colony had not much over one hundred thousand people in it, Gloucester was its most populous county; and to-day, it is one of the finest and best counties of the entire tidewater region of the State. The geographical position, climate, soil, and proximity to the sea and deep water, which this region enjoys, mark it out as one of the most interesting and important in Virginia. If emigrants from Europe and our Northern States, who settle in the far West, and have to contend with the rigorous climate, the malaria, and the primitive conditions of those regions, would expend the same energy and money in Gloucester and neighboring sections, they would reap a far richer return in every respect than they actually do now. One specially attractive feature of the country to the visitor is the numberless rivers, bays, and creeks that penetrate a very large part of it, affording the most charming sites for country seats, and excellent facilities for commerce and enjoyment. These rivers, etc., are all quite salt, being estuaries of the ocean. On the York, Severn, Ware, and North rivers, are some as beautiful homes as are to be seen in any part of the State outside of the larger towns and cities. The first named of these four rivers (York) washes the entire southern side of the county for a distance of thirty miles. The other three penetrate far inland, creating long slender peninsulas or "necks" of land in which is found some as fine farming land as the State affords. All of these rivers empty into what is known as Mob Jack Bay, which is only an arm of Chesapeake Bay.

Some of the most striking historical associations of the colonial era are connected with this region. In this county the old Indian king, Powhatan, lived three hun-

dred years ago at Werowocomoco. The spot is still marked by the old chimney which the colonists, under Captain John Smith, erected for Powhatan on a lovely bay of York River. If the beautiful story of Pocahontas and her heroic rescue of Smith is to be accepted still as veritable history, we can visit almost the identical spot on which the scene was enacted two hundred and seventy-two years ago. The very same spring from which the girl Pocahontas drank, remains as clear and musical as when a child she played about her majestic old father's home overlooking the York River not far from the present site of Gloucester C. H. Near by stands "Rosewell," the ancient mansion of John Page, once a distinguished member of the colonial council, and one of the earliest friends of Patrick Henry and the other Revolutionists against Governor Dunmore at Williamsburg, in 1775. Rosewell still stands, and is occupied by its present owner, Mr. Deans. Here, some affirm, Jefferson penned his original draft of the immortal "Declaration."

For some cause the pioneers of Presbyterianism in Virginia overlooked this whole region. Francis Makemie was on the Eastern Shore and near Norfolk from 1685 to 1710; Robinson, Roan, Blair, and Samuel Davies, were in Hanover county to the west of Gloucester, from 1743 to 1760; and Dr. James Waddell and others labored successfully in the Northern Neck, to the northward, from 1757 to 1780, but none of them seem ever to have extended their missionary tours to Gloucester. The explanation probably lies in the fact that but few Presbyterians from Scotland or elsewhere came to this section of the colony. It is likely that the first settlers were nearly all English people of the Established Church. Consequently the Episcopal denomination has had two churches in the county for generations past. That Church, however, reaches but a small part of the population in this day, as actual statistics show, but the members of that Church are of the very best people in the county. I was informed by an intelligent gentleman of the county that the two Episcopal churches together only number about one hundred and forty members, whilst the Baptists had about five hundred and the Methodists about nine hundred. Good old Bishop Johns of the Episcopal Church was wont to speak of the county as "godless Gloucester," in allusion to the pleasure-loving character of the well-to-do class he was most conversant with. The present population of the county is about 12,000, of which number a little more than half are negroes.

My first visit to this county was made in August, 1879, at which time I found quite a number of families of Presbyterians and others kindly disposed to our church. Some of them were native Virginians; but the majority were people from the north of Ireland, who had resided in the Northern and Western States of the Union, and had recently settled in this section. I was most cordially welcomed and invited to repeat my visit, which I did in the following November, accompanied by brother Jones of Petersburg. Last May I paid a third visit accompanied by Mr. Walter H. Robertson, the present representative of Presbytery in the field. He was most kindly received by the people, and his faithful and self-denying labors there during the last six months have opened the way for the organization so happily effected on the 14th ult. Bro. Jones and myself went over early in the week in order to hold a series of meetings before Sunday and visit all our people. The meetings were well attended, and the audiences were composed largely of people of more than ordinary thoughtfulness as to personal religion. We were favored, whilst there, with the pleasant company and efficient aid of an excellent brother, the Rev. Augustus T. Dobson of Chester, Pa., who was on a visit to his son who has recently settled in the county. The organization was effected on the Sabbath (Nov. 14th) and two excellent brethren were elected Ruling Elders, to wit: Mr. Robert H. Franklin and Mr. James Gass. Mr. Horace W. Jones, a merchant at the county seat, was elected a Deacon. The roll of the new church shows twenty-one communicants and twenty-eight baptized non-communicants. There are five or ten other persons who are expected to join the church soon. That this little band intend to grow, will be inferred when I say that two of them, a gentleman and his wife, generously deeded to the trustees chosen by the church a most beautiful ten-acre plot of ground on the main street of the village for a house of worship, manse and school house. This gift was estimated to be worth about one thousand dollars. A building committee was appointed and instructed to begin at once to mature plans for erecting a manse and church. As they now have a hall which they can use free of rent for a year to come, the erection of the manse will be first in order. If they can only get the contemplated buildings erected there would seem to be a certainty of success in this enterprise of establishing Presbyterianism on a firm basis in Gloucester. The undertaking is a difficult

