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CORRESPONDENCE

FROM THE MINISTERS AND MEMBERS OF THE A. M. E. ZION CONNECTION IN ALL PARTS OF THE UNITED STATES.

TO THE STAR OF ZION.

AN ADDRESS

DELIVERED BY

Richard McN. Williams,

BEFORE THE

District Conference, Fayetteville, N. C., October 24th, 1884.

"TEMPERANCE."

Life is short and full of vicissitudes and uncertainties. The man who begins active life has many things to endure, many hardships to undergo, and he who spent a long life of usefulness among mankind shall live in the memory of his fellow men. The man who has loyal principles, the morally good, the man who lives for the good he can do, regardless of the circumstances, and the true Christian all hope to receive their reward. In order that one may die a Christian, he must live a Christian. The process of living precedes that of dying. We are told that we may have all the pleasures of this life, that we may live in extravagance and luxury, and have a good time so far as the pleasures of this world are concerned, forgetting the laws of God and our duties to our neighbor, but with how sad an admonition does this portion of scripture close, "But know thou that for all this thou shalt give a strict account."

The ways of God are past finding out, and it is impossible for us to understand the decrees of his judgments. In consequence of our manifold sins we are inclined not to want our merits weighed but our offences pardoned.—We were to receive justice from our Maker too sad would be the consequence, but we hope that his justice will be tempered with mercy, and we be not banished into oblivion for our sins. As such is the case the fear of punishment should at least compel us to pursue a better life, and on the other hand a hope of reward should stimulate us in leading the same.

The general object of all formed associations is mutual improvement; but the one grand object of our Temperance Band of Hope is improvement in knowledge and virtue. Virtue is said to be its own reward, hence the necessity of carefully cultivating it.

Nothing I think is nobler than a reform. Fearfully it is needed among our own race, especially in the way of temperance. Should economy, uprightness, honesty, sobriety, each in their turn to take the place of the many vices that we are addicted to or should the raging flood of intemperance which now sweeps through our land, this world of ours would be a happy one. Would that we could make a Paradise of earth—much to our comfort would it be. But the combined efforts of sages in succeeding generations would tremble at such a task. However, let us work with all our might to make the world as good

as we possibly can. Let us work against the evils of intemperance; let us put the evil away, that others, seeing our good examples, may turn from their wickedness (and live). If we desire others to be temperate we must be temperate ourselves; if we would command others we must command ourselves.

We must practice what we preach. No man liveth unto himself. Every man makes his impression in the world before leaving. He may hide his light under a bushel—he may profess to be a Christian in word, through really he is a sinner in deed, but such a man you know to be a curse to society and himself.

Temperance is no new thing. Its lofty foundation, its noble principles have been embraced by all good men of every age. Remember the motto of our school, "Dare to do right," and to this we may add, "Dare to be true, for other men's failures can never save you."

Were these words universally observed, we, perhaps, would wear a much brighter crown at some future day. Since the evil one has made his advent to this world, he has not been idle as many of us perhaps, but he has been steadily at work spreading his evils throughout this land of ours. It has been allowed therefore by our Maker, and hence the bad are ever mingled with the good.

We must work not expecting to finally annihilate or fully extirpate all evils that may be around us, for this is a task; this is a work unaccomplishable, but let us work to save as many as we can from the blighting curse of intemperance. Temperance literally means moderation, sobriety, calmness. But this is not the kind of temperance that I would advise you to adopt.

Instead of indulging in a moderate use of intoxicating beverages or profanity, and evils generally, I would recommend total abstinence from them. I shall not here attempt to portray many of the evils resulting from intemperance, or to bring before you the horrible aspects consequent to it, but of necessity I must mention a few of them.

We know that the principles of our society discountenance vice, and that one of its greatest objects is to encourage virtue. In the term vice we include all profanity, evil pursuits, the evils resulting from becoming a drunkard and tobacco in all its forms. A man who has any respect for himself or for those around him, would never be guilty of the first of the enumerated vices. The man in such a case having already become depraved, loses control of himself, and we sometimes perceive the sad condition of his mind. Such persons are extremely dangerous, and their company should be avoided.

We shall not turn our attention to the drunkard. Drunkards are men who suffer themselves to be continually intoxicated. Men who have very few personal interests, and are groping about under a banner which unfurls degradation to themselves, their families, and mankind generally. It is not enough for us to say after witnessing the drunkard's career that I would not want to be a drunkard, but you must resolve never to be one, or you too may fill the drunkard's grave.

It is reasonable to admit that no man wants to be a drunkard, that he really wants to destroy himself or squander his hard earnings, and become a pauper. But he has never adopted a resolution that he would not be a drunkard, and consequently he

has been led one from one degree to another, and on and on, until he finds himself at last a wreck, a pauper, in all a vagabond, a drunkard.

Says Virgil, it is easy to get into a difficulty, but to retrace thy steps and soar to the realms of day, this is a work, this is a labor. So is it with the drunkard. He feels that he can never retrace his steps, that he is literally ruined. That he is not able at this late stage to reform. Had he never taken the first drink, he never would have been a drunkard.

It is not at all pleasant to behold a fellow man bound fast in the chains of intemperance. We pity him. We feel sorrow for his suffering family.—But alas! does this make the world better; by no means. As a remedy, we have organized or established temperance societies throughout our land, and we cordially invite and welcome all who have not connected themselves with us to do so for their own good.—The boy is father to the man, and we therefore must sooner or later take the places which our fathers' once occupied, and we must practice virtue and oppose vice, that we may the better succeed. Hence, let your aims be lofty. We cannot aim too high. One whose aim in life is very high will soar much higher than one who aim at objects very near on a level with himself.

