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Contributors and Correspondents

RECOLLECTIONS OF STUDENT LIFE IN GERMANY.

XII.—IN THE MOUNTAINS.

The German never thinks of concluding a meeting of any kind, not even a singing school, where the national beverage cannot be had conveniently. Indeed this mild stimulant seems peculiarly necessary to the *gingus ingenium* of a civic dignitary, for underneath every *Rathe-haus* (town hall) there is a *Ratheskeller*, which is usually the most aristocratic eating and drinking house in the whole place—quite consistently, that in Berlin is said to be the finest in Germany. Our Lossnitz *Gesangverein* had selected the town hall for their meetings, consequently beermugs made their appearance along with music books, and hold sway for mo o than an hour after Herr Director had loc ed the piano and carried of the "solid portion of the company with him. What an incongruous mingling of the sublime and the casual, to be listening entranced to a glorious burst of music from "Haus Heiling," and suddenly catch sight of an exhausted performer in the very front row reanimating his (or her?) energies with lager. I confess that I felt quite scandalized when Frau Directorinn, after singing a difficult solo successfully, coolly walked around to the other side of the piano and, lifting her husband's glass, "wet her whistle," or rather, soaked it if one were to judge by the quantity of moisture imbibed.

When the singing was over the piano was wheeled into a corner, and the jovial part of the company drew together around a long table. Fun and song were the order of the evening. Merry talk and quick repartee showed that the wits of Hans and Gretchen are quicker than we sometimes give them credit for. Perhaps here in the clear air of the mountains the *fogs* of the plain are wanting, and so mental fogs are wanting too. *Flirtation* looks very much the same in German as in English, and although I could not hear what Ernst was whispering to Hedwig at the other end of the table, I had a pretty shrewd guess.

The evening wound up with one of the most ridiculous parodies of the National Anthem that I have ever heard. The Saxon Anthem is the same as ours—words and music; of course they claim to be the original possessors of it, an assumption which, as a loyal subject in duty bound, I always combatted. However these irreverent youngsters in the Erzgebirge paroded its solemn words as follows, singing with due decorum:

I.

Wer Wurst im Tiegel hat,
Wer Wurst im Tiegel hat,
Hat Tiegel-Wurst.
Wer Wurst im Tiegle hat,
Wer Wurst im Tiegel hat,
Wer Wurst im Tiegel hat,
Hat Tiegel-Wurst.

"Who sausage has in pot" &c.,
Has pot-sausage."

II.

Das war der erste Vers,
Das war der erste Vers,
Der erste Vers.
Nun kommt der zweite Vers,
Nun kommt der zweite Vers,
Nun kommt der zweite Vers,
Der zweite Vers.

"That was the opening verse, &c.,
The opening verse."
"Now comes the second verse,
The second verse."

III.

Wer vor der Schule steht, &c.,
Ist Schul-verstand

"Who o'er the school presides,
Is president.

"We go no further now,
No further now."

The second is repeated after each alternate verse with the necessary change in the numerals. One must acknowledge that the song thus rendered is a grand improvement upon the classical "Old Grimes."

A lively snowball fight in which men and maidens took active part was the *finale* to the evening's amusements for most of us, but a more tender parting was the lot of some, for entering my friend's house a little after the rest, I found that there was some in the dark hall, and I heard a sound like—well, you know how it is yourself. They do some things in Germany very much as we do. Muller writes me that one of his sisters is "verlobt" (engaged); I could have *foretold* that a year ago. They like to make sure in Germany before telling anybody.

The Germans make a good deal of Christ mas as everyone knows. The poorest family has its Christmas tree, but here in the mountains I found no elaborate substitute for it. In one corner of the room the children, assisted by "Onkel Vater," erect a mound of painted wood, moss, etc., to represent the plains of Bethlehem with its sheep and shepherds, and gauze angels with gilt trumpets are suspended over their heads. In defiance of chronology, and with truly Kostis contempt of space and time, the stable with its ox and ass, and holy family are represented, the usual presenting their gifts while a little piece of clockwork raises camels, elephants, etc., laden with eastern spices, duly labeled, to pass in review, and at another spot is king Herod with his counciors interrogating these same wise men. Bits of colored glass with tapers behind them served to illuminate the whole at night, and gave it an exceedingly pretty appearance. In some house a perfect fir tree reaching almost to the roof was built and even real shrubs grow on it in concealed pots. "What a nuisance it must have been!" some thrifty housewife may say. But is it not worth the nuisance to impress more vividly upon the child's mind the reality of the child-saviour? Besides the sympathetic home-love which is displayed in the equal pride of parents and children, the rude piece of work is worth much.

