

# The Central Presbyterian.

WHOLE NO. 783.

RICHMOND, VA., WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 4, 1880.

VOL. 16--NO. 1.

## Central Presbyterian.

OFFICE:  
No. 1015 Main street, opposite the Post Office.

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**Richardson & Southall,**  
Editors and Proprietors.

[Entered at the Post-Office at Richmond, Va., as second-class matter.]

### CORRESPONDENCE.

#### Letter from Rev. Dr. Hoge.

[The following letter from the Rev. Dr. Hoge has been received by one of the editors of this paper, and although it was not addressed to the Central Presbyterian, still, as it contains matter of general interest, and especially to the members of his congregation, we give it to the public. We are glad that Dr. Hoge has not hurried home. We are sure, much as he has been missed, that it was the general wish in his congregation that he should not return before September.—Eds.]

PENMAENMAWR, NORTH WALES,  
July 14th, 1880.

To ————  
My Dear Sir,—When I sent my letter from Constantinople to the Central Presbyterian, I think I stated it was the last one I would write for the paper during my absence from home, otherwise I might have sent you an account of our voyage through the Bosphorus and across the Black Sea, with my impressions of Bulgaria, Roumania, and Hungary.

The cities of Varna, Rustschuk, Bucharest, and Buda-Pesth alone would have furnished a theme for a letter, to say nothing of the wild, sad people who inhabit these countries, always in a ferment, and just now apparently on the eve of a new revolution.

You may imagine how sharp the contrast was in passing from the Mohammedism of Africa, and the Turkish despotism of Asia, to England with its Protestant religion and its constitutional government.

I might also have sent you a letter from London, where I remained two weeks, during which time I heard a dreary debate in the House of Lords on the Bill with regard to the burial of Dissenters in grounds belonging to the Established Church. But while there was nothing worth hearing in the discussion, it was interesting to see some of the personages there. First among these was the Earl of Beaconsfield, looking quite at his ease sitting on the front row of the opposition benches, and seemingly hale and plucky, as if he was good for another pull at the Premier'ship.

But a few days after, I heard a very spicy debate in the House of Commons on the celebrated Bradlaugh case, in which Mr. Gladstone made the speech which has caused so much comment. Some of the English papers call it an oration, so rhetorical was it, and so unlike the dry, matter of fact style of speeches in Parliament. He enlivened his argument with a historical sketch of the successive removal, one after another, of religious tests and disabilities. He reminded the House that there was a time when no one could be a member of the body who was not a communicant in the Church of England—but that restriction was swept away. Then came the question of the eligibility of Roman Catholics. That was strenuously opposed but vainly, and Roman Catholic members were permitted to take their seats on perfect equality with Protestant members. Then the question arose with regard to the admission of Jews, but these too, after a controversy which raged thirty years, were finally brought in with the fulness of the Gentiles. "And now," said he, "you are invited to make a final rally for a Theistic Constitution. You have been driven from the Church ground, from the Protestant ground, from the Christian ground, and there is to be a rally upon this narrow ledge (cries of dissent) of Theism. It is a narrow ledge. For my own part, I see no advantage or profit either to charity or to reason, or to common sense, in making distinctions of this kind."

Mr. Gladstone does not hesitate, and draw, and repeat his words as most English speakers do. He is fluent, natural, and without the slightest affectation of manner. And yet we have lawyers in Richmond who are better speakers, so far as intonation, gesture, and all that is pleasing in what we call delivery, is concerned. Our friend, Hon. J. R. Tucker, has a finer manner, and I could name several among the American clergy who surpass Mr. Gladstone in mere elocution.

Yet he is in many respects the foremost man of the time.

Of the English preachers who most interested me, I may mention Dr. Dykes, of the Regent Square Presbyterian church; Dr. Parker of the City Temple church, and Canon Farrar.

Dr. Dykes may not have the literary culture of his predecessor, Dr. James Hamilton, but he is a better preacher. He has a strong emotional nature, held under perfect control; he is intellectual, but the fine thought of his discourse is so imbued with the spiritual, and so pervaded with *unction*, that his hearers are reminded of something superior to mere mental gifts, and his prayers are especially edifying, being characterized by fervor, humility, and a sweet flavor of scriptural *allusion*, as well as quotation, which gives them a sacred charm.

