

Pittsford, Monroe Co. N.Y.
Apr. 14, 1858.

My Dear Marvin:

Spent yesterday in a neighboring town, at a Conference of Congregational ministers & delegates; an exceedingly pleasant meeting. The subject of discussion was Individual Effort for the Conversion of Sinners. Different aspects or parts of this subject had been assigned, some weeks before, to different ministers; the part that fell to me was Causes of the Neglect of this Duty. The concentration of so much talk on a single point must leave a deep impression on the mind of a congregation. Was rather taken aback by their requesting me to preach their next sermon in September, a member of Rochester Presbytery; I could not handsomely refuse. Made some pleasant acquaintances; they are fine men; Dill of Spencerport, Prof. Fowler of Rochester University; Edwards of Plymouth Chh, Rochester; Butler of Bergen, &c. They are not so strong in influence, wealth, numbers, as our N. S. Presb. folks; but they are respectable, & very devoted. — Lately went to dedication of Ellinwood's new chh (N. Sch.) Rochester; a magnificent building. Sermon by Prof. Condit of Auburn Seminary; why so noble a preacher should give so common-place a discourse, or

so considerable an occasion, was a mystery to all. — This new edifice shows the genius & skill of the architect to more advantage than Plymouth Chh, tho' it is not so highly ornamented. Plymouth is the most gorgeous thing your eyes ever beheld; there is nothing in Boston equal to it. Even the Swedenborg Chh produces less effect. It has somehow always looked rather funny to me, to see Puritans building & worshipping in Gothic.

I have been reading over the speech carefully; the doctrine strikes me as new; at least it is new to me; I should want to think a little, before expressing an opinion. I approve of the remarks at the end; when in London, I was introduced to a Quaker woman, a zealous advocate for women's voting; she agreed to meet me the next day & demand my reasons. On thinking hard upon the subject, I resolved to urge this argument: "You women form the mind of the water as you please; and now you ask to vote too; surely you ought to leave us a little power". — But something prevented her coming. In one of my hist. lectures is this passage: (Speaking of the benefits brought in by the Northern Barbarians, one is their respect for women) "The ancient philosophy could not see, what is so plain to us, that the character of the boy must be derived ^{much more} from the mother than from the father; the dignity & cultivation of the female mind is of the utmost importance to the progress of the race. For such stupidity, barbarian violence was the proper instructor." I wd have

find a sufficient answer to the advocates of women's voting; they have already more than half the power; if they only had wit enough to use it; the argument is so exuberant, it will bear to be dwelt on & used far more than it ever has been. But concerning your theory of the family in voting, I am by no means prepared to give an opinion; am curious to know how it was ^{received} ~~treated~~. — I intend to write on a reform in female education; I have thought much of it. My theory is, it is absurd to make all girls go through a course of piano drilling, when they are sure to drop it in active life; they sh^d study such things as mix themselves up with every day's duties, history, moral philosophy, & especially biblical antiquities & analysis of bks of Scripture; this the more, because they have less physical strength, & less time, than boys, for getting an education. Admitting that instrumental music is good, we can not have every good thing. It is ridiculous to see girls playing splendidly on the piano, who do not know whether we are descended from Sclavonians or Feejee Islanders; to whom the whole magnificent past is a blank; & are ignorant of the rich consolations in the Sacred Writings, for the troubles of life; ~~and~~ who do not perceive the plainest operations of the plainest laws of the mind in children. History is the driest & the tedious^{est} thing possible in outline text bks, the most fascinating thing possible in a certain kind of familiar lecture; fortunate is the girl who gets it instead of a piano.

As to the sermons, I like them; the particular criticisms I should like to make, I have not room for here; I will

bind them up in my next vol. of pamphlets as a keepsake. The paper I return. When I get a little time, I wish to find a little fault with your style; this you can afford, it is so good in the main. And if I send you by & by a careful article, you will do the same to me.

The subjects of the hist. lectures you ask about, are these: State of the Rom. Empire in the Fourth Cent. State of the Chh. Northern Barbarians. Feudal System. Papal Power. Attempts against Papal Power. Crusades, effects of, on Mind of Europe. Chivalry. Architecture of Mid. Ages. Scholastic Philosophy. Influence on Europ. Mind, of Saracens. Mid. Age Monks. Mendicant Orders. Mid. Age Universities. St Bernard, &c. &c. Some of these are not composed, but are mapped out in my mind, & the materials ready. The majority of my young folks find all this rather high; but a keen few sympathize with me heartily. You speak of Guizot; his vols. are very precious; but I regard them as pre-supposing much reading in the student; college boys I fear do not appreciate, generally; to read ^{him} as a first bk is like putting a man's head on a baby's shoulders. — One of the very finest bks in the world is Milman's Latin Christianity. A good bk is Steinmetz' Hist. Jesuits.

