

Attica, Wyoming Co. N.Y.

Jan. 20, 1863.

My Dear Marion:

It is one of those dainty, pleasant days when one don't always like to sit down to hard labor; out of doors there is seen for the first time here this winter the running hither & thither of sleighs, with pleasure parties & a great jingling. I wd by no means have you understand that I expect a reply to every letter; I sometimes wish for the privilege of writing even several times to you once. — Was absent nearly the whole of last week; went, by invitation of Trustees, to assist in the dedication services at Pittsford. It is little more than a year since the old stone chh you preached in was burnt; it is wonderful that within a year they have erected a very fine brick chh, larger than the other. Sermons by Shaw, of Rochester. Was frightened at finding myself expected to

preach in the evening, because I had bro't no sermon; I c'd not venture extempore before so vast an audience, ^{they} expecting too, something extra. Daggett, of Canandaigua, as an angel of mercy, preached for me. He is as different as can be, from Shaw; dignified, leisurely, polished, with logical development & strict unity; Shaw is off-hand, colloquial, earnest, practical; always drawing a large audience. Daggett attaches his own people to him with profound respect. He is a son of old Judge D. of N. Haven, whom you may remember; sometimes writes for the N. Englander. He had never heard Shaw before; was curious to know the secret of his popularity; what his opinion was, I had no opportunity to ask. Tho' I had heard Shaw before, several times, I was pleased to hear him again, & came home resolving that I wd push on in what I have partly leav'd, to be more independent of my paper. We must write; we must leave the other too. If you have Alexander's Thoughts on Preaching, you have found him excellent on this point. If

you do not own the bk, you can not lay out
\$1.25 better. — As an assistant in ser-
monizing, I find it useful to keep a blank bk
for inserting hints toward sermons, which happen
to strike my mind forcibly at the moment; these
are of two kinds; those which are strictly from
my own mind, & those which are suggested by
reading. It is with me a great labor to set my
subjects in a fresh light; the good effects of
this plan I saw, in my late visit to P. The
people have been listening to common-place;
they spoke to me of it. And here is a chief
distinction between the Methodists & our peo-
ple; the Meth. like common-place, & are dis-
pleased with hard thinking, no matter how spi-
ritual & hearty it may be.

I have been thinking several times about
yo remark, that the style of piety which is in-
clined to introversion is not apt to be enter-
prising & gospel-carrying. Please look at the
^{No. 72} Bibliotheca, Vol. 18, page 814, note at bottom, two
or three last lines, the word "often". I think,
the more you re-consider, the more you will

change yr mind. — Bro't home from Rochester
vols. 14 & 15 of the New Amer. Cyclopedie; it is a
great treasure. — The Democrats are in a
boiling rage; I expect fighting here at the North;
you have seen how near they come to it in Indi-
ana. We have men here in my Society who wd
make any sacrifice to preserve slavery, even to
dividing the nation. I dare not speak of these
subjects; it wd create an uproar, & drive me
away, without doing the least good.

Evening. Since writing the above, Rev. Mr.
Whittlesey, of Le Roy, called; we have had two
hours conversation about preaching. He is
filled with zeal to learn the off-hand talking
style; made lately some experiments, with mor-
tification to himself, but is surprised to find
the people more deeply affected than by any
of his written sermons. "As iron sharpeneth
iron," so he has sharpened me to persist in my
experiment. Two sermons I gave to his people
were liked; but an off-hand exhortation in
the evening they liked far better. My heart,
my intellect, my eyes, my whole soul is fill-
ed with the experiment. God helping me,
I'll try.

Yours most lovingly & truly, A. North

In my
last N.Y.
Theological Review
is a fine piece
on the sinless perfect
ion of Jesus; another
from Taylor Lewis against
Dr. Hall of Auburn, entitled
"Hard Master," in defense of
Hicks; &c. &c. &c.

Dr. Hall seems to me quite
unfitted to meet these philosophers with
Also a piece by Wm Adams
on Politics of the Pulpit.

Attica, Wyoming Co. N.Y.

June 2, 1863.

