

THE NEW-YORK OBSERVER

THURSDAY, JANUARY 17, 1907.

Dear Billborn

The first religious paper that I saw in my childhood was the New York Observer; with the Bible & the "Pilgrim's Progress" it was a part of my Sabbath reading. The first religious paper to which I ever sent an article was to the Observer in 1847. Its proprietor and its editors at that time have all passed away; but I can testify that after these fifty seven years, the grand old paper was never better than it is today.

Brooklyn }

Yours clear through
Theodore L. Bayler

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TO ABIDE IN THE FLESH IS NEEDFUL.

By the Rev. H. T. Miller.

O tides of living bliss that never fall,
Rising, swelling, bounding to the shore;
On their stately breast I spread my sail,
And answer signs from lofty semaphore.

What if my joy post-dates the final hour,
Postpones the time of gladness and acclaim?
What if I ask suspension of the shower
Of plaudits, when I leave this troubled main?

I turn the key of Heaven's glorious door
Against myself, that I may labor on,
And serve my Master here a few days more
Before I strike the notes of glory song.

The fight is glorious, and reward is sure,
But souls in need yet urge their mighty plea,
O give me days of toll and nights of care,
Before I anchor in that glorious sea.

Hamsville, Ont.

A Visit to Theodore Ledyard Cuyler

His Eighty-Fifth Birthday in His Brooklyn Home.

THURSDAY, January 10, was a beautiful winter's day. The sun was bright, the air was crisp and the blustering wind of the previous day had ceased. It was a good day on which to celebrate, if one had occasion. So, in the morning, I made a pleasant pilgrimage from my home upon the Riverside Drive in New York by the Subway and the Brooklyn Bridge and Fulton street to South Oxford street, Brooklyn, where, in a commodious house with a large grass plot in front and a garden behind, lives my friend of many years, Theodore Ledyard Cuyler. It was his eighty-fifth birthday, and I knew that it would be celebrated by hosts of friends, and also that for many reasons this celebration would be largely by mail. It was not enough for me, who had been associated with him in The New York Observer, the work for seamen and the intimate friendship of Chi Alpha to send a letter to my dear old friend and write an Augustus letter about him. I wished once more to clasp his hand and hear his joyful shout of greeting, to say a few words to him now and then as a starter, and then listen at length to the wealth of his reminiscences and the flashes of his kindly wit.

I found Dr. Cuyler in his study. Books lined the walls. Pictures of friends and relatives looked down upon him. A gray eagle on a perch overlooked a table which was covered with birthday letters. A hundred had been opened and read, and as many more were waiting their turn. Already a delegation from the National Temperance Society had called and presented him with engrossed resolutions, and in the afternoon he was to receive the representatives of the Lafayette Avenue Church, of which he was pastor for more than thirty years. But I had an hour without interruption. He handed me specimens from his morning mail, and as I read he commented in a happy strain. Not a carping or critical word came from his lips. Dr. Cuyler is not a heedless optimist, but he prefers to style himself "a hopeful pessimist." That is the sort of man to live and do good for four score and five years in such a world as this. Acknowledge the evil that there is in the world and steadfastly set yourself to make it better and hope ever for the best results. That has been the Cuyler doctrine and practice, and it has worked well for him and for all with whom he had to do.

I looked over the letters. Here was a sincere and generous tribute from Hon. Seth Low. He knew the sterling worth of Dr. Cuyler as a citizen as well as a friend when he lived in Brooklyn, and was its Mayor. This was from Robert C. Ogden, a discriminating analysis, such as one might expect from a first-class man of affairs, of the character and influ-

ence of his friend. "Ogden is a real philanthropist, the son of a noble father," was the doctor's comment. Next came a characteristic letter of friendship from Mr. John Crosby Brown, in which his wife heartily joined. "This next letter and an incident which it recalls, said Dr. Cuyler, I value beyond words." It was the vote of 2,000 members of the Rev. Dr. Cadman's congregation that a congratulatory letter should be sent by their pastor to Dr. Cuyler on his eighty-fifth birthday. It was a noble letter, and I could understand Dr. Cuyler's feelings about it. It reminded him of the incident in the Hanson Place Methodist Church. "When I went to that church to speak last week," said he, "I was a little late, but as I walked down the aisle the whole congregation rose, and remained standing till I was seated. I have had Chautauqua salutes and flattering introductions on the platform, but never such a sincere and impressive honor in the house of God."

