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CORRESPONDENCE.

Letter from Rochester, New York.

ROCHESTER, July 30, 1880.

Messrs. Editors,—Perhaps a line from "these corners" may interest your readers. Rochester is, to my taste, at the most beautiful city I ever saw, just at this season, with a temperature of 70° at noon and 60° at sunrise. It is not only beautiful but delightful as a summering resort, and with my experience of Virginia's July sun and temperature, I cannot conceive of the necessity for people's leaving their comfortable homes to "take a trip" to find more pleasantness elsewhere. But so it is, here as elsewhere. Wealth and fashion must leave the city, or else close their window-shutters, allow the leaves and dust to accumulate on the door-steps, and thus make the house look as if the family were away, while the people live in the back of the house—and like the Ostrich with his head stuck in the sand, believes the world does not know she is there. The characteristic beauties of Rochester are her magnificent mansions, beautiful lawns, and interminable richness of flowers. In the earlier days of the city, when the Genessee Valley was the granary of the United States, Rochester was called the "Flour City." Properly enough, if one can judge by the still remaining immense flour mills—immense in size and number.

The "Great Western Prairie" and the steam horse have changed somewhat this monopoly of flour, and now Rochester is properly denominated the "Flower City." Of this pre-eminent ascendancy of beauty, I believe now there is no dispute, and no one, however envious, denies this distinction. For of a truth it may be said of flowers there is no end. From the lordliest mansion to the lowliest shanty, flowers salute the eye at every turn. *Parterres* of exquisite exotics, of the most expensive production and cultivation, spread out and scattered broad-cast over velvet lawns; shorn and trimmed weekly by trained gardeners, and the lonely dottings of little patches of flowers at the doorway of the humble, are the ever varying attraction and delight to the passer-by. Besides these beauties on the lawns, climbing vines, mainly the Virginia creepers, running wild over terraces and walls, and every variety of tree, avenue the long, cleanly kept streets, make Rochester a beauty embosomed in a forest, and if one will only toil his way up Power's Tower, 200 feet, he will look down upon the remarkable vision of a city enveloped in a forest, with the glitterings of highly tinted flowers glinting through the foliage, presenting a panorama of exquisite beauty.

This is a city of singularly irregular regularity, or singularly regular irregularity. Every variety of architecture and landscape gardening imaginable is seen on every avenue. No two houses are alike, and the eye is never tired in gazing at unchanging similitude. One attractive feature of the beauty is, the open lawn, disencumbered of railing or enclosure—the lawns, as neatly shaven as by a barber, reaching from the lordly mansion remotely located from the street, to the pavement. This absence of enclosure, you will see at once, must contribute very much to the pleasantness of the surroundings—and is an expression of hospitality to the stranger. To one not accustomed to this openness of lawns the effect is very pleasing, and is an expression of good nature in this: that the beauties of the grounds are open alike to the enjoyment of owner and the passer-by. It has the air of saying, "Walk in, look at and enjoy my beautiful grounds, they are as much for your pleasure as mine." So the poorest beggar in the city has as much pleasure as the proprietor, in admiring his elegant establishment. Saving the expense and trouble, which is shared only by the owner.

But I will stop—lest I weary you—if I have not already indulged my pen *regue ad nauseam*.
W. B. F.

Rome and Purgatory.

PETERSBURG, VA., Aug. 18th, '80.

Messrs. Editors,—I had just finished reading a very interesting book of "Father Muller," entitled the PURGATORIAN CONSOLER, and was preparing to give your readers some extracts from it, when I received by mail a copy of the *Catholic Visitor* of the 14th inst., containing a letter from "Rufus" of more than four columns devoted to my communication from Cobb's Island on "Rome and the Virgin Mary." I am sorry to say that he has made serious progress in the art of personal abuse, as he accuses me not only of "reasoning dishonestly," but of "falsifying truth unblushingly," although all I did was to quote from authors of approved standing in his Church, to show that the worship paid to the Virgin Mary is idolatrous. If any one "falsifies truth," it is the authors from whom I quoted and not I. But when he wrote that letter he had not seen my last one to him. After reading that, I hope he will repent him of, (or, as his Douay version would say, *do penance for*) these gross and offensive personalities which always argue a weak cause.