My Dear Marvin,

It is now just two months
since I wrote to you; begin to be hungry. Have
been writing to my two good boys: One about to
graduate at Marietta College, (July 2d) the other in
camp at Corinth, Tennessee. This last longs to go
back to his studies, but won't abandon the contest
when his enlistment is out, in a year longer, if the
war really needs him. He takes excellent views;
really a noble boy. Some soldiers have been lately
converted in the prayer meeting of which he is a
chief leader. The other boy I think of getting to
come home & stay with me a year or two, in order
to read largely in history, theology, & general litera-
ture; but I am strongly opposed to his entering the
ministry. The great want of the ch^e just now is,
not preachers, but devoted laymen. One in a ch^e
has more influence than a minister.

I do not remember that I have written to you since I spent three or four days in Rochester, during the height of the revival. It was very wonderful. I thought of you repeatedly; tho't it likely you wd find suggestions there of improvements in the mode of conducting revivals, to add to yr theory expressed in yr Bib. Soc. article. I sh'd exceedingly like to talk with you about it; there is no room in a letter. Hammond is a gentleman; there is nothing out of taste, nothing; the great secret of his success is, deep devotedness & spirituality; common place remarks from him have power. The prominent idea is, not as with Finney formerly, "Yr abominable wickedness", but the love of Jesus, & his power & willingness to bless; a common phrase is: "Oh the dear Jesus". The city of Rochester seemed melted with the love of Christ. Conviction of sin seems to grow out of it by natural inference, Moravian-like, rather than ^{from} by direct presentation ^{by} the preacher. Vast numbers of children talk with each other, about A, B, C, of their acquaintances, who have, or have not yet, "given up their hearts to Christ"; proud men are becoming little children, & are astonished to hear them talk. — These

are no metaphysical reasonings, Finney fashion; not a word about moral inability, & moral this, that, & t'other, & the will, &c. &c. I heard not a single word of it. It is ^{of Christ & coming to Christ,} Scripture ideas presented as felt realities, by which so many hearts are melted. E.g. the leper at the gate of Samaria he preached on, one evening. — It is a common remark, you know, in the present controversy with Naturalism & Neology, that the great question must eventually turn on the supernatural character of Christ, as Bushnell argues in his 10th chapter; hence too the new work he is preparing; I tho't of this while sitting in those meetings; I tho't, also, that not only in controversial theology, but in preaching, in daily living, we shall find this the great source of power. This is a step forward in revival improvements, if I mistake not. I sh'd like to know what was the prominent idea in the revival at Plymouth last year. I remember, in '24 & '25, there was occasional preaching about Christ, in a law point of view as Advocate & Mediator; but the great idea was, metaphysical views of sin as coming out of a perverse will, & consequent desert of hell. Submission to God was very prominent. When you

heard Finney, some years after, in '31 & '32, his ideas were enlarged somewhat in number, but not fundamentally. Law & mental philosophy made up the man. To such a mind, the Hammond idea was not possible. — As Bible ideas in the 16th cent. followed & displaced ^{schoolmen's} dialectics, so now deeper Bible ideas must displace the lingering dialectics & metaphysics of N. England; it is a necessity of human progress.

In a No. of the Independ. (Jan. 15, '63) I saw, that ^{at} an ordination by Bp. Eastburn at Worcester, six clerg. were present, once Unitarians. I read ^{"again"} lately, that the Episc. party in Boston is a rapidly growing one. A dozen years ago, Dr. Anderson told me, that the many Gothic clubs then built & building in Boston (e.g. Bedford & Salem sts.) had a squint, as he tho't, toward a coming Episcopal interest in the Unitarian mind. I tho't, at the time, it was his fancy. Now, when you write, tell me what are the causes of Boston love of the Episc. chh. Is it a revulsion from skepticism to the Episc. reverence? is it a city rich folks' love of show? is it an incurable party dislike of Congr. orthodoxy in a social view, long aggravated? or is it all three? or something else?

Love to them girls & wife, & bby.

Yr affec. friend,

A. North.

Send
me some
papers with
notices of the
time of the meetings.
A. N.
you speak of.

Attica, Wyoming Co. N.Y.
July 23, 1863.