You know all about Dr. Parker, of the City Temple church, with his vagaries and eccentricities. But for all that, he is a man of real, original force, and I doubt not he influences for good a large class of hearers who probably do not attend any other ministry.

I suppose the classical and accomplished Canon Farrar would not fancy being called a Universalist preacher—but that is just what he is. The sermon I heard from him was just such a discourse as Dr. Chapin, of New York, would have been delighted to preach in his best days. Dr. Farrar has rather a plebeian face, and a very sing-song, monotonous manner, but his style is polished *usque ad unguem*, and his discourses enriched with the cream of both ancient and modern literature. The afternoon I heard him, the church was crowded, pews, aisles, and vestibule. He is one of the acknowledged leaders of a popular school of divines at the present day, whose vocation is to prophesy smooth things, and whose preaching is an endorsement of the celebrated line—

"We never mention hell to ears polite."

During my eastern tour, and since my return to Europe, few things have gratified me more than the arrival of the Central Presbyterian. I am sorry to have missed any of the numbers. The publication of such a paper is a noble contribution to Christian literature, and I trust your subscription list is steadily increasing. In one of the June issues, it was stated in an editorial note that I was expected to return home during the month of July. That was my intention, for on many accounts I am anxious to be with my family and church again, and I had engaged my passage on the *Gallia* which sails on the 17th of this month. But early in July I began to receive letters from Richmond advising me to defer my coming, and last week I received four by the same mail, from officers and members of my church, all of them urgent and emphatic in the expression of the opinion that I ought not to return during the excessive heat of summer to recommence my work in Richmond. This week other letters have come, all of the same tenor, and I am much impressed by this new evidence of the solicitude the members of my church manifest in my health and comfort, in so urgently advising me to stay still longer in Europe, even after so protracted an absence, rather than risk the loss of the advantage I have gained by too early a return. Accordingly I wrote to Liverpool requesting the Cunard agent to transfer my ticket for the *Gallia* of the 17th of this month to the same steamer of the 21st of next month, but was informed that every berth on the *Gallia* for August was already taken, but that I could get one on the *Olympus*, which sails on the same day. So now I am booked for the *Olympus*, one of the slowest boats of the line, and far less comfortable than the *Gallia*. But it nearly always happens that some persons who have engaged their state-rooms are prevented from going by one cause or another, at the last moment, and as I have some friends in Liverpool who will be on the look out for me in case any vacancy occurs, I may yet get a place on the *Gallia*, and so reach home by the last of August. For the present I am staying on the coast of Wales, in a place where I have both mountain and sea breezes and salt baths. After the great fatigues of eastern travel, this life is most healthful and invigorating. The middle of the day is comfortably warm, but a little fire is pleasant in the morning and evening, and a blanket at night is necessary.

It may interest you to learn that I have received several letters asking me to republish my correspondence with the Central Presbyterian, with such additions as I choose to make, in a book form, after my return home. In such a correspondence I had to omit all mention of many things I would naturally have written about, because I had not the time and you had not the space for them. Whether I shall have the leisure for it after I get back is doubtful.

My Pemberton friends, whose presence and kindness brightened my whole tour through Egypt, Palestine, and Turkey, are now in Germany, and will not return to the United States before October or November. Yours very sincerely,  
MOSES D. HOGE.

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

BERLIN, July 10th, 1880.

