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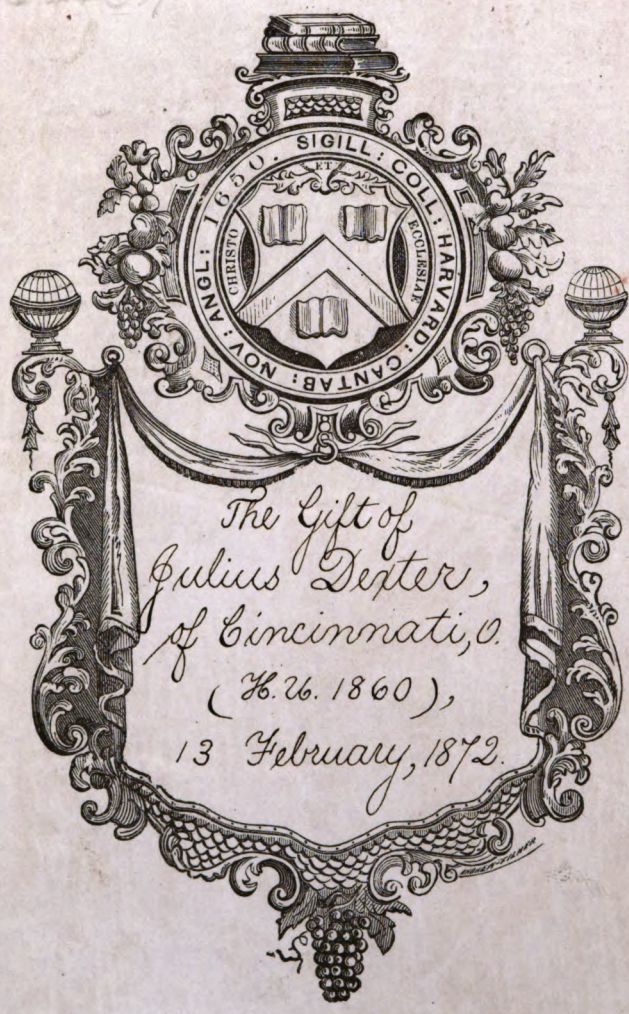
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THE
 LIFE AND SERVICES
 OF
 REV. LYMAN BEECHER, D. D.

AS PRESIDENT AND PROFESSOR OF THEOLOGY IN LANE SEMINARY.

A COMMEMORATIVE DISCOURSE,
 DELIVERED AT THE ANNIVERSARY,
 MAY 7th, 1863.

BY

Diarca
 REV. D. HOWE ALLEN, D. D.

PROFESSOR OF SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY.



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COMMEMORATIVE ADDRESS.

THE request that I should deliver a discourse on this occasion, commemorative of the services of the late President of this Seminary, Rev. Dr. Beecher, suggests as a reason why this service should devolve upon me, the fact that for several years I was associated with him in this institution. For the same reason, I presume it is expected that this discourse should be confined chiefly to his connection with the Seminary and his labors in the West. The admirable discourse delivered at his funeral in Brooklyn, New York, and the numerous sketches which have appeared in the Eastern papers, leave little to be desired in this form in respect to his early life and his public labors, until his removal from Boston. It is understood that a fuller memoir will soon be published, which shall give his history in permanent form.

But all these notices, so far as they have met my eye, have passed over very briefly the period of his public labor devoted to the West—a period of nearly twenty years duration—as if it were of comparatively little importance.

The presumption is that those who have written and spoken of Dr. Beecher, at the East, knew but little of the magnitude and importance of his Western work, and can not appreciate the extent of his influence here, both in the pulpit and the Theological Chair.

I can not hope to do more in this discourse than to present a brief history of his connection with the Seminary, and of his work here; and to suggest some considerations bearing upon a just estimate of the extent and value of this portion of his public services.

Lyman Beecher was born at New Haven, Conn., on the 12th of October, 1775, and died on the 10th of January, 1863, in the eighty-eighth year of his age.

Left motherless from his birth, and committed, a child of only three and a half pounds weight, to the care of a maternal aunt,

residing at Guilford, Conn., he was brought up under her tender care, till he became a stout, hardy, farmer's boy. But his impetuous nature demanded a more earnest life. When about sixteen years of age he began his preparations for college, and at twenty-two graduated under President Dwight. After one year of theological study under the tuition of his revered President, he was licensed to preach the Gospel; and a year later, (1799,) when twenty-four years of age, was installed pastor of the church of East Hampton, Long Island. Here he rose steadily and surely to prominence and distinction. After a ministry of eleven years, he was called to Litchfield, Conn., then distinguished for its excellent Law School. This pastorate, which he called the most laborious part of his life, continued for sixteen years.

From Litchfield he removed to Boston in 1825, where he spent six years of wonderfully successful labor—"the most active and intensely interesting period of [his] life."

With this brief outline of his early and middle life, covering just about two-thirds of the whole, I pass to speak more fully of the remaining third, spent chiefly in this community.

Dr. Beecher was elected to the office of President and Professor of Theology in this Seminary on the 22d of October, 1830—a most critical period in the history of its establishment.

The charter had been obtained in the winter of 1829. A donation of sixty acres of land, furnishing this admirable location, had been secured, one condition of the title being that a theological institution should be established and maintained upon it. Five or six thousand dollars had been received, including \$4,000 from the gentleman whose name it bears.

Agents had been sent East and South to collect funds, and had returned discouraged. The first Professor in the Theological Department had been appointed, and about a year before had entered upon his duties. Three or four students were on the ground, but there were no conveniences for their accommodation. In the spring of 1830 the Professor was sent to the East to obtain funds. He labored several months without any success, and early in September resigned his office and abandoned the enterprise.

On the receipt of this intelligence, a special meeting of the Board was called to consider what must be done. That was a solemn and memorable meeting. The institution existed only in name—without Professors, without students, without funds or

buildings—and their efforts to obtain funds have proved a failure, the prospect was dark enough to stagger the strongest faith. The foundations of one building were laid, but the means of completing it were not at command, and it seemed very doubtful whether the donation of land must not be given up, and the whole enterprise be abandoned.

The record of that meeting, held September 30th, 1830, is brief: "Much doubt rested on the minds of some," says the Secretary; "the meeting was solemn, and after much deliberation and consultation, it was resolved that one more effort be made to raise funds at the East."

From a full report of the financial operations of the Seminary, made some six years after, we are permitted to obtain a fuller acquaintance with that interesting meeting:

"The President of the Board (Dr. Wilson) said: 'I never had great confidence in obtaining aid from Eastern men and Eastern funds. We have made the experiment, and we have seen the result. We must now look to the West for Professors and funds; and if we cannot make a great institution, as we hoped, we must make a small one.' As little confidence, however, was felt by the members, generally, in obtaining aid from the West, as the Chairman had expressed in relation to the East. A member of the Board said: 'I am an Eastern man; I know the hearts of Eastern Christians; I know they will give us money, if we make a special appeal to them. We must have Dr. Beecher or Dr. McAuley, and the means for his support will not be wanting.' The Committee said, 'If the brother who has so much confidence in the East will go, we will send him, and make one more effort.' Dr. Wilson said 'Amen.'"

That brother, Rev. F. Y. Vail, consented to undertake the important mission. He hastened to the East, and conferred with prominent men in Philadelphia, New York and Boston, in respect to the man to fill the office of Professor of Theology in the Seminary. With one voice they directed him to Dr. Lyman Beecher, of Boston. If he could be induced to go, public confidence would at once be secured, and funds and students would immediately begin to flow into the institution.

The subject was next laid before Dr. Beecher, in connection with some of his best advisers, especially his ever loved and trusted friends, Drs. Cornelius and Wisner. He had then been in Boston

but about four years and a half, and was at the very height of his popularity and power in that city. Those had been years of almost constant revival of religion in his congregation and in connection with his labors in the vicinity. His head and heart were full, and all his power was tasked to the utmost in a kind of labor which he loved intensely.