My Bible Class I will tell you about, some time. We are troubled lest we should be passed over by the Holy Spirit. The great revival is not in Rochester, nor hereabouts much. My heart is on this subject just now. — Met with Sec. Treat lately; told me of revival in Boston; the Unitarians don't know what to make of the odd thing. — Love to Mrs. Morvin, & very much to yourself. Will write by & by.

A.N.

Pittsford, Monroe Co. N.Y.
Nov. 13, 1858.

My Dear Marvin:

I have been waiting for some general features of the meeting of the A. B. C. F. M. as they seemed to your mind. I never feel satisfied with newspaper descriptions; but perhaps it is because I look with the eyes of a missionary. But as it has passed so far along, let it go.

Since you left, I have much regretted the extreme hurry of your visit, & the consequent imperfectness & fragmentary nature of every thing that passed between us. One thing in particular which I said, I fear you did not understand, viz. that every thing distinctively American is mean. This was not a hasty or ill considered expression; but it needed time to explain. My meaning was, that the things we ought to be proud of, the English have in common with us; there is no one real blessing we have, which they have not. Do you say we have more newspapers for the poor? True, but they are

a mass of vile political falsehood & corrup-
tion, especially out of N. England; even the least
reputable Eng. papers are truthful in compari-
son. And so of every thing else claimed as a
distinctive excellence, while the mass of the peo-
ple ^{they} know not how to value the real comforts
of their condition. Eng. emigrants, with super-
ior sense & discernment, value these & despise
those. If you give the word distinctive its
due force, & carefully select those distinctive
features from what the two nations have in
common, you must admit the truth of my
assertion. You will naturally fasten on Ahn
& state; if I had room, I could soon show ^{even} this
to be no exception. But I do not wish to
agitate these subjects at such a distance; you
need not trouble yourself to notice them a-
gain. I rarely disturb them, & never with
common minds. When general intelligence
is more spread in this country, the people will
see the folly of hating the English; the impos-
sibility of our distinctive notions ever getting
a footing among them; & that the true glory of
both is to bless the world as Christian & Protestant.

Our Bible Class how being now $6\frac{1}{2}$, the attendance is much larger, & the interest great. Our next lesson is the 9th of Romans; a fine opportunity to show how our fathers erred from not understanding the *usus loquendi*; how Augustine's mind was biassed by his opposition to the Manichees, & Calvin's by his habits as a lawyer; & so we have been in the tail of these comets without knowing it; hence the distorted views of high Calvinism, ^{Scotch, Dutch, & English.} Eph. 1:4 forever settles the doctrine as true, rightly explained; but even moderately Calvinistic views, ^(i.e. spiritual enjoyment of them) I think, belong to the higher stages of Christian growth, or ^{sh'd be presented} to peculiar states of mind, as your sermon showed, of the 2d great revival. We should introduce it into the pulpit wisely, & with extreme caution. (See Robt. Hall 3. 231, 8th, 9th, & 10th lines from bottom.)

In connexion with this subject, I am delighted with the history of the Jansenists. Mrs. Schimmelpenninck's Port Royal, ^{Amer. edition} is a bk you ought to own. See also the just & well considered presentation of the subject in Ranke's Popes. Surely no chapter of history is more charming than the noble & sweet piety of those Catholics.

But I am just now beginning to enter upon a severe affliction. Our pro-slavery Democrats, or rather their leader, being defeated in attempting to drive me out at the end of last year, I have been fearing, all along, a more violent attempt at the end of this year, knowing as I do, how the mind of such men works. And so it has proved; he is determined I shall not enter my 3d year. The disturbance is frightful. I have never preached on slavery, hardly ever talk of it; have been diligent in my ordinary duties; yet they have somehow made out that I am very rabid & un-trust-worthy. My sermon of last Sab. is declared heretical, ^{in doctrine,} tho' it had not the slightest doctrinal statement in it; it was only a practical setting forth of the conduct of Christ & the ten lepers, "where are the nine?" &c. all harmless, & proper, & cautious. The rage of those men I c'd not have imagined. They seemed determined to do by impudence what is lacking in argument. It seems impossible to resist so many mouths; the little chh is frightened, & say they shall have to yield, or be greatly weakened as a Society; those men are determined to rule, as they did in the time of my predecessor who was a Democrat. If ever there was a vehement desire in human breast, it is the desire of our chh to escape from this bondage; but it is simply a question between ruin as a Society & submitting to Democrat rule for a while. The Democrat party here is very strong; they can do as they like. I am amazed to be made guilty of things I never tho't of; the Methodists, too, angry at the popularity of our Bible Class, join in the clamor. The bona fide difficulty is, my praying for the slave, tho' it is amusing to see, there is not a word said of it; ^{by the way;} my successor will have a queer question to settle. I can not live in such a noise; I must retire at the end of Dec. I may have to lie on my oars for many months. Besides all

this, there are chh difficulties, enmities, & corruptions, of long standing, which I have never understood; we need a revival more than words can tell.

