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CORRESPONDENCE.

Letter from Rev. Dr. R. L. Dabney.

Impressions of Scotland—The Labor Question, Slavery, etc.—Climate and Agriculture—The Furnace Room.

LIVERPOOL, May 29th, 1880.

Messrs. Editors.—I reached here last night from Edinburgh, somewhat the "worse for wear," by reason of the bleak gales of the North Atlantic and the scarcely less bleak breezes of this hyperborean region. I am reminded that I am, indeed, on the latitude of Labrador. In Edinburgh the other evening I read very well at my window at 8 o'clock, the twilight was by no means gone at 10, and it began again before 2 A. M. They say that at midsummer night is still shorter. I think Don Phobus must then conclude that the time for going to bed is scarcely long enough to make it worth while to take off his clothes; so he just lies down for a short nap, with all his toggery on; and as this is described as very "shiny," we have here a truly philosophical solution of the fact that it never gets dark. The people here say: "It is very fine"—meaning of course the weather; and the sun does shine, right cheerfully, most of the day, (with from one to three showers between times, to lay the dust.) But the wind—and it is their good wind, from the West—is precisely such a one as would make the old Virginia farmers say, in the afternoon: "Well, all the peaches must go to-night," and would send him to covering up his tobacco-plant beds from the frost. But somehow, the frost does not quite come. The temperature of the ocean around protects them from that; and while we mortals from more genial climes button up our heaviest greatcoats to the chin, the grass, oats, and potatoes grow a little still. The country is generally very green; but not a bit more so, to my eye, than our own limestone lands are in June. An Edinburgh paper, two days ago, congratulated the country upon the fine weather. He said it gave promise of an early and good harvest, though rather too dry and warm for a good hay crop. The thermometer for a week had ranged between the extremes of 35° and 61°! I see that when the attempt is made to till any summer crop, every expedient is made to get the utmost of what little warmth the earth has. The soil is ridged very high, as high as a two-horse plough can bank it up, in very narrow ridges, and the seed potato is put in the very top.

They say: First impressions are not to be trusted. My first impressions are, that British agriculture is a harder master than our old Virginian was; and that commerce and manufactures are unspokeably harder. One can only note what his eyes see. The potatoes are now, in a multitude of places, receiving the first hoeing. Women have been in the majority in every hoe-gang I have seen, but always with a man to lead and boss them; and I assure you they work "like fighting fire." The farm-laborers to whom I have been close are not as clean as our negro laborers on well regulated places, not a whit better clad, nor one whit less stolid looking and subservient. In walking a few squares on the "High Street" of Glasgow, (the street leading to the cathedral, the Barony church, and the fashionable cemetery), I met six women bare-footed, and at least a hundred bare-headed. My friend and I, mind you, had our winter overcoats buttoned up carefully. The next morning I found myself in the compartment of the car with an American also going to Edinburgh. He asked me if I had seen much of the squalor of the Glasgow poor? I replied, that I had not looked for it. Ah! said he, "It is disgusting." He then added: "It's the whiskey does it." I was not qualified to affirm or deny. But I thought, if so, then we see one of the advantages of our old system: that the main results of the labor of the poor could not be wasted on whiskey, because they were authoritatively directed into the more useful channels of shoes, clothing, bread and meat, shelter, and religious instruction for the poor; by hands effectually influenced for their

good, not only by conscience and family affection, but by interest. Our system was, for the laboring people, the best temperance society the world ever saw.

While on the steamer, I explored its very bowels, being as it were, in Jonah's phrase, in the "belly of hell," in the furnace room itself. There were the stokers, working exceedingly hard in an atmosphere of about 120°, black as the pit except for a few smoking little miner's lamps, bathed in perspiration and grimy as coal dust could make them. The avocation is simply horrible. But "the interests of commerce necessitate it! No stokers, no steam: No steam, no grand commercial wealth." Just so. But none the less is it true, that the most unreasonable master I ever knew in Virginia never set his bondsman to any toil-half so horrible and unhealthy. Had a single one of them done so, Faneuil Hall would have gone into spasms of virtuous indignation over it. But, what would have been more to the purpose, the man's slaveholding neighbors would have so rebuked his cruelty, that he could not have held up his head among them. I will remember that, under our kind and merciful system, "hiring a hand to the coal pits" (at Deep Run or Tuckahoe) was sometimes resorted to, in the case of a peculiarly insolent and profligate negro, who persisted in stealing, fighting his overseer, and spending his Sundays drunk—as a punishment, and not in any other cases! Yet the coal pit work was so light, and so thoroughly healthy, that these reprobate negroes usually became fond of it. But that was the "barbarism of slavery;" and this power, which shuts up white men in these portals of hell is 19th century philanthropy! Ah well, I am an old fogey.

Afterwards, seeing one of these young cyclops on deck during his respite, I asked the mate of the ship, who was conversing with me: "Is not his a very hard and repulsive employment?" He answered with a grin: "Pretty bad!" Said I, "I hope then, that their pay is correspondingly liberal?" "Oh no," he replied; "much lower than of any hands on the ship." But, I rejoined, "this is unjust, to exact the most trying work for the smallest pay." The mate turned on me, as if he thought my folly was very shallow, and said: "What good would that do? They would just have that much more for whiskey; they would never get any real good from their pay." "Why?" answered I. "Is there any needs-be for their being men of such worthless habits?" "Yes," he said: "If they were any above that grade, we should never get them to do such work. A fellow has to be real low down to live for stoking." This mate's philosophy is: that the degradation of a part of the servants of free society is necessary to her triumphs. I wonder if it is a true philosophy? If so, then our old system compared with it as day does with night; for our system elevated and civilized all its lower class, to some degree. But then, I am an old fogey. I have sent you by this mail the copy of the "Scotsman," containing the end of the famous Robertson Smith case. When you read it, I know precisely what scrap of our school-boy lore will rise to your tongue.