The scenery was of course beautiful. As the name "Earth-mountains" would lead one to expect, there are not many rocky gorges, but the country presents the aspect of steep hills covered with pine plantations. From the hill above Lossnitz we looked down upon the red tiled roofs and white walls of the compact village, with its massive church on a small eminence in the centre. At our back were more hills and forests, and before us, away in the distance six miles off, shining against the mountains beyond, was the town of Schesberg, with its huge bell tower, and fragrant in the nostrils of all true Germans for its sanitary "Shesberg snuff."

My visit came to an end all too soon. Very pleasant indeed, after the mud and mist of Leipsic, were the strolls over the hills, with as blue a sky over head, and as sparkling snow beneath the feet as we have in Canada. In the bustle of this western world, where a city sometimes springs up before the stumps of the forest have had time to disappear from its streets, we can hardly appreciate the repose of a mountain village where the descendants still life in the houses which their forefathers built before the first oak of the surrounding "Urwald" had fallen centuries ago. In these bye-paths of travel one finds much that is interesting, and is altogether unnoticed in the journals of those who follow blindly the guide book.

SHOULD NOT THE STRONG ASSIST THE WEAK?

When Joab, David's captain, was about to be attacked by the Syrians in front and the Ammonites in the rear, dividing his brave warriors into two bands, and placing one of these under the command of his brother Abishai, he made to him the following exceedingly natural and soldier like proposal. "If the Syrians be too strong for me, then thou shalt help me: but if the children of Ammon be too strong for thee, then I will come and help thee. A beautiful motto for Christians, and especially for those of the same church, in carrying on warfare against its numerous foes. Yet *facts* speak very differently.

Two congregations exist perhaps in the *same* locality. Each has *its* minister, while one could do the work of both. Union would give some famished station another laborer. They were independent congregations however before the union. Give way neither will, come what may of weaker stations.

A *country* congregation requires dividing. On some outskirt members have to come many miles to church. Organization there would bless the needy neighborhood, strengthen the cause, and perhaps by union there with would save some other weak outlying station; yet the central congregation mightily opposes this, simply to save pockets that God has filled. The late Isley Burns, in a lecture on Church History, has the following passage: "The Christain from the banks of the Euphrates carrying with him the letters of his bishop, is at home and amongst brothers on the banks of the Rhine." When we think of the painful indifference in some strong centres, we almost reluctantly conclude those golden days have passed away.

A *city* congregation is ready for branching. Many on the outskirts are being picked up by other denominations. Branching would prevent this, and carry the gospel to others needy. Said congregation however is the largest in the city, its constituents the largest, and its minister the best paid. The members of that church will not branch, their church would then be second. *Selfish* men, *others* will take their crown. In the same city a weaker church takes up the neglected field, though bleeding financially at every vein. *Noble* men, to them it will be said: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these," etc.

A pastor not *much* in love with his work has an excellent opportunity of establishing another congregation *in some rising* locality adjoining. The field is open and its wants are many. He does not preach the gospel there, for this would entail labor; he opposes the establishment of a mission station there, for there some of his members reside, so he contents himself in his manger with his bone, still that field is lost to our church.

Some *struggling* young man has his heart set upon the work of preaching Christ. Yet financial difficulties beset him before and behind; without assistance from some quarter he must turn aside. A much needed workman is lost to the church. How pleasant to reflect that a little timely assistance from some man of wealth, or congregation of means would bottle a wave of blessing that would roll on till it broke on the shores of eternity, and how depressing to *know* that such is too seldom given. Our church in Formosa is weak and struggling, though gaining strength from day to day. The Rev. Mr. MacKay is toiling manfully, while Dr. Fraser has made a sacrifice, a great one, that he may assist him. Means are wanted by this weak cause. Let us who are strong and have abundance supply them.

