

Chapter 11

Conference in New Kingston, Cumberland County Retire from the Active Ministry for One Year

At the conference in New Kingston, Cumberland County, though now contrary to my own feelings, yet according to previous arrangements, I asked for the privilege of retiring one year from the active work of the ministry – yet to be retained in the itinerancy – which request was very kindly granted me. I remained at conference until Monday noon, when I left New Kingston for father's in Columbia County with my horse and carriage – which took me two and a half days to reach. It rained most of the time, and the mud was quite deep in the roads – it being the beginning of March, 1867.

The first night I stopped in Newport, Perry County, with brother Yohn, a member of our church there. The next day I proceeded by way of Liverpool, Perry County, to Selinsgrove, Snyder County.

When I was about one mile above Liverpool, I saw a man sitting under the overshoot of a large barn. He had a fine home and was well fixed in the world, also a member of a sister church. I asked him for a little dinner and horse feed, it being about noon. “But he took me not in.”¹ He refused, but directed me up the river some distance to a hotel. I then proceeded but a few rods farther to another large farm house and stopped at the hitching post. But before I had time to tie my horse the man came out, took hold of my horse, and gave me a most friendly greeting. He said I should go into the house and he would put up my horse and feed him – before I had time to tell him who I was or what I wanted. The family treated me very kindly, fed my horse, gave me dinner – and he greased my buggy. I found them to be members of the Lutheran church, and good warm-hearted Christians. I told him of the manner in which his neighbor had treated me. He said, “Just wait until I see him – I shall tell him about it. He always thinks his church is so much better than the Lutheran church. I shall tell him how he turned away a minister of the gospel and directed him to a hotel – which is not a hotel, but simply a canal house and not fit for any decent man to stop at.” After dinner we talked for some time of Jesus and his love. I then read a portion of scripture, we sang a hymn and offered prayer, and the Lord blessed us together. I “thanked God and took courage.” I then asked them what I owed them for dinner and horse feed. They said, “Nothing” – that I was entirely welcome to all they had done to me, and that if I ever came that way again I knew where to stop – I should not fail to stop with them. This family heeded the exhortation of the apostle, “Be not forgetful to entertain strangers”² – while the other did not, but turned me away hungry and cold,

¹ The reference is to Matthew 25:43.

² Hebrews 13:2

and yet claimed to be the best Christian man of the two. “O, consistency, thou art a jewel.”³

I then proceeded to Selinsgrove, where I stayed overnight with another Lutheran family who treat me very kindly also – and free of charge. No wonder I finally became a minister in the Lutheran Church, after being treated so kindly by her members.

The next day I proceeded by way of Northumberland, Danville and Bloomsburg, and arrived at father’s about eight o’clock in the evening, where I met my family once more – having traveled through mud and rain, both of which were plenty at that time, from Bendersville, Adams County, to Briar Creek, Columbia County, with my horse and carriage. I found the children just recovering from a severe attack of the measles, which had been aggravated by the exposure from the long move. I now doffed the clerical robe for that of a farmer.

Father made public sale of his personal property, and I bought stock and farming utensils and went to work. Not having done much manual labor for eight years, it went hard with me for some time – but I soon became accustomed to it again. God also gave the increase. I had good crops, and did well in farming. Father said I had the best crops ever raised on the farm. But I no longer doubted my call to the ministry, and felt that farming was not my work. I never felt condemned for the course I had taken, believing that it was my duty to care for my aging father, and I preached somewhere almost every Sabbath. Yet I did not feel contented. I felt like a child away from home. As the child would long for home, so I longed for the active work of the ministry. Frequently on Sabbath morning, when in the barn feeding my horses, and hearing my wife in the house singing some of the beautiful songs of Zion, I would be so overcome that I would kneel down in the feeding room and weep and pray. I was so homesick for the work.

In April, while I was preparing to plant corn, the Baptist minister, a young man, was holding a series of meetings in the Baptist church – about one and a half miles from where we lived. My sister⁴ living on the adjoining farm was for many years a leading member of that church – indeed I might say was the leading member of that congregation, which was very small. Her eldest son has been a Baptist minister for a number of years, and was at that time going to school at Lewisburg – preparing for the ministry. She was naturally very much interested in this meeting. Her husband and I were always very intimate, but I am sorry to say he was not a member of church or a professor of religion at that time – and is not to this day. He very seldom went to church, unless I preached, but would generally go with me to church. On night this minister stayed at sister’s overnight, intending

³ The origin of this saying is unknown, even though it is sometimes erroneously attributed to Shakespeare.