Most men would have said at once, "I ought not to leave; I can not leave." But not so he. He entered into the subject with all his characteristic ardor. The idea of having so direct and important a part in forming the character of the ministry of this vast Western world, took profound possession of his soul. A field of wider and more permanent usefulness was opened before him, than the pastorship of any single church could furnish.

He was constitutionally fitted to grasp the great idea and, with prophetic vision, to see the coming magnitude and power of these Western States, and feel their claim upon the strong men of the East as very few men could. The subject was not new to him. He had prayed for the West, and pleaded for the West, long before he had thought of coming here himself.

After nearly all present had given their opinions, expressing the strong conviction that, notwithstanding the great loss to Boston, God now called him to the West, Dr. Beecher was called upon to express his own convictions. His utterance was almost choked by the intensity of his emotions, but at length he spoke substantially thus:

"Brethren, I have long desired the privilege of training young men for the ministry, and have hoped that God had given me some fitness for such a work; but the way has never been opened till now. Now it is all plain as *noontday*. What a glorious work to train ambassadors for Christ for the *Great West!* Some of you have said that Boston would suffer by my removal. Why, brethren, if Boston should *sink*, it would not be so great a calamity as to have this grand enterprise fail. Brethren, I ought to go—I must go!"

Arthur Tappan, Esq., immediately became responsible for the salary of Dr. Beecher, by subscribing \$20,000, to be paid at his decease, and the interest semi-annually, on condition that Dr. Beecher should receive and accept the appointment of President and Theological Professor, and also, that two other Professorships be secured at the East, and from \$10,000 to \$20,000 at the West

for buildings. The Board were immediately informed of these facts, and on the receipt of the grateful intelligence assembled for the special purpose October 22d, 1830, and unanimously elected Dr. Beecher, President and Professor of Theology. The following extract, from the letter of the Corresponding Secretary, Dr. James Warren, in which he communicated to the agent the action of the Board, will show the state of feeling at that time: "Your success was entirely unexpected, and it gave a thrill to the soul of every member of the Board, and others whom I have seen, are rejoicing with tears in their eyes. Is it possible, say they, that this Western world is to be blessed with the presence of Dr. Beecher? And we give thanks to the Lord that he has made you the honored instrument of conferring so great a blessing upon us. The resolution was passed with *reverential silence*, not a word was spoken but 'Aye.'"

Dr. Beecher was confident that he could make his people view the subject as he did, so that they would bid him God speed. But he had not estimated, perhaps till then he had not known, how strong were the ties and obligations which bound him to his people. Boston had no idea of *sinking*, nor of consenting that one of her pillars should be removed, or that any of her financial transactions should be put in peril.

One Sabbath morning, near the beginning of that year, (1830,) the Hanover Street Congregation had gathered in a strange place, and their pastor's text was, "Our holy and our beautiful house is burned up with fire, and all our pleasant things are laid waste." In consequence of this event, financial obligations had been incurred for the erection of a new house of worship, which could not be disregarded.

Early in the year 1831, solicitude began to be felt lest Dr. Beecher might not obtain the consent of his people to his leaving them, and Dr. Wilson, Rev. Messrs. Vail and Gallaher were appointed a committee to correspond with them on the subject.

The following extract from the letter of this committee will show how the very existence of the institution was regarded as being identified with Dr. Beecher's acceptance.

After speaking of Dr. Beecher's qualifications for the work to which he was invited, and the influence upon the cause of Christ, East and West, of his accepting, the committee go on to say: "The last reason we shall mention for Dr. Beecher's connection with our

institution is, that the securing of funds pledged on this condition, and the consequent *existence* and prosperity of the institution depend upon it. Three Professorships, amounting in all to \$50,000 are nearly secured, on condition that Dr. Beecher becomes our Professor, and that we, at the West, raise from \$10,000 to \$20,000 more for buildings. These funds, thus liberally offered to us, are to be given on account of the special confidence that the donors place in Dr. B. to preside over and give character and success to our Seminary. Shall it be then the painful calamity of the West, and of the Church generally, that some \$60,000 or \$70,000, which would place our institution on a high and permanent basis, and bless our increasing and perishing millions, must be lost, and our now brightening prospects be blasted for want of the man with whom the friends of Zion and of the West have identified their benefactions? Should we fail of securing Dr. Beecher and the funds connected with him, *we see not how our institution can be sustained*, as extensive funds are indispensable, and can not possibly be obtained here among our infant churches."

In March following, Dr. B. wrote to the Board a full statement of the case from which it appeared almost certain that he must decline the appointment.*

In this emergency a special agent was sent to Boston to lay the case anew before him and his people, and to secure, if possible, his final acceptance.

Several successive days were spent in consultation with him and his best advisers. It seemed to them all that no time could be more unpropitious for his leaving, not only on account of the condition of his own church, now destitute of a house of worship, but on account of the critical condition of the cause of Evangelical truth in Boston, and the rising controversies among orthodox men themselves in Massachusetts and Connecticut.

But in spite of all obstacles, Dr. Beecher's earnest desire, amounting almost to a passion, to take part in giving shape to the theology and education of the West, and the claims of the Seminary whose very existence seemed to be vibrating in the scale, induced at length a decision—that while he could not possibly leave at that time, he might, perhaps, in one or two years, though no pledge to that effect could be given. In this confidence the Board rested till the following year.

* See the letter in the Appendix.

On the 23d of January, 1832, his appointment was renewed. In April he visited Cincinnati to make a personal examination of the condition and prospects of the Seminary; and in July following, having previously renewed his connection with the Presbyterian Church, signified his acceptance of the appointment. In November he moved to Cincinnati, and on the 26th of December, 1832, was inducted into his office, and entered upon its duties. In the spring following, he was installed the pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church of Cincinnati.

The prospects of the institution were then in the highest degree encouraging. The theory that manual labor could be systematically united with study, so as not only to promote health, but to diminish largely the expenses of an education, was just then exceedingly popular.

The entire expenses of a student in the Theological Department were estimated at \$60 per annum, and in the Literary Department at \$75; and the hope was confidently cherished that a large part of these sums would be paid by manual labor. These causes, together with the high reputation of Dr. Beecher, drew together, at once, more than a hundred young men, of whom more than seventy entered the Theological classes. This prosperity, however, was not of long continuance. Before one year had passed, the Board had begun to learn the lesson, which all Manual Labor Institutions learned sooner or later, that while the system was a pecuniary gain to the *student*, it was a pretty heavy pecuniary loss to the institution.

The year following occurred what is known in the history of the Seminary as "the Abolition outbreak," which resulted in the withdrawal of about seventy students from the Seminary, and was followed by the abandonment of the Literary Department. During the very unpleasant excitement which terminated in this outbreak, Dr. Beecher's course was such as to secure the strong personal attachment of all the students. Even those who thought themselves called upon to leave for conscience's sake, loved him as a father, and it was always afterward his confident opinion that if he could have been here during the summer vacation, when the direct collision between the students and the Board of Trustees occurred, he could so have controlled the fiery spirits of those ardent young men, as to prevent the sad result.

This blow upon the prosperity of the institution discouraged

many of its best friends. From that time it was obliged to bear up under a load of prejudice as being a pro-slavery institution, which severely tested its strength and stability. Dr. Beecher's hopefulness and energy seemed to rise with the difficulties, and when the lowest stage of depression had been reached, from 1836-40, the graduating classes for three or four years averaging only five, and the confidence of the most hopeful except himself had failed, he threw himself into the breach, turned the tide, and again *saved the Seminary*. He visited the young colleges of the West, just then beginning to graduate classes, and then hastened to the East on the same errand. In the Colleges and even in the Theological Seminaries, he plead for the West with all his power, without any hesitation because of any seeming want of personal delicacy in the matter, exhibiting the great advantage to men who expect to labor in the West, of pursuing their theological studies here. The consequence was, that the next class numbered twelve, and the class following thirty-five.

