

# OLIVE TREES

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## QUESTIONS OF THE HOUR.

### THE PROHIBITED CONFEDERATION.\*

*Rev. A. J. McFarland, Beaver Falls, Pa.*

Isaiah viii, 12: "Say ye not 'A confederacy' to all them to whom this people shall say, 'A confederacy.'"

We are living in a time when it is quite generally admitted that the spiritual tone is exceedingly low, and genuine spiritual activity is all but wanting in very many of the churches of all denominations, and that the spirit of worldliness, of commercialism, and of self-indulgence has well nigh destroyed conscience, both public and private.

It is no less apparent that it is a time of great practical godlessness, when the demoralizing materialistic theory of life has become dominant, and the blight of national atheism has developed gross corruption in the whole political body.

Amid so much that is discouraging, it is a cheering fact that the subject of "Christian Citizenship" has become so prominent, and is awakening such general and growing interest and consideration. Prominent in the list of its advocates are such leading men as Dr. Josiah Strong, the author of "The Next Great Awakening," and half a dozen other most timely and widely read books. Carlos Martyn,

the editor of *American Reformers*, and author of "Wendell Phillips, the Agitator," and "John B. Gough," and "Wm. E. Dodge," has written a book entitled "Christian Citizenship." John G. Woolley, the editor of the *New Voice*, and the Prohibition candidate for President in 1900, and popular temperance agitator, is ever ringing the changes in his masterly speeches and editorials on "Christian Citizenship." Dr. Francis E. Clark, President of the Christian Endeavor Society, has a distinct department in that extensive organization designated "Christian Citizenship." Dr. Wilbur T. Crafts, Superintendent of the "International Reform Bureau," in his lecture on "Our Country's Needs," gives Christian citizenship a prominent place. The "Christian Citizenship League," an organization with its headquarters in Chicago, has for its chief aim, as its name suggests, the exemplifying of Christian citizenship.

There is not, however, among these leaders of thought and action full agreement as to the import of the phrase "Christian Citizenship," and as to what is required for its proper exemplification. The most of them have as their highest aim the "cleaning up of politics" by electing Christian men for office. But others, as John G. Woolley, contend that Christian citizenship is only truly exemplified in identification with the Prohibition party.

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\* A discourse delivered March 1, 1903, in the Second Reformed Presbyterian Church, New York, by Synod's Agent in Testimony Bearing, and published by request of the Minister.

for whom the school was founded is shown in the report of the Principal of Northfield Seminary, who says: "Two-fifths of our girls have no high school within reach, one-third are from towns of 5,000 inhabitants or less, and nearly one-fifth are farmers' daughters. Two-fifths have lost either father or mother, or both. One-third are girls who have done something toward self-support. Twenty-seven are paying their own way and ten others are meeting their expenses in part, while fifty-seven more are being assisted by the Students' Aid Society and Scholarships. Our plan is not to accept girls whose parents could afford to send them to more costly schools, nor to accept those who would be likely to prove poor investments." The annual report of the Principal of Mount Hermon School has a similar import. Of the 725 boys registered there, one-third are working their own way. This is possible from the fact that the average age of the school is higher than it is at the ordinary college preparatory school, and because the method by which the school is run is to provide board, room and tuition for the students at just half the actual cost. This opens a way for sturdy, industrious fellows to prepare for college, and smile at their empty pockets. The idea is not a free education, but an education possible through work. That young men and women are anxious to avail themselves of such a place is shown, when it is known that at Mount Hermon the ratio of applicants to vacancies is four to one; and this year at Northfield Seminary, for every vacancy there were seven applicants. This means that hundreds of deserving men and women have to be turned away because of lack of accommodations. As might be expected, from a place connected with D. L. Moody, a strong religious sentiment permeates both schools. Daily chapel exercises are

held, a well-established church is maintained, and in addition, students are required to pursue courses in Bible the same as in Latin or Greek. Character, rather than brightness, is the standard by which each student is judged, and not infrequently assistance is given to the more vigorous Christian when the merely clever student is turned aside. Hence a preparation for college there means more than the regulation amount of mathematics and languages. The goal, however, for which most students strive is the university or college, and such is the standard set by former students that there are few colleges in the East but are glad to welcome into their halls a boy from Mount Hermon, or a girl from Northfield Seminary. Nor is their confidence misplaced; four years of high intellectual training, coupled with the physical effort of self-support and influenced by the healthy spiritual life of Northfield, combine to give a preparation not only for a college but for the best and noblest kind of life. And that is the purpose and first object of the Moody schools.

