

# The Central Presbyterian.

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## Central Presbyterian.

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## CORRESPONDENCE.

### Rome and the Altar.

PETERSBURG, VA., Sept. 3d, 1880.

Messrs. Editors,—In the *Catholic Visitor* of the 28th ult., "Rufus" gives his reasons for withdrawing from the discussion with me. They are two, first, that I "will not keep or be kept to the point," and second, that I "prefer Father Muller as an expounder of Catholic teaching to 'Rufus.'" To the latter charge I plead guilty, but to the former I do not; and whilst it would be ungenerous in me to argue the case now that he "declines to correct me any more," I will only remind our readers that "the point," as distinctly stated in my first letter, was to acquit myself of the odious charge of "garbling," which a fellow-townman had wantonly brought against me in the public prints. To this point I have tried to keep myself, by numerous quotations from the author in question, to show that his teachings were really what I had represented. "Rufus" has introduced many side issues, such as partisan stories about the Reformers, etc., but I have steadily ignored them and kept to my point. The public may judge whether or not he has made good his offensive charge of "garbling."

In closing the public discussion, he gives me two challenges of a private nature, neither of which I can accept. One is to write to Father Muller and ask him whether he and "Rufus" agree or not. "Rufus" is so accustomed to have a priest decide everything for him, that this seems to him a very natural course—but after all the quotations I have made from both parties, my intelligent readers can decide, and have already decided, the whole case for themselves. The second challenge is still more remarkable—that I shall write to him and give him "the name of even one (Catholic) received by you during your ministry here of six or seven years." Now I have received Catholics to the communion of my church since I came to Petersburg, who are now living amongst us, and any responsible citizen who will come to me and give his personal assurances that no improper use will be made of their names, is welcome to them. But to send them by mail to an anonymous writer is to break over all the safeguards of privacy that a pastor must respect in reference to the religious convictions of his people.

I am sorry that in closing the correspondence "Rufus" did not see fit to retract any of his offensive language towards me. He says, however, that "if he has said anything offensive, such was not his intention." How can he use the word "if" when he has accused me of "garbling," "dishonesty," "falsifying truth unblushingly," etc.? If that language is not offensive what could be? And "if such was not his intention," why did he not withdraw it like a man? But I accept his assurance that it was not his intention to be offensive, and in parting with him, as I do now, I assure him that I shall not cease to pray for him that he may be guided in the right way, and I ask him to offer the same prayer for me, only to be sure to offer it to our Heavenly Father, and not to the Virgin Mary, so that I may have some hope of an answer.

And now that "Rufus" is withdrawn, and the editor of the *Catholic Visitor* has entered the field, not only on his behalf, but also as spokesman of Bishop Keane, there are a few questions that I have been anxious for a long time to ask the latter, and I would be glad if the editor of the *Visitor* would answer them for him, or get the Bishop, if he is not too busy, to answer them through his columns. In his sermon at Jarratt's Depot, Bishop K. used the following language (see synopsis in *Catholic Visitor* of July 3d): "He explained that the altar is erected in every Catholic church for the eucharistic sacrifice," and he called the attention of his hearers to the declaration of St. Paul (Heb. xiii: 10), "We have an altar, whereof they cannot eat who serve the tabernacle," and suggested to them when next they would enter a Protestant church to ask: Where is the altar? and

if they are told there is none, to compare the fact with St. Paul's assertion: "We have an altar." He explained that the crucifix on the altar shows that the sacrifice offered on that altar is the "showing forth of the death of the Lord, &c."

Now, the first question I would like to ask is, Did Bishop K. really mean to teach that when Paul said "we have an altar," he referred to a material altar such as the Roman Catholics now have in their churches? His language will not, it seems to me, bear any other construction. It was so understood by all his hearers with whom I have conversed. I have no doubt that he meant it to be so understood. His advice about Protestant churches could have no significance if he did not. Well, then, taking it for granted that this is his interpretation, that Paul referred to a material altar on which the sacrifice of the Mass was offered, I would like to ask him where he thinks this altar was, for the apostle only mentions one. You will notice that he uses the singular number; he does not say "we have altars," but "we have an altar." The *we* evidently refers to the whole Christian Church, and as St. Paul speaks of the whole Church as having a single altar, I would like to know where Bishop K. thinks that altar was. Did it remain at Jerusalem where, according to the Roman Catholics, "Mass" was first celebrated? Or did Peter carry it with him to Rome? Or did Paul carry it with him on his missionary tour? Did he have it with him when he "thrice suffered shipwreck"? Did he still hold on to it when he was "a night and a day in the deep"? And what did Peter and the other apostles do for an altar whilst Paul was travelling around with that one? Did they have to wait until the one consecrated altar came home before they could say Mass? And must not the poor souls in Purgatory have had a hard time when there was only one altar on which their friends could "offer the honoraries of one or more dollars for the 'intentions' of the Masses of a priest in their behalf," and Paul had that one away off in Asia Minor, or Spain, or some other remote province of the Roman Empire.

