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REV. E. B. DeMILL, A. M., Editor

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Original Contributions

LETTERS TO A YOUNG MINISTER.

DEAR YOUNG BROTHER:—
Some time ago I pointed out to you as a preacher of the gospel, the duty and the necessity of spending a reasonable portion of your time in study.

It is true you are to know nothing but Christ and Him crucified, but it is a right matter to understand this doctrine, this hidden mystery which angels' prayers vainly sought to solve. Simple and intelligible as are the terms in which the gospel is expressed, it presents themes of contemplation and investigation of the utmost importance, and which will fill all your time and energies.

It reveals the fact that Christ died to save sinners, but what is the nature and the attributes of the being who accepted this sacrifice? What was the nature, and rank, and character of him who submitted to this death—where is he now—and what is he doing? What are the duties which the gospel implies? What effect has it upon the individuals who receive it, or the communities in which it is proclaimed? How is it to be maintained and propagated? These are all important enquiries; the professed teacher of religion ought to be able to reply to them.

There is no department of reliable knowledge but may be of advantage in assisting you to understand, explain, illustrate, and enforce the great truths of the gospel. Natural science will prove to you the existence of the Deity, and deeply impress on your mind with a sense of his infinite power, knowledge, wisdom, and goodness. History will reveal the character of man, and show that there is a Governor of the nation who has all power upon earth, and whose power and moral attributes are made known by the judgments which he executes. Intellectual philosophy will describe the faculties of the soul and their mode of operation; its teachings will also assist you to understand how your gospel influences men. Moral philosophy descends into the deepest recesses of the soul, investigates the nature and authority of the moral sense, and assists in discovering our duties to ourselves, our neighbors, and our God. The true heavenly minister of the gospel may study to advantage all these branches of knowledge, and find in every reliable account of the operations of God in the material universe, or among the nations of the earth or in the individual soul, something which will nourish and stimulate his own mind, and aid him to appreciate more correctly the gospel of the son of God, and enable him to unfold its mysteries so as to enlighten the views and stir the hearts of his hearers.

But the Bible is the great authority in all matters connected with religion; it satisfactorily answers all enquiry which relates to the nature, character and will of God, or the sanctification and salvation of man.

This volume however was written in language which we are not familiar, its revelations were made at various times and in various ways. To understand its contents you must become acquainted with the history, manners and customs of the people to whom its teachings are originally addressed. You must also be able to discover the particular object for which each book was written, and the peculiar character or ability of the writer. You should also penetrate into the many obscurities which you find in the Scriptures, which originate in the language in which they were written, the customs of the Jews, so diverse from ours, or the nature of the subject treated of. You will also find it necessary to frame a system of doctrine to satisfy your own mind, and also to warn when you are on the verge of heresy.

While the Bible should be the book chiefly studied it is very evident that we need assistance to understand its revelations, and to classify its doctrines. As you are about to furnish yourself with a library let me give you an catalogue of books which you will find to be of great vitality in your efforts to understand or expound the contents of the Bible.

You will find John's Biblical Archaeology, and Kitto's Biblical Encyclopedia very useful in explaining to you any allusion to the manners, customs, history and religious observances of the Jews.

In seeking to classify and harmonize the doctrines of Scripture, Aedie's Analytical Concordance, with almost any standard work on systematic theology, Dwight, Woods, Dick, Knapp, are all good and may be readily obtained. I would also recommend you to avail yourself of the assistance afforded by Edwards on the Will, Muller on Sin, and McCosh on the Divine Government.

To become acquainted with the constitution of the primitive church, I know of no more valuable books than Crowell's Church Members Manual, Neander's Planting and Training of the Christian Church, and Whately's Kingdom of Heaven.

But it will not be sufficient for you to acquire such knowledge of the doctrinal contents of the Holy Scriptures, as may be gained by the study of Human production. You must examine the Holy Volume, book by book, chapter by chapter, and verse by verse. In this way only will you understand the Scriptures, and be able to unfold their contents to your hearers. Your course will be slow, you will

not be regarded as a very eloquent preacher, or a very profound theologian, but what is of greater importance you will grow in knowledge and the love of truth, and your hearers even if they do not learn to admire you, will have clear views of truth and duty.

In studying the Holy Scriptures in the manner above indicated you will need the aid of Commentaries. I shall now give you a catalogue of books which I know to be of value.