But he was then drawing near to his three score years and ten, and the signs of failure, both intellectual and physical, began to appear in the lecture-room as well as in the pulpit. I well remember an appointment to meet him at the ordination of one of his students in Athens County in 1839—an appointment which he failed to fulfill. I learned afterward that the steamboat reached within about sixty miles of the place, the night before the appointment, and on account of low water could go no further.

On inquiring about the matter, when next I met him—"Oh," said he, "it was the first time I ever failed to reach an appointment for such a cause in my life. If I had been five years younger, I would have hired a horse, and by riding all night, I could have got there in time. But I am a little too old for that now, and so I had to come back—but I felt as mean as a dog looks that has been stealing sheep."

A year or two later, however, he actually made very much such a night's ride, on the way to preach the ordination sermon of his son Charles, at Fort Wayne, Ind., through the swamps and prairies from Piqua to that place.

He continued to discharge the duties of both Pastor and Professor till 1843, and of those of his Professorship till 1850, when he resigned his office, at the age of seventy-five. From that time to the day of his death, his connection with the Seminary was

merely nominal, the Board, as an expression of their respect, having requested him to retain the office of President.

Their action on the occasion was as follows :

“The Board having learned from the Report of the Executive Committee, that on yesterday, Dr. Beecher resigned the office of Professor of Theology in the Seminary, unanimously adopted the following resolutions: 1. *Resolved*, That while the Board accept the resignation which the infirmities of advanced age have induced him to present, they desire to express to Dr. Beecher the high esteem and affection which they entertain towards him, their sense of the great faithfulness and ability with which, since the foundation of this institution, he has labored for its prosperity; their appreciation of his Christian self-denial and missionary zeal, in leaving the field of his earliest labors for this western world, and the rich blessing which his labors, under God, have conferred upon this country in aiding to send forth hundreds of young men in the ministry of the cross. They are free also to express the opinion that without his generous co-operation they do not believe this School of the Prophets could have been established on its present broad and liberal basis.

“2. *Resolved*, That, while the Board are thus willing to relieve him from the great responsibility of sustaining the great burden of theological instruction, they desire to secure to the Seminary such assistance as he may feel himself able to render, and for that purpose as well as to evince their gratitude for his past labors, they do appoint him *Emeritus Professor of Theology*, and request him to retain the Presidency of the Institution.

“3. *Resolved*, That the Executive Committee be directed, should Dr. Beecher accept this appointment, to make such arrangements with him, in respect to the service he may still be able to render to the Seminary, and the provision for his support as will be mutually satisfactory.”

Dr. Beecher's relations to the Second Presbyterian Church, to which he ministered as pastor for ten years, and to the city, were pleasant to the end. Many of that congregation will cherish his memory with grateful affection while they live. Several revivals of considerable power attended his preaching; but it was impossible for him to give himself to his work as pastor with that undivided energy which had been so richly blessed in Boston, nor was there here the same preparation for revivals of great power, in the

previous training and habits of the people, as in the Churches he so much loved in the East. His congregations, however, were always large, and visitors from every part of the land, who passed a Sabbath in our city, were pretty sure to be found among his hearers.

The results of these ten years of preaching, in clear and intelligent views of the doctrines of the gospel, as well as in the number of souls converted to God in the city and the region, compare, however, not unfavorably with any other period of his life.

A revival of great power attended his labors in Oxford, in connection with the Miami University, in which several who were afterward his students in the Seminary were brought to Christ. His preaching was also blest of God to the conversion of souls, in many other churches in all the region about us in this State and in Indiana.

When it is remembered that the special field of his labor, that which brought him to the West, was the Seminary; that here was the sphere of his daily work, itself enough and more than enough to fill the heart and the time of any man, it will seem marvellous that he could have done so much besides.

His relations to the Presbyterian Church at large can not be presented without referring to his famous trial for heresy, which terminated in the year 1835.

When he came to the West, he had been preaching more than thirty years, the first ten of them in the Presbyterian Church. He had been called with great unanimity to Philadelphia, and urged by the Princeton Professors to accept the call; and probably his views and his mode of preaching were as well known as those of any prominent preacher in the land.

He had been called to this Seminary by the unanimous voice, not only of the Trustees, but of a large portion of the Presbyterian ministry, East and West. His prosecutor, Rev. Dr. Wilson, was the President of the Board, and was Chairman of the committee, by whom a letter was sent him, of which an extract has already been read, urging him in the strongest terms to accept the call.

Well might he say, as he did say in the beginning of his defense, that at his time of life, he did not expect to be called upon to defend his orthodoxy. But so it was. And in what I say of the matter, I wish to impute no wrong motives to any one. A new zeal for the soundness of the faith of the Presbyterian Church

had been awakened by the rapid accession of men accustomed to attach somewhat different ideas to the terms of the Calvinistic creeds, from those which many of the fathers of the Church had given. Substantially the same difference existed, which about a century before had sundered the Presbyterian Church into two fragments, known as the New Lights and the Old Sides. The terms Old School and New School were now ranging the members of the same Church into two parties, in defense of somewhat different views of the proper way to explain some of the prominent doctrines of their common Confession of Faith, and differing also in their judgment and preferences as to the best way of conducting missionary operations.

Leading Old School men seem to have thought it their duty to arrest the further spread of these views of theology, by pronouncing upon them, in the person of some of their ablest defenders, the sentence of the several ecclesiastical courts.

Dr. Wilson was a representative man in the West, on the one side, and Dr. Beecher on the other. And while the Eastern forces were attempting to dislodge the youthful commander from his high position in the old first Church of Philadelphia, Dr. Wilson, old Roman as he was, was not the man to shrink from grappling with the new champion who had recently come, with all his Eastern glories about him, to fight his last battles in the West.

They both loved the great scheme of gospel truth with equal fervency, and defended it with like ability. They each believed firmly that their views of the philosophy of these truths were not only the true views, but that they were in accordance with the standards of the Reformation, and such as in all their experience God had blessed in the conversion of souls.

They have met, we can not doubt, in that world of eternal light into which doubt and darkness never entered, and as they walk about the heavenly Zion, they review the past with perhaps equal amazement at their mutual misunderstandings of each other.

As early as January, 1833, Dr. Wilson had endeavored to induce the Presbytery to take up charges against Dr. B., on the ground of common fame. But the Presbytery denied the existence of such common fame. At the next meeting of Presbytery in April, they were called upon to appoint a committee to examine some of Dr. B.'s sermons, and report whether or not they contained sentiments contrary to the teachings of our Confession of Faith.

The Presbytery declined to do this, and an appeal was made to the Synod. The Synod decided that the Presbytery could not be compelled to take up charges unless there was a responsible prosecutor. From this decision an appeal was taken to the General Assembly. This appeal was cast out by the Judicial Committee, on the ground that Dr. Wilson was not one of the original parties.

Dr. Wilson then returned to the Presbytery, bringing charges in his own name, and thereby making it imperative upon them to investigate these charges.

Omitting details, I remark, in passing—the charges were presented under six heads:

I. Propagating doctrines contrary to the Word of God and the standards of the Presbyterian Church on the subject of the depraved nature of man.

II. On the subject of total depravity and the work of the Holy Spirit in effectual calling.

III. On the subject of perfection.

IV. The sin of slander—in belying the whole Church of God—by teaching that his doctrines had been those of the Church in all ages.

V. The crime of *preaching* these doctrines in the Second Presbyterian Church.

VI. Hypocrisy—either in entering the Presbyterian Church without adopting her standards, or if he did adopt them, in doing so when he disbelieves them on some of the most important points.