Now I hope the Bishop, or his spokesman, will not seek to free himself from this embarrassing question in the same illogical way that Archbishop Gibbons does in that very remarkable book of his, "The Faith of our Fathers," where after quoting the words of Paul, "We have an altar," he naively adds, (page 314), "The Apostle here plainly declares that the Christian Church has its altars as well as the Jewish synagogue"—which is as complete a *non sequitur* as it would be if I were to quote the apostle's words a little above, "We have such an High Priest," and then add, "The apostle here plainly declares that the Christian Church has 'its high priests as well as the Jewish synagogue.' The Jewish synagogue had no altars, as it had no high priests. The tabernacle to which Paul refers (and not to the synagogue) had one sacrificial altar and one high priest, and only one. So the temple had but one altar of propitiatory sacrifice and one high priest. And the apostle means to teach here that as the Jewish Church had but one altar of propitiatory sacrifice, so the Christian Church has but one. But if Bishop Keane's interpretation of this passage is correct, then the Roman Catholic Church must explain how it has come to multiply altars so as to have one or more in every church edifice. One altar sufficed under the old economy, and the most rigid prohibitions were laid upon the erection or use of more than that one (see Deut. xii: 5-28). St. Paul says we have one under the new dispensation—one for the whole Church. And the whole Church continued to have but one altar of propitiatory sacrifice for several centuries after Christ, until the rise of the Church of Rome. One of the first marks of its defection was the multiplication of altars of propitiatory sacrifice, just as under the old economy, one of the first marks of apostasy was the multiplication of altars of burnt offering in the land. This multiplication has gone forward until to-day, instead of one altar, as in the days of Paul, we behold ten thousand altars on which ten thousand priests are imagined to be offering each a propitiatory sacrifice every time the Mass is celebrated; for the Council of Trent says (Canon 3 of the Mass): "If any one saith that the sacrifice of the Mass is only a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, or that it is a bare commemoration of the sacrifice consummated on the cross, but not a propitiatory sacrifice, or that it profits only him who receives it, and that it ought not to be offered for the living and the dead, for sins, pains, satisfactions, and other necessities, let him be anathema!"

If Paul had been a Roman Catholic he would have said "we have altars;" and when the hearers of Bishop Keane enter a Protestant church now and ask, "where is the altar?" we tell them, "just where it was in the days of Paul, in heaven, where the High Priest is who is on the right hand of the throne." But if one of those hearers should ask Bishop Keane where the altar was of which Paul spoke, whether in Jerusalem or