#### ALEXANDER M'LEOD STAVELY.

—The *Banbridge Chronicle* (Ireland) reports a memorial sermon preached in the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Ballyclare, on Sabbath, Sept. 13, 1903, by Rev. Gawin Douglas, of Loughbrickland. It is founded on Numbers 27, 13, "And when thou hast seen it, thou also shalt be gathered unto thy people, as Aaron thy brother was gathered." At the close of an excellent discourse Mr. Douglas pays the following well-merited tribute to our lifelong friend, the late Rev. A. M. Stavelly, whose name is inseparably connected with the missionary work of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in the Maritime Provinces of Canada.—

A venerable father, who was your

faithful pastor for fifteen years, and who occupied a high place in your affections, Rev. A. M'Leod Stavely, has lately been taken home to his rest and his reward.

"Yes, he is dead—O happy death!  
O deadly harm; unhappy Church,  
When shalt thou see among thy shepherds  
all,  
Any so sage, so perfect, whom not e'en  
Envy could touch for virtuous life and  
skill;  
Courteous, valiant, and liberal."

Alexander M'Leod Stavely was born on June 19, 1816, at Corkey, Ballymoney. Descended from an old Yorkshire family, he was the son of Dr. William J. Stavely, pastor of Dervock and Ballymoney in the first half of last century, and grandson of Rev. William Stavely, who suffered so much for his principles in 1798. Alexander, nurtured in an eminently Christian home, was early dedicated for the ministry, and with this object in view he was sent to the Academical Institution, and the Academy, Belfast, preparatory to his college course at Edinburgh, where he had a distinguished career. To his dying day he retained many prizes awarded him by Dr. Chalmers and Christopher North. On returning to Ireland he taught for some time in Derry, at the same time preaching every Sabbath. In 1839 he was licensed to preach the gospel, but hearing of the neglected state of the scattered Covenanters of New Brunswick, Canada, and believing he had a call from the Master to minister to them, he insisted, in spite of the entreaties of his friends, on giving up all his prospects in the church at home, and going out to what was then almost an unknown land. The voyage lasted thirty-eight days—a fitting prelude to the difficulties of a pioneer missionary's career. Mr. Stavely, however, gradually built up

a fine congregation, with manse, church, and lecture hall, all free of debt, and formed many Mission stations throughout the Province. He numbered among his hearers many not actually members of the Reformed Presbyterian Church. He was an ideal arbitrator, and it was Mr. Stavely who was entrusted with the negotiations, when the Presbytery of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, was taken under the jurisdiction and care of the American Synod. He traveled through much of the United States preaching the everlasting gospel as far south as Augusta, Georgia, and as far west as Wisconsin, and having many hair-breadth escapes from shipwreck, from vessels on fire, and lastly from a burning city. In 1877, the thirty-seventh year of his ministry, the city of St. John was well nigh destroyed. Mr. Stavely's church, manse, and almost all his belongings were consumed by fire, and all the loving labors of years seemed useless. The indomitable old pioneer, however, set to work at once, crossed over to Scotland and Ireland, where he got a very sympathetic reception, and collected sufficient funds to rebuild all the church property free of debt. Then he nobly decided to leave to a younger man the results of his thirty-eight years' labor, and left the city where he had long been the most popular as well as the most respected pastor. Twenty years afterwards his declining years were cheered much by a beautifully worded address of appreciation from this "the flock of his earliest care." \* \* \* His work was not yet done. So fresh was Mr. Stavely that when almost seventy years old he assumed the charge of a new congregation. In 1884 he was called to Ballyclare, where he labored faithfully for fifteen years, never missing a prayer meeting, prominent in every good work in the town, and winning the confidence and admiration of men of every creed. The

manse and church he renovated, and, as usual, left free of debt. Declining years, however, reminded him that after over sixty years of preaching he had earned a rest, and accordingly in 1899 he retired, the breaking of the tie being marked by an address and presentation on the part of the townspeople, and by a very hearty send-off, at which ministers of every denomination in the town took part, one of them humorously remarking that Mr. Stavely he feared would have the curse attached to the man of whom all speak well. The last few years of his life Mr. Stavely spent at Portrush, still able to preach occasionally, and to take various tours in England and Scotland, ever genial and courteous, and maintaining his interest in events to the last. His wonderful gift of prayer grew even more marked as the end drew nigh. Seemingly hale and hearty, pneumonia struck him down, and after a brief illness, in which he retained all his faculties, in his native town on the 9th of July, 1903, in the eighty-eighth year of his age, surrounded by his loving daughter and his faithful wife, he died triumphantly in the hope of a blessed immortality after a life of toil for Christ, his life-long prayer being answered—"Let me die the death of the righteous."