one, and one beyond the ability of the brethren there, but there is good reason to hope they will be generously aided both in Virginia and at the North. Brother Dobson promised to take up a collection in his church in Chester, Pa., for this enterprise, and if a few others would show a like kindly interest in the work the needed amount could readily be raised. After having visited the field four times, and studied it with some care, I can say with confidence that there is a most urgent demand for this undertaking, and that there is now every indication of success. There are difficulties, of course, and possibilities of failure, but nothing but the manifestation of a reasonable degree of interest in the work on the part of those who ought to take an interest in it, is lacking to assure entire success. If there are those who mourn the slow growth of our church in Eastern Virginia, and who really wish to see advance made in this direction, here is a capital opening for intelligent liberality to show itself. If we allow such an opportunity as this to pass from us we deserve to fall behind as a Church. The Rev. Dr. George D. Armstrong of Norfolk and the Rev. Dr. Moses D. Hoge, of Richmond, have been requested to receive contributions intended for the Gloucester enterprise.

To this already lengthy letter I will add one other statement. The young brother who is laboring in this field has no horse, and is unable to buy one. The Committee of Domestic Missions cannot afford to furnish him with one. He has a field embracing about one hundred square miles and has to walk a great deal. That region is one in which horses are very scarce. Is there not in our Synod some generous man who has a horse he would like to devote to God's cause by presenting him to the Presbytery for the use of its missionary in Gloucester? If so let him inform Dr. T. D. Witherspoon of Petersburg, or myself. NEANDER M. WOODS.

Letter from Philadelphia.

PHILADELPHIA, Nov. 23d, 1880.

Messrs. Editors.—I was exceedingly interested in a communication to the Central Presbyterian of last week respecting the State Fair, and more especially in the remarks respecting *Grape Culture in Virginia*. We have long thought that Virginia, even more than California, was adapted to the cultivation of the grape, and that if the drinking of wine instead of more fiery stimulants became more popular that the evils of intemperance would be reduced to a minimum. There is nothing in the climate of Virginia that should lead its people naturally to use heady intoxicants, and no doubt if milder were supplied of satisfactory quality and price, the masses of the people would accept and use them, thereby decreasing in vast proportion the injurious result now witnessed. For this element of

Climate Plays a most Important part in the Choice of a Nation's Stimulant.

In every country the body of man is rooted deep in the soil and takes shape from his surroundings. If one goes to Scotland he will hear them talking about a "Scotch Misth," and getting caught in one you will be apt to ask, "If this is a 'mish' what can a rain be." That mist is almost perpetual. The vapor, like a furnace smoke, crawls forever on the horizon, and the clouds are ever marshalling themselves in the sky and turning their flanks and growing black, and descending in heavy showers. You dare not cross the street without an umbrella, for fear of a drenching. It is a decidedly humid country, and the humidity circulates in man as well as plants—affecting all his sensations and his frame. It is not strange that in so humid and foggy a land—with the German Ocean beating forever against its rocky coast and covering it with ceaseless exhalations—with the terrible north wind coming over the sea bearing spikes as of hoar frost in its penetrating blast—in a land of rain and wind and surge and storm—that they do not find oat-meal porridge enough to feed vitality, but that in lieu of the most generous food that should be theirs, they use not beer, not wine, but brandy, pure and "straight," among all classes, men and women, ministers and laymen.