For the study of Passover—you will obtain the commentaries of Bush, on Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy; also Eschschmidt's Typology.

For the poetical books of the Old Testament, avail yourself of the assistance of Barnes on Job, Dr. Conant's translation of the Bible Union—Tholuck on the Psalms; Alexander on the Psalms, and Stuart on Proverbs, Alexander on Isaiah is very good.

The New Testament will occupy more of your time than the old, and consequently you will need a new set of commentaries in the study of this portion of Holy Writ.

For the study of the Gospels obtain Trench on the Parables; Trench on the Miracles; Neander's life of Christ; Brown's Discourses on our Lord, and Olshausen on the four Gospels.

We have very valuable commentaries on Romans. Hodges, Olshausen, Tholuck on Romans and Brown's Analytical Commentary, will all be found of great value to the student.

For Corinthians, Ephesians, Galatians and Thessalonians, Olshausen's commentaries are the most available.

Let me urge you to begin at once the study of some book of the New Testament. The passages of Scripture with which you will thus become intimately acquainted, will have a vast amount of time and trouble in the selection of texts, the information thus gained is constantly available, and this mode of study will give new life to the old ideas which have lain dormant in your mind.

P. S.—Any of the books mentioned above may be obtained through Mr. T. H. Hall of the Colonial Book Store. If not on hand they will be ordered immediately.

FEMALE EDUCATION.

Want of time, and consciousness of our inability to treat the subject as we would wish, have hindered us from sooner responding to your invitation to offer some remarks upon the state and wants of Female Education in our Province. The same causes conjoined, forbid more than a few brief articles at present.

The subject of Education, in all its phases, is one of those upon which so much has been said, and said so well, that the promise to place it in a new light, or to clothe it with a fresh interest would argue a strong confidence indeed, in one's own originality. The public mind is quickly assuaged by a succession of similar thoughts, upon related topics. And this effect is to be especially dreaded when the topic is of such a nature that its treatment is rendered additionally distasteful by the necessary implication of past shortcomings, and the tacit appeal for new energy and liberality in the future. The reflection that we may have been remiss in duty, or wrong in opinion—that our inaction may have been the result of indolence or timidity in ourselves, rather than of a lack of worthiness in the object—that our convictions may be the offspring of prejudice rather than enlightened judgment, is never a very agreeable one, and we are not usually grateful to the individual who suggests it. Such difficulties as these hedge up the approach to every subject which has a practical bearing, and, of course, the more the way of the writer on Education. In view of them, we approach our subject with diffidence. And yet it must be admitted that the fact of the existence of such difficulties, furnishes a strong proof of the worthiness of the subject and its claims, to our most earnest attention. If in venturing some remarks upon the necessity for a higher grade of female education, and upon its character, results, and tendencies, we should seem to repeat what that old and familiar, we can only say, in apology, but it has ever been considered pardonable to iterate and reiterate important truths, until such conviction is produced, as shall result in right and necessary action.

Some of our first observations shall apply to Education in the abstract, without regard to country or sex. Let no one think the attempt to argue the necessity of education, an idle one. It is not an admitted truism that it would be well for New Brunswick, well for the world, could every mind swell with the expansive life, every heart pulse with the new and mighty energy, which it is the province of a healthful and vigorous training to impart. There are very many who join in the outcry for a more comprehensive system of education, but few, we think, who could throw open the gates wide enough, and let the world see what the standard high school, to meet the requirements of our ascending and still aspiring humanity. One class, I deem, "small by degrees and beautifully so," fear to have the gates of the temple of knowledge thrown wide open, lest the in-crowding masses should jostle them in their self-appointed niches. They fear for the distinctness of "society" and "rank." They tremble for the "What!" say they, "shall the ignoble

people be helped to invade the secluded domains of refinement, and even to crowd into the consecrated circle of nobility? The soiled cow-dung of the farmer to work their way to the velvet drawing-room of the gentry—the ruddy hands of the milkmaid to draw water from keys polished for the taper fingers of ladyhood!—And they turn away in ineffable disgust. But however numerous in the fatherland may be the class to whom this abridgement from the mental world—a narrow-minded ancestry still clings, we may safely hope it has few representatives in our own province. Not that we care, or would for a moment wish for a state of society in which no grades existed—a literal leveling of all distinctions.—Such a state of things is, of course, as impossible as it would be unnatural. Ever reflective mind must discover a strangely-marked tendency to division and classification ingrained by the Creator's own hand, in the very nature of men. All that we would ask is, that the arbitrary boundaries which the unskilled hands of our ancestors have set up, should be suffered to pass unheeded to that oblivion towards which the enlightening sun of the age is fast sweeping them—that the social distinctions be left to take care of themselves. Then we may be sure the classifications will take place according to the natural laws; divisions correspond, as some one expresses it, to the plans of cleavage indicated by the all-wise creator in the mental formations.