The bulk of his letter requires no answer, as it aims to prove through three solid columns the importance of the doctrine that Christ was born of the Virgin Mary. As I never doubted that, and never heard of a Protestant or Catholic who did, I wondered why he should give it so much space—but I remembered that "Father Muller" denied that Christ died to redeem the world—a thing that I thought everybody believed; and so I suppose "Rufus" thinks there is some poor deluded "Father Muller" among his Catholic readers who denies that our Lord was born of the Virgin Mary, and it is an act of charity in him to prove it so conclusively. There is an admission of his, however, in his letter which corroborates what I said in my last about the difficulty of an intelligent Protestant ever coming down to the slavery of belief which the Church of Rome requires. After saying that he has always observed that "the worst Catholics can easily become the best Protestants, and even ministers"—a fact which only shows the power of divine grace, enlightening and reforming as in the case of Paul, St. Augustine, and so many others—he adds that "a good Protestant such as he ('Rufus') was, finds it very hard work to become even a *passable Catholic*." Well, leaving out the indelicacy of "Rufus" in pronouncing himself to have been good, though I really hope he was, it is evident that if Father Muller's standard of Romanism, is the true one, "Rufus" has made very little progress towards becoming a "passable Catholic," and had better quit. I don't think he ever can believe Father Muller's doctrines, and yet Father Muller is "orthodox, sound, and solid"—so the Archbishops say. For look at this very letter of "Rufus." He tells us that he only proposes to give to the Virgin Mary "such honor and praise as is possible and lawful in a creature"—by which he evidently means, such as it is proper and lawful to give to a creature. Well then "Rufus" and I are not far apart. I believe in rendering her very high honor and very great praise; so do all Protestants. But Father Muller and others believe in rendering her such honor and praise as is not "lawful in a creature." Thus, not to repeat the quotations already made, here is a prayer from this *Purgatorian Consoler* now before me—a prayer in such high repute at Rome that the Pope offers, as we are told in a note appended, (see pp. 79-80) "an indulgence of three hundred days as often as the above prayer is recited with a contrite heart, before a picture or image of the Blessed Virgin." What a convenience that the commandment about graven images has been stricken out! and how hard it must be for "Rufus," who learned it when a Protestant, to bow down to a graven image even to get an indulgence of three hundred days from "His Holiness the Pope!" But here is the prayer, word for word, only the italics being mine: "Most Holy immaculate Virgin, and my Mother Mary, to thee, who art the Mother of my Lord, the Queen of the world, the advocate, the hope, the refuge of sinners, I have recourse to-day, I who am the most miserable of all. I WORSHIP thee, O great Queen, and I thank thee for all the graces which thou hast hitherto granted me, and especially I thank thee for having DELIVERED ME FROM HELL, which I have so often deserved. I love thee, most amiable Lady, and for the love which I bear thee, I promise always to serve thee and to do all that I can that thou mayest also be loved by others. I place all my hopes in thee, and I confide my salvation to thy care. Accept me for thy servant, and receive me under thy mantle, O Mother of Mercy! And since thou art so powerful with God, do thou deliver me from all temptations, or rather obtain me strength to triumph over them until death. Of thee I ask the true love of Jesus Christ; through thee I hope to die a good death. My Mother, by the love which thou bearest to God, I beseech thee to help me al-

ways, but especially at the last moment of my life leave me not until thou seest me safe in heaven BLESSING THEE AND SINGING THY MERCIES FOR ALL ETERNITY. AMEN."

I leave it to "Rufus" himself whether "blessing the Virgin Mary and singing her mercies for all eternity" is honor and praise "lawful in a creature." I ask him if this is to be the occupation of "Father Muller" "for all eternity," what time there will be to worship God? And is it not remarkable that in all the visions of heaven given in the Book of Revelation, there is no mention of "singing the mercies" of the Virgin Mary, though she had been there then for half a century. I would rather not bind myself to sing the mercies of a creature for all eternity even with the reward before me of an "indulgence of 300 days."