*Messrs. Editors*—Your visits to Germany have made you as familiar as I am with the way the German Protestants keep, or rather fail to keep, the Lord's day. As you know, it is, except the early morning service in church, the holiday, and not the holy day. Theatres and concert-rooms are then gayest and fullest. The soldiery at all barracks have a special inspection and dress-parade. The bands play the loudest in the evenings. The beer gardens are the fullest. The shooting matches take place when there are rifle companies. The horses and hacks are all hired for pleasure-excursions. And in all this, there is little difference between religious people and preachers, and the world. But still we must not judge good people here, as we, with our theory of the Sabbath, would deserve to be judged, were we to do the like. The Lutheran (and to a degree the Swiss) Reformers expressly taught that the Sabbath was only a judicial and ceremonial institution, and was abolished by Christ. This great error still stands in their creeds, and is firmly held and taught by their divines. Hence, when they thus commit what our creed makes desecrations of the Sabbath, they are acting consistently with their creed. The thing of which they are guilty before God is, not that sin of inconsistency with known duty, which so many Americans, orthodox in profession, perpetrate: it is the sin of neglecting and studying amiss the testimony of God in making up their creed. Hence a German Christian here can do these things, to us so very wrong, without its implying a deadness of conscience and rebellion against duty, such as the same acts would imply in us. Even the saintly Neander, when explaining the practice of a theological professor in going to the Sunday-night plays in the theatre, said: He also condemned it, but only because the theatre was not the right place for a Christian on any night; but that he should feel free to use any amusement on Sunday, which he could use on Monday!

But none the less do I believe that this false doctrine of Luther and Melancthon, with its consequent loose usage of Christ's holy day, is the grand error of their reform, and the grand blight and curse of European Protestantism. I do not expect to see the chill of spiritual death broken, which practically reigns over the most of this land, nor the gospel bearing its proper fruits: until this heresy is refuted, confessed, forsaken, expunged from their venerable confessions of faith, and amended in practice. Our view is, that God's omniscience saw, that, for a moral creature such as man, a stated day, consecrated by divine authority to religious duties, is absolutely essential to man's continuing a religious being; and that for this reason God did consecrate one seventh part of our time for all ages and dispensations, even including the sinless one of paradise. Compliance with this command is a vital part of the efficiency of all means of grace. So that, in a true sense, it may be said, where there is no Sabbath, there are no adequate means of grace. The gospel cannot reign without its Sabbath.

This is terribly verified here. One natural consequence is, that there is very little family religion. I cannot hear of any such institution as family worship. I doubt if there is a parent in Germany, outside the pastorate, who ever catechizes his family. It is left to the official routine of the state schoolmaster and "pfarren." What else can one expect? As the world goes, the six days allowed by God for worldly duties, will offer no opportunity for religious, parental duties. These days, with the poor, must be occupied with continuous labor: parents and children must be separated by their imperious tasks. With the rich, the equally imperious demands of mammon, pleasure and society make the same separation.—Now, if the consecrated afternoons and evenings of the Sabbath may be properly given to the rural excursion, picture-gallery, concert, and beer garden; parents and children never come together religiously at all. There is no family-religion. But where there is no family religion there is no spiritual prosperity. Burns' inimitable poem, the "Cotter's Saturday Night," sets forth a deep philosophy here. The poet places the sacred rites on the evening of Saturday; but it was because the Scotch Presbyterians had the Sabbath, that they had such a Saturday night. I do not make the sweeping charge, that there is no family religion in Germany. Doubtless in a small minority of families, there is a beautiful and deep, if an unobtrusive, family religion. God teaches it to the hearts of his chosen few, in spite of the heresy of their creed on this point. But none the less, is the general tendency, and general effect of that heresy ruinous.

If these views of the practical results are just, then, the Sabbath argument needs to be re-discussed, and re-discussed, and made prominent with the utmost clearness and logical force. We must

remember that the thing which needs to be done is not merely to remind our continental brethren of a confessed inconsistency. They do not allow that it is one. They think they have a very good, critical argument to prove that the Sabbath is abolished. Their consciences are precisely in the state, as to their shocking delinquencies, of a Presbyterian's conscience among Episcopalians, when they should berate him for going rabbit hunting on Christmas day, instead of going to the communion. You could not make that Presbyterian see any sin in himself simply by berating him; or by lauding "our venerable liturgy and canons;" or by urging the authority of the "Church." The Presbyterian would sturdily rejoin, that the "Church" had no business with any such act of authority: that he did not believe Christ was born on the 25th of December at all: that if he was, neither He nor the Apostles had commanded Christians to solemnize his birth-day as a sacred one. The only difference is, that we are certain our anti-Christmas argument is authentic. Well: the German Lutheran (erroneously, yet) honestly thinks his anti-Sabbath criticism equally solid.