Another class, a much more extensive one, we fear, stands out in striking contrast to the above. It consists of those who, voluntarily resting in the background themselves, look with jealousy upon those who are striving to attain a higher position, a standing more in accordance with the dignity and the capabilities of the nature which God has given them, or who are seeking to secure such advantages for their children and neighbors. These, too worldly-minded, or too full of prejudice to engage in the work themselves, are content with declaiming against the "pride" and "ambition" of those who do. The true secret often is, we fear, the prospect to which they cannot shut their eyes, of the ignorance and consequent feebleness and obscurity to which they are wilfully shutting up themselves and their dependents. Such a class is not the creation of fancy. Many weeks have not elapsed since we heard a father deploring in bitter tones the efforts that were being made for the establishment of a higher-toned school for females in his district. His imagination drew the saddest picture of the "pride," the petty divisions and disruption of social relation, which were to be the inevitable result. We suppose it is of little use to write with a view to the prejudice of such. They are not readers. Should there be any who have honest fear of such results, we would, with all diffidence, solicit their perusal of some observations we have hereafter to make upon the character and effects of genuine education.

Taking these two classes as representing the extremes, and crossing the vast space that separates them, we find it occupied by sects holding opinions of every variety and shade. The subject is one upon which every one has formed or adopted a theory. This man thinks provision should be made for the instruction of the masses in the rudiments of such branches of knowledge as promise to be of practical advantage; that one is for distributing broadcast, the means of information on general topics. One is for allowing the rude a hasty glance into all the sanctuaries of science and philosophy, by way of expanding and elevating their ideas; another thinks the most effective mental stimulus is given by an intimate acquaintance with the principles upon which the superstructure of some one art rests. One advocates the banishment of everything but "Reading, Writing, and Arithmetic, from common schools; a second puts in a plea for Geography; a third, for History; and a fourth, for Grammar. Mr. B. wants his boys to be educated, they have to do business in the world, but doesn't see that learning is needed for housework. Mr. C. on the other hand, thinks his sturdy sons can work their way in life, but means to elevate his daughters in the social scale, by making them "accomplished." Amongst all these, how few there are who seem to get any enlarged views of the real office and dignity of an educational process; who seem to regard it as anything desirable, independent of the position, and prestige, and success in life it brings. How very small is the number whose enthusiasm is sufficiently strong, and whose faith in the adaptability of our present conditions of being to a supremacy of mental forces, a preponderance of the spiritual elements and affluities of our twofold nature, is sufficiently great to enable them to enter heartily into any scheme which contemplates so startling an aim as universal education. The pictured future, with all its ever brightening glories which open up on every hand before the student of the works, and laws, and word of God, is labelled "utopian" and consigned to a harmless oblivion amongst other offspring of the dreamer's brain. Now, we profess all due respect for those wise, "practical" men, who substitute everything for the cold scrutiny of reason, meaning by "reason," a due regard to the requirements of a capacious heart, and the healthful increase of an extensive nest of dimes, against the ever-expected rainy day. We admit that it would be huge folly to expect, in the ordinary sense of that word, a day when the

benefits of a high degree of intellectual culture shall be enjoyed in the remotest rural hamlet and its lowest cottage. And yet, we contend that such is the true goal for every true friend of education, principles may be right, though practice never can; the impossibility of a perfect result is no excuse for the absence of a perfect theory, which can be obtained. The fact that perfection in morals is unattainable, justifies no one in ceasing to make it his standard of effort. The same word of wisdom which sets in the strongest and clearest light our utter inability to attain anything like absolute rectitude in heart or life, constantly places before us the most sublime and uncompromising ethical laws, and exhorts us to be "perfect, as our Father in Heaven is perfect." The lofty and legitimate aim of the christian and the christian church, is to evangelize the world, and the more steadily this great end is held in view, the better will the heaven-born mission be accomplished, though no reasonable man expects that perfect result will be obtained till the millennial dawn. And so we hold, nothing is more necessary to the onward "march of intellect," than a deeper conviction of the duty of intellectual cultivation, a conviction rooted in broader views of its obligation as in the sight not only of ourselves and our fellow-men, but of Him who has written its necessity unmistakably on the tablets of the mind itself. From these considerations, we are led to ask space in your next number, for some thoughts on the necessity of education.