[See the specifications in full in Dr. Beecher's Works, vol. 3d. N. Y. Observer, June, 1835. Cin. Journal, July 31, 1835.]

The prosecutor supported the charges by a long and able speech. He was no trifling adversary. He held his opinions intelligently and fearlessly, and was able to present them clearly and strongly.

Dr. Beecher followed in his own defense, and occupied a considerable portion of three days. It was by far the fullest and ablest theological discussion of his whole life.

His defense of the distinction between natural and moral ability, and of the voluntary nature of sin, was masterly and convincing, and his argument as expanded in his views of theology, will be a text-book on that subject for ages.

The Presbytery pronounced the charges not sustained, by a vote of 23 to 12.

Dr. Wilson appealed to the Synod. The majority of the members of the Presbytery were in theological sympathy with Dr. Beecher, but the majority of the Synod were on the other side in the controversies. The case came before the Synod at Dayton in October of the same year, and was argued with no less power and interest than before the Presbytery.

The Synod, by a very large majority, came to the following decision:

Resolved, That the appeal be sustained,

1st. Because the Synod see nothing in the conduct of Dr. Wilson, in preferring and prosecuting charges against Dr. Beecher, which ought to infer censure.

2d. Because although the charges of slander and hypocrisy are not proved, and although Synod see nothing in his views, as explained by himself, to justify any suspicion of unsoundness in the faith, yet on the subject of the depraved nature of man, and of total depravity, and the work of the Holy Spirit in effectual calling, and the subject of ability, they are of opinion that Dr. Beecher has indulged a disposition to philosophise, instead of exhibiting in simplicity and plainness, the doctrines as taught in the Scriptures, and has employed terms and phrases and modes of illustration, calculated to *convey ideas* inconsistent with the Word of God and our Confession of Faith; and that he ought to be, and hereby is admonished to be more guarded in future.

The parties were called into court. Dr. Beecher declared his acquiescence in their decision, and his purpose to act accordingly.

The Synod expressed by resolution their satisfaction with this termination, and requested him to have published at an early day a concise statement of the argument and design of his sermon on native depravity, and of his views of total depravity, original sin and regeneration, agreeably to his declarations and explanations made before Synod. In compliance with this request, his *Views of Theology* were published.

When the motion requesting such a publication was made, a member of the Synod, with a voice choking with emotion, moved to amend by substituting the word "*required*" for the word "*requested*." The father who drew the resolution, Rev. Dr. Carothers, then, and while he lived an Old School man, but a man of nobility of soul above all sectarianism, replied in the words of the apostle, "*Rebuke not an Elder, but entreat him as a father.*"

The prosecutor, however, believing, as he said, that justice was not done, and the demands of truth not satisfied, carried the case by appeal to the General Assembly, which met at Pittsburg in the following spring.

But a short time before the case was to come to trial, Dr. Wilson asked leave to withdraw the appeal. He was induced to do so by the urgent requests of many members of Assembly, with whom he had been accustomed to act—requests presented before the Assembly met.

But it seems that the preaching of Dr. Beecher, on the first Sabbath after the Assembly convened, in the presence of a large number of its members, gave special force to these requests. One who was present writes: "The sermon of Dr. Beecher, in Dr. Heron's church, on the personality and agency of the Holy Spirit, was among the grandest the Doctor ever delivered. Though the house was filled to overflowing, you might have heard a pin fall during much of the sermon; and to those who heard it, it was evidence 'strong as proof from Holy Writ,' that on that subject at least, the Doctor was sound to the core."

Dr. Wilson himself, in giving the reasons which had induced him to withdraw the appeal, said, "And what did I hear on Monday? I heard from several brethren that Dr. Beecher had preached on Sabbath two powerful orthodox sermons, by which he had cut up New-Schoolism by the roots;" and though his own mind was unchanged, the request of brethren so numerous, so respectable, carried with it almost the force of a command.

Thus ended this protracted trial; but the agitation, of which it was a part, went on unchecked, till it rent the Presbyterian Church into two fragments, which now for more than a quarter of a century have maintained a separate organization, though with the same name and the same constitution and charter.

The trial had, at least, this effect at the time, viz: that men holding the same Confession of Faith should not be condemned for heresy in the Presbyterian Church, because of different philosophical explanation of the terms of that Confession. When it shall appear that the same principle is recognized as valid in both branches of that Church, one obstacle to a *re-union* will be removed.

It remains that I speak of Dr. B. as a teacher of Theology.

About the year 1835, several students of Andover Theological

Seminary thought seriously of finishing their Theological studies at Lane. They inquired therefore of an Alumnus of Andover, then residing in Cincinnati, how the advantages of the two institutions would compare. The answer in respect to the Professors of Theology was substantially this. Under Dr. Woods, you will have a more systematic course of Theology and get more of it into your Note Books than you will here. Under Dr. Beecher, with a good deal less of system, you will get a good deal more into your heads and you can never get it out again.

This answer expresses pretty much all that need be said in regard to Dr. Beecher as a Theological teacher, as judged by the results of his teaching. It need not be claimed that he was specially *systematic* in his instructions. The whole system of revealed truth stood before his own mind in its due proportions, and his peculiar modes of conception and expression pertained alike to the whole of it, so that whatever the topic he discussed, he was always consistent with himself.

But at the same time some truths of the system had entered so much more deeply than others into his own religious experience and into the experience of his pastoral life; and he drew his lectures so largely from his heart, rather than his head, that he could hardly fail to give those truths such an overwhelming importance that his pupils would not be likely to discover the majestic temple of truth with all its parts fitly framed together and compacted by that which *every joint* supplieth. Depravity, Free Agency, Moral Government, Atonement, would be likely to be regarded as four massive rocks, intended for corner stones or buttresses, not yet adjusted to their places.

A full compensation, and perhaps more than a compensation, for any lack of system in his teaching, was found in his power of impressing himself so strongly upon his pupils, that the truths he discussed became living truths, truths to be loved, and lived and preached, "lively stones," in God's spiritual house, which would illumine and animate every thing they could touch, and not bones of a skeleton to be fastened together with wires, and hung up to show how complete a theological system can be, and how cold it can be too.

Let us inquire for a few moments into some of the elements and sciences of this power.

The *brilliancy of his intellect*, readily suggests itself as the first of these elements. The common consent of all who ever heard him in his best days, has recognized in him the evidences of remarkable intellectual power. His was not a massive intellect like Edward's or Chalmer's or Webster's—nor broad and comprehensive, like Dwight's. It was not stored with all knowledge like Hamilton's, nor was it disciplined by the habits of careful and patient study. Dr. Beecher was not a student of books. He read history, and he read men. He *studied* only his Bible, and that not at all by Grammars and Lexicons, and not much by Commentaries. He studied it rather in its own light, as a self-interpreting book, in the light also of his own experience and observation of men, as a book made for man, not man for the book.

His conclusions were not so much the result of a careful examination of all sides and all views of a subject, as the convictions of his own strong common sense. They were not so much reasoned out as seen—not so much logical as intuitive. When he grasped a principle, especially a principle in the government of God, its relation to the whole sphere of theology flashed through his mind with the brightness of noon day, and no technical or logical difficulties could ever convince him that he was mistaken. In the defense of such principles, and of their wide and momentous bearing, was revealed the type of his intellectual power. It was brilliant, splendid, sublime, pouring out the fullness of its own light upon his hearers, and burning the thoughts into their very souls.

Besides the Bible, I apprehend there was no book with which he was so familiar as Butler's Analogy, and no portion of his lectures is more worthy of being given to the world than his lectures on Butler. They were generally given at the beginning of his course, and impressed the student at the outset with the idea that he was in safe and strong hands.