Now, with such a case, mere hortation; or boasting of our "scriptural church order;" or of our pious ancestors and how they kept the Sabbath; or mere charges of sin unsupported by demonstration; or pious outcries about America's having her old Sabbath, counts for nothing. To the Lutheran trained in his creed, it is silly and insulting. The thing which needs to be done, is to meet and refute the false exposition of Luther (and of Calvin too) and of Neander: even as the great Calvinistic divines of Great Britain met it in the 17th century, and convinced the mind of British Christians impregnably, that the continental reform was totally erroneous on this point; and established the opposite doctrine, (a doctrine which Calvin himself renounced with contempt as mere judaizing) like a great rock in the Westminster Standards. And I, for one, believe, that this striking contradiction between the Westminster and the Lutheran Confessions, gives us the practical, instrumental cause of the grand contrast between English and German Protestantism in their outcome. It explains why the latter has been at a standstill nearly since Luther's death, hemmed in by State lines and popery to its original area; paralysed by Rationalism; while Westminster Christianity has leavened a new continent, and is filling the world with missions.

How many of our people really know the difference of the two doctrines? How many of them know the nature of the arguments by which the true doctrine was run against—the commanding authority and astute sophisms of the great reformers? This battle of truth urgently needs to be fought over again; and fought until there is no longer a foe in the field to assert the blighting error. What one sees here teaches him that it was a great privilege to be born an Old-School Westminster-Confession-Presbyterian, and also a great privilege to be born a citizen of a truly republican commonwealth, such as old Virginia was. Of this last point I will give you some discussion in my next.

R. L. D.

### NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES.

#### Southern Presbyterian.

**Organization of a church at Powellton, Accomac county, Va.**—According to leave granted at spring meeting of East Hanover Presbytery, Rev. John G. Anderson and ruling elder S. C. Slator organized, on first Sabbath of July, a Presbyterian church at Powellton, Accomac county, Va. The church was organized with five members. Six or eight more are expected to join very soon.

The church building is in progress of construction. We hope to dedicate it about the middle of September. Many kind brethren have aided us in this enterprise, for which we can return, at present, only an *in thesei* deliverance of thanks. We promise to be more special and satisfactory after the dedication. J. G. A.

**Rev. E. D. Junkin**, lately removed from New Providence church, Va., was, on the 11th ult., installed pastor of the church at Honston, Texas. The services were conducted by the Rev. R. H. Byers, D. D., Rev. R. F. Bunting, D. D., and Rev. J. M. Cochran—all of the Presbytery of Brazos.

**Rev. Dr. T. W. Hooper**, of Selma, Ala., has been visiting his old friends in Virginia, and on last Sabbath preached at Mt. Horeb, the church of which Rev. T. M. Boyd is pastor.

**Rev. Dr. G. H. W. Petrie**, of Montgomery, Ala., preached last Sabbath in the Charlottesville church, of which his son, Rev. G. L. Petrie, is pastor.

**Greenbrier Presbytery** was called to meet in Lewisburg, W. Va., on Tuesday, 3d inst., for the purpose of ordaining Mr. Absalom Sydenstricker, to the full work of the gospel ministry. Mr. Sydenstricker will go as a missionary to China in a few weeks.

**Rev. Dr. S. J. Baird** is preaching for the congregation of the Ninth Street church, Covington, Ky., from which Rev. George Summey lately removed to New Jersey.

**Rev. E. C. Gordon**, of Savannah, Ga., has been invited to the pastorate of Salem church, Roanoke county, Va.

**Rev. A. W. Ruff**, of Montgomery Presbytery, has been obliged to desist from all labor on account of failing health.

**The Seven Mile Ford Presbyterian church** was dedicated July 4th. Revs. William V. Wilson and E. H. Barnett officiating. It is a small building, seating comfortably only 150. Gothic in style—built entirely of native woods, and in every way neat and comfortable.

A Sabbath School has been organized, with most encouraging result. Several persons in your city aided us and will probably be glad to know the result. The church was dedicated free of debt.

NEWBERN, VA., July 27th, 1880.

To all whom it may concern, greeting.