"But I leave 'Rufus,' as I hope on the stool of repentance, and pass to the 'PURGATORIAN CONSOLER—A MANUAL,' (as the title page informs us) 'originally prepared for the use of the members of the Purgatorian Arch-Confraternity, enlarged and adapted to general use by Rev. Michael Muller, C. S. S. R.'" It is published in New York in 1879, by the "Printers to the Apostolic See," and has the *Imprimatur* of the Archbishop of Baltimore. No one then will gainsay its authority. And now if any poor soul is in dread of Purgatory, and seeking for a "Consoler," I warn it away from this one, for it will cry out after reading it, as Job did to his friends, "Miserable comforters are ye all!"

First, as to the sufferings of Purgatory, the teaching is awful, hell itself could not be worse, than the Purgatory here described. Listen to but a single extract: "They (the souls in Purgatory) are buried under waves of fire. It is from the smallest spark of this purgatorial fire that they suffer more intense pains than all the fires of this world put together could produce. In this fire they suffer more than all the pains of distempers, and the most violent diseases; they suffer more than all the most cruel torments undergone by malefactors or invented by the most barbarous tyrants; they suffer more than all the tortures of the martyrs summed up together. Could these poor souls leave the fire of Purgatory, for the most frightful earthly fire, they would, as it were, take it for a pleasure garden; they would find a fifty year's stay in the hottest earthly fire, more endurable than an hour's stay in the fire of Purgatory." Pp. 34-35.

I could multiply passages—but this is enough. Think of being buried under waves of fire, of which one spark causes more suffering than all the fires of this world put together could produce, fire in comparison with which Nebuchadnezzar's furnace was a pleasure garden. If that is not hell, only one of Hudibras' celebrated theologians could "learnedly divide" betwixt the two.

But let us ask our author, who are the miserable souls allotted to this awful inconceivable torture? Surely they must be the worst enemies of God! No, says our author:

"The souls in Purgatory are holy souls. They are confirmed in grace and no longer in a condition to offend God, or to forfeit heaven. They love God above every thing. All their disorderly affections and passions have died away, and as they love God, so are they loved by God in an unutterable manner." page 95.

And this does not describe their condition after purification in Purgatory, but on their entrance into it, for the author in another place speaking of the soul of the believer, says:

"No sooner has the soul departed this life than it * * * finds it altogether impossible to seek, and to love anything but God. It experiences at once an insatiable hunger and thirst after God. It pants for its Supreme Good with a most violent desire. 'God! God! I must be with God!' is its constant cry. But in the very moment in which the soul is endeavoring to unite itself to God, it is repulsed by the Lord, and sent to Purgatory to expiate for its sins not sufficiently cancelled in this life." Pp. 30-31.

Nothing astonishes us more in reading this work than to find in Purgatory enduring these torments of which one hour is equal to fifty years, in the hottest flames of earth, the souls of the purest and holiest of those who were saints on earth. Archbishops, Bishops, Abbots, Canonized saints, monks of "great piety and perfection"—all come back to earth to tell of their merciless torture in these flames. And to see for what trivial offenses they suffer such awful penalties! There is for instance, "St. Severinus, Archbishop of Cologne, a prelate of great sanctity, so much so that God wrought through him many remarkable miracles." Being found in Purgatory, "suffering most excruciating pains," and "being asked why he suffered so much, who, on account of his holiness of life ought to be reigning gloriously in heaven," he replied, "I suffer this torment merely for having recited the canonical hours hurriedly, and with wilful distraction." Pp. 20-21. The Greek emperor Theophilus was

there "because he had been unable to perform the penances which towards the end of his life he had wished to perform." Page 135. A Dominican priest being interviewed, says, "My too great familiarity with seculars and my useless conversations with them were the cause of my long stay in Purgatory." Page 137. A sister of charity had to lie on a bed "the upper and lower parts of which was full of red-hot, sharp iron points penetrating into the flesh. She told me that she had to endure this pain for her carelessness in the observance of her rules." Her tongue was "eaten up by moths on account of uncharitable words, &c." Pp. 138-9.