⁴ Sarah Ann Dietterich (1819-1888) was married to James Kocher (1818-1894). Their son Rolandus Kocher (1845-1930) was a Baptist minister. These three and family members are buried in the Baptist Cemetery in Centre township, Columbia County PA.

to talk to my brother-in-law and try to get him to church. In the morning, he spoke to him as follows, "Mr. K., why don't you come to preaching?"

The reply was, "I seldom go to preaching, unless Alonzo preaches. I would go a good ways to hear him."

"And who is Alonzo? I have never seen or heard of him."

"Why he is my brother-in-law and lives just below here on the adjoining farm."

This was enough. After breakfast my sister and the preacher came to visit us. Their object was to get me to preach for him, so my brother-in-law would attend church. I was in the field ploughing until noon. I spent about two hours with them. I then said they must excuse me, as I had no one to help me – and I dare not let the team stand idle in the stable – but they should spend the afternoon with father and my family. The minister then informed me of the meeting and insisted on my coming to his help. I told him it was impossible for me to do so, as I had not worked much for years, and did not expect to farm long, and so must put in full-time while at it, and I go so tired by evening that I could hardly walk – and so I must have my rest at night. He insisted on my coming, but said nothing as to the special object. I simply told him I could not – and went to the field.

Toward evening he and my sister went home again. But early Sunday morning, when I was feeding my horses, he came into the feeding room and said, "I want you to help me out today. I have preaching in Berwick this morning and evening, and I dare not disappoint them – and this meeting cannot stop yet, so I want you to preach for me. What do you say?" "I will preach at the meeting this morning and evening, but not in Berwick, as that is too far," was my reply. "All right. Then I will go to Berwick, and you preach here this morning and evening – and publish preaching for Monday evening. Good morning." And he left.

In due time I started for church, and as I passed my brother-in-law's house he went with me. And so in the evening, when he told me of the conversations he had with the preacher, he said, "That is the reason he came to see you, and got you to preach for him. But you can't do it now, and this is not the proper season to hold meetings anyhow. I won't go again." And he did not. But that evening, before I began preaching, the minister came in – but I must preach, and did so. It was the last time myself, or brother-in-law, were at the meeting. In a few evenings the meeting closed, and but little was accomplished.

A few Sabbaths after the closing of the meeting, he baptized two or three persons in the Susquehanna River. And two weeks later, he held communion on Sabbath afternoon in the church. Not having any other engagement, I walked down to the church. And as I passed my brother-in-law's, he said he would walk along – and did so. We arrived at the church just as the Sabbath School was closing, and so stopped outside the gate in front of the church a few moments. When we saw the pastor approaching, my brother-in-law remarked, "Now he will want you to preach for him. I said, "Not today. This is communion day, and they are close

communionists.” He replied, “Yes he will. Now see if he don’t.” “Well,” I said, “if he does, we will have a little fun with him.”

By this time he came up, shook hands with both of us, and then turning to me said, “I want you to preach for me – won’t you?”

I said, “Not today. I came expressly to hear you this time.” He insisted, but I said, “Not today. You heard me preach a few weeks ago, and now I came to hear you – and I positively will not preach.”

“Well then, you will go with me into the pulpit and take part in the services – won’t you?”

I said, “I will on certain conditions.”

“And what are they?”

“Well, you are close communionists here. We can come and sing and pray with you, and preach for you – and are right good fellows until it comes to communing. Then we must all sit back, like heathens. Now if I am to sit back like a heathen when you commune, I don’t want to sit in the pulpit or take part in the services.”

“No,” said he. “We are not close communionists.”

I said, “You always have been here. And I venture to say that there never have a half dozen communed in that church, outside of your own membership, since it was built.”

“No, we are not close communionists. All are welcome to commune with us who are satisfied with their baptism – whether members of our church or not. If you are satisfied with you baptism, you are welcome to commune with us.”

I replied, “My parents had me baptized in infancy, and I never felt that I needed any more – and therefore I am satisfied with my baptism.”

“Then you are welcome to commune with us.”

“Will you make that statement from the pulpit?”

“Yes, sir.”

“Will you treat the members of other churches as you treat the members of your own church when they come to commune?”

“Yes, sir. I will.”

“Then I will go with you.”