My Dear Marvin:

Just got your letter. What long letter of last winter you refer to, I am not certain; probably Jan. 10th; there is no other. I made no allusion to it for this reason, that the topics were of such a nature as required much remark or else nothing; they were too important to be dismissed with a few words; so I said nothing. Besides I was probably in a sad mood, from my prospects here. Next Sabbath is my last. Copperheadism drives me away. It is not the majority in the chh, but it is strong enough to rule virtually. A few months ago some Copperheads slyly got themselves elected trustees in a thin meeting; the people knew nothing of the plan. Coming to light, it makes a great wrath. — I fear we are going to have a bad time; it must be my care to keep separate. Some members of our chh feel the most intense enmity toward the Government; I have never preached on these subjects,

except a soldier's funeral sermon long ago; but I have frequently introduced into the morning prayer a petition for our slaves; this the Copperheads can't stand. In a contest, they have the advantage, because they can resort to any foul means. The atrocity, the foolishness, of the whole thing, leads our people to ask: "Where is the use of a change? Do the Copperheads expect a minister of their own sort? no such can be found. If they drive Mr. North away, & introduce another man, we will subscribe nothing." — But I shall probably occupy the parsonage ^{or a year or two.} some months. And to go to a reading meeting, & hear a deacon read, will seem funny; if they ask me to read, I'll do it. It is very difficult now to find a place; ^(unilating words!) I may be years out of employment. There is one good thing; they owe me \$500, which, with stores on hand, will keep us two years in tolerable comfort. My eldest boy has just graduated at Marietta College; he is with us, intending to stay a year or two & study; ^{Christian} & a nice boy he is. He is leading his brother, of eleven, rapidly on in the Latin grammar, & expecting to become thorough in Homer himself.

I hope to write a quantity of new sermons, of a careful sort; I love to write a sermon at leisure. It is a matter of gratification to me, that the enemy make no complaint of the preaching; nor can they find impiety, or neglect of visiting; it is simply: We will, & we won't. Their trustee power they'll use.

Upsham's principles have been much blessed to me; I feel a pleasant calm; God has done all this. Years ago, I sh'd have felt much disturbed & indignant at conduct at once malicious & silly; I have learned better. — But I fear I am becoming tedious; I will not fatigue you with my private affairs. When your afflictions come (and they'll be along by & by,) I shall be the better prepared to sympathize with & pray for you.

Nothing can be more delightful than my cultivated & Christ-loving family, with its fine music. No Copperhead knows these joys. Just received a letter from my younger son in Tennessee; they are a-chasing Bragg & living on blackberries.

I do not possess a copy of Hopkins; it wd give me great pleasure to read him; because what Mark says is always excellent. I have Chateaubriand's Mar-

ters, but not the Genie du Chr. Hamilton my son studied in college, & is of course enamored of him. I shall strongly encourage his reading metaphysics, as an accomplishment: Ritter for ancient philosophy, Morell, Tenneman, Tucker, Adam Smith's Moral Sentiments, Edwards, Tappan, Day, & the whole tribe, with monograms on Scholasticism & Cartesianism. He detests Brown. Having him under my own eye, I can guide & check, I hope. My plan will be, to give him such impressions from the history of philosophy, of its instability, that he shall leave with the more ardor to the New Testament faith. I have had, during after-tea walks, several talks with him, on the gradual change going on in American theology. Robinson's Harmony he expects to master gradually, getting ⁱⁿ ^{to} his mind a clear idea of Christ's life, with Olshausen's help.

My impression of the war is, that we are to have yet a deal of hard fighting; & what troubles in Congress afterward, no mortal knows. Seymour is putting in Copehead officers, to make N. York troops inefficient. We are going to have trouble. The late victories seem to me of not much account, except as occasions for more vigorous efforts of pro-slavery men among us.

I hope their daughter is well; I love them for the father's sake. — Tyler is lying still; whether he is trying to deny himself, I have not learned; shall be likely to hear soon. — Got yr Boston paper. — Can not now afford to go to Andover. Expect to see you at Board meeting at Rochester. — If I am not obliged to lie by, I may go to see you, at ~~Wanete~~ Andover; for there I shall be able to pay.

Attica, Wyoming Co. N.Y.

Oct. 21, 1863.

My Dear Marvin:

I was in hopes of seeing you at the meeting of the Board. It was a good meeting, but not so good as some which I have attended. The concourse of people was very great.