I have said he read history. He lived in times which made no small amount of the most stirring history of modern days. Born at the opening of the American Revolution, in the ardor of early life during the last war with Great Britain, one of his cast of mind could not fail to be in full sympathy with the movement of nations toward universal liberty, of which De Tocqueville, justly remarks that it has all the characteristics of a divine decree, which human

energies are alike impotent to advance or retard. Dr. Beecher's early life, and the first years of his pastoral life, were spent near the sea shore. This fact, in connection with the times in which he lived, gave a cast to a good deal of his figurative language. The remark was a common one, that he never preached a sermon without getting into a battle or out to sea. But he seldom used complete figures. His rapid and brilliant mental movement spurned them. *Metaphors* were like the atmosphere he breathed, and these were drawn very largely from common life, so that every one could see and feel their force.

Such an intellect, clothing its ideas with such language, could not fail to make an impression on the minds of young men, which they would never lose. It inspired them with zeal to investigate, and awakened new and valuable trains of thought. It clothed the driest subjects with life and interest.

I recollect a discussion in Presbytery on the profound question, whether slaveholding is a *sin per se*, the whole tone of which showed plainly enough that none on either side had been accustomed to bring the question to the test of any *principle*, metaphysical or practical.

Dr. Beecher rose, and taking for his starting point, the principle that whatever tends necessarily to undermine God's institutions is in itself wrong, in a speech of about half an hour, laid bare the tendencies of slavery, as antagonistic to all the principles of the divine government, with a clearness and force that left nothing more to be said on the subject.

On a visit to the north-west about the year 1845, he was called to attend a missionary meeting, in which a missionary from among the North American Indians, gave an account of his labors. It was a very prosy, dull narrative. The speaker seemed to have forgotten, if he had ever known, how to use the English language. Dr. Beecher followed, and beginning with Henry Obookiah, he traced the history of Foreign Missions, and unfolded its destined results, in a way that held the audience spell bound for an hour or more. "Thank God," said a Professor in one of the Western Colleges, "our mother tongue is not yet a dead language."

A second element of his power lay in his intense sympathy with the truths of the gospel—a sympathy which was the result not

alone of his piety, but of his experience of their power in his own preaching.

His theology was just what he had preached for thirty years. It was the theology which God had made mighty in his hands in pulling down the strongholds of Satan. It was the theology that Nettleton preached in those wonderful revivals in which so much of his life was spent. Dr. Beecher came directly from some of the most glorious revival scenes of his life; and whenever he touched upon those great themes on which he had poured forth his soul in the pulpits of Litchfield and Boston, and which he had learned to love so much in revivals, the fountains of emotion overflowed anew, and he lectured as he preached, with the heart as well as with the head.

One of his pupils writes: "One of the most important benefits he conferred upon his pupils was his provoking them to think not on abstract themes in general, but on those difficulties in theology and piety which are practical in all thoughtful minds. He seemed to have been so long engaged in taking away from people their refuges of lies, and leading souls to Christ; also in directing truly converted people in their religious embarrassments, that this fact imparted its character to his lectures. To such an extent was this true, that I was wont to regard the practical religiousness of his class-room performances as of the nature of a direct appeal to my own religious wants. There were episodes in his driest lectures, when he would chase down some practical difficulty which had haunted me for years in connection with the higher and more abstruse doctrines of religion which have exerted a great influence on my religious experience and preaching."

When he had given his definitions in the Lecture Room, laid down his premises and spread out his work before him, he would often raise his spectacles, straighten up his body, and *set fire* to that logic, verifying emphatically his own definition of eloquence.

That fire was drawn from his heart—not from his intellect alone. It was not the inspiration of genius, but the out-breaking of strong conceptions of the truth, and of that living sympathy with it, which the spirit of God had wrought in his soul.

I was present at one of his lectures in which, as nearly as I now recollect, he was examining the objections against the doctrine of free agency. He had compared the tremendous perils and fearful responsibilities of such an endowment on the one hand, with the

glorious privileges and possibilities which it involved on the other, when, suddenly snatching off his spectacles, he drew a picture of an assembly of all God's intelligent universe summoned into a *quasi* state of existence, in which they should be capable of understanding the reasons for and against being created, clothed with the responsibility of free agency, and permitted to decide the question for themselves. Then leaping from his chair, and walking back and forth upon the platform, he poured out, in a few short pithy sentences, the peril of falling and the damnation of hell on the one side, and the blessedness of standing and the possibility of restoration by divine love, and the highs of immortal glory to be gained on the other; and then, as if standing in the place of the Creator himself, and putting the question to vote, shall I create or not create? he made the shout go up as the voice of ten thousand times ten thousand, *create! create!*

Now whether, by a cool calculation of logical probabilities, we should have been brought to say yea or nay on such a question, one thing is certain, no man who heard that lecture could help thanking God that He had decided it for him by making him a free agent, and a fit subject of just that government of law and grace which God is administering over our world.

Along with this intense love of the truths of the gospel system was his enthusiastic delight in preaching. A student could hardly fail to catch from him some measure of apostolic earnestness in doing good; and probably no one impress of himself was more distinctly and deeply made on the whole life of his students than this, the glorious privilege of living to save souls.

A characteristic instance occurred in the summer vacation of 1842. We had both been absent from home nearly a month, preaching in protracted meetings. On his return he found a letter from one of the Elders of his son's church in Indianapolis, informing him that a revival had begun in other churches of the city and was extending to theirs; but their Pastor was absent at the East, and therefore the Church was very anxious he should come and preach for them a few weeks. Without noticing the date of the letter, then nearly a month old, he immediately wrote me to meet him at Indianapolis, and the next day took stage for that place.

When we met there we found the interest had subsided and no special labors were expected. "Well," said he, "Brother A. it is harder to stop the ebb tide and roll it back, than to roll it in at

first, but by God's help it can be done. God has sent us here for some good purpose. There are souls here to be saved. Let us go to work." Some precious souls will bless God forever for the three weeks labor which followed.

This, "his ruling purpose," writes one, "never left him. Since his mental faculties have been clouded, a minister, to try his condition, said to him in presence of several friends, 'Dr. Beecher, you know a great deal; tell us what is the greatest of all things?' For an instant the cloud was rent, and a gleam of light shot forth in the reply, '*It is not theology, it is not controversy, but it is to save souls,*' and then the deep shadow came over him again."

The students went forth from under this electric power over them, determined, with the help of God to be revival preachers—to make their ministry tell on the salvation of men; and many a congregation has had occasion to bless God that such an impress was thus made upon this institution; that from its birth it was thus stamped and set apart as a Seminary for furnishing the church with revival preachers. May it never lose its first impress, never leave "its first love." *Action—work—work* in saving souls, was Dr. B.'s highest joy and glory; and he looked forward with joyful confidence to an eternity of more intense and unwearied action in the service of the same Master.

Who of his students has not heard him say that *action*, vigorous, untiring action, is the highest pleasure of mind; just such action as we ought to expect to have in heaven. "I should hardly want to go to heaven," he would exclaim, "to sit forever by purling streams and sing psalm tunes."

Indeed, he never seemed quite ready to give up his work and depart. There was always some crisis just ahead, in Church or State, in the labor of which he wished to share, and the issue of which he wished to see, before he could say, "Now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace." And if God had not shut up his faculties, so that he could not enter into the spirit of this war, he would have thought that this was no time to die.

He had no patience with the millenarian notion of the personal reign of Christ on earth. He believed, most firmly and exultingly, that the Scriptures clearly teach only a spiritual reign of the great Head of the Church; that the world is to be converted to God, and the true millenium brought in through just such means and agencies as have been employed hitherto; and that it would be

the glorious privilege of ministers of the gospel, in all ages, to be employed by the Spirit of God in saving souls.