We entered the church and the pulpit together, and he preached. But he had no liberty in preaching. It would not go – and I presume the circumstances in which he was placed had something to do with it. To treat me and all others as he had promised me he would do, would be a violation of the rules of their church. And not to do so would injure his influence in that congregation, outside his own membership, at least, and that was very small. And it would certainly ruin his influence entirely with my brother-in-law – whose favor he was trying to court – and rightly, too. So he hardly knew what to do – but got out of it nicely in the end.

When done preaching, he stated that they were now about to commemorate the sufferings and death of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ by partaking of the emblems of his broken body and shed blood. And then he said, “It is not for me to invite anybody to commune, not even my own members, but all are welcome to

commune with us who are satisfied with their baptism – whether members of our church or not.” And then he sat down. Thus he did not violate their rules. He had done all he had promised me to do – treated all alike – and yet invited no one, not even his own members, to commune. I communed with them, but was the only one outside of their own membership to do so.

While I have love and charity for all Christian churches, I confess my affection for those close communing Baptists is not very strong. I have seen so much of it, as to make it look unchristian and disgusting to me. May the good Lord forgive me if I am wrong in this feeling. That brothers and sisters of the same family cannot commune together – yea children cannot commune with their own parents – and yet claim to belong to the same divine family, I think, to say the least, is unnatural, if not unchristian. And I would pray to be saved from such a spirit as that. They may have a heaven by themselves, or a separate apartment in heaven in the future world – I do not know – but if they have, I have failed to find any direct reference to it in the Bible. If they have not, they certainly must commingle and commune with God’s people of other churches in heaven – if they ever get there. Then why not do so here on earth?

During the summer, as already stated, I would frequently get very homesick for the active ministry. One Saturday noon I came in from the field, having one of my homesick spells very badly. After dinner I sat down to rest and took up the “Evangelical Messenger,” our church paper, and looked over the obituary column. It contained a lengthy obituary of a young man who had died on the Wyoming Circuit. It spoke of his illness, and of his happy death. He had died very happy, and gave the brightest possible evidence of his acceptance with God. It then stated, “This young man was converted and admitted to the church at a meeting held by Rev. H.A. Dietterich in the Square Top school house.” I called to mind this young man, and remembered well how I had knelt by his side and pointed him to “The Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.” As he knelt at the altar of prayer. I remembered how he had looked up to Jesus through his tears, and his darkness was turned into day and his mourning to joy. I also thought of the happiness he experienced when deliverance came, and how he praised God for it – and now he had died praising God, according to his obituary. I thanked God that at least one was saved through my instrumentality – and that is worth a lifetime in the ministry. It proved a great comfort to me at that time.

I preached somewhere almost every Sabbath during the summer. We also had a tent at the Evangelical camp meeting in the grove of Mr. Joseph Conner.⁵ At the conference held at this meeting Rev. G.E. Zehner,⁶ a cousin to my wife,

⁵ Joseph P. Conner (1831-1877) had farm property west of Lime Ridge that later became Columbia Park, an amusement resort operated by the trolley company. He is buried in the Briar Creek Union cemetery.

⁶ George Evans Zehner (1841-1902) received his first appointment in 1869 and served Evangelical charges until his retirement in 1900. His mother was the former Anna Evans (1804-1884), a sister to Mrs. Dietterich’s father George Evans (1809-1870).

received preacher's license – and is yet in the active ministry. In the fall, on invitation, I attended and assisted at the dedication of the Union Church near Clear Springs, York County – at the Brandt appointment, already referred to in this book, where I began the work by preaching under the locust trees in Brandt's yard. I went down on Friday, and on Saturday we held the first service in the new church. The dedication took place on Sabbath. The following ministers were present: my brother-in-law, Rev. Z. Hornberger,⁷ who was my successor as preacher in charge of the circuit which I had left in the spring when I moved to father's; Rev. George Hunter⁸; also Rev. Fohl⁹ of the United Brethren Church; and myself. The dedication passed off very pleasantly. On Monday Reverends Hunter and Fohl left for their homes, and Hornberger left for his home in Bendersville on Wednesday. At the urgent request of the people I remained over the second Sabbath and until Saturday of the following week – and continued the meeting,¹⁰ which was a grand success. The mighty power of God was most signally displayed at the meeting. Sinners would be so overcome during the preaching of the word, as to fall on their knees at their seats and to cry to God for mercy. Some were so broken up as to be unable to arise and come to the altar of prayer when penitents were invited forward – but remained on their knees at their seats all through the church, earnestly wrestling with God like Jacob of old for mercy and salvation.

