

WEEKLY ERA.

FAMILY READING.

Letter from Dr. Munsey.

This communication was read, by order of Bishop Keener, to the Holston Conference, and the following resolution was unanimously adopted by the Conference:—

G. TAYLOR.

Resolved, That this Conference do hereby tender to Dr. Wm. E. Munsey their hearty Christian sympathy in his deep affliction, and will earnestly beseech the Great Head of the Church to restore him speedily to his former health and usefulness.

E. E. WILEY,  
FRANK RICHARDSON.  
Marion, Va., Oct. 18, 1873.

MR. EDITOR:—It is published from one end of this country to the other that I use stimulating spirits too freely. Their use I have entirely abandoned, preferring to be sick, or dead, than to lay myself liable any longer to such complaints. I used them by medical, and otherwise respectable, advisement. Their use saved my life.

I was a poor boy, and had to support, single-handed, for many years, a mother and five children. I did it most of the time by manual labor, as a hireling. I had little time to go to school—three months will comprise all the time which was of any profit to me. Then I had to walk several miles to the school house, after cutting, and often carrying upon my shoulders from a neighboring ridge, enough wood to supply the necessities of the family for a winter day—returning at night, doing my work, and learning my lessons by the light of pine knots and chips. In the meantime God regenerated me, and six years afterward—called of God to preach—I started, without an education, to my first and only Circuit, three hundred and forty miles away, on foot, with but \$3 in my pocket. I was furnished some money by the Rev. A. G. Worley, of the Holston Conference (God bless him!) to enable me to get to my work. But I had to deny myself the privilege of eating, save once, from Bristol, Tenn., to Charleston, Tenn., and seventy-five miles of the road was then travelled by the stage.

Thus I started to preach—studying everywhere, and under all circumstances, and sometimes nearly all night, to try to make myself an approved workman. My record in the Holston Conference is well known. In 1866 I was sent by Bishop Early to Alexandria, Va. Always having a feeble, nervous constitution, and never flinching in my life from the post of duty and danger, my health rapidly began to give way. Exhorted to use stimulants, I refused. During the eighteen months I was stationed in Alexandria I tasted ardent spirits but a few times, and then in only a few cases of real illness—never as a beverage. At the end of my term in Alexandria I ought to have located for one year, but I had a horror of such a step. I was then removed by Bishop Doggett to Baltimore. Baltimore was our frontier work. The membership was small. I had to make my own congregation. With such an inspiration I gathered up all my feeble powers and did my best, in the meantime helping other charges all I could. My efforts to preach at this time were succeeded by a kind of convulsive vomit, and this often followed by a severe attack of cramp colic, which at several times threatened my life. I was told by friends—and among them the late Dr. Thomas E. Bond, M. D., and President of the Medical University of Maryland—to use a small portion of whiskey or brandy after preaching, and it would prevent the vomiting. I had to do it or give up my station and stop preaching. I tried it, effected a cure, and counteracted, after a time, the tendency to colic. The amount used was small. The first summer I was in Baltimore, I was threatened with paralysis; my health seemed to give away almost entirely, and I was released from my work for nearly four months. I recommenced my work in October; but, to fill the pulpit, had to give up, in a great degree, pastoral visiting. The state of my health caused me to accept the position of Secretary of the Board of Foreign Missions. During that summer, I was threatened with another attack, and lost about three months from my work; but after that my health, for the first time, began to recuperate in such a way that I thought I would have no more trouble and if I had not been put back into the regular work for a year more I would not have been ineffective, as I have now been for twelve months.

Our troubles in Baltimore in 1872 kept me at my post during the summer, till I fell there. I stayed, not because I was able to do the whole work, but to prevent a demoralization. I had to use stimulants

or desert my post. In addition to my threatened attack. (Harvey G. Byrd, M. D., of Baltimore, being one of the physicians who made the diagnosis), I have suffered horribly with neuralgia. My brain would not bear opiates; again I had to use whiskey or brandy. I ceased awhile last February, but was compelled to resume their use for awhile. I always used them against my will; and one great purpose of my coming to the country was to get my nerves gradually relaxed from the tension of twenty years, so I could live without a stimulant. I was making a battle for life, and in me it was no sin, hence I never concealed it, my intense horror of paralysis may have caused me to exaggerate my danger; it threw a gloom over my soul, and the year to me has been one of darkness—though I could feel the strong hand of God leading me through the shadows. But he knoweth the way that I take; when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold. I could have spared a leg, an arm, or even an eye, but my fault lay not in them.—God touched the point of my ambition, and I will abide his time. He performeth the thing that is appointed for me, and many such things are with him. I never dreamed that I could and would be misunderstood, and traduced as a common drunkard, or that any of my brethren would ever have believed it. But neuralgia or no neuralgia, paralysis or no paralysis. I have abandoned its use, in any quantity and in all circumstances, except the most extraordinary—i.e., it must be a matter of immediate life and death, and never in the sense of a tonic, or to relieve pain, or in any continuous sense whatever. It would be well for all time to come, under God, after careful thought, to the same conclusion. In the end all stimulants are a great physical and moral curse. When I am able to work without a stimulant, I will work; when I am not, I will rest. I sacrifice myself to emergencies, without having the power in all instances to meet them. I ought to have taken the advice of friends, and have gone to places where I would have had less responsibility and a better support.