Feel assured that a church destitute of spiritual sympathy, is just in that proportion destitute of spiritual life.

SAULT STE. MARIE.

Editor British American Presbyterian.

Sir,—As long reports are sometimes sent you from sentry-boxes belonging to the Presbyterian army scattered over the Dominion, one from such an important outpost as this will, perhaps, not be rejected. You have sometimes reason to complain of correspondents who transgress the anti-Presbyterian post Butler's rule, that

"Brevity is very good,
When we are or are not understood."

I trust, however, that the interesting character of my letter may preclude any ground for such a complaint. Yet if, perchance, any readers of this should grow impatient, let them not set it aside without carefully perusing and pondering well what is contained under the last two headings, and resolving, above all, to make a liberal response to the appeal with which it closes.

CLIMATE IN WINTER.

We have had a very cold and stormy winter here, the severest experienced for many years, according to that somewhat mythical personage "the oldest inhabitant." Two or three times the thermometer registered as low as 40° below zero; yet, with the exception of a few days when we had intense cold coupled with high winds, I have not experienced so much inconvenience from the cold as was expected. I have observed, respecting the cold here, that it is drier and far less chilly than you have it in Toronto, owing perhaps to the fact that the snow seldom melts in any degree here until spring sets in. I have noticed also that it wonderfully sharpens an appetite whose ordinary condition is a healthy one. In spite of the cold, the winter seems to have passed rapidly away. The snow averages three or four feet in depth, and is only now beginning to feel the influence of the mid-day sun. It melts gradually; and it is owing to this, and the protection which it affords to the soil (in which it is said there are only two or three inches of frost), that vegetation is so rapid in these northern regions.

CLIMATE IN SUMMER.

I need say very little on this point, as the delightful salubrity of the climate at the Sault is well known. The days are almost as hot as in lower Ontario, while the nights are cooler and more pleasant. And last fall we had fine weather almost to the middle of November.

THE GREAT WANTS

of this place are a population, especially a good farming community, and a railroad. There is along these northern shores a romantic, healthy, and extensive country, covered with forests, and awaiting settlement. True, it is not all adapted for agricultural purposes; but large tracts of it have excellent soil, on which almost anything may be raised except the larger fruits. The smaller kinds of fruit can be produced in abundance. The streams are numerous, and well stocked with fish. All that is wanted is a sturdy yeomanry—"their country's pride." We have a few good specimens of the farming class; but we want thousands more. It was sad to witness, as we did last summer, so many emigrants,

"Forced from their homes, a melancholy train,
To traverse climes beyond the western main;"

passing by the Sault to a region which I think must be, on the whole, taking everything into account, inferior to this. Farmers who have large families of sturdy sons in Ontario, and who feel pinched for room, need not go so far away as Manitoba. Let them come to the Sault. There is land enough in this region to support thousands of families. We want an honest class of farmers, who will cut hardwood four feet long, and pile it fairly, and above all, who are not given to drink. Those who have brought themselves to reduced circumstances in lower Ontario by intemperate habits had better remain where they are, unless they resolve to abandon such habits, for their temptations here would, perhaps, so even greater than below, owing to the more secluded life of the farmer in sparsely settled districts.

Another great desideratum is a railroad to connect with eastern Canada, from which we are isolated for six months in winter. We trust the Government will extend the railway which they propose to build to French River, westward, as soon as possible, to the Sault. Our American cousins expect soon to have railway connection with Marquette. If two such lines were built, and united together by a bridge over the rapids here, this little village would soon swell to the proportions of a city. At least such is our dream, which we hope will not be all a dream.