Now, in your more cultivated & moral N. Eng-land, you will think such outrages impossible; you will say: "North must in some way be to blame." Be assured, it is a disturbance ab extra, as Dr. Hickok wd say. My friends are indignant; they say: "Don't make up your mind to go, till we have had time to see how strong we shall be to raise salary, & set them at defiance; but they do not know the iniquity those pro-slavery men are capable of; I think a new man had better come; i.e. I tell them, let the other party choose a candidate, & hold things outwardly together for a while; it may be, the freshness of his different preaching will produce, with God's blessing, a revival.

Between God & my own secret thoughts, there is the true understanding of this evil; he is chastising me for a former sin, which Pittsford does not suspect. Lately wrote a very successful discourse from Ex. 34:7, "Forgiving iniquity, transgr. & sin; but will by no means leave unchastised," (as it sh'd be) The reason of the success was, it was written out of the heart.

An agent preaches for me to-morrow, a former pastor of this chh. I think of improving the opportunity to hear some Rochester preaching.

Campbell, I see, by a paper he sent me, is installed. He is a surprising instance of popularity from good sense, & power of close logic, without booning, either theological or biblical. Hickok preached.

Write to me when you have time, & feel in the mood of it, perhaps weeks hence.

Yours affectionately, A. North.

Dr. Westcott of West on the Monument, Boston, & others in England
(London.)
Pittsford, Monroe Co.

Dec. 13, 1858.

My Dear Morvin:

Thank you for your letter of the 9th. Have had a time of excitement here. Since I wrote to you a few days ago, I sent in my withdrawal or resignation, or whatever you may call it, to a meeting of the Trustees. This produced a large Society meeting, larger, say old men, & more unanimous, than they have ever known in Pittsford; every body turned out that had a vote. The enemy put up Rev. Mr. R. formerly here 17 years, & much revered by the people. They chuckled at the certainity of victory, & were seen to grin wide. For him there were four votes, & then the whole mass rose to their feet for Mr. North. The enemy confessed their astonishment afterward. I was informed that I might pray for the slave as much as I liked. With such a splendid vote, of course I re-considered my letter to the Trustees, & have now en-

tered another year. The Democrats next Sabbath looked I can't tell you how. I am now convinced I did not understand the matter; I was frightened at their uproar & impudence. But I am not elated; I know the devil is still strong.

There seemed to be something Providential about it: Mr. R. had just preached a whole Sabbath; but "it didn't seem as it used to"; soon after it, came my capital punishment discourse before a large audience & with splendid success. There was a contrast between a man who studies & one who has been for many years contented with common-places. I should have had the vote without that effort; but it plainly increased the determined spirit of the meeting.

Our Bible Class is much larger & more interesting than when you saw it. I am persuaded there is an unexplored region of usefulness hardly suspected by ministers. I have sometimes thought of publishing my theory & experience on this subject, with

warnings; for it is of a delicate nature, easily spoiled. One secret is, to avoid common-places; another is, to enrich your remarks with the spoils of all things. Another is, to make close practical applications to the impenitent not too often; they lose their effect; this is the error Campbell wd fall into. I should like to have you present at one or two of our right good meetings, where intellect & heart are stirred up together.

The reason why I gave no more criticism on the hist. discourse was, the novelty & evident truth of the theory so pleases the mind that it has no appetite for criticism; it is as if we had eaten two or three big dumplings & must sit a while. I think you will never get a criticism upon it; no one wants to talk of language or dvers in such a case; & as to the matter, there are mighty few who are enough acquainted with history to talk of that. I thought I knew something of the facts of those days; but I never tho't of them in that pleasing combination, or classification.

I am ³also ²⁰sorry I was not criticized by you as a preacher. If I gather correctly from friends & enemies, the result is about thus: A little too sweeping & positive; too great a tendency to intellectual presentations not profitably applied; sometimes sufficiently practical to satisfy the warmer Christian hearts; an agreeable avoidance of common-place; eloquence popular, & when deeply interested sometimes too vehement; a want of tenderness, rather knocking down & compelling the mind, rather than winning it. — This is the evil & the good so far as I know; should have been exceedingly gratified with faithful criticisms added by yourself. — With a sermon so peculiar as yours, I could hardly judge of yr ordinary discourses. The printed ones you sent me seem not sufficiently projectile, yet the one in Pittsford seemed enough so. Delivery good, tho' not quite life enough for west of N. England. I feel unwilling to criticise on so small data. Have often been deceived in this way.

You ask if Campbell is not a little bit ambitious; he is, doubtless; and I shall watch to see him beaten a little bit.

The Worcester papers I received, & read the two articles; good, but too short. — Wife is even doing considerable work; still, I think, has the consumption.

As to yr style, there is no room here; I will speak of it in due time; I will also try to satisfy you about my metaphysics. Books too there is no room for. — With much love, A. N.