During the two weeks I was at the meeting, thirty-six persons presented themselves at the altar of prayer as penitents – eighteen of whom professed conversion. The last night I was there eighteen were kneeling side by side at the altar – six of whom were happily converted to God that evening. It was one of the most signally blessed meetings I ever attended and conducted. I should have remained longer – and the congregation plead with me to do so – and continue the meeting, but father was not well when I left home. So I felt obliged to return home, and did so. How the meeting finally terminated I do not know, but as a result of the meeting they were able to effect a good organization which remains to this day. For my two weeks services the good people kindly gave me thirty dollars. May the Lord reward them abundantly for it.

During this meeting I had an experience which I will never forget, and I do not wish to see it repeated. I was staying overnight with a family in Franklinton. In the morning before we had breakfast, a gentleman came in stating that he was sent after me to come to Mr. Strayer's tenement house to baptize a sick woman who

⁷ Zachariah Hornberger (1833-1893) was pastor of the Gettysburg Circuit, which included the Evangelical appointment at Union Church. He was married to Minerva Evans, the older sister of Dietterich's wife Tamar Evans.

⁸ George Hunter (1824-1901) was serving the nearby Cumberland Circuit.

⁹ John Fohl (1815-1901) was serving the York Springs Circuit, which included the United Brethren appointment at Union Church. His unique role and importance within the United Brethren denomination is told in the *Autobiography of John Fohl*, published by the Conference Historical Society in 2000.

¹⁰ It was customary after the dedication of a new church building to immediately begin a protracted meeting there.

was at the point of death. We ate breakfast hurriedly. Then I mounted the buggy with him, and we drove to the house. When I entered the house I found quite a number of neighboring women present, kindly doing all they could for the afflicted family. I was conducted into a small room down stairs, and as I entered it, on the left on a bed lay the wife and mother – in the last stages of typhoid fever. To the right in another bed lay their only child, a daughter about fourteen years of age, with the same disease – and it was hard to tell which of the two would die first – while the husband and father was in bed upstairs, slowly recovering from the same disease. Thus the entire family were in bed at one time with the fever. I approached the mother's bedside. In answer to my questions, she informed me that she had neglected the salvation of her soul, as many do, up to the time of her sickness. But she said she had now repented of her sins, and she felt that God had forgiven her – that she had peace with God and was ready to die – only she must yet be baptized. She felt that she must be baptized and all would be well – but that she must be baptized by immersion. I told her she could not well be immersed in her present condition, and asked whether she could not be satisfied to be baptized by sprinkling – as the validity of baptism did not depend upon the quantity of water used, or the mode in which it was performed, but upon her faith in Jesus.

But she said, “No. There is no baptism but by immersion. I can easily ride to the creek and be immersed.” I then told her that the day was cold, and very windy, and that it was quite a distance to the creek – and that she was too weak and short of breath, and would strangle in the water, and it would be impossible for her to ride that distance and be immersed now. But she became quite excited and said, “It won't hurt me. It is you – you are afraid to go into the water. I can easily ride to the creek, and I must be immersed or I will be lost.” And in her excitement she sprang up in bed and reached out for her clothes, which were hanging against the wall at the foot of her bed. I plead with her, reasoned with her, and tried to show her that her salvation did not depend upon her being immersed now in her present condition – and that God did not require impossibilities of her in order to grant her salvation. I explained that she should have attended to this important duty in the days of health, when she might have been immersed, but to immerse her now was impossible – and if God had forgiven all her other sins, as she claimed he had, he had also forgiven her the neglect of being baptized, and she could be satisfied to be baptized in some other way than by immersion.

Others tried to reason with her also, but all in vain. When I could do nothing with her, I went upstairs to her husband and spoke to him in reference to it. He said, “To immerse now is impossible, and to baptize her in any other way will not satisfy her – so we can do nothing for her but pray for her, which you have already done.” But this was her constant plea all day – “Only immerse me, and it will be all right.” Oh, I wished again and again that immersion had never been heard, or thought of, as a mode of baptism or an ordinance of the church. I believe that the church and her ordinances are like the gospel – yea, like salvation itself – suited to all people, to all times, to all places, and to all circumstances. But immersion is

not, and I am therefore inclined to doubt its being a scriptural mode of baptism, or an ordinance of the church.