At this occasion, which was the celebration of the forty-



THEODORE L. CUYLER, D.D.

ninth anniversary of the church, Rev. Charles Edward Locke, D.D., the sixteenth pastor of the church, conducted the services and introduced Dr. Cuyler as "that magnificent disciple of the Lord" and "the octogenarian prince of preachers of the United States." Dr. Cuyler replied:

"Dear Friends—For the last few days I have been harassed with a severe cold and cough, and to-day am suffering from lameness in one knee, and shall have to ask to be allowed the privilege of my Master, who 'sat while He discoursed with His disciples.' I could not fail to be with you this morning, for my heart is here, to join with you on this anniversary. Before I announce my text let me devote a few moments to the remarkable history of these two sister churches that have lived and labored and loved side by side for almost half a century. The coincidence between these two churches, this church and the one of which I was the founder, is very striking. Hanson Place Church has long been the largest in membership of any Methodist church in the State of New York, one of the largest in the United States; Lafayette Avenue Church is the largest Presbyterian Church in the State of New York and one of the largest in the United States. And, then, too, there was that remarkable coincidence in their birth. They were born so near each other that they narrowly escaped being a pair of twins. Hanson Place Church was organized in the latter part of 1858, Lafayette Church in 1857. This church struggled along for three years without a pastor. My ministry of Lafayette Avenue Church began in April, 1860. When I came into this neighborhood it was but

sparsely settled. This edifice had been occupied a comparatively short time, and in this pulpit stood my beloved brother, C. B. Foss, who was then in his ruddy youth.

"I come here to-day as the last surviving minister of all those who were in New York when I was there, and the last survivor of the Brooklyn pulpit when I came here, forty-six years ago. The hour is approaching, the scroll is being rolled up and 'what is written is written' and cannot be altered. Blessed are they who are written in the scroll of saving belief in Jesus Christ. If your name is not written there do not you dare to set foot into that next year, out of Christ. I will give you a motto for next year: 'Every day for Jesus.' Not Sundays only. Some people's religion is packed up on Monday morning with the Sunday clothes, and put away for the next six days. Every day in the week for Jesus! In the counting room, the shop, the office, the school, the kitchen, the nursery. Brethren, every day with the Gospel in our hands, for Christ! As the declining sun sets toward the horizon it is only a hand breadth. Well, so be it. But then, as the hours shorten they become more precious. When the last hour comes, let it come, let it come!"

A letter from the Rev. J. Wilbur Chapman, D.D., of Winoona Lake, Ind., pleased Dr. Cuyler greatly. He wrote that "speaking as one who had known many ministers intimately, he was able to say, I know that more than any living man you have inspired them to preach the Gospel and to be faithful to the truth. I thank God who has permitted you to live to this eighty-fifth birthday." There were letters from all over the land and from beyond the sea, from celebrated men and women, and from humble recipients of spiritual and temporal blessings at the hands of the faithful pastor. There were resolutions of corporate bodies, letters from Jews and Gentiles, politicians and private citizens, and friendly epistles without end.

When, fearing to tire my friend, I called a halt, he said: "Stoddard, you remember Charles Hodge's fiftieth anniversary at Princeton, and how after he had listened to all the fulsome and adulatory speeches of the occasion, he rose to reply. Hodge stood silent for a little space, looking upon the venerable and honored assembly, then he said, 'My friends, I never felt so mean in my life!' If he had said no more, it would have been one of the great speeches of the world. I feel just that way when I read all these letters."

"Now," said Dr. Cuyler, "tell me about 'Chi Alpha,'" and when the narrative ended, the venerable man put his arms around me and spoke with a tenderness and warmth of affection of those bosom friends with whom he had taken sweet counsel for more than fifty years. After recalling one and another, and characterizing them with aptness and wit, he said: "But there is one who always rises before me from that company as a king of men. We recognized him as such and almost worshipped him—William Adams, the joy and crown of our fraternity."

It was almost time to go, but I must see the scrap-books, and especially the one which held his first contributions to The New York Observer and the religious press. His first article for The Observer was written in 1847. It was printed in the issue of October 9, and was entitled "A Sabbath of Former Days"; two articles upon the memoir of Robert Murray McCheyne, a New Year's article, entitled "The Night Cometh," and three or more upon "Answers to Prayer." All were signed T. L. C. Most of these were published in January, 1848, and in subsequent months. Speaking of the McCheyne articles, he said:

"When I was in Edinburgh in 1872 Dr. Horatius Bonar invited me to his house, and while there he showed me these articles cut from The New York Observer and kept for twenty-four years as the only American tribute that he had seen to the devoted missionary."