"Parturient montes; nascitur ridiculus mus."

But don't you say it; you naughty fellow! Remember your manners. The Scotsman, whose editor in chief they say, is not a Scotchman at all, is in Edinburgh very much what the Herald is in New York, able, unscrupulous, employing the spryest reporters, veiling a secret enmity to the gospel under an affectation of high liberalism. Doubtless the picture he gives of the debates is as faithful as graphic. Such manners in an ecclesiastical assembly, and such insolence and incipient riot in the audience of a great ecclesiastical assembly, would look very queer to us Southerners, who were habituated to the "barbarism of slavery." But we shall learn in due time, and reconcile ourselves to this higher model.

Yours faithfully,
R. L. D.

"The word Priest in the Prayer Book, (P. E.) is only a contraction of Presbyter."—Halifax Guardian.

Why, so it is! And now, can any man render a reason, why—if Priest in the Prayer Book means Presbyter; the Prayer Book shouldn't say Presbyter and not priest?—Covenant.

Hooker, in his really great work on "Ecclesiastical Polity," A. D. 1554-1600, says:

"The word Presbyter doth seem more fit, and in propriety of speech, more agreeable than Priest, with the drift of the whole Gospel of Jesus Christ."

And, again, "Seeing that sacrifice is now no part of the church ministry, how should the name of priesthood be applied thereto?"

Will some one greater than Hooker—and who sees more clearly than he—tell us how? And he might as well include a certain Lord Bacon in his tutorage. For he knew no better than to assert exactly the same thing. See, "Works Montague Ed.," vol. 4, p. 426.—Ib.

There is an effort being made in some quarters to establish a rule in the Reformed Episcopal Church that bishops elected shall resume the pastorate at the end of ten years, if not re-elected.

NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES.

Southern Presbyterian.

Gloucester C. H., Va.—Rev. Walton H. Robertson, a recent graduate of Union Seminary, Va., entered upon his missionary work in Gloucester county about the middle of May.—There has never, so far as known, been a Presbyterian church in this fine county, and there has never been any regular occupation of the field by any ministers of our Church. This is one of the best counties of eastern Virginia, and before the war was one of the wealthiest in the State. There are about a dozen families of Presbyterians in and about the county seat who will aid in the support of a Presbyterian church. Mr. Robertson enters on the work for the summer in order to ascertain whether a church can be organized there. It is believed that \$300 can be raised, per annum, in the field itself. If the prospect at the close of the summer is encouraging the purpose is to organize a church and erect a house of worship.

A Working Church.—Messrs. Editors:—On last Sabbath the Franklin Street church, Baltimore, had the pleasure and profit of listening to a discourse from their pastor, Rev. W. U. Murkland, D. D., on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of his pastorate, from the text, 1 Cor. iii. 13, "Every man's work shall be made manifest; for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is." The discourse was an elaborate and searching discussion of the doctrine contained in the passage from which the text is taken, and a faithful application of the truths deduced to the hearts and consciences of its hearers, and at its close a modest but most telling statement of the work accomplished in these ten memorable years, and of the present condition of the church was made. Some of the facts given are as follows:

There have been received into the church during this period 468 members, of whom 260 were on examination and 208 on certificate. The number of children in Sabbath Schools and Bible classes have increased from 450 to 733. During this period the church has been enlarged at a cost of \$10,000, and the total contributions for all purposes have been \$190,816, nearly as much as in the twenty-three years of its preceding history. The church roll has twice been purged, and 143 have been put on the reserved list. The membership of the church has, therefore, in ten years been doubled.

The statistical report of the present year shows the state of the church to be as follows: Number of Elders, 10; number of Deacons, 9; received on examination, 27; on certificate, 27; total of members, 617. Adults baptized, 5; infants, 7; children in Sabbath Schools, 733; contributions nearly \$18,000, about one half of which was congregational, and the other half was distributed between the different causes of benevolence of the General Assembly. This church never omits a collection, but gives liberally to all the causes.

The working force of the church is found well represented in the Sabbath Schools and Ladies Societies. Of the former there are three with 84 teachers, and all of them are doing a good work in training the children in the knowledge of the truth and for usefulness in the Church.—A mission is conducted in a destitute part of the city. The ladies' societies are four, and is called "the Benevolent Society" which raises \$400 for Education, and sends off boxes to the families of ministers; two are foreign missionary in their object; and the fourth is the Dorcas Society with 54 names enrolled, which last year furnished clothing for 82 boys and 104 girls, including 579 garments, nearly all of which were made by the ladies themselves, and 164 pairs of shoes. There is also a sewing school with 16 teachers and 60 pupils, and a mother's mission, where poor mothers are gathered and instructed, and receive sympathy and kindly advice and assistance once a week. Eighty women were thus benefitted last year—and at the annual dinner provided about New Year, 150 mothers set down and were satisfied with a bountiful and elegant repast, and had their baskets, which they had been instructed to bring, filled with substantial and comforts for their families.