RECOLLECTIONS OF NAPLES.

No. 4.

When the visitor to Naples has spent a few days in wandering through the streets, in or visiting the churches, palaces, and museums, he will begin to think of the interesting objects or localities which surround this magnificent city. His attention will first of all be directed to the mountain which rises a few miles to the left, the most conspicuous object in every view from any quarter of Naples, and one of the wonders of the world.

One bright morning in February we with a party of several Americans left the city for the volcano. In a few moments we arrived by the Rail Road at Portici, a small town at the base of Vesuvius, built on the lava which ages ago overwhelmed Herculaneum.

We no sooner leave the cars than we are surrounded by a number of persons who suspecting our object offer ponies to carry us up the mountain, or poles to assist us in clambering up the cone. After a great deal of bargaining, each of the party is mounted on a rough and battered looking pony, armed with a pole of cork wood about five feet in length, and followed by a ragged looking rascal who holds on to the pony's tail. Thus equipped and attended we begin the ascent. At first we pass over a tract of the most fertile land in the kingdom of Naples. The lava on the gentle declivity of the mountain has in the course of ages mouldered into a soil of matchless fertility, nourishing the most valuable vineyards in Italy, and producing the celebrated wine Lacrima Christi, "Tears of Christ." Gradually this rich and fertile district is pressed, and we reach a dreary and desolate region. We did not ascend by the circuitous carriage road which gently winds half way up to the cone of the volcano, but by a more direct course known to our guides. When we first reached the rough and dreary region which stretches upward to the crater we were all in high spirits, and in great glee, the ponies trod up the rough ascent with considerable speed; our attendants puffing and blowing, yet clinging to the ponies' tails furnished us with material for amusement.

But gradually we came more serious. The course became increasingly dreary. Every sign of verdure vanished, and instead of the vine or the orange tree or the rank and luxuriant cactus, we have only large masses of lava scattered all around, or deep gorges which seem to have been formed in some terrible volcanic convulsion.

The wind which had been but a gentle breeze when we left Portici, increases in violence as we ascend, until it blows a gale. As we move along in single line up the steep ascent, over large masses of lava, or by the brink of some deep gorge the voice of laughter is hushed, and some violent gust of wind almost huris us from the saddle, we begin seriously to reflect on the probability of being dashed upon some block of lava or tossed over some precipitous cleft.

At length we reached the Hermitage of St. Salvador, about two thirds of the way from the base of the mountain to the base of the cone. After remaining at the Hermitage for a half hour or so to procure refreshments, and to brace up for the remainder of the journey, we again proceed. For about twenty minutes we stumble along over the thickly strewn masses of lava, and then finding that even the sure footed and well trained ponies can go no further, we leave them and continue our journey on foot. The walk from this point to the foot of the cone is very toilsome, and the scene indescribably desolate. No green thing meets the eye, the voices of the city and the country are alike hushed, and the vast field of lava blocks imbedded in ashes seem like the work of some omnipotent destroyer.

At length we reach the base of the cone and pause to rest before undertaking the fatiguing ascent. The guide points out to us the ancient crater, that from which was vomited forth the ashes which buried Pompeii, and the floods of lava which overwhelmed Herculaneum.

Now the toil of the day commenced. The cone is as steep as a Rail Road embankment, but instead of a firm and even soil we can only choose to climb up over rough blocks of lava, or through ashes into which we sink twelve or fifteen inches at every step. Experiences soon taught us to prefer the lava, to the light and slippery ashes. The poles which we had purchased at Portici were now found to be of great utility, indeed we could scarcely have advanced without them. The ragged gentry who had clung so tenaciously to the tails of the ponies, in the earlier period of our ascent now offered their services. They were provided with a sort of harness which they attached to themselves and then wished to attach to us. In vain they inveigled us into the ashes to wear us; in vain they told us of the impossibility of reaching the ascent without their aid. We persisted in declining their

services, until in deep disgust they left us, and when they had reached the bottom of the cone relieved their feelings by kicking over some chairs which had been left there.