Instead of coming straight home, I stopped, the Sabbath after, to preach in Le Roy, by request of the Session. Whittlesey, for some four years past, has had a deal of trouble & opposition; at our last meeting of Presbytery, there was a request presented, from a part of his people, for his dismissal; we put the answer over to a special meeting to be held at Le Roy next month; I have no doubt he will leave. I am privately informed, that the invitation to officiate there a few times under pretence of supply, ^{in W's absence,} is regarded as a candidating, by the leading men, politely contrived so that I can avoid the discredit of a failure. The audience is very large, with much wealth & refinement;

the salary \$1000. If I please them, I have serious doubts whether I had better undertake so weighty a charge, exposed to the hatred of Copperheads & other bad men in the Society, likely to be stirred up afterwards. To please at first, is easy. My friends are not pleased to see me looking that way; they have an idea that no man can go to La Roy; that the evil men of that chh are like "men coming out of the tombs, exceeding fierce." But this is my position: If God wishes me to go there, he will make it so plain, I can not doubt; if he thus sends me, he will give grace to do the work. So I wait, without ambition, & without anxiety or desire. My impression is rather that I am not to go. If I go, it will create a great activity; shall have to walk ^{rapidly} many miles every week to see their numerous families; to think & write in a sort of agony; to sharpen my memory to remember the names of their numerous children in their vast S. School. Indeed it will be a relief to be rejected. I have in no way sought the place.

Next Sabbath I preach at Perry Centre, a very large & good chh of wealthy farmers, who are united & suc-

anxious to have me come; preached there once.
The support would be nearly as good as in Le Roy; the
trouble far less; but there is no Seminary, & it is off
the rail-road; there is no parsonage. My mind is
made up, that so well off a people must come to
my terms, or I will not go. Meanwhile there is
a movement here to retain me, against the bad
men; it is possible I may stay. The Fenelon &
Mad. Guyon doctrine of living by the hour is now to
me a source of comfort in my perplexity.

Tommy has got through the great battle of Chat-
tanooga without, tho' in the thickest of it. My elder
boy Edwin, lately graduated at Marietta College, has an
appointment of ^{inquiry} teacher of a black regiment at N.Or-
leans, with rank of 2d Lieut. pay \$100 a month.
I have just got back from N.York, whether I went
to get him off, in the huge steamer Cahawba. It
is likely he will be stationed at Port Hudson where
there is to be a garrison of black troops, some 10,000,
each regiment having a good teacher. How strange
all this two or three years ago! I rejoice in my
noble boys; may God preserve them.

Articles in Theol. Rev. on Presbyterianism, its Affili-

ties, Roger Bacon, Intellectual Development of Europe, & others. Last No. of the N. Englander is, you perceive, tolerable, but not so rich as many. — Bro't home from N.Y. J. Taylor's Logic in Theology (i.e. the evil of it) & other essays — an excellent bk. — Andrews' Life of our Lord I am much pleased with. Such bks I wd master, if I c'd go back to the beginning of my ministry, & let metaphysical theology, Hickok-ism, &c. alone. The Life of Christ is yet to take a much higher place in the studies of ministers; wd that my eyes had been opened earlier.

My ideas of sermonizing are changing; cannot describe here. I sh'd like right well to know the general drift of your studies, thoughts, & likings.

Thank you for the letter on Episcopacy in Boston.

Many, many times I have tho't of writing for the Independent, but the time does not come.

The character of Irving, & his ideas of the Incarnation, fill me with tho'ts unutterable. Pity that such a soul sh'd not have been trained in correct principles of interpretation.

My boy Edwin, in going South, has it in view to watch for openings, after the war, for new enterprises of Northern & Christian young men, toward Christianizing the South, making money for benevolent purposes in cotton planting, or what may turn up. I have made him promise he will not enter the ministry; what the ch^k wants is, devoted laymen.

Love to those daughters & that wife.

Yours very truly,

A. North.

Attica, Wyoming Co. N.Y.

Dec. 19, 1863.