This might have been done in her bed by sprinkling, without inconvenience or doing her any harm. But because of her prejudice or early training, that would not satisfy her – consequently she must die without being baptized at all, immersion being impossible under the circumstances. Oh, what folly. I remained with her until time to go to the church in the evening. Before I left for church, her physician came in. He was a middle aged man. I told him of her desire to be immersed. He said, “Well, if you had a large vessel here in her room you might immerse her – but she would die in your hands, and you would not like that. But it would make no difference, for she will die anyhow.” I said I should not attempt it, even if we had a vessel suitable for the purpose. If she must be immersed now, she must get those who taught her that doctrine and believe in it to immerse her, for my faith in immersion is not strong enough to attempt such a thing now. She lamented all day to be immersed, and that night died with the same lament on her lips – though delirious part of the time. I preached her funeral sermon in the Chestnut Grove Evangelical Lutheran Church, and prayed to God that I might never witness another such a scene.

Yet I did see a similar case a few years later, in Cumberland County. This man, however, when he found he could not be immersed, consented to be baptized by sprinkling – and was satisfied. Not that I doubted her salvation simply because she was not baptized – for the dying thief was not baptized, and yet he went from the cross to paradise. And when I think of these cases, I almost wish that all that has ever been said or written in favor of immersion could be blotted out forever. If parents would have their children baptized in their infancy, as they should do, the lament to be baptized would never be heard on the death bed. Her husband and daughter finally recovered and are yet living.

In the fall I informed father that I could farm no longer. I told him that I would not accept the best farm in the county as a present, if I must abandon the ministry and live on it, though I need not work a day in my life. I advised him to make his home with my oldest sister, Mrs. Hutchison¹¹ – who was a widow and then lived in Light Street, a very pleasant little town seven miles away from the farm. I thought he would have more company in town, and it would be more pleasant for him there than on the farm. And then he could rent the farm to a stranger, and I could engage in the active work of the ministry. He concluded to do so, and had partly arranged with a neighbor to take the farm.

He then went to see my sister in reference to it. They arranged for him to come and live with her in the spring, and then rent the farm out to the neighbor

¹¹ Lovina Dietterich (1816-1867) married William Hutchison (1810-1860). They are buried in the Hidlay Cemetery – on Hidlay Church Road, in Columbia County about 1.5 miles east of Light Street.

referred to. But that night, after he left her and came home, she took sick with typhoid fever – and in nine days she died. “Thus man proposes, but God disposes.” She died October 12, 1867, aged fifty-one years, three months and thirteen days. She had been a worthy member of the Methodist Episcopal Church for many years, and died a good Christian woman. She left one son and one daughter.¹² Her son, the Rev. Arthur Hutchison,¹³ is now a minister in the Presbyterian Church in the state of Illinois.

Arrangements were now made for Daniel Shaffer, who was married to my youngest sister,¹⁴ to move in with father to take care of him and do the farming. That I might devote more time to the ministry during the winter, and that my brother-in-law might the better prepare for the spring work, we – with the mutual consent of all – agreed to exchange homes that fall yet, and did so. He moved in with father, and we moved into the house which he had occupied – about the first of December. But shortly after the change was made, father took sick – and after six weeks of severe suffering, he died. He died January 30th, 1868, aged seventy-three years, eleven months and ten days. I was with him during all his sickness. And frequently, after lying down at night to get a little sleep, he would call me up again. And when I would get up and go to him he would tell me, “I feel so bad I cannot rest, and I want you to pray for me.” I would then kneel by the side of his chair and offer prayer in his behalf. He would then invariably tell me, “I feel better now and you can lie down and take a little sleep again.”

For nearly six weeks he sat in his chair day and night, being unable to lie down – because of difficulty in breathing caused by heart disease. He gave me repeated assurances of his readiness for the important change so near at hand. At last death came suddenly to his relief, and I saw him laid by the side of mother in the Lutheran burying ground near the Lutheran Church which I, as a mechanic, had helped to build in my unconverted state. Father and mother had both lived and died worthy members of the Lutheran congregation, worshiping in that church. “Peace to their ashes.”

During the winter I assisted our minister, Rev. A.H. Irvine,¹⁵ as much as I could in holding meetings. I conducted a meeting in the Evansville Church, during father’s sickness, which resulted in twenty-five conversions. Here I had myself been converted some years previous. I also attended the laying of the cornerstone

¹² Clarissa Josephine Hutchison (1851-1917) was sixteen when her mother died. She married a Mr. Wesley Dial and is buried in the Old Oroville Cemetery, Oroville CA.

¹³ Rev. Arthur L. Hutchison (1856-1928) was only ten when his mother died. He was raised by relatives and served the Presbyterians as a pastor and a synodical evangelist. He is buried in the Tacoma Cemetery, Tacoma WA.

