

OUR CHURCHES.

St. Michael's (P. E.) Church, Mint St. Services at 10 a. m. and 8 p. m. Sunday-school at 4 p. m. Rev. P. P. ALSTON, pastor.

M. E. Church, Graham Street. Services at 3 p. m. and 8 p. m. Sunday-school at 10 a. m. Rev. E. M. COLLETT, pastor.

First Baptist Church, South Church St. Services at 11 a. m., 3 p. m. and 8 p. m. Sunday-school at 1 p. m. Rev. A. A. POWELL, pastor.

Ebenezer Baptist Church, East Second St. Services at 11 a. m., 3 p. m. and 8 p. m. Sunday-school at 1 p. m. Rev. Z. BAUGHTON, pastor.

Presbyterian Church, corner Seventh and College Sts. Services at 3 p. m. and 8 p. m. Sunday-school at 10 a. m. Rev. R. P. WYCHE, pastor.

Clinton Chapel, (A. M. E. Z.) Mint St. Services at 11 a. m., 3 p. m. and 8 p. m. Sunday-school at 1 p. m. Rev. M. SLADE, pastor.

Little Rock, (A. M. E. Z.) E St. Services at 11 a. m., 3 p. m. and 8 p. m. Rev. W. JOHNSON, pastor.

If your paper has a blue cross mark, it will be stopped till you pay up. We cannot continue to send it to you without some money. Please pay up and let us continue it to you.

LOCAL ANNOUNCEMENT.

After the 9th of July we will receipt for only 3, 6, and 12 months subscriptions at the following rates: 3 months, 50 cents; 6 months, 75 cents; one year, \$1.50.

If your paper has a blue mark on it this week, it will simply mean we are compelled to discontinue sending it to you until you settle up. We regret to stop it, but cannot send it after the blue mark appears.

Rev. P. J. Holmes, P. O. box 73, Rockingham, N. C., is the Supreme Governor of the Universal Brotherhood of North Carolina.

NEW AGENTS.—Miss S. F. Young, Cameron; J. E. Smith, Fayetteville; B. B. Hill, Wilmington; R. E. Grier, Matthews; I. I. Walker, Salisbury; G. H. Henderson, Washington, D. C.

Prof C. S. L. A. Taylor was in the city last Tuesday.

Miss Sarah J. Johnson left last Saturday to take charge of a school in the country.

Miss Laura Lomax returned last week after a visit of several weeks in Union S. C.

The Sunday-school convention to be held at Chester, S. C., will convene next Wednesday.

The street railway is being rapidly extended from the square out East Trade street.

Mr. R. P. Bearden spent the week home with his family. He has been in Florida several months.

Rev. J. S. Caldwell stopped in the city last Monday on his way to the S. S. convention at Monroe.

The Presbyterian Sunday School Convention will be held at Biddleville August 4th and 5th.

Mrs. Marzella Smith of Laurinburg has just returned from a visit to relatives and friends in Fayetteville.

Mr. J. D. Bibb of Livingstone college spent last Sunday in the city. He has gone to Rutherfordton to teach.

About twenty delegates left for Monroe on Tuesday night. Others went down Wednesday noon and Thursday.

Miss Isadora Lomax returned home last Friday from Wadesboro after an absence of several weeks visiting relatives.

The ceiling and walls of Ebenezer Baptist Church have been nicely painted and decorated, and a new altar built.

Rev. C. S. Brown spent last Sunday and Monday in our city. He preached at Clinton Chapel Sunday night.

The Statesville District Sunday-school Convention of A. M. E. Zion Church will be held at Rutherfordton August 10th, 11th and 12th.

Rev. W. H. Sheperson passed through last Wednesday for Lincolnton and we heard it whispered that he would return to Virginia Friday with one of the ladies of that town with her name changed.

We received a package from the postoffice last Wednesday that had been there, since the 8th of June coming from Greensboro N. C.

Miss Julia Kelley received a severe shock from lightning last Wednesday. Her shoes were torn off, and she still suffers partial paralysis in the arms.

Mr. Richard Pickenback, one of the oldest and best known citizens, died last Tuesday night after a long illness. He was buried from the M. E. Church Thursday afternoon.

Mr. John Taylor and Miss Nora Tyler were the delegates from Clinton Chapel to the convention. Miss Minnie Sumner represented Grace Church.

Mr. Jas. A. Johnston of Davidson College gave a call last Tuesday. He was a delegate to the S. S. convention and will work for the MESSENGER after this.

Mr. W. H. Houser spent two days in the city this week looking up more hands and teams to prosecute work on the High Shoals plaid factory. He is getting on finely making brick for the mills.

