

ment to the Federal Constitution to prevent the existence of polygamy any where in the United States. This is the only way to reach it, for as the law now stands the matter is entirely in the hands of the state government. This government in Utah and probably in some other states is in the hand of the Mormon church. So no relief can be secured there. Action must be taken by Congress in the matter; but this cannot be done, until the Constitution gives Congress the authority.

To this end on December 6, 1915, Congressman Gillett of Massachusetts, introduced into the house a resolution proposing the following amendment to the federal constitution:

"Article XVIII.

"Sec. 1. Polygamy and polygamous cohabitation shall not exist anywhere in the United States or any place subject to their jurisdiction.

"Sec. 2. Congress shall have power to enforce this provision by appropriate legislation."

January 5, 1916, Senator Thomas of Colorado introduced into the senate a bill proposing the same amendment.

The measures were referred to the judiciary committees of the two houses.

A deep intrigue to prevent action has been effected by the Mormon church and Kingdom. Christian patriots who favor the amendment ought to express their wish personally to their senators and congressmen.

## Contributed

### AN INTERESTING POEM.

In your paper of the 29th, received to-day, there is a letter from a mountain girl, Bertha Cosner. The name recalled a poem by a young preacher of that name, who came from the mountains; gave great promise of usefulness, but died just after entering on work in his loved home field. I never knew him and have forgotten his given name.

The copy of the poem which I have was given me about fifteen years ago by a friend of his. It is in his handwriting and beautifully done—printed letters.

His friend told me that he was self-taught until found by Rev. George White, D. D., who interested others in him and entered him in school at Moorefield, W. Va.

I hope you will find the poem worthy of a place in your columns.

Miss Bettie Gilkeson.

#### Look up—the Stars are Shining.

Look up—the stars are shining  
So brightly in the sky,  
Be not in darkness pining;  
Look up—there's light on high,  
Though in a desert dreary,  
Thy sun gone down at night,  
Poor wanderer, faint and weary,  
Above thee still is light.

Look up—the stars are shining  
Those gems do not appear  
Until the day's declining  
Shows night is drawing near;  
But when the light has faded,  
And when the gloom of night  
All nature has o'ershaded  
Above the stars shine bright.

Look up—the stars are shining  
Beyond the misty shroud  
When all beneath reclining  
Is hidden by the cloud,  
Yield not to idle sorrow;  
Mourn not the gloom of night;  
Nor pine thou for the morrow;  
Look ever for the bright.

—Aetus.

(Note.—Here is his record as given in the Alumni Catalogue of Union Seminary: "William Francis Cosner, Hardy County, W. Va.; born, November 29, 1845; farmer and teacher; student at Washington and Lee University; entered Union Seminary in 1876 and graduated after three years; was licensed by Winchester Presbytery April 26, 1879, and was ordained as an evangelist October 4, 1879; died in the Home Mission work November 17, 1880."

This brief, bare statement of facts gives no idea of the character of the man. His memory was fresh at Washington and Lee and at Union when the writer of this note was a student at those institutions. Especially at Washington and Lee was his influence still felt, and he was remembered as an earnest and active Christian.

Much of his writing remained in the Y. M. C. A. records and elsewhere, and it was just such as is described above. The explanation of the peculiar form that it presented was due to the fact that in his mountain home he had no teacher. He learned to read in some way, but knew nothing of writing. So he learned to write by copying as nearly as possible the letters of the printed page. This he did beautifully.