BUSINESS

has been very dull at the Sault this winter, and is very scarce, owing largely to the fact that there has been very little work going on at the new canal on the other side. I am glad to see, however, that the American Government have resolved to push on the works there, and have granted the money required. This will greatly improve matters on both sides of the river. We expect business to be very brisk next summer, as several important buildings are going to be erected. Besides the usual number of dwelling houses and stores, of which latter, perhaps, we have enough already, the Roman Catholic community will erect a handsome cathedral, which will be of stone quarried from the new canal on the American side. The Episcopalian denomination have commenced a fine residence for the Bishop of Algoma; and

THE PRESBYTERIANS

have resolved on erecting a neat and sufficiently commodious place of worship, hoping to be liberally assisted by their brethren throughout the Dominion. A liberal-hearted gentleman—a resident of the place, but not at all connected with the congregation—has very generously made us a present of a fine site for a church, at the head of a street leading down to the river, a position similar to that which our new College occupies with respect to Toronto Bay. But this gift is made on condition that we undertake to have a neat church erected upon it by December next. We feel, therefore, that now is our opportunity to establish our cause here. The people here have subscribed liberally to this object according to their number and means; but the larger portion of the funds requisite must come from our brethren in Canada.

I have called this an important outpost. It is, perhaps, more important than our Church is aware of. While the place itself is growing, and is likely to become a place of importance, it is already a favorite resort of tourists in summer, who come from all parts of the States and Canada. A number of ministers of all denominations, with their families, visited this region last summer, amongst them a distinguished Presbyterian divine of New York city. And does not our Church expose its weakness, or rather misrepresent its strength and influence, by having no decent place of worship here, while the two other Protestant denominations—the Episcopalians and Methodists—although very little superior in point of numbers, have neat and comfortable church edifices? Those churches were, I believe, erected almost entirely by and received from their respective main bodies throughout Canada. And why should not we Presbyterians have assistance—and liberal assistance too—from our brethren in the wealthier and more favoured parts of the Dominion? We would therefore make an earnest

APPEAL

to our brethren for assistance. We do not aim at a grand or costly building; yet, as any building is comparatively costly in this remote region, I have no doubt we will need all the aid we can procure. If sufficient money could be raised to erect a manse also, it would greatly add to the inducements for a minister to settle here in future. A church, however, is all we aim at in the meantime; and we trust that God so blesses our efforts, and that they are so liberally seconded by our brethren throughout Canada, that we shall be able to erect before next winter a building that shall not disgrace the Presbyterian name, and shall not be altogether unworthy of being consecrated as a house of worship. Mr. Charles P. Brown, of this place, who is now on a visit to friends in Toronto, has been duly authorized by our congregation, to which he himself belongs, to solicit subscriptions for us. We trust that he will be kindly received by friends upon whom he calls, and that he will be successful in his efforts. A gentleman of Meaford kindly sent us ten dollars, unsolicited, upon hearing that we were going to erect a church. Let his good example be largely followed. Let every Presbyterian who has ever enjoyed a trip to our noble lakes and rivers, and who has looked with admiration upon this romantic and beautiful spot, give us a few dollars, and amongst them let the reporter of the *Globe*, who visited us last summer, and who, if I mistake not, is a well-known Presbyterian of Toronto, and who called this place an "Indian village," (doubtless because no Presbyterian Church was visible), give us ten dollars by way of amends, beside the much larger amount which I have no doubt he will willingly give from a higher motive, and we should very soon have a comfortable church, free from debt. Rev. Mr. Reid, of Toronto, and Rev. Mr. Cochrane, of Brantford, will kindly take charge of contributions from those who may not be personally called upon, and who may be inclined to give to this laudable object.

W. K.

Sault Ste. Marie, March 23, 1875.

Is Baptismal Regeneration the doctrine of the Scottish Branch of the Reformed Church?

Editor British American Presbyterian.

Sir,—In the controversy regarding the efficacy of Baptism, which the minister in the post-baptismal prayer of the "Book of Common Order" prayed that the child might not lose, it appears to me that it is forgotten that our present standards were framed by Englishmen, and are, to some extent, a compromise with the Independents who held Zwinglian views on the subject of the sacraments. The chapter xxviii in the Confession of Faith is certainly ambiguous; stating baptism to be "a sign and seal of *regeneration*, of remission of sins,' etc., it continues in Sec. 6:

"The efficacy of baptism is not tied to the moment of time wherein it is administered, yet, notwithstanding, by *the right use of this ordinance*, the grace promised is not only offered, but really exhibited and *conferred* by the Holy Ghost, to such (whether of age or *infants*) as that grace belongeth unto, according to the counsel of God's own will, in his appointed time."

