

Selected.

BETHANY COLLEGE IMPRESSIONS.

Strangers on their visit to Bethany College are charmed with her matchless hills, green slopes, grateful shades and winding streams. How much more those who have, by years of pleasant student life, become wedded not only to these hills but, perchance, to some of the fair daughters of the hills also.

After an absence of fourteen years, many of which were spent in darkness of heathenism, it has been my great pleasure, through the good providence of God, to again be present in Bethany during the happy season of College Commencement.

The characteristic American question, "Well how do things strike you here?" has been asked me so frequently, as if I were half foreigner, if not half heathen, that I am minded to presume that there are some of the readers of the widely-read *Christian Standard* who would be interested in knowing what my impressions are on returning to "Bethany on the banks of the old Buffalo."

If my impressions of Bethany College were given in full they would be arranged under three heads. First: As a good place to come to. Second: As a good place to go from. Third: As a good place to come back to. The orators at the great Jubilee of Bethany College next year, when they assemble here from all parts of the world, will be greatly assisted by following some such original and comprehensive outline as I have given. The Alumni will most gladly testify to the experimental accuracy of the above three headings.

Criticise as we may (and who has not done so?) some of the mud puddles, side-walks, bad roads and plank fences—some of which are stragglers even to whitewash to this day—of Bethany corporation, yet artists and travellers from many lands admit that there is no more charming spot in all the world.

The real charm, however, of Bethany is in what she does for those who come here. Four to six years at Bethany transforms the Freshman, "green as grass" and awkward as a handspike, into a grave and reverend Senior, who has the inspiration and preparation to be and do his part in the world's great work. And when far from Bethany's quiet shades and granite hills, toiling in the conflict and battle of life, the strength of the lessons learned here gave fibre and grace to the soul.

But there is no feeling that so eludes the power of my speech as the emotion that a sight of the old campus and College buildings produce, as we come wending our way back again among the old and familiar hills and haunts of this sacred spot. We feel that the spirit and genius of the great founder of Bethany College, and the noble and great men who have given of their lives here in the cause of God and humanity, lingers and lives upon these everlasting hills, inspiring and blessing all who upon the heart and mind to heavenly influences.

The Forty-ninth Commencement just held has been one of the happiest of the happy seasons of Bethany. The universal verdict is that there has never been such a unique and excellent programme of exercises so perfectly carried out from beginning to end.

Sunday, June 15th, was the first of the great days, when old Bethany Church was crowded to overflowing to hear the first Baccalaureate sermon of President Archibald McLean. The day was grand and inspiring. The address was as perfect as the day, and we were all proud of Bethany's President. It was a masterly production, worthy of the occasion, and would have rendered honor upon any institution in the land.

In the afternoon a student's farewell prayer-meeting was held in the College Chapel. Especial

interest was centered in this meeting, as two of the students are going to China, and one to the far west, as missionaries. The students are supporting one of these. This missionary awakening is one of the surest signs of the progress of Bethany College. Thirty students are willing to go as missionaries to any part of the world. Alexander Campbell, the sage and founder of Bethany, who said, in 1859, "The missionary spirit is most genuine and satisfactory proof of our discipleship and our possessing the Spirit of our Father and Redeemer," must rejoice with the angel in heaven, to see Bethany alive to the great work of world-wide missions for Christ, our King.

In the evening another large audience assembled to witness the ordination of six young men to the Christian ministry. Of these, Brothron Bently and Muckley are going to China, and Bro. Mercer to Montana. Pro. Tribble preached an able and appropriate sermon, Bro. A. M. Atkinson, of Wabash, Ind., assisted in the highly interesting and enjoyable exercises. May there be many more such glorious days in the annals of Bethany.

The day of Commencement, when nineteen graduates received their diplomas, could not have been more beautiful, bright and pleasant. The class impressed me, both in public and private, as one of Bethany's most promising. The speakers acquitted themselves well. There was not a hitch or accident to mar the interesting proceedings of the day. It was a time of supreme delight to many students and friends. Long live the President, the Faculty, the class and the sweet memories of the happy day!