If such tortures await such pious people what is to become of those of us less devout and holy? And why are they there at all, if they are God's people whom Christ died to redeem? (But I forgot that the "orthodox" author denies that Christ died to redeem them.) Our Saviour said to the thief on the cross, "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." Why does He "repulse" these holy souls and send them to Purgatory? The author says in the passage quoted "to expiate for their sins not sufficiently cancelled in this life." Well this is strange! I thought Christ died to expiate for the sins of his people. But Father Muller says Christ died to establish a priesthood, and sins are to be expiated by the fires of Purgatory. The Apostle says (1 John i: 7) "the blood of Jesus Christ, His son, cleanseth us from all sin." But Father Muller says (page 8) that the Divine justice has not yet been fully satisfied, and that the soul must be "confined till by suffering it is cleansed and purged from all these defilements of venial sins and rendered fit to be admitted to the presence and enjoyment of God." So it seems that Christ's blood only cleanses from some sins and not from all, as the inspired apostle imagined! True, Father Muller tells us only the "venial sins" remain. But if Christ's blood cleanses from the mortal sins, I do not see why it should not from the venial too. If it atones for the great ones, why not for the least. And these least must be awful if it requires so much suffering to expiate them. And if Christ's blood has not power to cleanse them, I do not see how Purgatorial fires are to do it. And now when I read that some of these "holy souls" are "doomed to suffer the pains of Purgatory, to the day of the last judgment," page 23, and that the rest escape only through instrumentalities set on foot by their "brethren on earth"—chief of which are Masses, (page 50), which must be paid for, (page 49 and 105). Father Wilson to the contrary notwithstanding, and to be paid for even if it requires the last dollar, (page 105). I ask you, is not the prospect gloomy enough especially for those who die in poverty, and leave none to "offer the honoraries of one or more dollars for the 'intentions' of the Masses of a priest in their behalf." (Page 49).

And now where is the Scripture warrant for this monstrous system which consigns Archbishops of great sanctity, pious Abbots, canonized saints, etc., to these tortures which fairly make our hair stand on end. The only passage cited in its support is that in Matt. xii: 32, about the sin against the Holy Ghost "which shall not be forgiven neither in this world nor in the world to come," "in which words" says our author, "He (Christ) plainly insinuates that some sins shall be forgiven in the world to come"—and now upon this imagined insinuation, he builds his whole system saying, "Now this truth necessarily establishes a middle state where some sins shall be forgiven"—page 9. Was ever so monstrous a hypothesis rested upon so slender a base? Purgatory upon an insinuation!! and that one of the author's own imagining, for our Lord did not mean to insinuate any such thing—but simply to give emphatic statement to the unpardonableness of the sin against the Holy Ghost. I would rather, like Paul, "depart and be with Christ which is far better," than, like the Archbishop of Cologne, depart and be "buried under waves of fire," which is far worse.

T. D. WITHERSPOON.

Announcement is made that Mrs. A. T. Stewart has decided to build and endow a Protestant Episcopal College, for those young men wishing to enter the Church, but who are unable to pay the heavy expenses demanded by present colleges. Several other educational buildings are also to be erected at once in Garden City at the expense of the estate; one of which will be dedicated to the young women residing on Long Island. The costs of the buildings and the endowments will amount to fully \$3,000,000. Under the contract entered into some years since for the building of the Garden City Cathedral, which is to serve as a memorial to the late Mr. Stewart, the beautiful edifice should have been completed by the first of last June, but the contractors and architect say that the delay was caused by the delicate work which had to be executed in the interior of the building, and the large amount of stone necessary for the building proper. Mr. Harrison, the architect, says that work on the cathedral is being advanced as quickly as possible, and that the entire building will be completed by Christmas. Christian at Work.

NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES.

Southern Presbyterian.