Last Sunday was quarterly meeting day at Grace Church, Rev. R. S. Rives, P. E. conducted services during the day. Five children were baptized in the afternoon, and communion services at night.

Bishop J. A. Beebe passed through the city last Tuesday evening from Texas. He goes to visit his family at Washington N. C. He had with him, a Texas horned frog. It is a frog shaped like a terrapin, with horns on the back of its head.

Good crowds attended Ebenezer Baptist church last Sunday throughout the day. Collections were taken to pay for the painting of the ceiling which is now being done. Rev. Collett preached in the afternoon and \$25 were raised at this service.

It is gratifying to know that Zion Methodist Church has this year made such marked improvement on children's day collections. Regardless of the discrepancies in the Star's statements, we have reasons to believe the collections are much larger this year than ever before.

It is sad for us to announce the death of Mrs. Rebecca Bowman which occurred in Fayetteville on Wednesday of last week. She was a kind mother and loving, devoted wife and earnest Christian. The Church and society lose much in her death. She leaves three or four small children. The husband and family have our sympathy.

At first alarm of fire after the disbanding of the white fire companies, the new companies and the old reliable Neptunes responded promptly like men. Again all rest assured that the town is safe. Colored men have always stood by the property owners, for in everything except politics, the property owners have always stood by them. Right will prevail.

One of the most frightful shocks in the storm last Tuesday was at Miss Hattie Wells. One end of a bureau was splintered and torn to pieces, the mirror shattered, papers and clothing in the drawers scorched, and the carpet on the floor badly torn. The occupants were, fortunately, in another room at the time. A post six or eight feet from the outside wall was split. All the windows and doors were closed. The electricity must have gone down the chimney, as the side of the bureau and the torn parts of the carpet were near the fire-place. Then the fence post must have been split by a different bolt. An old white gentleman passing at the time was knocked down and his umbrella broken.

White and Colored Teachers. Last week the public examination of school teachers was held in Monroe for Union county. From the Monroe paper we learn there were 23 white and 36 colored applicants. Three of the whites failed to make any grade, while five made 3d, twelve 2d, and three made 1st grade. Thirteen colored failed; ten made 3d; seven made 2d, and 6 made 1st grade.

This speaks volumes for the fitness of our colored teachers. The examinations were very rigid—the same for the colored as the whites, only the

whites had three and four days, while nearly all of the colored failures came from want of time to do the work, as they were late coming in. The whites were examined Wednesday and Thursday, and were allowed to continue their work with the colored applicants till they finished. The colored, having the last days, had to finish or fail. It will be seen that one-sixth of the colored applicants got first grade, one-sixth second grade, one-fourth third grade, and about one-third failed to get through. Of the whites, nearly one-eighth got first grade, one-half second grade, over one-fifth third grade, while a little over one-seventh failed. Biddle, Livingstone and Scotia were among the first grade applicants.

The Sunday-School Convention.

The Charlotte District Sunday-school Convention was held in Monroe Wednesday and Thursday. Very nearly all the schools in the district were represented, and the reports showed them to be in a prosperous condition. The session was harmonious and very interesting. Presiding Elder Rives presided; Rev. R. H. Stitt, recording secretary; Rev. J. S. Caldwell, financial secretary. Rev. R. H. Simmons preached the annual sermon, and took an active part in the convention. Mr. J. C. Dancy delivered the address. Much business of importance and benefit to the Church and Sabbath School was transacted. The papers read were all praiseworthy. We had the pleasure of hearing those read by Misses Georgia Williams, Maggie Wright and Nora Tyler. These were all well read. Miss Minnie Sumner read her paper on Wednesday. Rev. J. W. Stitt, William Johnson and Thomas read papers also, and Rev. R. H. Stitt delivered the address Thursday night.

The firemen and Good Samaritans visited the Convention in uniform. An excursion went down Thursday, and Monroe was made quite lively. A game of base ball was played in the afternoon between Charlotte and Monroe—Charlotte getting the best of it. The entertainment was a success. All the churches here were well represented, and Grace Church was the recipient of many compliments. The District Convention of the Churches will be held in Clinton Chapel on the 13th of October.

Matthews Notes.

Miss Ella Green left for Charlotte Saturday evening. Miss Green was much devoted to her Sunday-school lessons. We feel she had a good one.

Miss Eliza A. Grier returned from Monroe on Sunday morning, after going through a very lengthy examination. She left Sunday evening for her summer work, at Stevens, Union county, N. C.

Miss Sallie Hall and her little bird left us on Tuesday at 12:37 P. M. for her uncle's in Wadesboro.