Much might be said about all this, but the facts and figures given above will suffice to show that here is a working church and a working pastor, and that great results have been accomplished. Very few men have such opportunities, very few know how to use them so well. The Franklin Street church is, we believe, the largest Presbyterian organization in Maryland. Its influence is large and extensive, and its pastor and people have a mind to work, and they are doing much for the upbuilding of the cause of Christ at home and abroad.

S.
Baltimore, June 11th, 1880.

Installation at Shepherdstown, W. Va.—On Sabbath, May 23d, J. A. Armstrong was installed pastor at this place. The services were conducted by Rev. F. M. Woods of Martinsburg, Rev. Harvey Gilmore, of Hedgeville, Rev. J. S. Lefevre, of Oakland, and Rev. E. L. Wilson, of Gerardsburg; and on May 30th, Mr. Armstrong was installed pastor at Kearneysville, by Rev. J. A. Scott, Sr., and Rev. W. C. Campbell.

Licentiate F. P. Harrell, late graduate of Union Theological Seminary, will labor in the churches of Prospect and Fifth Creek, Concord Presbytery, N. C.

Taylorville, Ky.—There was a discussion last week between Rev. M. H. Houston, of the Presbyterian Church, and Elder T. S. Gatton, of the Baptist Church, on the mode of baptism, and the terms of communion.

We learn that Rev. J. J. Anderson, former pastor of the Samuel Davies' churches of Hanover county, Va., expects to preach his final sermon on the last Sabbath of June, and that the Salem church (one of that interesting group) are looking for a visit from Rev. R. R. Howison on the 1st Sabbath in July, with a view to his taking charge of that field if all conditions be satisfactory.

Rivanna Church, Fluvanna Co., Va.—On last Sunday, (June 6th), a committee of West Hanover Presbytery organized a church in Fluvanna county, called the Rivanna church, with fourteen members and one Elder and one Deacon. Dr. T. D. Bell presided and preached in the morning, after which the organization was formally entered into. The officers elected, having been previously ordained, were installed. After a sermon in the afternoon the Sunday School (a Union School) under charge of J. W. Rison, held its second anniversary. The meetings were held at the Sunday School house, near Rivanna Mills, under a large arbor. The crowd in attendance was the largest seen in those parts for a long time.

L. B. JOHNSTON.

Newbern and Laurel Hill Churches, Pulaski County, Va.—Since March 15th, these churches have been served by their pastor elect. There are four preaching places—Newbern, Martin's Station on the Va. & T. R. R., Laurel Hill four miles up the Altoona Narrow Gauge R. R., and Oak chapel half-way between Laurel Hill and Newbern. There are now Sabbath Schools at each of the three first named places organized this spring. The Sabbath School at Oak chapel is carried on mainly by Methodists and Baptists.

The sacramental service was held at Laurel Hill on the fifth Sabbath of May. A large congregation was in attendance. One person was publicly received into the membership of the church.

The services of similar character at Newbern, first Sabbath of June, were attended by a very large congregation, increased by many from New Dublin and Dublin churches—whose pulpits happened to be vacant that day. There were four additions to this church—two by letter and two on examination.

New Haven, Ky.—In accordance with the appointment of Presbytery, and in answer to a petition of certain members residing at New Haven, the commission of Presbytery, consisting of Rev. Messrs. T. E. Converse, J. H. Morrison, and J. J. Cooke, and Ruling Elder J. J. Irvine, of Bardstown church, visited the field, and found the way open to organize a church. The organization was completed on Sunday, May 30th, and the church then elected Mr. Wm. H. Allen unanimously to the office of ruling elder. Mr. Allen was duly ordained and installed. The services were closed by the administration of the Lord's Supper.—Christian Observer.

Home Mission in Wilmington Presbytery, N. C.—The committee arranged vacant churches of the Presbytery into groups as follows: Burgaw, Mount Williams, and Top-sail to be supplied by Rev. G. W. MacMillan, and that he be requested to reside in Burgaw if the way be clear; Rev. K. McDonald to visit the churches of White Hall, Cobb Mills, and Richlands, and if the arrangement be acceptable to supply them; Rev. J. S. Black to take charge of Keith and Black River chapel.

The Rev. H. B. Garriss was appointed an evangelist for the eastern portion of this Presbytery at a salary of six hundred dollars. He to raise what he can in the field and the remainder to be supplemented by the Presbytery.—N. C. Presbyterian.

Letter from Eutaw, Ala.—After a long spiritual dearth, a delightful season of revival has been experienced in Eutaw, Ala. No such wide-spread religious interest, and no such large gathering into the church, has occurred in a quarter of a century. The services begun on the 9th of April, were continued for six weeks, without any abatement of interest, and closed with the regret of all. They were held in the Methodist church, under the conduct of the minister in charge, but with the hearty cooperation of the Presbyterian pastor and congregation. The result was the addition of twelve to the membership of the Methodist church, a number of them heads of families; and of thirty-two to the Presbyterian church, five of whom had been members previously. The large proportion of these were in the morning of life—from fourteen to twenty-one years of age—and had been trained up from their childhood in the Sabbath School.—Southern Presbyterian.

Church Organized at Fulton, Ark.—Rev. W. T. Howison and Elder John B. Christian, of Ouachita Presbytery, organized, May 29th, a church at this place, consisting of ten members, one ruling elder and one deacon.