Rome or Ephesus, what would he say? Will the Bishop pardon me for asking just one question more? How did he reconcile this interpretation of his with that "public profession of the orthodox faith," which, in obedience to the Bull of Pope Pius IV, (Canon. et Decr. Conc. Trid. Tauchnitz Ed. page 226), he was required to take at his consecration, in which solemnly made oath, "nor will I ever receive and interpret the Scriptures except according to the unanimous consent of the Fathers?" *nisi juxta unanimum consensum Patrum.* Now as Pius IV in that Bull warns all concerned that for any one to "go contrary with rash adventure" to this engagement under oath is to "incur the indignation of Almighty God, and the blessed apostles, Peter and Paul," it was reasonably to be supposed that he would first ascertain whether his interpretation was according to the unanimous consent of the fathers—Was it? Well I do not know what Bishop Keane would consider *unanimous consent*, but certainly his interpretation and that of some of the fathers is very conflicting—and if only one of them differs with him, he brings down the judgment upon him denounced by the Pope, for a consent is not *unanimous* if one voice is lifted against it. Now St. Chrysostom, one of the chief of the fathers, interprets this passage as referring to an altar in heaven. He says in his Homily on the passage, (In Heb. Hom. XI.) "We have our victim above, our priest above, our sacrifice above, therefore we offer such sacrifices as it is impossible to offer on that altar," explaining that the sacrifices are *prayer and praise*, the only ones that we can offer on an altar in heaven. This breaks up the *unanimous consent* as it seems to me. But further, St. Irenaeus, (Adv. Haer. IV, 34,) says, "God wills that we should offer gifts at his altar without ceasing. There is therefore an altar in the heavens, for thither are our prayers and oblations directed." So here is another serious break. Then St. Cyril, of Alexandria, (De Adv. L. 9.) "He (Christ) is the altar, He is the incense, He is the Holy Priest." So well was it understood during the first three centuries of the church, that there is but one altar and that one in the heavens, that the church edifices then, like our Protestant churches now, had no material altars, and it was a standing reproach against the Christians by the Pagans that they had no altars. So that as late as the time of Arnobius the Elder, (A. D. about 300) we have the following declaration, (Arnob. Adv. Gentes.) "You Pagans (Gentes) are accustomed to accuse us of impiety in the highest degree, because we do not make altars." If they had lived in this day they could have brought this accusation against Protestants, for we now, like Irenaeus, and Cyril, and Chrysostom, and Arnobius, have our altar in heaven; but they could never accuse Roman Catholics of not "making altars," since they could say like the makers of the silver shrines at Ephesus, (Acts xix: 25.) "Sirs, ye know that by this craft we have our wealth."

I wonder that the Bishop with all this array of the father's against him, and with the interpretation of St. Thomas Aquinas, the Magnus Apollo of Catholic Doctors, who says, (Expos. in Div. Ap. in loco), "This altar is either the cross of Christ on which he was immolated for us, or Christ himself in whom and by whom we offer our prayers to God," and that of Lyra, another eminent Catholic expositor, who interprets, "We have an altar, that is the cross on which Christ was offered," and with the denunciation of Pope Pius IV hanging over his head—should nevertheless have spoken so confidently about the material altar which is wanting in Protestant churches. Would it not have been safer for him, as well as more modest, to have followed the learned Bellarmine, the Coryphoeus among the Jesuit authors, who says, (De Sac. Euch. L. V. Cap 13), "Some grave authors think not improbably that the table of the Lord is expressly called an altar in Heb. xiii; but since there are not wanting Catholic authors who understand by altar in this passage the cross of Christ, I do not urge it."

And now as Bishop Keane took the liberty of suggesting to his hearers at Jarratt's Depot, most of whom were Protestants, a question for Protestant ministers, I hope he will not decline to answer the questions I have asked him, so that I may transmit to those same Protestants his reply. Will he tell us where that one altar in the days of Paul was kept? and what finally became of it? and why, as one altar sufficed for the whole Church in Paul's day, it is necessary to have one or more in every church edifice now? and how the Mass was celebrated in the first three centuries of the Church, when it was a standing reproach that the Christians made no altars? and what authorities he can quote better than Aquinas and Lyra and Bellarmine? and what he proposes to do about that "indignation of the blessed Apostles Peter and Paul."

T. D. WITHERSPON.

P. S. Since writing the above, I learn that Bishop Keane has "gone into the retreat," and as "Rufus" has withdrawn

and the editor of the *Visitor* has those Latin tomes to search through, I propose to give the attention of your readers respite for two or three numbers, after which I hope to give them selections from a few more of "Father Muller's" works.  
T. D. W.

## NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES.

### Southern Presbyterian.

Rev. L. A. McLean, late of Fayetteville Presbytery, N. C., is now supplying an important field in Greenbrier Presbytery, preaching at Quinimont, Hinton, Fire Creek, Sewell, and Coal Valley. His Post office address is Quinimont, Fayette county, W. Va.

Covington church, Montgomery Presbytery, has given a call for the pastoral services of Rev. A. L. Coker.

Rev. E. C. Gordon, of Savannah, Ga., has accepted the call from the Salem church, Va., Montgomery Presbytery, and will enter upon his labors there at once.

Rev. W. E. Cave's Post office address has been changed from Gordonsville, Va., to Bloomfield, Ky.