You may imagine the writer a little lonesome. But when I find myself seated in the school room battling with 66 pupils, I find no time to be lonesome.

Mamie Kelley seems to enjoy the country. R. E. GRIER.

The Fort Worth South West says: "The labor movement has nothing to do with the theological views of men, but deals with secular questions, and social and economic conditions. He who would arouse religious hate in the ranks of labor is an enemy to the human race. Watch well the man who springs the religious wrangle in the councils of labor. Either he has not as much sense as a mud turtle, or he is a villain. What folly it would be to permit religious intolerance to disrupt organized labor! What a spectacle it would be to see the masses wrangling over theology while their wretched families were starving for bread."

Mr. Powderly asserts that co-operation furnishes the solution of the labor question. Let us hope that the decree will be adopted, for the General Master Workman has hit pretty near the bull's eye. Co-operation implies high skill, high honesty, high frugality—the sources of all prosperity of workingmen. And let ambitious converts begin at once to apply the suggested remedy. If men will save enough of their earnings and then apply it to reproduce shrewdly enough the result could not but be beneficial.—Ex.

Please send us a remittance of a dollar or so. We need cash.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

Lesson Text: "The Baptism of Jesus," Matt. iii, 13-17—Golden Text: Matt. iii, 17—Commentary by Rev. William Newton, D.D.

V. 13. Jesus had passed some twenty-nine years of His life in Nazareth of Galilee; and was now thirty years of age, i. e., the age at which the priests commenced their work, Num. iv, 3, or entered on their office. John—being six months older than He—Luke iii, 23—must have been preaching and baptizing for that time. At the end of that time, the incident of this verse took place, and Jesus began His public ministry, by a public recognition of the divine authority of John's baptism. But in the midst of the crowd that thronged around him how was John to recognize Jesus? For we have the authority of his own statement, John i, 31-33, that he did not know Him until after He had been baptized. The facts seem to have been these:—

On the day here indicated when John seems to have ended the work of the day, Luke iii, 21, a single stranger presented Himself to him, asking for baptism at his hands. It is not to be seen in the declaration of John just quoted, that as Jesus asked this rite from him, John must have had a strong persuasion that this stranger was the Messiah whose herald he was. Doubtless he was familiar with all the incidents of the birth of the Coming One. Doubtless he knew that He would come to him for baptism. And now when he sees the Stranger approach, his impression as to His character must have been quite strong enough to lead him to make the objection in verse 14. There is really no difficulty in the case whatever.

But why should Jesus seek for baptism at the hands of John? Do not the following reasons furnish a sufficient reply? 1. John's baptism was of divine authority, John iii, 33. John was sent to baptize. 2. John's baptism was connected with the manifestation of Jesus to Israel, see John i, 31. It was the reason why he baptized. 3. John's baptism was the baptism of repentance. And, as being one with the people whom He came to redeem, as made under the Law which they had broken, and as charged with their sins, He came just like one of them, to receive the baptism of repentance. Did not being "made under the law," involve all this? So He was circumcised, so He was sent, and so partook of the Passover—just like every other Jew. And so He came to receive the baptism, to which His own herald was sent of God, to call His people. It was of necessity, that being made in all things like unto His brethren, He should stand with them, on the same plane, before the Law which they had broken and He came to fulfil.

V. 14. How shall we understand this? Was not John filled with the Holy Ghost? Luke i, 15. Was not John a burning light, the greatest of the prophets, under the continual power and teaching of the Spirit? What then was his need of the baptism of Jesus? What is that baptism? Is not "He that baptized with the Holy Ghost," made unto us wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption? And does not this cover the entire range of his great work? Does it not include "the redemption of the body," at His coming again—as well as the sanctification of the Spirit? And taught as John was of the Spirit, did he not see and feel that all the need was on his own side? What would he do to Him whose baptism secured all these glorious gifts to each one of his people? And He, John, needed them all. But why He whose gifts they were, should come to him for baptism, he did not understand.

V. 15. And the answer of Jesus seems to confirm the Baptist's expression of his need. It is as if he had said, "All that you say is true." But there is a "need" of which you know not. This must be so now. It is involved in the work I came to do. "And it becometh us—it is fitting, or right, or laid upon us as an obligation—to fulfill all righteousness." And in the difficult understanding of these words, lies all the difficulty of the passage. What righteousness? Clearly something that involved the concurrent action, both of Jesus and of John. Can we tell what it was?