Northern Presbyterian.

On Sabbath, June 6th, eighteen persons were added to the First Presbyterian church of Philadelphia, the Rev. L. M. Colfelt pastor. Eight were received on profession of faith and ten by letter. One received the ordinance of baptism. Scholars from the Sabbath School and those of riper years consecrated their lives to Him who is "mighty to save." Pastor and people united with one voice of thanksgiving to God that "this and that man was born in her."

It is good policy to help feeble churches in their struggle to build houses of worship for themselves. The United Presbyterian Church went into this benevolent work somewhat later than our own, but it reports that the total number helped is 201, located in 48 Presbyteries. These now report a membership of 14,720, and their contributions for all purposes for the present year amount to \$173,600.

The communion season in the First Presbyterian church of New Brunswick, N. J., on the first Sabbath in June, was a very delightful one in several respects. For some time past an annoying debt has crippled the energies of the church. After some preliminary preparation, on Sabbath, May, 30th, the pastor, Rev. Dr. W. J. McKnight, preached a sermon on "Bringing all the tithes into the storehouse, &c., (Mal. iii: 10), setting forth the law of God on the whole subject of Christian giving, and called for subscriptions to pay off the debt of \$5,700. The response was a voluntary offering of over \$8,200. This greatly encouraged the people. Then, true to his promise, the Lord at once began to pour out a spiritual blessing upon the church. During the next week fifteen valuable young people were accepted by the session, and before the communion publicly confessed the Saviour, and nine worthy additions were added by letters from other churches—twenty-four in all. At the March communion also fifteen were received, making thirty-nine additions since the present pastor entered on his labors among this people on the 1st of January last. The pastor and people are much encouraged by these signs of fresh growth in this old and honored vine.

The Revival Services at Dr. Talmage's Tabernacle were brought to a close on Friday evening, June 4th. Mr. Harrison, "the boy preacher," assisted by Dr. Talmage, has held services every evening except Saturdays for six weeks, and as a result over four hundred persons have been received into the church at the Tabernacle. On Sunday, Wednesday, and Friday, last week, Dr. Talmage administered the rite of baptism by immersion to those among the converts who had expressed a preference for that form of baptism, and on Sunday (6th) one hundred and fifty others were baptized by sprinkling.

Place aux dames. This was the constant cry in the General Assembly. "Woman's Work," and the grand success achieved therein was the theme of praise in many of the reports and speeches, and the tributes were hearty and generous. The ladies have purchased themselves a "good degree," and the article on "Deaconesses," by Dr. McGill in the late Presbyterian Review, was a foreshadowing of the elevation which may be at hand. And if there is any place where pious and zealous women should be honored it is in the church of God.

The Rev. J. R. Berry, D. D., pastor of the Presbyterian church of Montclair, N. J., ten years, during which time 290 persons have been added to the church, of whom 126 were a profession of faith and 164 by certificate. The amount contributed to religious and benevolent objects is \$40,000, of which \$6,000 were given during the past year.

The Rev. A. E. Kittredge, D. D., of the Third Presbyterian church, Chicago, has had his salary raised from \$7,000 to \$8,000.

After all, the use of instrumental music is creeping into the United Presbyterian churches, and the subject was brought before the late United Presbyterian General Assembly by Rev. W. W. Barr, D. D., of Philadelphia; but that body did not see fit to take any action with respect to it. Previous to the meeting of the Assembly it had been intimated that a resolution would be adopted directing the delegates appointed last year to the General Presbyterian Council which meets in Philadelphia, September 23, not to attend unless Psalms should be exclusively used in the devotional services. A resolution to this effect was proposed in the Assembly, but it was laid on the table, so that no action on the subject was taken. We have been told that the delegates from this denomination are corresponding with the delegates of the other Psalm-singing churches in reference to the course to be pursued. We most earnestly hope that the delegates from these churches will not refuse to cooperate with the Council.—Presbyterian Banner.

The effect which the teachings of Prof. Robertson Smith and others, and their toleration by ecclesiastical bodies, upon the Presbyterian Church in this country, may be learned from the action of the late General Assembly [Northern] in adopting the report on theological Seminaries, which said:

"Another matter, suggested by the signs of the times, has also been presented to our notice. At a period when acknowledged religious teachers, holding high positions in Christian institutions in Europe, are disseminating doctrines which are calculated to undermine the authority of the Holy Scriptures, we deem it appropriate that this General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church urge upon the Professors in our Seminaries to see to it that they do, by no means, even indirectly, give countenance to these fundamental errors, by any magnifying of the learning of these false teachers, but, on the contrary, that they do faithfully expose their fallacies, and unsparingly denounce their heresies, and that the integrity, inspiration and authority of the Word of God be fully and emphatically insisted upon in the instruction of candidates for the sacred ministry. It is further recommended that the Directors of the Theological Seminaries, under care of the Assembly, be requested to see to it that all candidates for the Presbyterian ministry, under their instruction, be prepared for an annual examination in the Westminster Shorter Catechism."

A more thorough acquaintance with the state of things in the Free Church of late years would have prevented the Independent from saying: "That the Free Presbyterian Church is the most conservative of the Presbyterian family across the ocean. It is the Old School Church of Scotland. Yet in this Church it is now decided that the views of Robertson Smith may properly be held and taught in a theological seminary. It is this Church which will represent Scotch Conservative Orthodoxy at the Pan-Presbyterian Council, in Philadelphia, next fall."