“No, no,” he would exclaim to the young men, “Christ has not given up his contest with the devil, and he hasn’t changed his tactics. He has no intention of giving up the gospel and taking the sword instead. Think you he will ever retreat from the front, go round to the back door, seize the devil, and put him in chains, kill off the wicked, raise the saints, and have a jubilee? Or, as Father Mills would say, “whom he was fond of quoting: ‘that he will stretch his teams, as he has done, all the way from Dan to Barsheba, and then back out?’ No; to the end as now, by the foolishness of preaching, he will save them that believe.”

Another element of his power was derived from his personal character. His students not only admired him as a man of splendid intellectual endowments, not only were they aroused and excited by his vivid and earnest presentations of the truth, and stimulated by his example, but they loved him as a father and a friend, so that his words came to hearts already open and predisposed to receive them with favor. He was eminently a man to be loved, and those who knew him best loved him most.

In the days of controversy through which he passed, he was charged with being scheming, envious, disingenuous, a strong partisan. Never was a charge more entirely without foundation. He was a man of almost child-like simplicity, without one particle of envy, much more ready to be lead than to lead, and always placing unlimited confidence in his best friends. Perfectly accessible and free, he made all his students feel at home with him. He encouraged and stimulated them by speaking well of other men, and rejoicing as sincerely in the success of others as he could in his own. To the talents and usefulness of the few who might be called his peers, both in our own and other branches of the Church, he was always ready to bear joyful testimony. Indeed, it may be said of him, as another has said of Chalmers; that he was characterized by “a living fellowship with all humanity, a lack, while no man had a more decided individuality, of everything like conscious individualism.”

One who was a pastor in this city when Dr. B. came here, writes: “We soon saw and felt that he came among us for no selfish ends. He held his whole being subject to the promotion

of Christ's kingdom, and he rejoiced in all the genius, learning, eloquence and influence, of all or any of his brethren, regarding their gifts as his capital with which the good cause might be advanced. If any other one rejoiced in his own abilities or good work, 'he more.'

"He had no small ambitions. He left to his brethren unchallenged all the influence they could gain by person, dress, and address, social assiduities, minute learning, and niceties of style; he left to his brethren, if they desired it, all ecclesiastical offices and preaching prominence, if the people would consent, at ordinations and installations; he left to his brethren so much that he hardly seemed to be in the way of any, while all felt his deference to their person and claims, and therefore they all rose to aid and bless him in the great field of thought and enterprise which he occupied. And he was so willing to invite the sympathy and aid of others in all his great efforts, that they seemed to share with him in all the good effected. If good was done, he cared little by whom, or who had the credit for it. He made all around him feel that they were necessary to him. If he had a grand thought or splendid scheme, he shared it with them, and took their suggestions, so that when the matter was accomplished all said 'we did it.'"

A pupil writes, "I loved him very much. He was noble in his feelings. He had nothing mean or low in his nature that ever disclosed itself to me. I have heard him in public discourses and in private conversation speak freely of other men, and yet he always spoke as if an envious thought had never entered his mind. His controversy with Dr. Wilson seemed never to have left in his heart one unkind feeling. In this respect his magnanimity seemed characteristic and remarkable."

On this subject I may perhaps be pardoned if I bear my personal testimony.

My intimate acquaintance with him commenced in 1840, when I came here to enter upon the duties of the Professorship to which I had been invited. He received me at once as a brother, and gave me his confidence and his heart; and never once, during the ten years of our connection as members of the Faculty of this Seminary, did an unkind word, so far as I knew, fall from his lips. Never did anything occur in the least, to mar our official or our social enjoyment. My other associate, Rev. Dr. Stowe, I venture to affirm, will unite with me in this testimony.

Dr. Beecher's simplicity, frankness, hearty affection, fondness for a good generous laugh, united with his tender interest in the welfare of our students, and his fervent love for the Redeemer's Kingdom, commanded my admiration and my affection, as no other man ever has done. I loved him as a Christian father. I loved him as a neighbor friend, and associate. His memory will always be exceedingly precious to me; and it has been to me a grateful labor of love to prepare this memorial of him.

In the freedom of conversation about other men which prevails among the members of a Faculty, entire kindness of feeling, and a generous appreciation of their excellencies, were always manifest.

I mention but one other source of his power over young men, viz.: the pithy, sententious remarks which flashed out from his living experience, and fastening themselves in the memory, became like familiar proverbs—practical principles of life. The weekly conferences of the Faculty with the students furnished the best opportunities for these, but they were not unfrequent in the lecture-room.

"You will have troubles, young gentlemen," he would say, "go where you will—but when they come, *don't dam them up, but let them go down stream*, and you will soon be rid of them."

A young man said to him, "What can I do if I am not elected?" "When you begin to care about being saved, come to me and I will tell you—but while you don't care a snap about it, very likely God doesn't."

"Take care that you don't let down the doctrine of future punishment. Nothing holds the mind so."

"Eloquence is logic set a fire."

"Walking is not the best exercise for students—you don't *think with your legs*."

I was in his study, says a pupil, the morning he received a letter from H. W. B. at Indianapolis, announcing the re-conversion of Charles. With choking utterance he exclaimed: "His mother has been long in heaven, but she bound chords about her child's heart before she left which have drawn him back. He has never been able to break them."

Speaking of the happiness which flows from moral freedom he

said, "God never meant to fill this world with machines, and then create another order of beings to wait upon them."

"Suppose a skillful workman makes a chronometer so perfect that it never varies, no matter how long the voyage; but some intermeddling scoundrel thrusts his hand in and deranges the machinery. As a consequence, the ship is wrecked; is the maker of the chronometer to be blamed? God made man in his own image, so that his soul contained all the elements of happiness. He was not made to be miserable. But the tempter placed his hand on the beautiful instrument, and death ensued. Was God to be blamed?"

"What a preponderance of motives in favor of doing right! how small the inducement to do wrong! The first is to the second as a million to one."

In commenting on the sentiment or opinion which seeks to account for the fact that every one sins, not by alleging natural depravity, but by saying that "the appetites and passions are developed faster than reason; that is, in the nature of things which God has constituted the appetites and passions *necessarily* obtain the ascendancy over reason." Dr. B. said "it is by this theory as if God had placed a man in a boat with a crow-bar for an oar and then sent a storm on him! Is the man to be blamed if in such a case he is drowned?"

"Indolent habits derange the nervous system and stir up a tyrant capable of making hell on earth. Thus with dyspepsia; and it is most remarkable, that nature, before she surrenders, stoutly resists, and hangs out flags of distress."

"Dr. Ware, Dr. Channing and others of their school, who are sound reasoners on other subjects can not construct a logical argument on Christ's divinity."

"Reverie is a delightful intoxication into which the mind is thrown. It is extempore novel-making. I knew a person who was wont to retire into this garden of reverie whenever he wished to break the force of unwelcome truth. I told him he must break up the habit or be damned."

"Multitudes never learn to study a subject and unlock it so as to be able to enter it."

"Great readers are in danger of filling their minds with undigested facts, which they have not force enough to reduce to general principles."

"All the sciences which amplified occupy so much space might

be reduced to their elements so as to be contained in a few pocket volumes."

"Take care in your contest with intellectual sharpers how you attempt to prove that *mind is not matter*. The *onus probandi* in such a case is on the skeptic. The inability to prove a negative does not falsify an affirmation. Suppose I assert that the spots on the sun are immense rat-holes made by rats a thousand times larger than our rats?"

The soul in the body is enclosed "within mud walls," through the chinks of which the brilliant light of the soul shines.

"Conscience for the obedient has sounds more pleasant than music, but for the transgressor peals more terrific than thunder."

"Death tears off the mask. Then slumbering convictions awake and rage. The soul is then a volcano in its throes."

"Conscience is the executioner of the sentence, the sheriff who unlocks the dungeon, leads forth the criminal, draws the cap, and swings off the culprit."