Jesus was here to introduce a new dispensation. And baptism has always been the outward and visible sign of the introduction of such a dispensation. Thus when Israel came out of Egypt, St. Paul tells us they were all baptized unto Moses, in the cloud and in the sea," 1 Cor. x, 2. But when Joshua led them through the Jordan, though that was as great a mark of the new power, yet we are not told they were baptized unto Joshua. For Joshua did not bring in a new dispensation, but only carried forward that which was already introduced. So, when the new dispensation of the church was brought in, it was introduced by the baptism of the Spirit, on individuals, since the Church itself is composed of individuals "taken out of" the nation, Acts xv, 14, so the new dispensation of Israel's coming glory—after the church is gathered—will be brought in by the baptism of the nation—Judah—by the Spirit, Joel ii, 28, 29. It will be on the scale of surprising power and greatness when "a nation shall be born in a day," Is. lxi, 8. So now when the new dispensation of the kingdom of heaven is to be introduced, the same rite is to be observed, Jesus must be baptized, as the divinely appointed sign of the dispensation now to be brought in. And the "righteousness" referred to was obedience to this sign. It was the sign appointed for the nation, in view of the coming Messiah.

V. 16. As John was baptizing at the fords of Jordan, Bethabara, no conclusion as to his mode of baptism can be safely drawn from the text. "I went up out of the Jordan," Surely he can be used, as truly, in reference to a shallow ford as to a deep stream. Nothing but a proof text, covering the entire case, can settle such a question. In Luke iii, 21, we have a most suggestive incident related to the narrative of the baptism. It seems that Jesus did not present Himself for baptism until all the people present had received the rite, Luke iii, 21. Then "being baptized and praying," the incident took place. "And praying," did he ask for this public recognition by the voice of the heavens? We cannot tell. But "the heavens were opened unto Him," and not to John nor any of the people. Mark tells the same thing in the words: "He saw the heavens opened," and therefore to Him alone. Luke records the opening of the heavens, but silent as to who saw them opening. While John's vision was of the descent of Spirit alone, John i, 33. Thus far the record is clear. "The heavens were opened unto Him," and therefore to Him alone. Once more was the glory which He had with the Father before the world was unveiled to His view. He saw that of which He was a central part, as He commenced His public ministry of humiliation. Then came the descent of the Spirit upon Him, and of this the record leaves us in no doubt. "He saw the Spirit," John saw the Spirit. The Spirit descended like a dove, while Luke adds, "in a bodily shape like a dove." It was not a dove but "in bodily shape" was like the dove, even as the cloven tongues on the day of Pentecost, were not fire, but "like as of fire," Acts ii, 3. Now of this Matthew uses the expression "lightning upon Him," Mark, "descending upon Him," Luke, the same word; and John the double expression, "abode upon Him," and "remained on Him." And our Lord claims this presence of the Spirit always, Luke iv, 18. And it was not given by measure unto Him, John iii, 34, and all His ministry was wrought out under it, Heb. ix, 14. Manifestly this includes all His work. It was all done under the direct inspiration of that Spirit.

V. 17. On three other occasions this divine assertion of the character of the Lord Jesus was made, Matt. xvii, 5; Mark ix, 7; and Luke ix, 35. But in these three instances of its use, remarkable addition is made to the words in Lesson, i. e., "hear ye Him." Now, why were not these words used on the occasion before us as they were in the three recorded cases referred to. We have no doubt, the difference is to be found in

the difference of the office held by the parties named. Peter, James, and John were Apostles of the Lord. Their work was to preach the Gospel, or to "be witnesses unto Him." They were, therefore, to be thoroughly trained in His word. And in order to be so, must "hear Him," reverently, obediently, lovingly. But John was the herald of Jesus, whose ministry did not commence till that of John had ceased, Matt. iv, 12-17. These words, therefore, were not used in his case. The Baptist had no heed of them. They were confined to those whose daily ministry would be the unfolding of the words and the opening of the Finished Work of Jesus.

GENERAL LESSONS.

1. The Tri-Unity of God. Let us place their secrets before us. Here was Jesus declared to be the Son of God. Here was the Spirit of God descending, and resting upon Him. And here was the voice from heaven, "This is My Beloved Son," and what have we in all this, but the simple and childlike statement of a fact just as it occurred? It is the setting forth of the great truth of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, or the three personalities in the Divine Nature. There is no attempt at explaining how this can be. Why should there be? We do not need explanations, which we have now in our possession. What we do need is, just to believe what God says about Himself. Meanwhile, there is the other mystery of the Trinity of our own nature, body, soul and spirit, and about which the Apostle prays, 1 Thess v, 23. Here on the one side is Father, Son and Holy Spirit—One God. Here on the other is, Body, Soul and Spirit—one man. We do not halt at the one, for we know it is the fact of our own nature. Why should we at the other, when that is the fact of the Divine Nature?—Lesson Helper.

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