Presbyterian Banner.

Central Presbyterian.

WEDNESDAY, June 16, 1880.

Letter from Rev. Dr. Hoge.

DAMASCUS, May 8th, 1880.

Messrs. Editors.—I doubt whether any one ever made a journey of this length with as little care and trouble, or with more of unalloyed enjoyment. For the first time since it commenced I am now separated from the friends with whom I have travelled. The lady (and the life) of our little party was so wearied by the long ride on horseback from Sidon to Beirut that she was not willing to encounter the fatigue of the trip to Baalbek and Damascus, but preferred to rest at Beirut, where there is so much to see and to enjoy, and her husband remaining with her, I made arrangements for performing the journey alone. Not alone either, for the Rev. Dr. Post, of Beirut, to whose kindness I am indebted in many ways, selected a guide to accompany me—a native Syrian, Farah Mahloof, by name, whose native tongue is the Arabic, and who also speaks English very well. Without his aid, as interpreter, I could not have engaged horses on the road, or settled bills, or found my way from place to place. During the trip I found Mahloof attentive, efficient, and honest. In this land where all the men go armed, he carries a revolver in his belt, and a long knife stuck in a sheath on the inside of his boot. Thus attended I left Beirut by Diligence at 4½ o'clock in the morning, having secured a seat in the *banquette*. I will be sorry when the Diligence becomes obsolete, as I suppose it will one day. It is a lumbering, awkward looking conveyance, about twice as long as an ordinary stage coach, divided by a partition into two compartments. In front is the *coupe*, holding three persons, with glass windows in front and at the sides which can be lowered or raised at pleasure. Behind the *coupe* is another and much larger compartment, holding I know not how many, but immediately over the *coupe* and above the driver's seat is what is called the *banquette*, covered with a calash, leathern top, which in fine weather is by far the most desirable place in the Diligence, as its elevation enables the traveller to see the country on all sides to the best advantage. The Diligence is drawn by six horses—three abreast, and as the road from Beirut to Damascus was made by a French company, who own the line, and have a monopoly of the conveyances on it, the horses usually go at a gallop along the smooth macadamized way, without obstruction or danger of collision.

Baalbek.

At 11 A. M. we arrived at *Sh'tora*, where I left the Diligence, and where Mahloof hired horses for us on which to make the journey to Baalbek. It is a ride ordinarily performed in about seven hours—and a most interesting one it is. The road is an indifferent one, but good enough for horseback riding, and runs nearly all the way from *Sh'tora* to Baalbek along a beautiful plain with the great range of the Lebanon mountains on the left and the Anti-Lebanon on the right. When there are no clouds drifting across the sky the whole country is utterly shadowless, owing to the absence of trees, and lies under the bright glare of the sun, until towards evening when the mountains begin to cast their shadows on one another and over the vast plain. Then the effect of commingled light and shade is very fine, and then the beautiful colors which give such charm to a Syrian landscape come into play. As we approached Baalbek at the close of the day, all this was displayed in its perfection, and added greatly to the enjoyment of the ride. No picture is more distinct in my memory. The Lebanon mountains on the north were covered with snow, the sides were brown and red, and the plain at the base was of a vivid green. On the south, the purple Anti-Lebanon range was slightly veiled in mist; and directly in front rose the tall columns which still surmount the ruined temples of Baalbek amidst a fringe of slim poplar trees, stretching entirely across the plain, from mountain to mountain.

I found good quarters in the hotel Palmyra, which was once the residence of a wealthy gentleman of Baalbek, before it was converted into a public house. It is a good specimen of an oriental building—entered by a low, narrow door-way opening into a large, paved court through the middle of which runs a rushing stream of clear water, with an oval basin in the centre where the water is whirled about in a swift eddy, making a welcome sound. The rooms of the house are ranged around the sides of the open court, and a stone stairway leads to the upper chambers in front of which is a terrace paved with white marble, divided by narrow red strips, marking it off into squares and lozenges. My chamber had six windows on the lower tier and three on the upper, with a curiously carved wooden cornice running around the ceiling. The divan across the room and the chairs were covered with yellow silk, and all the furniture of the quaintest and most antique style. I saw no one at the hotel Palmyra except the Italian servant girl who waited on me, the landlord not being at home. I was the only guest, and in the night the silence was most profound, with the exception of the pleasant plash of the water in the fountain. There is such a thing as being alone without being lonely. The next morning I surveyed the vast ruins

which attract travellers to Baalbek from every part of the world. Nothing that I saw in Egypt impressed me more. I sent Mahloof back to the hotel that I might survey the ruins undisturbed by the presence of any one. The great temple, and the smaller temple of the sun close beside it, may have been the work of the old Romans, but who laid the foundations of the more ancient structures once rising from them, and who were the engineers who could raise stones of such magnitude and adjust them in their places in the walls? Three of these stones, which lie end to end in the same course, forty feet from the ground, measure respectively sixty-one, sixty-two, and sixty-three feet in length, and thirteen feet in width, and there is another stone in the quarry, near by, (and never removed from it,) which is seventy-one feet long, fourteen feet wide, and thirteen feet thick. Three vast columns in one of the temples and six in the other still tower over the broken arches, capitals, and columns which lie in indescribable confusion around. There are no other ruins so grand, and in their very desolation they are more impressive than any existing structure. The modern Baalbek does not differ in appearance from other Syrian towns, and I will not waste time in speaking of it.