Church Dedicated at Petersburg, Grant Co., W. Va.—Our new house of worship was dedicated on Sunday, August 18th. It had been in use for just a year, but we preferred to postpone the dedication till the debt had been paid off. Thanks to the liberality of friends in the Presbytery, we were able to report only \$50 unpaid, part of which was raised on that day. The house is a neat brick building, completely finished, capable of seating 240 on the main floor. The entire cost is estimated at \$2,400, besides the lot on which it stands, which was given by one of our citizens. Taking into consideration the hard times in which this work was commenced and completed, we have great reason to be thankful to the great Head of the Church for the success which has crowned our efforts. May this stimulate us to greater efforts in building up the spiritual temple among us, and be a foretaste of better things! We desire to return our sincere thanks to all those who have aided in the work. Our own efforts could not have accomplished it. Why should not this plan of co-operation be more extensively carried out? A little from many sources, directed to one object, will result in great good there.

Presbyterianism was planted in this valley in 1782; Rev. Moses Hoge being the first settled pastor. The flock gathered by him and his successor in 1787, had been scattered and reduced to two old ladies when Rev. Wm. N. Scott settled here in 1822. But the labor of this faithful servant of Christ were so blessed that in 1838 three congregations were formed out of those gathered by him. He died in 1857, amid the people he had taught and trained in both secular and spiritual knowledge. The fruits of his labors survive him.

The dedication sermon was preached by Dr. H. M. White, of Winchester, from Mark xiv: 8, "She hath done what she could," a clear and instructive presentation of the great law of personal responsibility and effort in the Master's kingdom. "This," said the speaker, "is the epitaph which I would most desire to have written on my tombstone."

Rev. R. H. Fleming, of Woodstock, was also with us on that day. These two brethren had been directed by Winchester Presbytery at its last meeting to visit this part of the field, and spend some time in labor among us. They preached here and at a point five miles west, for ten days, greatly to the gratification and we hope to the profit of their hearers. The word was faithfully preached, and we look for promised results in the quickening of God's professed people and the conversion of the impenitent. Our church needs to put forth more of this special effort in its weak and destitute fields. Twelve of our ministers are under instructions to do evangelistic work in the western portion of Presbytery—and the plan will probably become a permanent one. It will doubtless result in great good, not only to the fields visited, but to the ministers themselves, and through them to their own flocks.

If any of your readers desire to aid us in completing a mission church in this field, their contributions will be thankfully received.
J. L. S.

Rev. W. R. Coppedge, of Montgomery Presbytery, has received a call from the Presbyterian congregations at Salem, Greenbrier county, and Hillsdale and Gap Mills, in Monroe county, W. Va. These are the congregations from which Rev. G. T. Lyle lately removed.

Miss Janet H. Houston, daughter of Rev. Dr. S. R. Houston, of Monroe Co., W. Va., has accepted a position in connection with the mission at Matamoros, offered by the Committee of Foreign Missions.

Rev. Dr. James Woodrow, late professor in Columbia Theological Seminary, has been elected professor of Mineralogy, Geology, etc., in the Agricultural and Mechanical Institute of South Carolina, at Columbia.

Prof. Jas. F. Latimer, Ph. D.—On the 3d inst., the University of Leipzig, Germany, conferred upon Prof. James F. Latimer of Davidson College, N. C., the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, he having successfully passed all the examinations necessary thereto. The examiners were Professors Heinze, Curtius and Voigt, who complimented Prof. Latimer very highly upon the distinguished manner in which he passed his examinations.

Tuscaloosa Institute.—The fifth annual session of this school for the training of colored men for the ministry, will commence on the 1st day of July following. All applications for admission or for information should be addressed to Rev. C. A. Stillman, D. D., Tuscaloosa, Ala.

Mark's Creek, Fayetteville Presbytery.—The Rev. S. C. Alexander, who had just returned to his home in Wadesboro, N. C., writes to the N. C. Presbyterian, August 16:

"We closed last Friday a meeting of seven days at Mark's Creek. The Lord was with us in mighty power. The people seemed to be greatly refreshed and revived. Sixteen members were added to the roll of that church on profession of their faith in Christ. On the last day of the meeting there were twenty-nine baptisms, six of them on their own faith in Christ. To God be all the praise. The people of this congregation are generally poor; but they have fine crops, and are more prosperous now than they have been since the war. The Lord has blessed them greatly in temporal and spiritual things; and I hope they will soon become rich in faith and good works. There was truly a shaking of the 'dry bones' in the valley of Mark's Creek."

(Continued on 4th page.)