

Charles Pettit Mcllvaine Letters

3-4-1862

Letter to C.P. Mcllvaine

R. S. Cook

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62-03-64

W. S. Cook & Mc G

Office of the Sub. Committee,
21 Bible-House, N. York, N. Y. 62

Dr. Rev. & dear Sir,

Your valued note of the 3^d inst. has just reached me, and I desire to thank you for communicating my views to the Government.

I should discuss the matter here, but for the apprehensions that the plan of operations is not quite understood. Mr. Seward's objection, which you consider to have weight, is thus stated: "If such agents are sent by the Govt. it is quite impossible to keep their connection with it secret; and then not only is the Govt. held responsible for what they write, but being considered as in the way of the Govt. what they do loses influence," etc.

To this I answer,

1. That while the movements of gentlemen as widely-known as yourself, Archbishop Hughes & Mr. Weed, in a

period of excitement like that of the Trent affair, are bristled on both sides of the Atlantic, the crossing the Ocean by gentlemen of left marks and at the present time, would not attract public attention. The men constituted for such a work, too, should be prudent enough to keep their own secrets; and, if they were wise, they would combine other real or ostensible objects with their secret mission.

2. They should have, in fact, no formal connection with Government, and they do not need to be authorized to commit it in the least, in public or private.

3. Writing solely, or mainly, for Editorial columns, their utterances would become those of the journals to which they may gain access, so that the question of their pay could never affect the public influence of their labors.

working of the Profs in our special department may help Mr. S. to mature his views as to the adaptation of the system to international questions.

You will be pleased to learn that the movement in behalf of the Sabbath in the Army & Navy is taking a definite & hopeful form. Influential parties at Washington have negotiated for an audience with the President and a Deputation from our Committee, on Thursday next. Admiral Foote & the Secy. of the Navy have interested themselves deeply in the subject, and the President has given favorable intimations. Our Deputation consists of Messrs. White, F. S. Weston, Mr. A. Booth, David Hoadley, Fred G. Foster and Gustav Schwalb (German.) We shall present an Address & form of a Gen. Order; and we shall be greatly disappointed

Rev. R. J. Cook
N. Y.

If we do not succeed in this, ^{ess,}
under the blessing of God, we have
in all our other exertions for the
Sanctification of the Lord's Day.

Thanking you for your thoughtful
reps as to this important interest when
at W., and beseeching the exertion
of any influence that you may
deem helpful toward the result
at which we aim,

I am, Bro. Rev. & Dear Sir,
with affectionate reverence,
Yours in the Gospel,

R. S. Cook,

The Bro. Rev. C. P. McIlwaine, D.D.

P.S. My address at Washington will be
to the care of
The Am. Peter Parker, M.D.

There can be no immodesty in
illustrating my position by the volume
of five years in kindred efforts in this city.
I have written the Editorials of a
dozen different Journals, Daily & Weekly,
on the Sunday question, and such other
topics as I have chosen to discuss. Not
one in a hundred has been declined. But,
beyond the Editors themselves, and the
members of an "Committee", not a
dozen persons in the world are aware
~~that~~ of the source of these articles. The
entire public responsibility has been
absorbed by the Journals, and the
question of the pay or the relations of
the author has never been raised.

So, it seems to me, it might &
should be with the Agency proposed.
It should be felt - not seen. No man
ambitious of personal notoriety should be
sent; but only those who are willing
to serve their country & the cause of
truth & peace on the principles of "freedom".

It is clear, I think, that the project will never be realized unless it be taken in hand by the State Department. No voluntary arrangement will secure the requisite oversight or responsibility. As a branch of the secret service of Govt., I see not why it may not be as legitimate & effective as any other - more effective, if it be the object of Govt. to conciliate the good will of the people of Great Britain.

But, my only object was to remove what seemed to be a misapprehension of the plan, rather than to argue the question of power or efficiency; and I forbear further remarks.

I expect to visit Washington next week, on another errand; and should you consider it desirable that further explanations should be made to Mr. Seward, I shall take pleasure in waiting on him. Several of the members of our Committee will also be there; and their knowledge of the efficient