Not being able to take work at the last session of the Baltimore Conference; and being too young a man to take a superannuated relation—and a superannuated relation would have left upon me some measure of responsibility, which I wish to avoid—I located and wept like a child when the appointments were read. I will be in regular itinirancy when God gives me strength to meet fully its responsibilities. My health is now better.

Your Brother,  
W. E. MUNSEY.  
Jonesboro, Tenn., Oct. 17, 1873.

Our Sunset on the Hill.

The wind's low voice was silent,  
The whispering trees were still,  
When last we watched the sunset, love,  
Our sunset on the hill.  
You said its glow was shedding  
Its crimson on my cheek,  
And that my hair was tangled in  
Its last, great golden streak.

Then, in some sudden impulse,  
You drew me to your heart,  
As if 'twere heaven to hold me so,  
As if 'twere death to part.  
Low sank the sun and lower,  
And dark began to creep;  
It stole the gold from out my hair,  
The crimson from my cheek.

Yet there together standing,  
With hand now clasped in hand,  
We watched the solemn night descend  
O'er all the quiet land.  
I called your eyes the starlight,  
Because the sun had flown—  
(How selfish to be wanting, dear,  
A starlight of my own.)

And then, like happy children,  
Still clasping hands we went,  
With love's too slow, unwilling steps,  
Adown the hill's descent.  
O, life's one golden evening!  
I live to bless it still,  
When last we saw the sunset, love,  
Our sunset on the hill.

An odd New England deacon of the olden time was one day riding on horseback, when he was met by an old woman who had not so many of this world's good things as he had. Taking out his wallet he handed her a quarter and rode on. He had ridden only a short distance when he began to soliloquize: thus "Now wouldn't I have done better to have kept that money and bought myself something? Wheeling his horse round he rode back to where the old lady was standing, and said, "Give me that money! She handed it to him, wondering what it meant. Placing it in his wallet, and at the same time handing her a five dollar bill, he exclaimed, "There, self, I guess you'll wish you'd kept still!"

Carl Schurz has come back from Europe, well satisfied with the relative prosperity and discretion of America. He says that Austria is rotten, France haggard, Spain hopeless, and North Germany debauched with the sudden influx of money.

That Bonnet.

Going along the other day  
I saw—how ever she could don it?  
A woman only five feet four,  
And one foot six of that was—bonnet!

Her head had been a tidy head  
But for her big chignon upon it;  
Yet all was foiled, disfigured, spoiled,  
And swamped by said chignon and—  
bonnet.

On Sunday last she went to church,  
And took her book, as if to con it;  
And all the time that she was there  
She thought of little save her—bonnet.

The parson took a winning text,  
And tried to fix attention on it;  
But all in vain, for naught she cared,  
Except "the end of all"—the bonnet!

Yet stay! there is just one thing more  
I must include in this sad sonnet:  
She sometimes thought of women there  
Who envied her her mortal bonnet.

The luckless sermon, psalm, and prayer  
All went for nothing—out upon it!  
For every other woman there  
Was lost in hatred of—"that bonnet!"

That morn her husband was non est—  
His shirt neck had no button on it;  
For him she had no time to spare,  
Intent alone upon her—bonnet.

Now mark we well, whom it concerns,  
And think ye humanly upon it;  
How could ye make her such a "guy,"  
By recommending such a bonnet?

The Moderate Pulpit.