Zah'leh.

The next night I spent at *Zah'leh*, a large town built upon the inner slopes of what looks like a mountain ridge, cleft in twain. The houses rise from the margin of the narrow valley up the inner slopes of the mountains, which form a splendid amphitheatre, on which nearly every building stands out in bold relief. I had a letter of introduction to the Rev. Mr. Dale, the American missionary at *Zah'leh*, and never had a kinder or more cordial reception from any one. He is greatly encouraged in his work, and is cheered by seeing it prosper in his hand. I had a long and deeply interesting conversation with him about missionary work in the East. He tells me that Bible distributors go through the populous villages of Syria with instructions to leave a Bible in every place, not as a gift exactly, but if people will not buy a copy, the colporteur is expected to exchange it for a little produce of some kind, perhaps barley for his horse, for anything, in a word, in the way of barter, in order to enhance the estimation of the purchaser for the book which cost him something. Dr. Dale informs me that the persecution of Protestants in *Zah'leh* which once made mission work difficult and perilous has now ceased. One of the last cases of hostility was that of a man of some influence in the town, who went into the church and cursed the assembled congregation. The man was reported to Rustem Pasha, who had him arrested, his hands tied behind him, and thus led through the town to prison. This taught fanatics a lesson. The influence of the American missions in Syria is seen in every direction. Midhat Pasha himself has a son at the Syrian college—and recently he applied to that institution for two young men for whom he had vacant official positions. Mr. Dale had a service in his new church the night I was with him at *Zah'leh*, and at his invitation I made an address to the native congregation, he interpreting into Arabic, sentence by sentence as I spoke. I may say, in passing, that this kind of speaking is well calculated to teach one brevity and conciseness—inasmuch as an address fifteen minutes long when delivered in English is thirty minutes, or more, by the time it is translated into Arabic. I parted with Mr. Dale with real regret, but will always cherish the most pleasant recollections of him and of my visit to *Zah'leh*.

Damascus.

The next morning I rode over to *Sh'tora*, where I took the Diligence which brought me to Damascus by 6 o'clock in the evening. An hour, in conclusion, what shall I say of this city, so wonderful for its antiquity, existing as it did, before the days of Abraham? Other renowned cities of the olden time which seemed more likely than this to survive the desolations of time have utterly perished, but Damascus still flourishes, and like its own rose, seems annually to renew its life and beauty. It still has a population of more than a hundred thousand, and since the Turkish Sultan, Selim, marched into it nearly three hundred years ago it has been one of the provincial capitals of the Turkish empire. It powerfully affects the imagination to remember the personages who have figured here—the great kings and conquerors who have here held their courts and celebrated their triumphs—Assyrian, Persian, Egyptian, Greek, Roman, and Arabian. From Damascus Benhadad sent forth the hosts which "smote Ijon and Dan, and all Cinneroth and all the land of Naphtali." In the trenches of this city the troops of Tiglath Pileser once shouted as they advanced to storm its walls. Its streets once trembled under the tread of the Macedonians, and in its gardens Alexander inhaled the fragrant air of the morning. Here the fierce Tigranes, reigned until his iron sceptre was broken by the Romans under Metellus. Here Pompey received homage from the ambassadors of the neighboring kingdoms. Here the pleasure loving Omayyades held their gay court. Here the Egyptian Tutunides and Fatimites reigned for more than a century. Before its walls the Crusaders planted their batteries and suffered successive defeats. Here the savage Tartar, Timour, achieved one of his great victories and enriched himself with the spoils of the captured city. (If I trip in any of my historic re-

ferences, your readers will excuse me—I have no opportunity of verifying dates, or of correcting mistakes.)

Ecclesiastically too, Damascus is full of interest to the Christian student.—Elijah and Elisha were probably as familiar with it as with Jerusalem. During the time of the rival kingdoms of Israel and Judah the Damascenes made frequent invasions and profited by the dissensions of those who should have presented a united front to the oppressor. But I need not say that nothing connected with the ecclesiastical history of Damascus so fills the mind and heart of the traveller from our country as he approaches this city, as the visit of St. Paul, and his miraculous conversion—an event second to none in importance in its influence on the Church and the world since the beginning of the Christian era. To-day I have walked from end to end through the street which is still called "Straight." I think it was Mohammed himself of whom it is related that when he first ascended the mountain from which Damascus and all the verdant plain about it bursts on the view, he exclaimed, that he was not worthy to enter such a paradise on earth and then another paradise in the skies. I can well understand how one familiar only with the arid sands of Arabia would be transported by the vision of Damascus with its emerald groves and blooming gardens, gay with innumerable flowers; and I can comprehend too the feeling of Naaman the Syrian, when he cried out, "are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus better than all the waters of Israel?" The Jordan, with its turbid flood, does indeed suffer by contrast with the clear, swift Abana, one of the most beautiful rivers of the East; and as Egypt is the gift of the Nile, so Damascus, in a certain sense, is the product of the Abana, for it is owing to its refreshing and fertilizing waters, divided near the city into six different streams, and thus diffused over the plain on which the city stands, that Damascus owes its chief attractions. Without these life-giving waters Damascus would stand in a plain of yellow sand (provided it could exist at all) instead of rejoicing in its present surroundings of luxuriant groves of richest green, and gardens where flowers of every hue delight the eye and fill the air with their fragrance. One of the favorite pastimes of the inhabitants is to sit in the shade of these gardens on the banks of the Abana smoking the *nargileh* and drinking endless cups of coffee. I made a little experiment in this direction myself, and can testify to the excellence of both of these Damascene refreshments.