It would be an interesting study to trace the influence climate has upon the body—from the far northern climes where the waste of animal power is so great that to keep up the physical heat man add to food and clothing the most fierce and fiery stimulants—down to sunny France and the happy shores of the Mediterranean where the waste is not so great, and from the days of Horace until this hour, "the mild Falernian wines" and the less exciting drinks are deemed sufficient. I think it is demonstrable that climates have a vast influence upon the bodies of men—that those who live in cold lands or among marshes or on the shores of wild seas, who are ill-housed and ill-fed, and ill-clothed by reason of the poverty of nature, who gaze upon sombre skies and are a prey to gloomy thoughts, crave violent sensations and give way to drunkenness as they do not in more congenial climes.

But what is true of our climate?—Though not so humid as that of Scotland, yet it is an atmosphere that is peculiarly exhaustive. It is so oxygenic—so carbonic that it generates, especially in the North, the love of strong excitements. There is no living in it without an abundance of good food. The summers are hot and drain fearfully the physical vitality—the winters are cold and the east wind penetrating. The senses become blunted, and stimulants are clutched at as a swift way of bringing up the working powers even with men's tasks, of beguiling fatigue, of diminishing weakness, of enhancing animal pleasure. It is a climate which in our northern latitudes arouses the passion for excitement. Cultivated people find that excitement in ideas—professional men in profession—business men in business—but thousands finding no excitement by normal and intellectual methods, turn to abnormal excitements. If then it is an outgrowth of climate itself, that we should crave stimulants in our land, it is plainly the duty of philanthropists first

To Substitute for Powerful Stimulants Weaker Ones

It is for this reason we believe that the man who introduces the cultivation of the grape and the use of wine where men previously used drastic and corroding whiskeys and brandies, is a benefactor, and we hail with great satisfaction any token of the initiation of the experiment. Already California has made her name famous, and New Jersey is entering the arena of grape culture with success. But Virginia, with her beautiful climate, her long summers, mild winters, equable temperature, is wonderfully adapted to bring the grape to perfection, and to produce the "mellow" wine. And her intermediate position between the extreme northern cold and southern heat, makes her population peculiarly adapted to use and popularize wine for America, as France has done for Europe. This work of substitution is going on in the northern cities, and has been incorporated as a practical principle of temperance reform in the establishment of numerous coffee houses, which are doing more to decrease the evil by supplying wholesome satisfaction for the craving for excitement, than all the radical measures ever proposed. Let this work go on. Substitute for the greater stimulants the less, and for the less the least, and by and by the intoxicants that consume men will be displaced by the excitants that build them up.

Before this is accomplished, however, a supplementary work must be done in another direction. We must not only provide more wholesome satisfactions for the human craving for excitement, but we must

Weaken by Every Means the Craving Itself.

It is clearly possible to sap the foundations of this destructive craving in a variety of ways. If climate has such a powerful influence—disarm it by adequate and warm apparel. Let men clothe themselves warmly, and nurse thereby the animal heat in winter. An examination of our apparel will show that while finer in quality, as a rule, it is not nearly so heavy in weight as that of the English, who have to endure a much milder winter than ours. The extreme heat of our summers betray us into a contempt of the winter, and it is an exception to see a working man in our northern cities adequately clothed against the blasts of winter. Men go shivering about their tasks, and are tempted by the cold without to fire up within.

Feed Men Generously.

and by so much you weaken the craving for unnatural stimulus. I am persuaded that the woman who is herself a master of the art of preparing wholesome dishes for her husband's table, who prepares food in an attractive form so that his appetite is satisfied in a normal way, sends him forth to his labor doubly armed against the temptations of drink. She has anticipated dangerous appetite by supplying full satisfaction for the natural appetite. When I think of the slattern women in the world, of the widespread ignorance of cookery, of the wretched messes to which thousands of working men sit down in the name of a meal, I do not wonder that rising up, unfilled, and going forth, they take the glass as the readiest means of supplementing the craving which has not been satisfied.

This is a profound as well as a comprehensive matter, and reaches far down into the life of the home.

A Bright Home

is itself a great preventive. The woman who is a neat housekeeper, and loves to present a cleanly and tidy house to her returning husband, is doing much unconsciously to keep her husband and her sons home of nights. It robs them of discontent and the bar-room of its chief attraction. The saloon, as it is constructed in modern times, with its bright lights, its burnished casks, its clinking glasses, its companionship, its boozey cheer, is a dreadful foe of the poor woman's home, and bids strongly against her. But love is stronger than any other force in this world, and a wife's true love is sure to

conquer if it is but thrown with wisdom into the scale. That love in the meanest cottage is capable of clove it with such attractions as to out-wit all the saloon-keeper's ingenuity, and eclipse with its radiance all the gorgeousness of the most splendid drinking palace. L. M. C.

NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES.

Southern Presbyterian.

The Mt. Horeb church, of which Rev. T. M. Boyd is pastor, so earnestly resisted the call which had been extended to him from the church at Eufaula, Ala., that Lexington Presbytery, at its meeting in Staunton last week, refused to dissolve the pastoral relation. See the resolutions of the congregation on page 5.

We learn that on last Sabbath there was a delightful communion season. An additional elder, D. M. Layton, was elected, and also another deacon, J. S. Craig.

Union Church, Lexington Presbytery.—On Sabbath, November 21, Messrs. John H. Sillings, John H. Jones, Rudolph McGlamery, and James H. Fauver, were ordained and installed ruling elders.

Rev. Dr. G. B. Strickler, pastor of Tinkling Spring church, Augusta county, Va., gave notice to his congregation on Sabbath, November 21st, that he would visit Louisville, Ky., with the view of considering the question of accepting an invitation to become co-pastor in the Second Presbyterian church, (Dr. Robinson's). The state of Dr. Robinson's health is such that he seeks some relief from the work of the pastorate in the large congregation which he has so long and ably served.

Augusta Church, Lexington Presbytery.—At the late communion (November 14th), nine persons were added to this church, of which Rev. Alexander Sprunt is pastor.

Rev. D. A. McRae, who has been laboring as an evangelist in the Presbytery of Eastern Texas, has returned to North Carolina. His address is Melroe, Robeson county, N. C.

Rev. W. T. Thompson has been transferred from the Presbytery of Nashville to the Presbytery of Harmony, S. C. He accepts the pastorate of the First Presbyterian church, Charleston, which is now connected with our Assembly.

Rev. R. B. McAlpine, was, at a meeting of the Presbytery of Wilmington held during the sessions of the Synod of North Carolina at Raleigh, received into that Presbytery from the Presbytery of South Alabama.

Courtland, Ala.—Rev. Dr. J. W. Hoyte has just closed a meeting of a week at this church. The church was much revived and ten persons made a profession of religion.

The Synod of South Carolina

Met in the Presbyterian church at Sumter, on Wednesday, November 17th.

The opening sermon was preached by the retiring Moderator, the Rev. N. W. Edmunds, from Matthew xxviii: 18.

The attendance was unusually full, over one hundred members being present.

Rev. J. L. Martin was elected Moderator and Rev. E. G. Smith, temporary Clerk.

After reading the narratives and statistical reports from the Presbyteries, a conference on the work of the Presbyteries was held; and it was ordered that such conference be held at 11 o'clock on the second day of each session of the Synod.

Dr. Girardeau presented, in behalf of the committee, the final report on the *Nature and Functions of the Diaconate*. The editors of the *Southern Presbyterian Review* were requested to publish it in that periodical.

The *Columbia Theological Seminary* was represented by Revs. Drs. Mack and Girardeau. Synod resolved to assume \$20,000 of the \$30,000 which the Alumni association had resolved to raise for the endowment of the Howe Memorial chair. The prospects for re-opening the Seminary are bright, and the people of this Synod will do their full part in this great and noble work.

Foreign Missions.—A conference was held upon this subject, at which addresses by Drs. J. L. Wilson and Girardeau, and Mr. Pratt, were delivered. A letter from missionary J. Hampden DuBose was read and a collection taken up. An overture to the next General Assembly, offered by Dr. Girardeau, was adopted. It asks the Assembly to declare if necessary deductions are a part of the "word of God as interpreted in our standards."

Publication.—The Rev. Dr. Hazen, Secretary, presented this cause to Synod in a very able and exhaustive and satisfactory address. Synod urgently and affectionately commended the cause to all of its churches.

Education.—A statement from the Secretary was received, which was referred to a select committee who brought in a report cheerfully commending the cause to the prayers and contributions of all our churches.

An unusual degree of harmony and good feeling prevailed throughout the deliberations.

The closing exercises were very solemn and impressive, consisting of memorial tributes to the memory of four of its members, who during the past year, have been called to their eternal rest, to wit: Rev. W. S. Flumer, D. D., LL. D., Rev. D. McQueen, D. D., Rev. W. H. Adams, and Rev. T. H. Cunningham.

The next meeting will be held at Columbia, November 23, 1881, at 7 1/2 P. M., at which time the semi-centennial of Dr. Howe's Professorship by the Alumni, will be celebrated by suitable exercises. E. H. B.

(Continued on 5th page.)