There is in the town of New Castle, Craig Co., Va., a Presbyterian church edifice—with good walls, a good roof, but bad floor and plastering, and a feeble folk. It will take about two hundred dollars, besides what the people would raise, to put this building in good repair. The congregation is served once a month by Rev. W. R. Coppedge, who preaches in the Court House. If forty persons will give five dollars each to this object, it will encourage a faithful pastor, build up the drooping hopes of a scattered and discouraged people, save from dilapidation a good building, and glorify Christ. I will be one of the forty—who will be the other thirty-nine. I suppose that Rev. W. R. Coppedge, Sinking Creek, Craig county, Va., would manage such a fund.  
W. E. HILL.

**A County Sabbath School Convention** was held in Newbern, Pulaski county, Va., on the 28th and 29th ult. Hon. J. Hoge Tyler was elected President, Capt. J. H. Larew, Secretary, with Mr. Miller, Vice-President, and C. S. Bullard, assistant Secretary. There were forty-five delegates, representing sixteen schools. The meeting was harmonious, interesting, and instructive. Enthusiastic addresses were delivered by Messrs. Herman of the Virginia People, "Of Welcome," Rev. W. S. Bullard on "The Scripturalness of Sabbath Schools;" Rev. William E. Hall, of Texas, on "Sabbath School work, its aims and results." On the 28th and 29th, the Convention was addressed on "Sabbath School Helps," by Capt. J. H. Larew. "On the relation of the Sabbath School to the Church." This was requested for publication by the Convention, and will be distributed in the county—Pulaski. A lecture and normal class-drill was conducted by Rev. W. E. Hill, and at night—Thursday—the exercises were closed with addresses by Prof. Jordan, of Shelbyville, Ky., and Rev. W. E. Hall, of Texas. The organization was made permanent—J. Hoge Tyler, President, Dublin Depot; Park Phippo, Esq., Secretary, Newbern, Va., who, with Rev. W. S. Bullard, Snowville Va., were appointed an executive committee, with instructions to open correspondence looking to county and State Sabbath School Associations.

**Our Missions**, from *The Missionary of August, 1880*.

**GREECE**—Our latest intelligence from Greece is to the 17th June. Dr. Kalopothakes had got back to Athens, after a sojourn of three weeks at the baths, much relieved from suffering, but not entirely restored. The other members of the Mission are reported as being in good health.

**BRAZIL**—From Campinas our latest letters are dated to the 8th of June. Mrs. Lane's health was still feeble, and it was expected that she and her two children would sail for New York the early part of July. Mr. Lane just returned from Santa Barbara, where he received three persons to the communion of the Church. He mentions that two of the newly organized churches in that region were busily engaged in erecting church edifices, which indicates great earnestness on their part and permanency of their work. Mr. Boyle's letter is occupied mainly about his colporteur's work, which he regards as promising important results.

**CHINA**—The latest letter from China is from Mr. Davis, of May 17th. Speaking of the importance of his having larger accommodations for holding religious meetings, he remarks: "On Sunday, May 16th, I had a communion service at my place. There were several women who, when told that we could not seat them in the house, asked to be permitted to stand in the court and look on during the services. Though it was about to rain, I filled the open court nearly half full of benches and had about as many hearers outside of the room as there were in it. \* \* \* The woman of whom I have already written and her child were baptized, and the teacher in Mr. DuBose's boarding-school restored to church fellowship." Mr. Davis, as well as many of his friends, will be gratified to know that the committee have appropriated the money necessary to purchase the new place, and that four-fifths, or thereabouts, of the fund has been contributed by the churches in North Carolina, his native State.

**The Camp Meeting at Bennett's Woods** closed on July 21st. The whole meeting was a rich feast of fat things to those who attended. The clearness and fulness with which the gospel was presented as full of blessing to man could scarcely be surpassed. Dr. Palmer's sermons showed all the vigor and ability for which he is distinguished. Drs. Boudé and Smith also greatly delighted and instructed the hearers. The results are to be reckoned up not in time but in eternity. There were several professions of faith—how many we do not know, though the number was not large. The largest results it is hoped are not in the harvest now gathered, but in those to be gathered hereafter from the seed sown.—Texas Presbyterian.

(Continued on 5th page.)