Dr. MacDouall said it would be impossible to replace Dr. George Lillie Craik, and so "take our father for all in all we shall not soon look upon his like again." He possessed an eminently attractive personality. As Tholuck, on his introduction to Chalmers, said he was "ein lieblicher Mensch—he was a lovely man." As a man and a Christian, his endowments were of a superior order. His dispositions were amiable. His manners were bland, kind, and courteous. His appearance was stately and striking. He was a lover of peace, and of all good men. He was an

accurate and finished scholar. He was a good preacher. He was a great Bible reader, and his sermons were packed with Scripture. Like Barnabas, he was a son of consolation. As a Presbyterian, he was well-informed, judicious, and conciliatory. He was an ardent and devoted friend of the Missions of the Church, and did much to stir up many to pray for and to give liberally to the missionary enterprise. While he was kind and conciliatory, he was steadfast as a witness for the grand principles of the Covenanted Reformation, and by his candid and loving spirit was influential in commending them to others. He was a good raconteur, and oftentimes have I hung with rapture on his lips as he portrayed in glowing terms the varied scenes through which he passed in his missionary tours in the British Colonies in North America. "He spake no slander; no, nor listened to it." He was exemplary in all the relations of life, a loving husband, an affectionate father, and a true friend. He was an ideal host; to know him was to love him, and the more he was known the better he was loved. As we think of him we are reminded of the words of Christ regarding Nathanael—"Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile." After a ministry of sixty years, exercised in St. John, N. B., and in Ireland, his native land, he has entered into the joy of his Lord. He is not lost, but gone before. His removal says to surviving ministers, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, no device, no knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave whither thou goest." While it says to all of us, "Set thine house in order, for thou shalt die and not live."

"Art is long, and time is fleeting,

And our hearts though stout and brave,  
Still like muffled drums are beating,  
Funeral marches to the grave."

Brethren beloved, you all did love him once, not without cause; he lives in your hearts, and you mourn his removal. We miss the touch of the vanished hand, and the sound of the voice that is still. Well the poet says, "He mourns them best who does as they desired." He being dead yet speaks to us in this wise, "Be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." Honored father, farewell—no more shall we see thy happy face; no more shall we hear thy winning voice again; no more shall we enjoy fellowship and co-operation with you in the Church on earth, but we shall meet again,

"In that bright world above,  
Where parting is unknown—  
In that eternity of love  
Formed for the good alone."

"Thou art gone to the grave—we no longer behold thee,  
Nor tread the rough path of the world by thy side;  
For the wide arms of Mercy were spread to enfold thee,  
And sinners may die, for the sinless has died.

"Thou art gone to the grave, but we will not deplore thee,  
Whose God was thy ransom, thy guardian and guide;  
He gave thee, He took thee, and He will restore thee—  
And death has no sting, for the Saviour has died."

Meanwhile, let us be followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises. "And now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up

and to give you an inheritance among all them that are sanctified."

"Weep not for broad lands lost,  
Weep not for fair hopes crossed;  
Weep not when limbs wax old,  
Weep not when friends grow cold;  
Weep not that death must part  
Thine and the best loved heart;  
Yet weep, weep, all you can—  
Weep, weep, because you are sin-defiled man."

I cannot, my friends, sit down without offering a last tribute of sympathy to Mr. Stavely's accomplished wife, who for upwards of fifty-two years shared in all his sorrows and joys, and who was his true helpmate in every good work. May the God of her husband be her God now as in the past; may she be sustained until the day break and the shadows flee away.—Amen.

#### DEVAJI.

—In the annual report of work done in India during 1902 under the direction of the Canadian Presbyterian Church, Mr. F. H. Russell, of Dhar, contributes the following interesting incident.—

The church building in the city, which is situated on the main street, has proved of great assistance in the work of reaching the general population. At both the Sabbath services and week-day meetings a considerable number of Hindus and Mohammedans are present, and most of them stay throughout and listen with apparent interest to the singing and speaking.

One Wednesday evening in June a man of the drover caste, who had come from his village eighty miles away to buy cattle, heard the singing in the church as he passed the door. He was a man of earnest spirit, and had for some time been