Much of the effort of the modern pulpit is devoted to showing that things which unregenerate manhood will persist in are not so sinful after all as Mother Church would have us think them. Thus the devil is not more likely to overtake a clergyman whose coat goes inside of two thirty-seven than the occupant of that lumbering pulpit on wheels, which can only pull through at the rate of two forty. Again, if the deacon overtakes the Sunday school superintendent on the Brighton road, each feels for a moment the unhallowed carnal ambition to reach the hotel first, and in the end one of them is chastened in spirit and mortified in the flesh—as one of them must be—by getting there second, why talk about the "old man," and the slippery ways, and all that? There be speedy saints as well as sulky sinners. Morality must mix up with every day life and not keep aloof. Have we not already pastoral pastors, and church lotteries, and kitchens and services for feasting as well as fasting? Have we not the namesake of one theological organ in the "Mambina Pilot? Have we not Flora Tempel and the (Hiram) Drew theological seminary? Surely whatever is, is right; and if some muscular Christian preachers are less proficient in bowling temptations than ten-pins we must value them for the good they possess and not look for what they have not. The centrifugal tendency of the contribution box may well be counteracted by the centripetal power of the church saucer, and the excellencies of cookery supplement the short comings of preaching. Whatever well-conducted people wish to do they must be allowed to do, if not encouraged to do, and the pulpit's task to justify it. The day of asceticism and severity, we are told, is past, and from reading some Monday morning sermons we are inclined to think so. The higher moral influence of "seven up" may soon be desecrated upon.—*Boston Journal.*

Is this the Heroic Age.

That noble lives are lived by quite ordinary people, who say nothing about it, is once in a while proved by the noble deaths that suggest the story of the unheard of years preceding them. Such a life must have been that of James Marr, who recently, near the Australian coast, was washed overboard by a heavy sea, which at the same time carried away the mainmast of the schooner. Marr clung to the mast until he saw, with the quick eyes of an old seaman, that it hampered the vessel; then simply enough, and without a word, he gave up his only chance of life for his comrades sake. He motioned them to cut the mast adrift; they bade him good by, and he nodded for answer as he quietly sank back in the waves.

We have only to assail railroads and railroad securities for a very few weeks to bring every branch of industry to the verge of ruin, to fill every household with dismay, and to destroy abroad the credit or power of borrowing money to which so much of our past prosperity has been due, and from which so much of our future prosperity must come.—*The State.*

Squabbles, an old bachelor showed his stockings, which he had just darned, to a maiden lady, who contemptuously remarked, pretty good for a man darning. Whereupon Squabbles remarked "Yes, good enough for a woman, darn her."

Upon this Plea We ask You to Pay the Printer.

Printers are most patient and faithful toilers, and, therefore, we do not wish to be continually "blowing" about their hard, hard lots; nor do we at all mean this little article as a dun—either directly or indirectly. But printers do serve the public faithfully, and we bespeak for them a generous return. From early morn to noon, and from noon to midnight, often, they strive to tell you of the world.

How quiet the compositors are, and yet how fast they pick up the type! There is a sort of nervous stillness in these men, and it grates harshly on their feelings to have this stillness broken. There must be no loud talking, no whistling, no singing, no mirth in a printing office. Occasionally, in some dark corner where ink kegs are, a "devil," who has not quite forgotten the outside world, gives vent to a smothered laugh, as memories of the clown loom up before him; but, with an awful frown and in a querulous tone, the dreaded foreman scares him into silence. The sun goes down, and the moon comes up; but still they work. Passers-by become less frequent, and the lights in the shop widows go out; but still they toil. Even the red oyster lights fade away at length; but still they work. At last the pale moon, dying away, sheds her light on a sleeping world; but still the printing press is rumbling, and the editor is thinking and writing and mailing, and the printers are "setting," and the devils are—tired and drooping.

Hale old farmer, you have striven hard to day, and this sweet rest which you are taking now, in the quiet watches of the night, is good for your tired body. But away in a distant town nimble hands and active minds are plotting to render to you in its most attractive form the papers, containing the *very latest* news.

It has been said that "there is a Divinity that shapes our end, rough hew them as we will." We accept this trite but true saying, and we blow our fingers on icy mornings with cheerful hearts, and we eat our *light* frugal meals with a keen relish, for we know that our Divinities have "shaped our end," to wear no gloves, to eat no fat, brown capons or veal cutlets. But we think differently concerning these printers; we believe—we know—that their Divinities have intended them to wear gloves and eat capons, and we, therefore, urge you to bring in your names, with the money, in order that we may enable these men to carry out the dictates of their Divinities.—*N. C. Gazette.*

A Sharp Repartee.

The spectators in a court-room always enjoy the retort, when a lawyer, when badgering a witness, receives short replies at his own expense. Sympathy is always against the lawyer. Even half-witted persons sometimes hit the weak point in the harness.

"William Look—Tell us, William, who made you?"  
William, who was considered a fool, screwed up his face and looked thoughtful, and somewhat bewildered, answered, "Moses, I suppose."

"That will do," said Counselor Gray, addressing the court. "Witness says he supposes Moses made him. That is an intelligent answer; more than I thought him capable of giving, for it shows that he had some faint idea of Scripture. I submit it was not sufficient to entitle him to be sworn as a witness capable of giving evidence."