I shall note some of the changes that have taken place "since I last walked these dells." There is a new President. The Faculty has changed in every department. There is also a new janitor, as well as new street lamps, in Bethany. Ladies are gracing both College and Faculty, enjoying equal ~~privileges~~ *privileges, burdens and honors with the gentlemen.* There is a chair of New Testament Literature. The College chapel, class-room, hall, etc., have been tastefully papered. The chapel has new seats. There is a student's reading room, open daily, a Young People's Christian Endeavour Society and a Young Men's Christian Association. There is a gymnasium, field day and a promising infant Louvre Gallery. The students call their own roll by number. The three literary societies join in one performance on one evening, instead of taking one evening for each separately, during Commencement week. There is a good piano, and spirited singing every morning in the chapel. Only representative students deliver orations on Commencement Day. The hall is decorated with ferns and flowers. Solos are sung. There is no bogus programme. The friends and sweethearts give the graduates books instead of bouquets. Reception at the Heights the last evening is a kind of college lawn fete that makes a most happy and fitting conclusion of Commencement.

The prospects of Bethany College have not been so bright for many years. There is a larger number of students on the roll than ever before. There is new spirit and life in Trustees, Faculty, students and people. The former days were good, but the carrying forward of any well-begun work often requires change in method and administration. The trees planted by students in the Campus have grown larger. The changes in Bethany College are likewise growths of wise plantings, out of which will surely come her best and most prosperous days. There is good ground for confidence and hope. The President, Faculty and students are full of earnestness and enthusiasm. Business men are investing thousands in the College. The new dormitory will be completed by September. It will accommodate sixty students. The coming session will undoubtedly excel any that has ever preceded it.

In pressing forward, however, to the better things to come, there is no disposition to disparage the former days. There was nothing more beautiful or impressive during Commencement week than the respect shown the memory of the sainted noble dead who sleep in Bethany Cemetery. Bethany lives in the past, present and future. Long live Bethany!

G. L. WHARTON.

Bethany, June 23, 1890.

QUESTIONS OF THE DAY.

RELIGIOUS QUESTIONS OF THE TIME VIEWED FROM THE STANDPOINT OF UNIVERSAL THEOLOGY.

Suppose, instead of taking a vote on the question of revision of certain articles of the creed, and instead of but one communion being occupied therewith, the question of revision of Christianity itself should be taken up. And suppose, further, that instead of but one section, the whole of Christendom was interested in it. What an excitement there would be! How the finest minds would be agitated! Papers, magazines, pamphlets, would flood the whole community! The result would be of the utmost benefit. But this consummation, so very devoutly to be wished for, is not likely to be. We quoted last week from a letter in which the writer bewailed the effect created in the minds of the Japanese in their city of Tokio by reason of the diversities of religious opinion presented by the many Christian sects occupied in missionary work in that place.

That all who are active there are in earnest is certain. But to any Japanese capable of thinking, what a strange thing Christianity must be, if he pauses to examine the sectarian divergencies! And when he marks the animosities, jealousies, and rivalries, must he not come to the conclusion that these Christians do not love one another? They may unite in preaching and teaching the Word which enjoins mutual love; they may alike hold up the example of life offered by Christ. They may together declare that charity is a Christian virtue, that humility is another, and that unity is a third. But the thinking Japanese, as he ponders, must doubt the love of rival Catholic and Protestant; must condemn the hypocrisy of those who preach but follow not the example of Christ; must ridicule their assertions as to charity, humility, and unity, when they show so little of any.

Every Christian Church, by retaining its special differences, prevents Christian union. Every Church believing that it is the only holder of the keys of heaven must believe that the educated members of other churches are crassly obtuse, wickedly wilful, and therefore deservedly condemned to penalties.

What must our friend, the intelligent Japanese, think of all this?

"Do not be a Protestant," exclaims the Catholic missionary to him. "If you become one you will be everlastingly damned."

"Do not be a Catholic," exclaims the Protestant missionary in his turn. "If you become one you will be an idolator?"

"Yes," will chime in another Protestant, "the Pope is Antichrist?"

"Yes," indeed, adds another, "But if you do not become a member of my division of the great Protestant body, and receive our articles of faith as your articles, you will in the future life be condemned to everlasting punishment; you will be given to perpetual fires and never-ending pains."

"Not quite so," will reply another Protestant. "Our friend, a blue Presbyterian, is not quite correct. We do not know this for certain. We cannot believe it. We do not think that infants or people who have never known of Christianity or of this or that special Christian doctrine, will be condemned to such terrible pains and penalties. Better join us, think with us, and be a Congregationalist!"