Rev. J. K. Hiner was dismissed, August 24th, from the Presbytery of Louisville to the Presbytery of West Lexington, Ky.

Rev. W. G. White was dismissed, at a late meeting, from the Presbytery of Louisville, Ky., to the Presbytery of Bethel, S. C.

Laurel Hill Church, Abingdon Presbytery.—On Saturday, August 28th, Captain Wm. S. Hart as Ruling Elder, and Charles L. Teany, Deacon, of Laurel Hill church, were ordained and installed to their respective offices at Martin's Station. Rev. Robert C. Gray was present and offered the ordination prayer. Capt. Hart is superintendent and Mr. Teany is treasurer and librarian of the Sabbath School at Martin's, which was organized this spring, and now numbers on its roll nearly a hundred, with a large average attendance. This place is the site of the Butha Zinc Furnace, and is growing more rapidly than any other place in the county.

On Sabbath the second quarterly Communion of Laurel Hill church was held at the Station, a mission point. A very large congregation was in attendance. Rev. R. C. Gray assisted the pastor elect. Three persons were received into membership in accordance with Rules of Discipline. Others will be received in the same way.

Newbern Church, Va.—On the 5th Sabbath in August, Capt. J. H. Larew, Ruling Elder, and Ernst F. Voge, Deacon, were set apart with prayer and the laying on of the hands of the Session to their respective offices, and pronounced and declared to have been regularly elected, ordained, and installed.

Church at Harkersville, Ala.—I wrote you last fall of the organization of a church at Harkersville with fourteen members. With the help of friends here, and at other points, they have erected a very neat church, and organized a Sabbath School with forty-one scholars. Licentiate T. W. Raymond has been preaching for them during the vacation.

Last week I went up to help him in a protracted meeting, which continued from Thursday to Monday. Rev. James McLain and his son, Harry, a student of Union Seminary, also assisted in the services. We had communion on Sunday, when the church was crowded and many could not find standing room. There were eight additions, four on certificate and four on examination. Mr. Raymond writes me, "I have heard several say that this meeting did them more good than any they ever attended." Some of us sent them a pulpit Bible to day, but the church is still unplastered and unpainted, and a spare dollar would help the small band of earnest worshippers.  
T. W. H.

Selma, Ala., September 3d.

Bethel Church in Orange Presbytery. Rev. J. C. Alexander in a hurried note gives us the following gratifying news: Have only time to say that the Lord has done and is doing great things for us at Bethel. A week ago today we commenced our meeting—it is still in progress—twenty-six have professed a hope in Christ. Others are still inquiring what they must do to be saved. Two or three new ones to-day.—N. C. Presbyterian.

Mt. Carmel in Fayetteville.—Mt. Carmel church is a little more than one hundred years old, and has been in feeble health for a long time. But I am happy to say it is improving. Four more names were added to its roll last week, making twenty-four in the last twelve months. Its total membership is now seventy-four. Three elders and three deacons have been recently elected and ordained.—*Id.*

Good Hope Camp Meeting, Miss.—A correspondent writes to the *Christian Observer*: "I got back yesterday from the Good Hope camp meeting, twenty-three miles west of Shubuta, on the Mobile and Ohio railroad. This camp is just four years old and growing fast. The attendance this year was much larger than heretofore, and still the accommodations were ample and abundant for all. On Saturday and Sunday there must have been over two thousand persons present, from every part of the surrounding country. Many came in their wagons with their children thirty and forty miles; others on horseback and in buggies sixty miles distance. Those people did not come out of mere curiosity; they came from a sense of duty to their Church, themselves and children; and they were not disappointed. Many returned to their homes richly rewarded. There were eighteen who united with the Presbyterian Church before I

left—nearly all baptized children of the Church. I do not know how many may join other churches. There were six ministers present—Dr. Smith, of New Orleans, Dr. Raymond, of Marion, Ala., Dr. Bardwell of Meridian, Rev. Messrs. Burkley, Moseley, and Coit, of Mississippi; all men of talent and ability, who worked faithfully all through the meeting. I have never listened to more faithful, pungent preaching, and God bless the labors of his servants abundantly to the rejoicing and saving of many souls.