"Mr. Judge," said the fool, "may I ask the lawyer a question?"  
"Certainly," said the Judge.

"Well, then, Mr. Lawyer, who do you suppose made you?"  
"Aaron, I suppose," said Counselor Gray, imitating the witness.

After the mirth had somewhat subsided, the witness drawled out, "Well, now, we do read in the book that Aaron once made a calf, but who'd a thought the critter had got in here?"  
The Judge ordered the man to be sworn.

A Scotch parson had a farming neighbor who was in the habit of shooting on Sundays, but after a while this Sabbath-breaker joined the Church. One day the minister to whose Church he belonged, met a friend of the farmer, and said:—  
"Do you see any difference in Mr. P. since he joined the Church?"

"Oh yes," replied the friend, "a great difference. Before, when he went out to shoot on Sunday, he carried his gun on his shoulder, but now he carries it under his coat."

Mankind may have been learning six thousand years, and yet how few have learned that their fellow-men are as good as themselves, and that the "laborer is worthy of his hire"

Hast thou now a sweet temper, whereas thou once wast passionate? Boast not of it; thou wilt be angry again yet if He leaves thee. Art thou now pure, whereas thou wast once unclean? Boast not of thy purity; it is a plant, the seed of which was brought from heaven; it never was within thy heart by nature; it is of God's gift and God's alone.—*Spurgeon.*

It is the wretched tendency of our times to base all calculations, all efforts, on this life only, to crowd everything into this narrow span. In limiting man's end and aim to this terrestrial existence, we aggravate all his miseries by the terrible negation at its close. We add to the burthens of the unfortunate the insupportable weight of a hopeless hereafter.—*Victor Hugo.*

Religion is becoming as easy to wear as an ancient well ventilated shoe, and is to be kicked into one corner when it is in anybody's way. Beecher says he likes the custom of asking the blessing before meals, "makes the bread taste sweeter," but for those who are indifferent "there is nothing obligatory about it." That is an item for Professor Blot. Gratitude to God is no longer a Christian virtue, but no mean condiment for cruet.—*Interior.*

An enterprising phrenologist once wrote to the late Charles Dickens, asking leave to make an examination of his cranium. Dickens replied: "Dear Sir.—At this time I require the use of my skull, but as soon as it shall be at leisure, I will willingly place it at your disposal."

The "hostile correspondence" between Ex-Governor Herschel V. Johnson and Governor Smith, of Georgia, is still in progress, having been already conducted for the rise of a year. Which reminds us of the venerable lady of 80 years who admitted to her physician that coffee might be a poison; but insisted that it had been a mighty slow poison with her.

A young man who was attending a night writing-school was captivated by the charms of a lady present, and at the close of the school pressed forward and asked if he might escort her home. "Yes," said she, if you will carry my little boy." He is gradually recovering from the shock.

A talkative man annoyed a lady at a dinner party by constantly arguing in favor of strong drink, and at last said to her, "You know, Madam, drinking drives away care and makes us forget what is disagreeable. Would you not allow a man to drink for that reason?" "Well, perhaps so," said the lady, "if he eat next to you."

If we could find a man who had a heart sweet all through, and a gentle will; without subtlety, yet of sound reason; at once wise and simple. He who has seen such a heart, has colors wherewith he may picture to himself what an angel is.

George Eliot makes one of her characters say: "Its poor work allays settin' the dead above the livin'. We shall on it us be dead some time, I reckon—it ud be better if folks ud make much on us beforeand, instid o' beginnin' when we are gone. Its but little good you'll be waterin' the last year's crop."

Prayer is the peace of our spirit; the stillness of our thoughts; the evenness of recollection; the seat of meditation; the rest of cares and the calm of our tempest. Prayer is the issue of a great mind of untroubled thoughts; it is the daughter of charity; and the sister of meekness.—*Taylor.*

Robert E. Forsyth, who recently died at St. Louis, was a man of remarkable memory. He used to be a land dealer, and Abraham Lincoln, who was his attorney, related that he had at one time eleven lawsuits on hand, all the details and

A Kentucky paper desires the restoration of the franking privilege, because it is a truly Democratic journal, and is "agin all abolition doin's."

The only paper which goes freely on the street is newspaper. It always offers sufficient interest to make it desirable as an investment.

General Jubal Early and M. Victor Hugo are both incensed beyond expression by the report that they exactly resemble each other.

Bret Harte's new Christmas story, in Scribner's monthly, will be entitled "A Monte Flat Pastoral; How Old Man Plunket Went Home."