That surely reads like a Zwinglian concession to a "higher" doctrine, and merely repudiates the idea that, in point of time, the sign and thing signified are contemporary, while it asserts that the right use of the ordinance is the divinely appointed means of conveying the grace promised. The consistency of the clause is surely open to question.

To explain this ambiguity, it would be necessary for us to search the minutes of the Westminister Assembly, to discover, if possible, the position taken by the Scottish Commissioners, and the reason for the adoption of each clause. These minutes are now published, and it is to be hoped that a copy will soon be added to Knox College Library. The teaching of the Church of Scotland, may, however, be discovered very clearly from the writings of her divines, her books of discipline, and the catechisms which she ordered to be taught to her children. The first of these I have not yet sufficiently studied, and the second I have not at hand. I would beg, however, to submit the following quotations from a few catechisms in use in Scotland before 1600.

"Calonis Catechism," "approved and used by the Kirk of Genova, and by the whole Reformed Church of France; used by the Kirk of Scotland; ordinally printed with the Book of Common Order; and approved by the First Book of Discipline, Eph. iv. 20;" (title page 1564) was taught in Scotland in the time of Melville, and its use commended by the church. In this book occur the following:

828. Moderat thou then that the water standeth in none other stead unto us but as a figure?

A. It is such a figure as *hath the verite joyned unto it*, for God keepeth his promise and deceiveth no man; wherefore it is certaine that remission of sine, and newness of life is offered to us in baptism, *and that we receive the same thereon*.

829. Is this grace receyved indifferently of all men?

A. No, for divers through their wickedness cause it to stand them in no stead. Nevertheless the sacrament loseth not his propertie, albeit that none *lede* the comfort thereof, but only the faithfull.

The "Palatine Catechism" was "composed by Lasbary Ursin, approved by Frederick III., Elector Palatine, the Reformed Church in the Palatinate, and by other Reformed Churches in Germany; and taught in their schools and churches; examined and approved without any alteration by the Synod of Dort, and appointed to be taught in the Reformed Churches and schools of the Netherlands. Translated into English, and printed Anno. 1591 by publike authority, for the use of Scotland;" (title page 1721.) Question 70 is as follows:

Why then doth the Holy Spirit call Baptism the Washing of Regeneration, and the Washing away of Sins?

A. God doth not without great cause so speak, to wit, not only to teach us, that as the Spots of the Body are cleansed with Water, our sins are purged by the Blood and Spirit of Christ; but much more, that by this heavenly Token and Pledge, he may assure us, that we *are* as truly washed inwardly from our Sins, as we are washed with outward and visible water.

Nos. 69, 70, 71, and 74, teach the same doctrine, which, viewed in connection with infant baptism, certainly indicates regeneration in and through baptism.

The catechisms by Mr. John Craig, first minister at Aberdeen, were at one time extensively used. The larger was deemed too extensive for general adoption, and the author condensed it by request of the General Assembly of 1591. In its shorter form it was used in the Church of Scotland till superseded by the Westminister. Under the section "of the Sacrament of Baptisme," occur the following questions:

What doth the laying on of water signifie?

Our dying to sin, and rising to righteousness.

Doth the external washing works these things?

No, it is the work of God's Holie Spirit onlie.

Then the sacrament is a bare figure?

No, but it hath the veritie joyned with it.

Does all men receive these graces with the sacraments?

No, but onely the faithfull.

The language of the shorter edition is quite consistent with this.

The doctrine of these writings seems to be, that by the working of the Holy Spirit, God's elect are regenerated in the sacrament of Baptism; but, like the prodigal, who remained a son even while in the far country, so the child of God may wander far from his Father's house, but will return, for he is a son and not an alien. Indeed this view does seem most consistent with the Doctrine of the Supper in our standards, and with the definition of a Sacrament in general.

"A Sacrament is a holy ordinance instituted by Christ; wherein, by sensible signs, Christ and the benefits of the new covenant, are represented, sealed, and applied to believers."

T.P.P.

There is a secret power in the good man's prayers, which is scarcely felt by others, whether this power is ever explained or not. It is the mystery of godliness; undiscernible in that mystery which, like an atmosphere, it compasses a minister of the gospel.