My friend, Mahloof, also obtained admittance for me into two or three of the private houses of the city, that I might have the opportunity of studying an oriental interior. Nothing can be in stronger contrast than the bleak, dismal exterior of a private house in Damascus, and the luxury and comfort of all of the arrangements within. The plan of all of these residences is essentially the same—an open court, paved with marble, and always graced with a fountain, and on the four sides of the court the apartments of the family, the largest of which is the reception-room, in which is a divan running around three sides, against the wall—with ottomans and cushions scattered about. The ceilings of these rooms are often very highly ornamented with carvings and the walls covered with various fanciful designs. Coffee is invariably offered to the guest, and usually the *nargileh* or cigarettes. In one of these visits my host surprised me by introducing to me his daughter, a very rare honor in an oriental house—a blooming girl, with roses in her cheeks as well as in her hair, and a sort of a ruby glow in her fine eyes. The women of Damascus, and those of Syria generally, are far superior in face and form to those of Egypt, some of them being exceedingly handsome. But the toilet of an ordinary Mohammedan woman must be a very simple and convenient affair. When she gets up in the morning she has only to put a calico window curtain over her face, a sheet around her shoulders, and then don a pair of loose cotton trousers, tied close at the ankles, and she is dressed for the day.

I wish I had time and room to tell you of the endless variety of the bazaars; of the poetical street cries of the venders of snow-water, fruits, and sweet-meats; of the picturesque costumes of the men of rank; of the Mosques, the greatest of which was once a heathen temple, then a Christian church, and is now a Mohammedan place of worship, but with a Greek inscription on one of the walls, "Thy Kingdom, O Christ, is an everlasting Kingdom; and Thy dominion endureth throughout all generations." (The words "O Christ" being an interpolation). I trust this inscription is prophetic of the time when this great Mosque will again become a Christian church, and when the Ottoman Empire will constitute a part of the dominion over which He will rule, whose right it is to reign.

The only disappointment I had in my visit to Damascus was my failure to see *Ab-el Kader*. I was conducted to his house by *Meshaka*, one of the American consuls, and we expected to find him at home as it was Friday, the Mohammedan Sunday, when he generally comes to town to attend the Mosque, but to my great regret he was at his country residence, where he spends most of his time. I greatly wished to see the man who so nobly interposed at risk of his own life, for the protection of the Christians of

Damascus during the terrible massacre of 1860, when 6,000 Christians were murdered by the fanatical Moslems, and the whole quarter of the city where they lived converted into a heap of ruins. Christians are still regarded with great aversion, it is said, by the Mohammedan population, but though I spent most of my time in their quarter, I had no indication, by word or sign, of their un-friendliness.

I had the pleasure of meeting with the two missionaries of the United Presbyterian Church of Ireland, laboring here, Messrs. Crawford and Phillips, from whom I received kind attentions. They called on me at the Hotel Dimitri, and I visited them at their homes, and heard much from them of the difficulties and discouragements of their work in this city. I would have accepted their invitation and remained with them over Sunday, but for the fact that our passage is engaged on the Austrian Lloyd steamer which sails from Beirut on Monday night, for Cyprus, Rhodes, Smyrna, and Constantinople. Thus ends my delightful visit to *Zah'leh*, Baalbek, and Damascus. M. D. H.

For the Central Presbyterian.

Moody's Success.

Thank God for every word uttered by this, or any other man, by which Christians have been built up in the faith, and lost souls brought to Christ. But wrong conclusions are often drawn when we look upon the wonderful success which seems to accompany Moody's work wherever he goes. Why is it that none of our own ministers are ever found "carrying all before them," as the papers report him to be doing? Nay, we need not look quite so far away from home. In our own State an evangelist held a series of meetings not long since. The reports show great results. Further it is stated that at the hour of public worship, the merchants closed their stores,—all persons forsook their employments and pleasures,—and every day seemed like a Sabbath. It was only a man who preached, and he preached only the same gospel proclaimed by others. Yet his success was wonderful. Now as our own pastors never have such success, we conclude that they have not the power of such men. "Give us Moody! Give us the evangelist, and our souls will be saved!" Is not this the cry with many? We see souls dying in sin. They remain so under all that our pastors can do. But let Moody, or "the evangelist" come, and these will be saved! How is this? What is the matter? Is not the saving work of God only? Is it Moody? Is it the evangelist? Or is it the Holy Spirit witnessing with the gospel, who saves souls? Now read this:—*If Christians would flock to and sustain the gospel preached by their pastors, as they do when Moody or "the evangelist" preaches this same gospel—not here or there—but all over the land the cry would be, "The Lord hath done marvelous things for us." But where is such a thing seen? If one of our pastors holds a series of services, who is confident about it? Who closes his store? Who forsakes his work? Who abandons his pleasure? We will work for Moody, but not for our own pastors! We will work and make sacrifices for "the evangelist," but not for our own pastors! "But see how these men preach. We never heard such preaching." Yes, because the people of God stand by them as by none others. Go and treat your pastors as you treat these men, and they will preach too,—preach as you never heard men preach before! This is the human side. Let this get right, and God's spirit will bless all the means of grace no matter where or by whom used. H. H. H.*

For the Central Presbyterian.