"Sincerity will never cause tares to produce wheat, nor sowing to the flesh life everlasting."

"Some cry out 'mysterious! mysterious!' because God has not so created us that we can not make mistakes. There is no mystery about it. As well ask why God has not created tallow candles to light up the universe. He intended man to be happy in the exercise of mental activity in view of motives. How much happiness could be placed in a snail's shell? God did not make man after such a pattern, but according to a law which is common to all intelligences from man to the highest angels who burn before the throne of God."

In illustration of the folly of the notion that the motives of the gospel are enough to convert men, he exclaimed: "What if the engineer does ring the bell with all his might, if the man ahead on the track has no ears to hear."

Of certain evils he was wont to remark, "they are not warts but cancers."

Dr. Beecher's mental faculties began to give evidence of failure before he resigned his place in the Seminary. His mind had never been trained and stored by patient and careful study. He depended more on its original resources, which hitherto had seldom failed him. But when the fires of genius began to burn low, as

there was little in reserve for him to fall back upon, the change was very obvious. The enginery worked heavily.

When J. Q. Adams delivered the address at the laying the corner-stone of the Cincinnati Observatory, feeble under the weight of years, and yet clear and beautiful as ever in thought and language—an old steamboat Captain said of him, “It is a pity we couldn’t put that old engine into a new hull.” It was not so with Dr. Beecher. The hull at the last proved better than the engine.

And it was remarkable that among the earliest signs of failure was the want of control over language. In the very sphere in which he had seemed most wonderful—sometimes almost inspired, he seemed first to be shorn of his greatness and become as other men.

This was painfully evident when he visited us in 1856, and attempted here for the last time to address his former pupils. His loving heart was touched by the tender recollections of the scene, and he found it very difficult to control his feelings or to command his thoughts; and while to his students it was delightful to see his face and hear his voice once more, the contrast with the addresses and discourses of his best days, which had so often borne them irresistibly on their current, was painful. They venerated him still as a father, but he could no longer be their teacher.

The last letter I received from him, and the last he ever wrote to any one, bearing date September, 1857, has at once the movement of his magnificent style of thought and expression, and of an intellect struggling to break through the cloud that was steadily gathering over it. It is the result of the sixth distinct effort to reply to a letter, enclosing a draft of about \$1,000, in part payment of his claims against the Seminary for unpaid salary. It is as follows:

“*Dear Friend*:—There are moments of hope and fear, and apprehension and relief, that may fill the soul. We knew that you would be pressed to advance the successive portions of our needed income, and of course our hopes left us in not a little doubt.

But when increasing earthquakes swept over you in ceaseless continuousness, our hearts died within us, or waked only to hear that all was lost. When, therefore, on yesterday morning, on our

first arrival home, your opened letter told me that all was well, with all the testimonials, it required time and an effort for our astonishment to get up and to wake up our realizations, and to clothe our thoughts with wonder, gratitude and praise. As soon as tears and emotion would permit, we bowed to God together, and as the pious Montauk woman said to her benefactor, "I think, Col. Gardner, God inclined you to give me this meat. I thank you, also, Col. Gardner"—and in our condition, we think God inclined *you* to do these things, and we thank you too, Brother, for all your care of us."

But our loved and venerated father is gone. The man of great intellect, of noble spirit, of childlike piety and earnest faith in God, is gone; yet "he is not dead, but sleepeth." He lives in his children, justly distinguished in their several spheres.

He lives in his writings, his sermons on Intemperance, his Pleas for the West and for Colleges, his Views of Theology, and his Occasional Discourses. These writings, containing some of the grandest specimens of eloquence to be found in any language, destined to be admired wherever vigorous thought, vivid pictures of the imagination, and thrilling language are admired, will perpetuate the name of their author, and make him a blessing to the latest generations.

He lives in the multitudes who have been led to Christ by his instrumentality.

He lives in the three hundred men who have here been impressed by his power, guided and stimulated by his instructions, and who to-day are preaching the same gospel he taught them, in all parts of this land and in the far distant lands of heathenism, most of whom are among the men of middle life, bearing the heat and burden of the day.

His last definite and positive testimony for God was in the words of Paul, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown which God the righteous Judge will give me in that day." "*That* is my testimony; write it down. *That* is my testimony."

But there was a more remarkable testimony of God for him as his redeemed child, a few weeks before his end. The cloud was lifted off from his intellect for a few hours, and the light from the throne of God broke in upon his spirit. In the presence only of the daughter of Mrs. Beecher, who had watched and nursed him

with the tenderest care, he exclaimed, 'Mother, mother, come sit beside me. I think I have begun to go. I have had a glorious vision of heaven. Blessed God for revealing thyself. I did not think I could behold such glory and live. Until this morning my hope was a conditional one; now it is full, free, entire. Oh, glory to God! How wonderful that a creature can approach the Creator so as to awake in his likeness! Oh, glorious, glorious God.'

APPENDIX.

BOSTON, March 9, 1831.

Dear Brother :—It is not until now that Providence has seemed to give me permission to write. For a long time the slow movement of things around me, and the very great difficulty of forming a decision, refused to afford to me any thing to say ; and when I came in sight of the result to which I should be obliged to come, it was with so much regret, and such anticipation of possible injury to the cause as made me willing to postpone an answer as long as it might properly be done. You have not forgotten my views expressed to you of the immeasurable importance of the West, or the frankness with which I declared my willingness, should it please God to call me to do it, to consecrate my remaining days and labors to His cause, in that immense field, and my expectation that though it would, in their present condition, be a peculiarly hard case, the consent of my church and people could be obtained, and that I would assume the responsibility of attempting to obtain it, according to my best discretion. I am happy to be able to say, that I have honestly and faithfully redeemed this pledge, though not with the result which I anticipated. That you and all concerned may judge, I subjoin the written argument which I submitted to those on whose judgment, piety and influence I relied, with an epitome of the argument made in behalf of the church on the other side.

My own arguments in favor of a removal :

1. The extent and importance of the field of action and the influence at this time of a well endowed orthodox seminary to anticipate error and extend evangelical doctrine and religion to the future millions of the West, and through them to the millions of the Southern continent and to the whole world.

2. It has occurred to me that from the beginning God has been preparing me in some respects to teach theology ; the first ten years of my life having been employed in preaching and vindicating the doctrines of the gospel in the presence of a crafty, cavelling infidelity ; the next sixteen, in counteracting what may be called the antinomian tendencies of hyper Calvinism, as well as the opposite extreme of Arminianism ; and the last five in the exposition and vindication of the same doctrines in opposition to the innumerable mistakes and misrepresentations of Unitarianism, in its Arian Socinian, Universalist and infidel forms. The consequence is, that though I have never been engaged in a public theological controversy, my mind has been constantly disciplined and exercised by reason of use, in explaining and vindicating the doctrines of the Reformation and in adapting them to popular apprehension and in commending them for purposes of conviction and conversion to the conscience and the hearts of men ; and when I look back and perceive that it has pleased God that one-third of my ministry should be occupied in revivals among my own people, I have dared to hope that I have not been unguided by His Spirit both in the doctrines I have preached and the manner in which I have explained and vindicated,

and pressed them ; and I do confess that the prospect of being permitted to write the results of my somewhat extended experience, not on paper, which can never be done, but on the fleshly tablets of the heart of a generation of ministers, lays open before me a work of pleasure and usefulness which I can not without regret be obliged to decline. I might be disappointed, but I can not but indulge the hope that I should be enabled so to teach theology as would accomplish the end of silencing gainsayers, allaying fears and prejudices, and inspiring confidence and co-operation in all good things in the hearts of all who love, in sincerity and truth, our Lord Jesus Christ.