My Dear Marvin:

I have just got through the Life of Wilberforce, which the old Bib. Rep. of '39 calls "a treasure." Am so delighted with it, that I am in a writing mood. — It is a sad appendix to that Christian bk, that one of his sons, after compiling it, became a papist; the other is now high chk bp of Oxford; I have read his hist. of the Amer. Episc. Chk. It wd be interesting to know whether their extreme notions came from their father's strong dislike of dissent, wrought into them when boys. Htgdon's remarks on his pure-mindedness as a statesman are good, (Sermons 2d Vol. 481) uttered in the hearing of the Legislature of Massachusetts. Mad. de Staél said he was best converser in England. Wd that the immense masses of our rough & ignorant boys c'd read that Life — rough, I mean, here in Western N.York; yr Massachusetts noble school system makes a difference there.

Have read yr Worcester pamphlet twice; once
for the language, once for the argument. As to the
style, there is nothing particularly good or bad.; all is
meat. Style, as a separate object of attention, has lost
its importance, during the last forty years, i.e. as a pos-
itive quality; it is like good spelling; good receives
no praise; bad is grossly culpable. The different
varieties of style, once so interesting, are more blended
together, in consequence of ^{the} close contact & insensible
influence of ^{large} classes; the rapid & frequent inter-
course thro' the press bleeds the once distinct indi-
viduality, except in writers of extraordinary greatness
like Isaac Taylor. The 18th cent. was an age of tri-
fling, of shallowness, of rhetoric; the first twenty years
or so, of the 19th, were a reversion of it; this genera-
tion is an earnest one, deep in enterprise & action;
we are busy with things, the manner is forgotten in
part. When a boy of 14, Blair's polish delighted me; the
mind was at leisure^{to see it}; there was not then a flood
of bks & newspapers to occupy one with great move-
ments & events. The neatness ^{of style} now exhibited by thou-
sands wd then have attracted notice. As society
moves on, style must receive less & less attention. A

man must be very odd indeed, like Carlyle, or highly polished, & laden with new matter too, to secure notice, like Stanley. I think a man is unwise to aim at style; i.e. any thing more than simplicity & perspicuity — things, like the atmosphere or sun-light, not tho't of. Avoidance of high words, & skillful emphasis in delivery, are far more important than exquisitely selected & arranged words in general. I have, it is true, a highly elaborated system of ^{rather negative} rhetoric in my own mind; but its force depends ^{much} on feeling & elocution. Written, i.e. as mere style, it is hardly worth notice.

As to the matter of the pamphlet, I cannot say in a note what I wd. Some things I strongly object to, e.g. page 11, "our excellent judiciary system". I am at a loss to know what you mean. It is notorious that in the universities of Europe, our decisions have almost ceased to command respect. Our mob-chosen courts are the very concentration of all that is infamous & corrupt; within two years it has been stated on the floor of Congress that our system had "lost the confidence of the country"; I am sure of the fact; sorry I kept no record. The newspapers of this State are full of articles on "our Executive judiciary", i.e. as a public annoyance. I can

not conceive such a mind as yours insincere in such a statement; so I conclude you mean Massachusetts.— Much of the sentiment I assent to; but I cannot worship as you do, the Yankee god Proper Government; we shall never agree on this point; we must conclude to love each other, & let it drop. It is too vast a subject for a short letter. "But," you say, "do you not assert where the people are Christianized & well schooled?" Nay.— But I have learned to keep still in company. I c'd live for years in N. Eng. & never offend.— This essay is worth, compared to yr Three Revivals, as a copper to a guinea. That piece shines brighter & brighter.

Find myself in a very unpleasant situation; must leave the parsonage in April; have no where to move to; W. is trying to stay in Le Roy; is preparing for a terrible explosion; how it will affect my going thither, can not say. Copperhead-ism rules this Society; I am driven away by it. I ought to be willing to suffer in the war as others, especially in view of the kindness of Providence to my noble boys; the younger, now 21, was in both great battles of Chattanooga; escaped all harm, but had a bullet-hole in his clothes. The elder is teaching blacks at Port Hudson.— Things often look gloomy to me; almost lose my faith; no doubt need the discipline. Have in view a Sub-eve. Lec. on Hist. of Preaching, showing that the modern pulpit is compelled to retire into the experimental & spiritual further & further, & away from the scholastic & doctrinal, & politics, &c.

Much love.

A. North.