### Northern Presbyterian.

Rev. W. C. Matthews, D. D.—The Presbyterian Church has lost a minister widely known, highly respected and of most lovely spirit in the death of Rev. William C. Matthews, D. D., which occurred at La Grange, Ky., Tuesday evening, August 24. He was born in Granville County, North Carolina, Sept. 23, 1805. Two years afterwards his father, Rev. John Matthews, removed to Shepherdstown, Virginia, where he grew up and received his primary education. In 1827 he and his brother, Rev. John D. Matthews, D. D., graduated at Jefferson College, Pa., in a class of which Prof. Jacob Coon of Franklin College, Ohio; Judge William McCaleb, of Maryland; the late Rev. John W. Scott, D. D., Rev. David Sterrett, and Rev. Joel Stonerod were members. His theological studies were pursued at Princeton.

In the meantime his father had been pastor at Martinsburg, Virginia, but removed to Hanover, Indiana, in 1829, where he had been appointed professor of theology. The son, Rev. W. C. Matthews, was called to succeed his father at Martinsburg, where he continued to be pastor until 1836, when he removed to the West, having accepted a call to Madison, Indiana. In 1831 he married Miss Mary S. Hunter, daughter of Col. Hunter of Martinsburg. In 1842 he went to Winchester, Clarke Co., Ky., where he labored until 1847, when he accepted a call to the church in Shelbyville, Ky., and was its pastor for twenty-three years. In 1870 he took charge of the Fourth Presbyterian church of Louisville and served it for nine years, when he retired from the active duties of the ministry because of increasing infirmities, after fifty years of faithful service.—*Presbyterian Banner.*

The First Presbyterian church, Chicago, Ill., was organized in June, 1833, and held its first communion in a log house. Since that time it has admitted 3,000 members, and at present has 867 on its rolls. Last year, ending April 1, 1880, it contributed \$28,856.63 to church work, of which \$8,620.39 was to Home Missions. It was burned out in the great fire, but at once a new church was built and paid for, a house of worship which is a credit to the denomination and to Chicago.

### Other Churches.

Methodist.—Great preparations are in progress for the Ecumenical Methodist Conference. This body will assemble in the City Road Chapel, London, in September, 1881, and will be composed of four hundred members—two hundred from Great Britain, and two hundred from the United States and Canada—one-half ministers and one-half laymen. The English section will include representatives from the Wesleyan Methodist and affiliated conferences, the Primitive Methodists, the Methodist New Connection, the United Methodist Free Churches, the Wesleyan Reform Union and Bible Christian Conferences. From the United States and Canada there will be representatives of sixteen Methodist bodies. Invitations have already been issued to all the Methodist bodies in Great Britain to send delegates to a preliminary council, which is to assemble in the Wesleyan Centenary Hall, Bishopsgate Street, London, at a date to be hereafter fixed. The invitation has been accepted. The conference, like the great Presbyterian Council soon to meet in Philadelphia, will have no legislative or administrative functions, but its object will be to promote union and to stimulate to more zealous Christian effort.

Home Mission Work.—The *National Baptist* gives some suggestive facts and figures in the course of a comprehensive review of Baptist Home Mission work. During its last fiscal year the American Baptist Home Missionary Society engaged the labors of 158 missionaries among Americans, 36 among Germans, 18 among Scandinavians, 5 among French, 9 among Indians, 15 among Freedmen, and 2 among Chinese, besides 38 teachers in the Freedmen schools. As a result of this labor, 20,762 sermons were preached at 836 stations, 1,160 persons were baptized upon a profession of their faith, and 67 churches were organized. There were 416 Sunday Schools under the care of the missionaries, with an aggregate attendance of 27,091 scholars. All this work was accomplished with the expenditure of \$154,752.57.

From this review it appears that there are 646,974 colored Baptists in the South. In the Indian Territory the Society has 18 missionaries and teachers, with 5,823 church members, out of the 60,000 Indians. Among the Germans in the United States there are 120 Baptist churches, with 8,665 members. The Scandinavians in this country are said to number 1,000,000. The Society's missionaries among these people labor principally in Iowa and Minnesota. Mission work among the French is pursued in New England, where the French Canadians are to be found in the mills of the manufacturing towns. They are Catholics, but less bigoted than Catholics of some other nationalities. Of the two missionaries laboring among the Chinese, one is stationed at Oakland, Cal., the other labors in parts of Oregon and Washington Territory.

(Continued on 5th page.)