

LETTER FROM THE REV. J. ROAF OF TORONTO,  
TO THE REV. H. WALKER.

LIVERPOOL, 28th April, '42.

MY DEAR BROTHER,—You kindly asked me to keep you informed of my movements while absent from the Province; and having arrived in this country, I proceed to give you a hasty report of my progress to this spot, as introductory to such narrations, as hereafter I may find opportunities to prepare for you.

I left Toronto in the night, between 27th and 28th March, to proceed, by the force of steam, by lake, and land, and ocean, from the most western city of the British Empire, to its "great metropolis." The modern facilities for speedy and pleasant travelling, may be used, as much to extend religion, as to promote commerce; and it is important for the advocates of Christianity to consider, whether they are not thus supplied with a means of action, of much more efficiency, than they have yet ascribed to it. From Rochester, (on the southern side of Lake Ontario,) I proceeded by rail-road to Albany, in twenty hours, and thence to the Atlantic at Boston, in ten. What a sensation of power does a man realize on a rail-road! A train of carriages, apparently self-moved, smoothly and quietly skimming along, at the rate of twenty-five miles an hour! Then, how effectually is listlessness prevented, by a rapid succession of scenes, and how easy is it to see the manners and arts of 'distant neighbourhoods, and how comfortably can children and feeble persons be taken from spot to spot, and what a tendency to sociality is there in the quietness and large companies in railway trains, compared with the reserve and corner-seeking of the old stage coaching! Surely great changes in the spirit, and social condition of man, are being brought about—changes, which we cannot conceive of, till they stand out, as accomplished. In history, we often see extensive, and almost fundamental revolutions, effected by the slow operation of disregarded influences—as so frequently the secondary and unperceived tendencies of events, have been more effective than those, which were, at the time, conspicuous; so, probably, new phases of domestic and public society, may now be preparing, to which there is in history nothing analogous.

To proceed with my journey:—I need not tell you of the curiosity and pleasure with which, as a Congregationalist, I passed through parts of the New England States, through the scenes in which the pilgrim-fathers found wildness, barbarism, and idolatry, and soon exhibited the triumphant efficacy of vital Christianity. Striking, indeed, is the contrast between those States, as they now are, and as they were, when they became the refuge of conscience, fleeing for liberty and independence. How great, too, is the number, and magnitude, and beauty of the sacred edifices, visible amongst every con-

siderable group of dwellings. Those who think that religion will become extinct, if not provided for by legislation, cannot be fully aware of the vitality and energy of Christianity; and the dispute between the advocates of voluntary, and of compulsory contributions to religion, appears to hinge upon the question, "Is there, or is there not, the spirituality in religion, which its advocates assert *that there is?*" In the Eastern States, there is recorded, not only the indomitable energy of conscience, and the self-supporting, and self-extending genius of Christianity, but the tendency of pure and unfettered religion, to promote domestic, and commercial and agricultural improvement. The comparative forwardness of the cultivation, the good condition of the houses, the intelligence of the people, the general absence of profanity and drunkenness, repeatedly roused my attention, and directed it to the principles by which the origin of these communities was distinguished.

How strange is it, that we Britons, and those, almost Britons, can ever think of going to war—aiming to destroy each other! and how deplorable is it, that so many persons, on each side of the frontier line, should be constantly engaged in generating contempt and hatred towards those on the other side of that line!! Our aversion to the Americans, seems to me to be as unfounded as their animosity to us.

Arrived at Boston, the steam-ship "Columbia" had arrived with her machinery broken, and was to return under sail. Is a steam-ship safe in navigating the Atlantic "under canvas?" was my enquiry. And before I could reach an answer, I remembered, that in these British American Mail-steamers, there are not now allowed any ministrations of Clergymen, not of the British Establishments; and that, where no Minister of those Churches is on board, the Captain is to officiate in holy things! I did not like the idea of sitting by while such a personage acted as God's holy minister. I did not like to have the validity of my ministerial character disparaged, and by my act to acquiesce in the disparagement. I did not like to see the Atlantic converted into an additional parish of an established church—and soon determined to submit to the inferior accommodation and speed, supplied by the sailing packet. To New York I then turned—and by railway to Stonington, and by steam boat through Long Island Sound, reached that port in fourteen hours. I trust the proprietors of the "Cunard" steam ships will deliver themselves from the influence of "the intolerants," before their line becomes permanently injured. They will find conscience sensitive, and stern, and powerful.

From New York, I took passage in the fine packet "Ectope,"—the ship in which Dr. Reed and Matthewson crossed and re-crossed the Atlantic. I was happy in having as a fellow passenger, the Rev.