3. The work of providing an evangelical ministry for the West must be done chiefly at the West. The East can not furnish the requisite company of the publishers nor the funds to educate them, and if she could, it were better that the ministry of the West should be indigenous rather than imported. As an ally, the Atlantic States may do and are willing to do much. But it is the sons of the West, educated on her own soil, who must preach the Gospel to the West ; and in this great work, the Lane Seminary may, if prospered, exert an important influence.

4. Immediate and vigorous measures are demanded to occupy the ground.

It has been suggested that as yet there was no preparation for my labors. But if my influence and co-operation should be required to make the preparation, could I refuse it in such a world of souls? Half way measures will not save the West. And if any man is qualified and is called to that great work, how can he refuse to go, unless the providence which calls permits the interposition of insurmountable obstacles?

Others have said that as yet the West is too poor and too much encumbered to be able to afford men for the ministry or funds for their support. If this were so, it would augment our obligation to go, as the means of drawing the young men and the charities of the Atlantic States over the mountains, for were they to be deprived of the bread of life till all the obstacles of a new country are removed, the disposition to educate an evangelical ministry would be gone, when the day of ability should come. But the fact is, that there are men and there is money ; and it is a moral influence, such as theological seminaries and pastors and revivals alone can give, which is needed to make the able willing ; and it must not be forgotten that a little charity there, added to the economy and personal enterprise of the beneficiaries, may form better soldiers than more charity and less economy and personal effort.

Some of my friends have suggested that I may be more usefully employed in preaching, than in teaching. But I shall expect to be no less usefully employed in preaching if I go, and as to teaching theology, as no employment could be more delightful, so I hope and believe, that in none would my time and powers be more usefully employed.

5. For a year past I had begun to anticipate that my work here might be drawing to a close, and had made up my mind, called or uncalled, to go to the West, probably to Cincinnati, to inquire and ascertain if God had, in that region, any work for me to do.

6. The reasons for my detention here are temporary, and it would seem to be a subject of regret, that a short service here should foreclose the employment of my whole future life in a station of such importance as now invites my acceptance. Aside from specific engagements, I could not hesitate a moment, either in respect to duty or to inclination.

The arguments suggested in opposition to my removal at this time are :

1. The Hanover Church is not to be considered in the light simply of a single and insulated church. It was established by the benevolent from all the churches as a public concern, as one among a train of causes which they relied on under God to turn back in this region the captivity of years, and restore the city and the college to Christ and the church, and hitherto God has made use of that institution for good beyond all which had been asked or thought. Is it not therefore the interest of a single church which is to be considered but the associated interest of the great cause in the arduous conflict going on in this region. Should any thing be done to injure seriously this Church it would send exultation through the ranks of opposition and faintness of heart to the friends of evangelical religion.

2. The house now building was undertaken with express reference to yourself as our pastor, in concurrence with your advice and on a distinct engagement that your continued labors might be relied on. This pledge was given, not to the Church, but to the stockholders, some of whom probably could not be made to feel the motives of distant usefulness in the same degree, as they may be felt by the Church, whose consent could not be obtained if that of the Church were given; which, however, could not be given without offending many of the congregation and threatening great evil.

3. These evils would be amplified by our having been dispersed and withdrawn from pastoral and congregational sympathies for more than a year, and by the exchange of the Trust deed, by which the entire election of Pastor and control of the building were vested in the Church, for a simple act of incorporation, in which the Church and the pew-holders act in the election of Pastor by a concurrent vote of the Church and the pew-holders.

4. About 4,000 dollars have been vested in the house, in reliance on your influence to fill it and enable us to liquidate the debt of \$18 or \$20,000 as yet unpaid, which without a Pastor and with all the difficulties of obtaining one would render our embarrassment not small.

5. There is no way for you to obtain the consent of the stockholders to your dismissal but for you to request it, and to do it in such circumstances as would by many of them, and by all persons unfriendly to religion be regarded as cruel and indirectly a breach of promise.

6. You are not immediately needed at the West as imperiously by any means as you are now needed here. Should your agency there be thought important when our special exigency is past, it may be time enough then for you and us to determine what is duty. At present, it seems to us manifest that it is not your duty to go.

7. The impression made by your lectures, indicates to us that you may be serving the cause of religion for a season here, even more efficaciously than you could be at the West.

The Unitarian conflict is not, as you supposed, drawing to a close, but becoming more determined and threatening, by the union recently of the Theological Seminary with the College at Cambridge, indicative of unyielding and high determination to hold out and bid defiance to opposition.

These are the arguments and opinions of my most judicious friends. I did not think it expedient to call a regular meeting of the church and congregation, but what I have done is in my opinion the best that I could do, and I am bound to say, that, in my opinion those whom I have consulted have viewed the subject comprehensively and under the influence of an enlarged

benevolence which feels deeply the weight of the reasons I have offered; and who, but for the specific difficulties above stated, would, in my opinion, not only have consented to, but would have advocated my dismissal. But as matters were circumstanced they could not advocate my dismissal without a prostration of confidence with the congregation, which would be ruinous to their influence.

I have thus made to you a frank development of my views and feelings and conduct, and if apology is needed, for speaking so freely about myself, it must be found in the fact, that fidelity to my engagements to you demanded such an expose of my views to my friends, and I have communicated the same to you, that yourself and the Trustees may see that I had no disposition to recede from any encouragement given. I have, as I hope they will be of opinion, acted in sincerity and good faith according to my best discretion, to realize the expectations which I permitted to be excited, and that I am stopped by the hand of God, for as circumstances now are, it is my entire persuasion that my dismissal could not be obtained without being thought to have done such violence to friendship and obligations and public sentiment as could not be justified. I have only to say, that in the short conversation held with you, the change which had taken place in my relations in consequence of the burning of my church, did not occur to me. I looked at the practicability of obtaining a dismissal as an event which lay wholly within the bosom of the Church; and though I was aware of the engagement given to be their Pastor, if they rebuilt, I did not consider until the call came, and the difficulty rose up before me, that this engagement was made, not to the Church, but to stockholders, over a portion of whom my influence would be comparatively small.

As yet, however, I have given no answer, and before I do it, I have thought proper that it should be preceded by this explanatory statement.

Since the above was written, I have received the address to my church. But as I have in conversation, as well as in writing, suggested all the most material considerations it contains, there would be some superfluous evil and no probable good in agitating the church and congregation with the subject at this time, especially as there are beginning to be some symptoms of a revival interest waking up.

I would add, that my answer, if it be to decline the call, will be, and must be, considered as without any secret or confidential understanding that I may be called again after the exigency here is passed, and that if called then I will come. That it was my duty to give such encouragement as I did, is my opinion still; that an anticipated impediment, insurmountable at present, forbids the fulfillment of the expectations excited is to my mind clear. That I am willing to give my remaining days to the cause of Christ in the West, should his providence open the door and plainly make the demand, is as true now, as it was when I saw you, and the motives to do it have lost none of their weight and power.

But beyond this the whole subject lies in futurity, and must be left in the hands of God, as if nothing had happened. I must be able to say to my people, if I decline the call, that my relations to them are, in all respects, as they were before receiving it, and that I am under no obligations whatever, expressed or implied, to leave them, other than the general obligations to regard the providential will of God, which existed before, and is obligatory on every man. I am the more particular on this point

because already rumors are coming back from the West that I am to decline, with a secret understanding that if called again a short time hence, I will come. I have no such understanding, as you know full well, that I shall be called again, and I have authorized no understanding that if called I will accept. My views and feelings about the West were known before, long before, the call came. They can not be taken back and made a secret. But whether a call shall be made or not, depends not on me, and is not the condition upon which my decision turns. No, not in the slightest degree. And whether it would be my duty to accept a call, were it given, would depend on the independent merit of the question at the time.

I am, Dear, Sir, respectfully yours,

(Signed) LYMAN BEECHER.

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