The following very interesting account of this remarkable man has been written for our readers by Rev. Charles R. Stribling, of Petersburg, Va., formerly of Martinsburg, W. Va.—Editor]

#### Rev. Wm. F. Cosner.

Some years ago a beautiful poem appeared in the Moorefield weekly paper. Great was the surprise when the discovery was made that the author was a mountain boy living in the "Canaan Wilderness" of West Virginia. Soon Rev. George W. White, D. D., was planning to ride forty miles on horse back to see this gifted young poet, with aspirations that were high and noble. In that day the "Canaan" country was as unknown as the wilds of the Rockies. Tall and stately trees, beautiful boughs of laurel and ivy, running streams, furnished ideal haunts for bear and deer and game. Of roads there are none,—only a trail here and there, on which the hardy settler carried his scant provisions on horse back. Late one evening Dr. White rode up to a mountain home hidden away in the forest, and here he found, William Cosner, the only son of a widowed mother, and the main support of her and three sisters. That night William made up a huge fire in the fire place to scare off the bears that had been stealing his sheep. Around that fire the preacher and family sat and talked of the future.

The library of the young man consisted of a New Testament and a well studied copy of Shakespeare. He had learned to write by copying the verses from the New Testament. Many of his poems were written in a clear hand and are as even and regular as if printed on a typewriter. He knew two books—he knew them well! Two plans were decided on; first, he was to come to Moorefield and unite with the church. Then, if some provision could be made for the care of his mother and sisters, he was to begin his preparation for the Gospel ministry.

That mountain lad clothed in garments woven on a hand loom, and made by a mother's loving hand, stood one morning before the pulpit of the Presbyterian church in Moorefield, W. Va. As he spoke of the Master and his faith in Him and his desire to dedicate his life to Him, the congregation was moved to tears.

Yes, he traveled forty miles on foot to confess his Lord! And the Moorefield congrega-

tion undertook his education. To their everlasting credit be it said. The money they spent was as good an investment as a church ever made.

The mother of William Cosner was an Idleman—a family that has done much for the Presbyterian and Methodist churches, in Mineral and Grant counties. When a protector was needed—John D. Idleman came forward and promised to care for his widowed sister and her children, while William studied. He went to "Canaan" and moved the family near him and the other brothers. So God prepared the way. He always does. The boy took in knowledge almost by absorption. A friend of the writer was by his side when he first saw a locomotive. Without expressing any surprise he watched it carefully, and when it pulled out of sight, began to talk of the mechanical principles of its construction.

First at the Academy in Moorefield, then at W. & L. University, finally at Union Theological Seminary, he acquitted himself with honor.

Then he went back to give his life to his own people in the mountains of West Virginia. God spared his life just a little over a year after he was ordained in 1879, then like that other young man Stephen "he fell asleep."

Yet what a fruitful life! His songs are still being sung by the children of our Sabbath schools and his influence can never die!

Up in a little family burying ground on the top of the Alleghany Mountains, amid the bushes and briars, there is a white marble tomb-stone, and on that stone a name—William F. Cosner, born November 29, 1845. Died November 17, 1880. And then these impressive words:—"The Founder of the Alleghany Church." And he was!

Poet, preacher, musician,—he "endured hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ," and gave his life for the church.

G. R. S.

#### CHURCH SINGING.

Our simple and scattered comments, may or may not be accepted, but we are constrained to write just what we feel is right and proper on the subject of congregational singing.

Your paragraph in the issue of March 15, 1916, on the first page on singing attracted our attention specially. Not that the other matter found in your excellent Presbyterian is unworthy of notice, for that is not the case, for we read "the" paper all through with care and profit. The paragraph referred to reads thus:

"Singing may well be called the neglected part of public worship. There are some, no doubt, who will maintain that in many churches, instead of being neglected, a great deal of attention is paid to the singing. This is true, so far as the choir is concerned. The singing of a paid quartet, whose almost only recommendation is that they have good voices, can scarcely be considered a very high order of worship. Usually they cannot be accused of singing so that the people can understand what is being sung. The Bible has a great deal to say about singing. The purport of it all is, 'Let all the people sing.' Singing on the part of the congregation is uplifting to the worshipper and inspiring to the preacher. It warms and stirs the hearts of both."

We have spent a life, so far, in music as a teacher, choir leader, author and composer, and we believe we are aware of the gross defects that exist in the majority of the churches not only in the South, but everywhere.