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Letter to Francis Wharton

Charles Pettit McIlvaine

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Recommended Citation

McIlvaine, Charles Pettit, "Letter to Francis Wharton" (1858). *Charles Pettit McIlvaine Letters*. 21.
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in the presence of an assembly of elders, I have felt it was not a favorable indication concerning himself. In such a meeting, for such of the lay professors and teachers as well as the clericals to take part in prayer and address—and the theological students also (with discretion as to the last)—it is not only right, but desirable.

“C. P. McILVAINE.”

The Bishop's own son being one of those first interested in this revival, it is pleasant to think that his father felt that in his case at least it was a genuine work.

“Before I sailed, and after leaving home, I wrote to him much at length, especially as to reading and examining his heart. Now all this I say in confidence to you, that you may know what to do, and where to work for him and with him. Oh do be faithful with him! Would it do him good to be engaged as a Sunday-school teacher? Or had he better have the Sunday to himself? Here, in my room in Bonn, right under the walls of the University, and in a population of Romish superstition, my heart goes over to that dear boy at Gambier, and all its anxieties concentrate in this one desire and prayer that God in His infinite mercy will make a deep and thorough work of grace in his heart, that he may be indeed a follower of Christ, in whom the power of His Spirit will be glorified. The Lord be with you all.

“Yrs. very affect'ly,

“C. P. McILVAINE.”

Again—

“RAGATZ, SWITZERLAND, Sep. 14th, 1858.

“MY DEAR BRO.:

“I wrote you a few days ago concerning my dear boy. My mind was too anxious about him. I wish now to say, and I do it with great thankfulness and joy, that I received yesterday at Zurich a delightful and most precious letter from him, entering sweetly into his state of mind. It was dated Aug. 13, and had been much delayed in reaching me. But it is just what I wanted, a sweet, natural, humble, tender endeavor to make me understand his mind spiritually. Blessed be God—for such a consolation! I could not have a letter from him more to my mind. I have but a few moments to write, as I wish before I go to bed to write to my son, and have been travelling all day. I have now entire confidence in

the work in his heart. The Lord be praised for His grace. He is reading the Scriptures regularly, and wishes to be guided to the best mode. You cannot serve me in any way more nobly than by endeavoring to promote in him the right way of becoming more and more enriched by, and in love with the Scriptures. Be his help in that. He is systematic in secret prayer, and has become fond of spiritual, searching reading. He mentions especially his sense of the value of, and his love for the little book, ‘Advice to a Young Christian,’ which I gave him, and which I much value. I am here in the S. E. of Switz'd—having come here to-day by Lakes Zurich and Wollenstadt, and thence S. E. If you take a S. E. line from the head of the latter till you meet the Rhine in lat. 47°—you will find my whereabouts—among the sources of the Rhine, and near to the baths of Pfeffers, celebrated for fine Alpine scenery; etc. This is an excursion from my main route. Now good-night. The Lord be with you all.

“Very affectionately yr's,

“C. P. McILVAINE.”

“CINN., O., April 29, '57.

“MY DEAR BRO.:

“I have written a letter for the Vestry, and another for the man of the two named, whom they may choose. I hope one or the other may be got. I am now trying what I may be fit for in a visitation, and I find my head more disturbed than I hoped would be the case. I do not see that I can expect to endure, and escape a sudden and entire break down, except I can restrict my preaching to about once a Sunday, and perhaps once in the week (on visitation), and be exceeding quiet in the intervals. The latter is quite as difficult to effect as the former. Incessant talking—the worrying needs and infirmities of small parishes—the expectations which I cannot gratify—the troubles which I cannot relieve—seem to wear on me as much as preaching—at least on my spirits much more—so that I think my prospect of much more work, except in a very quiet way, is not good. I hope I am to have a son in the ministry, who will take up the message as I am dropping it. I have such a sense of the danger of leading in advance of the Lord, that I have purposely avoided putting the question of the ministry before him till within two or three weeks. I only want the Lord