The following extract from the article on McCheyne will be read with interest: "In reviewing McCheyne's life I have been struck with nothing more impressively than with his intensely prayerful spirit. Prayer, instead of being a penance, was his most chosen delight. He 'gave himself to it.' He rose before day to engage in his favorite occupation. He prayed before he sat down to his studies—before he went out to visit the sick, before he entered on any work for his Master, great or small. Like good John Welsh he rose from his bed to commune with God at the mercy seat in the night watches. He speaks also of having a 'scheme of prayer' and marking the names of missionaries on the map, that he might pray for

them in course and by name! His Bible he loved like the mercy seat, and when he read it it was with the eager avidity of one who is delving in a gold mine, with the shining ore laid bare at every stroke of the mattock. 'When you write,' said he to a friend, 'tell me the meaning of the Scriptures. One gem from that ocean is worth all the pebbles of earthly streams.'"

Dr. Cuyler also wrote at that early day, among other articles for The Observer, one headed "Stray Arrows." This was placed as the leading article in his first book, which, under the title of "Stray Arrows," was published by Robert Carter & Bros., in 1857. The number of the books which he has written and published since then is twenty-four. Most of them are aids and encouragements to Christian life and work, a few are records of travel and biography; but The New York Observer, "The Christian Intelligencer," "The Presbyterian," and later "The Evangelist," have published thousands of articles from Dr. Cuyler's fruitful pen during the fifty-two years since he began to write for their columns.

The time was passing, and before I said good-bye I gave the greeting of the American Seamen's Friend Society to one who has been a friend to seamen all his life. "Yes," said he, "my good mother, who lived here and died in this room, taught me to love the sailor and to keep up her annual gift to the Society, and I have done so every February. Once, when I was crossing on a Cunard steamer, Captain Anderson came to me and said: 'There are but few clergymen who know how to talk to sailors, and so when I have the men mustered for service, I don't often ask the traveling ministers to preach, but I know that you can do it.' So I preached, and put in all the nautical phrases that I could. The men seemed to like it, and after service I asked the captain if I had made any blunders. 'Only one,' said he, 'we furl sails, but we don't unfurl them.' I had unfurled a sail somewhere in the sermon, but I got the vessel into port all right."

After this we embraced each other and I returned to New York, helped and happy for my call.

There are few men who have passed three-score years and ten who are cheerful and inspiriting companions, and when men come to four-score not only are their years "labor and sorrow" to the owner, but generally to most of his family and friends. But Dr. Cuyler is a cheerful and stimulating companion at eighty-five. He enters heart and soul into the life of the age, has opinions of value and force upon public questions, political and social as well as ecclesiastical, and expresses them with vigor and earnestness. His whole career has been vital in the best sense, for he has brought the element of a sanctified enthusiasm into everything that he has undertaken. There is no moan in his utterances, no note of despair or distrust in his writings. He has never been weary of living, and while he has never wasted energy upon empty causes or championed windmills, he has ventured boldly into every genuine philanthropy and been a true knight of real progress. He has proved all things and held fast to what was good, but he has done more than hold fast—he has led good things forward by word and deed. He does not want to die, but to live and see more of the wonderful works of God and man; yet he is willing to wait, and to work as he is able, to the last hour, and is ready when that comes to enter into the joy of his Lord and live forever. So may he continue to live in this world and then go forth to live forevermore.

Augustus

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Mr. Carnegie's gift of \$750,000 to provide a building to house the Bureau of American Republics has moved President Roosevelt to express his thanks in warm terms, and to signify his opinion that this new benefaction by the steel king will result in benefits for the Western Hemisphere almost if not quite equal to the service performed by The Hague for Europe. The new building will probably go by the name of the American Hague, and is expected to serve as a kind of clearing-house for all American interests, whether of North or of South America. The gift of this building by Mr. Carnegie, who is a keen observer of events and sincerely devoted to the cause of peace, has followed closely upon Mr. Root's return from his South American tour. Mr. Carnegie expresses the hope that the work of the Bureau of American Republics will grow until it becomes a veritable American Temple of Peace.