¹⁴ Arminta Dietterich, born in 1836, was just two years older than H.A., who was the youngest in the family.

¹⁵ Armstrong Herman Irvine (1838-1923) was the Evangelical preacher appointed to Columbia Circuit 1867-69. He received his license and first appointment in 1860, and served continuously, including a term as district superintendent, until his retirement in 1918.

for a new Lutheran church at Martzville.¹⁶ The sermon was preached by Rev. A.W. Lentz¹⁷ of Clintonville, Lycoming County, Pa. We had a severe winter. An immense body of snow, with good sleighing, lay on the ground from the middle of December until the middle of March.

The first week in March I again attended our annual conference and applied for a circuit. Thus ended my experience as a farmer – which satisfied me more fully than ever, by my constant longing for the work of my divine call to the ministry. I have never doubted it for a moment since. It was in some respects an eventful year. God blessed us all with good health, our crops were all good – but during the year I had seen my eldest sister and my father laid into the silent tomb.

My most amusing, and yet most provoking, experience on the farm was with a bulky mare I had purchased at the public sale. She was just like some people I have met. You could not depend upon her, for she would generally balk just about when and where you did not want her to do so – and at times and places where there appeared to be but little or no cause for it. My first experience with her at it, and the first I knew she was given to this evil habit, was while plowing corn in a field near the house. There was a small hill to ascend, and she finally concluded she would not go up it any more – and so stopped for me. I urged, coaxed, and petted her – but all in vain. I finally concluded to try “Solomon’s birch”¹⁸ on her – and I met with some success. She changed her mind and went up the hill again, and so we got along pretty well until noon.

At dinner father began to tease me about it by saying, “Ah, I guess I saw the preacher cross once.” I said, “When?” “Why, when he was whipping the horse this forenoon.” I said, “No, father, I was not cross. But I whipped her just as I plow corn – because it must be done.” He teased me considerably about it, for he knew she was an old offender at it. He had had some experience with her himself. My wife said, “It is too bad to whip her that way.” “Well,” said I, “it must be done.” After dinner I went out and tried it again, but soon had the same trouble with her. I unhitched her, and then hitched her up again – and did all I could to get her to go, without using the whip – but all in vain. After some time spent in this way, my wife, who had been looking on from the house, came down to me and said, “Now,

¹⁶ St. Paul’s Lutheran Church was erected just northwest of Berwick 1867. Prior to erecting the building on land donated by Abraham Martz, the congregation worshiped in a nearby brick school building and held their first communion in March 1861, with 12 of those first 15 communicants being members of the Martz family.

¹⁷ Alexander Wiley Lentz (1834-1907) served the White Deer Valley charge 1863-74 and lived in Clintonville, a community on the northern edge of the borough of Montgomery. Coincidentally, he later served the Friesburg Lutheran Church in Salem County NJ 1882-86, where his immediate successor was H.A. Dietterich’s son James Eugene Dietterich 1887-91.

¹⁸ “Solomon’s birch” is an old expression for the “rod of correction” – i.e., corporal punishment – taken from Proverbs 22:15: “Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him.”

whip her right – for she deserves it.” I then tried the whip again, and finally succeeded in getting her to go.

In the evening father teased me again. But now he said, “You did not get cross enough. A man strikes harder when he is right cross. She thinks you are only in fun, and not in earnest about it.” I had considerable trouble with her until August, when I hired my nephew to plow for me – while myself and family tented at our camp meeting. I told him he would likely have trouble with her. He only remarked, “I’ll soon manage that.” She did try it with him. And I do not know whether he got crosser and struck her harder than I did or not, but she never tried it again – for him, or for me, while I owned her. Perhaps he struck harder than I did, as he was at the time only a student for the ministry and not yet a preacher – though he became one after graduating at college.

And so it is sometimes severe measures are necessary – not only with horses, but also with people, before they will do their duty. In fact, we all need to be chastened at times. Hence the apostle says of the Lord, “Whom he loveth, he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.” “Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.” – Hebrews 12:6,11. We all have need, therefore, to pray with the poet.¹⁹

Do thou Lord, mid pleasure or woe,
For heaven my spirit prepare,
And shortly I also shall know,
And feel what it is to be there.

¹⁹ Elizabeth K. Mills. The lines given by Dietterich are a stanza from her hymn text “We speak of the realms of the blest” – #1128 in the Evangelical Hymnal.