After toiling for about three quarters of an hour we reached the summit of Vesuvius. Encircling the crater is a high bank of ashes from the top of which we can look down into the vast funnel of Vesuvius, or around upon the expense of country which stretches away for miles in every direction.

We found to our great delight that the wind which had annoyed us so much during the day, had blown over to the opposite side of the crater, and away towards the bay, the smoke and sulphurous vapors which in a calm day fill the vast cavity and ascend in a perpendicular column far on high. We stood for a while upon the edge of the crater. The soil beneath our feet was quite hot so that our guide after scraping away two or three inches of ashes, roasted an egg with which he refreshed himself. We look down into the vast funnel lined with blocks of lava and smoking ashes, and then for a time watch the smoke which perpetually ascends out of the dark gulph, in thick white masses. It seems like the very mouth of the pit of destruction.

But we determined while here to see all that was to be seen—to descend into the crater and stand upon the very brink of that frightful gulph. In vain our guide refuses to accompany us, in vain he tells us that we may be suffocated by the fumes of the sulphur, or may slip into the fiery pit. We determined to descend without him and in spite of his warnings. As we descend the soil becomes hotter at every step, the sulphurous vapors become thicker and more suffocating, but we keep on until we stand upon a crag of lava deeply imbedded in the ashes and on the very brink of the fathomless pit. We can look down only for a few feet, owing to the thick white smoke which perpetually ascends. If our feet were to slip, if that crag of lava were to move by our weight from its bed of ashes; what a horrible death! Years have gone by since we stood on that block of lava looking directly down into the throat of the burning mountain, yet we cannot recall that moment without a thrill of horror.

We picked up a few pieces of brimstone as a memorial of the visit and then hurried up out of the crater, and its hot and suffocating atmosphere. Our boots were nearly destroyed, the sulphurous fumes had turned the color of portions of our clothing, and the effects of that descent into the crater were perceptible in the breath, and the health of the entire party for several days afterward.

When once more on the summit of Vesuvius we pause to survey the scene spread before the eye. We look away from the dreary cavern and the horrible abyss of the volcano, to the regions below, the loveliest region in all the world, like the rich man in Hades surveying Paradise. Beneath the fields of lava and ashes lie spread the most fertile and populous portions of the kingdom of Naples. From Mola and Gaeta in one direction, and to the mountains of Calabria in another, everywhere the eye rests on scenes of matchless beauty, rendered more attractive by the contrast with the dreary and desolate scene immediately in view. The fertile Campania dotted with towns and villages, the magnificent city of Naples with its domes and palaces, the glorious bay surrounded by scenes whose beauty was sung ages ago by Virgil and Homer, constitute a panorama of exceeding beauty and of surpassing interest.

Here too from the summit of Vesuvius we can look down upon the site of Herculaneum and the partially excavated Pompeii. We can trace the course of the fiery torrent which overwhelmed the former city, and the direction of the destruction tempest which for ages berried the city of the plain. The emotion of awe with which we from the summit of the volcano contemplate those buried cities is heightened by the recollection, that the fearful destruction was a just retribution. The fearful eruptions was not simply a savage freak of nature, but the destroying agency of a just God.

The descent of the cone requires much less time and fatigue than its ascent. We now prepare for the light and slippery ashes, to the rough lava blocks, and in a few minutes are all assembled at the base. After we had come to the place where we had tied the ponies, we mounted once more and they trotted along with considerable speed until we came to the road which winds a long distance up the mountain. This is a magnificent road, and every turn opens up some new view. Our ponies were in good heart, and with a judicious combination of sight seeing and horse racing we finished very pleasantly the descent of Vesuvius.

A FATHER CONVERTED.—A pious young woman was filled with the most intense desires for the conversion of her father, who resided some miles from her. She did not hesitate to invite him to go to Christ when she had opportunity, but her main power she felt to be in prayer. At length there came upon her such ardent desires in his behalf, that she was literally in an agony. She could not pass a night without raising from her bed to make her supplication in his behalf.

Now look at the result. Her father had hurt himself in some way so that he could not work. There were meetings in his neighborhood, and he could attend them just as well as not. Although not at all striking religious views, yet he