Mission Work.

Messrs. Editors.—I am so fully in accord with your correspondent, "Town Elder," in a former number of your paper, that I feel impelled, most heartily, to second and endorse his views and suggestions. I hold that every organized church, collectively as well as every member individually, is bound by the strongest obligations of religious duty, to perform some missionary work; and to do such work as may be demanded, by the cause of Christ. No Christian can fail to give of his prayers and his means to missionary work, without neglect of one of the most precious privileges of the Christian, and of the plainest duty of a follower of Christ. Our churches do give by contributions in money to the cause of Missions. But ought not every church which has a pastor for his whole time, to do more? It appears to me that there is too much selfishness and too little charity in a church blessed with means of providing for itself regular ministrations of a minister every week, to look with indifference upon the desolations around, and not to feel willing to give of their abundance to the needy and destitute. The admonition given by John is as applicable to a collective, organized church as to individuals—"Whoso hath this world's goods and seeth his brother have need and shutteth up his bowels of compassion, how dwelleth the love of God in him."

To be brief, I think great good would result from the plan of "Town Elder." First, it would enlarge the charity of the favored church, and such giving "would not impoverish." Second, it would break in upon the Sunday Christian, who feels that his religion will not hold out more than a week, without the bracing help of a preacher every Sunday. Third, it

would give Elders an opportunity of supplying the pastor's labor, and show to a congregation that God can be worshipped without a pastor and preacher. Fourth, it would give the bread of life to destitute neighborhoods, and build up churches. Fifth, it would benefit city pastors to rusticate and rough it in the country. FRONTIER ELDER.

For the Central Presbyterian.

Admission into the Church.

The writer has long hoped to see an interchange of views by older ministers on the subject of the admission of members into the Church. Such a discussion might do good. Of course no special rules can be given, but there are some general principles to be observed, which might well be made the subject of frequent review, for the benefit of younger ministers. No more delicate or important matter can come before a church Session than this, viewed in its relation to the Church at large. The spiritual and moral character of the Church is fixed by these acts of the Session. Here it is that "witnesses" and "lights" are chosen and accredited. Surely the utmost caution should be exercised in such acts; and young ministers need to be guarded from mistakes into which they are very liable to fall, and which will seriously affect the spiritual tone and power of their congregations afterwards.

The *Central* recently contained an article signed "Elder," in which a grievous complaint was made of "the tendency among professors of religion to go as near as possible to the boundary line between the Church and the world"; and in your own article in the same number, you say that worldliness in the Church is the main cause of her troubles and the great evil of the day. This is and always has been the truth. A body which is constantly receiving poison into itself must seriously suffer.

Now this worldliness, this spiritual poison, comes in whenever the Session receives unregenerate members. The remedy for the present unsatisfactory state of affairs in many churches, might be found in more faithfulness in the examination of applicants. Of course no degree of caution will keep out the tares altogether; but the complaints so often made in public and private of the conduct of church members, raise the question whether the church of to-day maintains "the strait gate" as set by the Master in His visible kingdom.

"Let every man take heed how he buildeth," is a caution perhaps lost sight of at times. There is a desire to report additions; other denominations resort to "measures" and gather in the fruits hastily. A spirit of competition is developed, and ministers are sometimes tempted to receive members on slight grounds lest they should be carried away and lost to them altogether. Besides the Church is popular now, and many seek admission for other than spiritual ends. There is a call for firmness and fidelity on the part of the Church's guardians. John the Baptist demanded "fruits meet for repentance" before he would receive the Pharisees. He was not satisfied with a few common-place questions, which often afford no real test of the state of heart. So in Jonah iii: 10, it is said that "God saw their works that they turned," etc., before He "repented of the evil," etc. Can the Church afford to dispense with such safeguards?

The Presbyterian Church possesses a glorious heritage in her Confession, Catechisms, and History. She has the truth and the form. What she needs is to embody this truth in living witnesses, "a peculiar people." Charity to her Master, herself, and the world, demand that she should carefully guard her ordinances and name. It may at least be questioned whether her practice is not at times too loose. Regeneration is a great thing and works great changes in the heart and life wherever it is experienced. Our Church's doctrine requires regeneration before admission. Do we in practice, wait and require to see the fruits of this change? And how can a Session best determine when it has been wrought? This is a question on which the writer would like to see some discussion. JULIUS.

THE BIBLE WAGON IN ITALY.—Matteo Prochet, a Protestant clergyman of Genoa, Italy, says of the Bible wagon now in use by the Waldensians, that although the Italian laws do not permit preaching in the streets, yet the colporteur with his wagon, by paying a small fee, has been able to secure a place in the public squares of cities, and this fee has carried with it the right not only to sell the Bibles, but to explain fully what they are, and to read from them as much as he likes. In this manner, he says, one man was able last year to place the Bible in the hands of nearly sixty thousand people who had never heard it before.

A RAY OF LIGHT IN MUCH DARKNESS. In the last of M. Renan's lectures in London there was a passage, the London *Spectator* says, understood to imply his own belief in a personal God: "One thing only is certain; it is that the fatherly smile at certain hours shines across Nature, and assures us that there is an eye looking at us, and a heart which follows us." The *Spectator* considers that as a great advance on the general drift of the *Dialogues et Fragments Philosophiques*, and says that apparently M. Renan is groping his way back to a purer theism.