Work on, then, in this noble cause, and may your efforts be crowned with success.

Bishop Hood's Address

To the Members and Friends of the Kentucky Annual Conference of the A. M. E. Zion Church in America.

Beloved Brethren:

In the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, assembled as we are in annual convocation, it is our indispensable duty to render acknowledgment and thanksgiving unto God, our father, the sovereign ruler of the universe, for all the many mercies we have enjoyed. While desolating and inundating floods have spent their force in our very vicinity, unusual storms and the fearful shaking of the earth, have filled guilty mortals with awful dread. Yet we have enjoyed the peaceful and happy assurance of Divine favor.

In assembling in our annual conference, the interests of that kingdom for the coming of which we are taught to make the first petition of our devotional exercise should engage our chief attention. Not what we shall eat or what we shall drink, or where-with shall we be clothed, should be our first thought; but what can I do to hasten the reign of righteousness on earth. Whoever may manifest their indifference respecting the coming of Christ's kingdom, surely God's chosen ministers will not. And yet it is to be feared that there are many in the ministerial ranks who, for some reason, are very far from being workers together with Christ, for the upbuilding of his kingdom. I have noticed three evils which hinder the work of the Lord.

First; Selfishness. Like Peter, we are selfish. We won't do anything for the Lord, unless we can see some personal gain—forgetting that the riches of God's blessing are yet to be revealed. When we reach the mount of transfiguration, we want to build

and stay, forgetful of the perishing millions in the valley below, to whom we are sent to disciple and bring to the shepherd of souls.

While all our institutions are languishing for the want of means to run them, and while churches, not paid for, are slipping out of our hands, men are content setting down on large salaries, with folded arms, wholly indifferent to Zion's chief interests. One man gets \$1600 a year, or twice what the law allows him, and brings up from 700 members \$100 or \$250 less than that duty requires of him. Do you think that we can live at this poor dying rate? Can we hope to have God's blessing while coming that far short of duty? How long think you will there be any fat place to sit down in, if this state of things continues. While there may be very few who are receiving double the amount of salary fixed by law, yet I know of more than one, two or three men in Zion who have injured their own usefulness and the cause of Zion, by demanding unreasonably large salaries from strong-living churches, whereas, if they had been willing to accept a reasonably large salary, and thus retained a much larger influence for good, in inducing the people to contribute the means to pay for churches and support our institutions, they would have had much more influence to-day, and the churches they have had charge of would have been a hundred per cent. better off than they are now. And I doubt not that these ministers would have been in better condition themselves, for it has been remarked that ill-gotten gains takes to itself wings.

I might mention other churches which have suffered from like causes, but I speak of these four in the 5th district, because they are conspicuous illustrations of the point I am making, namely, that selfishness is a great hindrance to our work. I am told of a case here in the Kentucky conference, in which the church was lost simply because the minister insisted upon appropriating for his personal use the money which had been raised to pay the church debts. The locality of that church is now destitute of a place of worship, notwithstanding it is a locality in which we ought to have had a flourishing church.

Secondly—And closely connected with the evil of selfishness, is that of self-indulgence. Needless self-indulgence is one of the evils condemned by our general rules; and yet I doubt whether there is any evil more prevalent in the church. This evil assumes a variety of forms. Sometimes that of laziness. Some men are just too lazy to move around and perform the duties of the ministry. I might use a softer expression, but sometimes evils assume such stubborn attitudes that to handle them with gloved fingers is to trifle merely. The bishop has no power to apply the law, but he can declare it. And it is his duty if in his power to create such a sentiment of honest purity in the conference as shall make it unpleasant for men to live a slack, twisted ministerial life, and impossible for them to violate law with impunity. I assure you that I shall not shrink from this duty. So far as it is in my power I shall make it too hot or too cold for the drones in this district. A pastor of a church should see every member once a month if possible. He should know all of his members personally. He cannot do this however, if contrary to discipline, he spends long hours in foolish gossiping with his good looking, members, (some of whom are fast in mischief and loose in habit) to

the shameful neglect of those who are sick. Sometimes ministers are sent for to see the sick but neglect to do so. Then when the neglected people, and their surviving friends get somebody else to attend the funeral, they objected to it and sometimes hinder the invited minister from doing what he would not have been called upon to do, had the pastor discharged his duty in visiting his members. Sometimes these negligent pastors, in a fit of anger, better becoming a demon than a minister, get up in the pulpit, and scold until they drive large numbers of members from the church. If scolding must be done, it should be left to wicked old women—by ministers never, and the evil becomes intolerable when a tardy minister scolds about the results of its own laziness, or neglect of duty, from any avoidable cause. Ministers, must learn, if they have not, that the ministerial calling demands the minister's entire time, which he has no more right to trifle away than he would if he was employed, by a planter, merchant, or architect. In the one case he is responsible to his employer whom he must render faithful service or get no pay. In the other case he is responsible to the body with which he is connected, which, if it regards its own interests, must see to it that he renders faithful service. Among the things we have a right to inquire into in this conference, is whether or not the ministers, from presiding elders down, have faithfully served the people to whom they were sent, or whether they have wasted their time in politics, or in organizing and attending secret associations, to the neglect of their ministerial work. They have the same right to vote, and to freely express their political opinions that other people have, and if those in their charge want any political information which they possess it is their duty to give it, and they ought to inform themselves as far as is convenient, on all public matters. "The priests lips should dispense knowledge," but they have not the time to play the politician.

Another shape in which the evil of needless self-indulgence appears is in following the cravings of the appetite, for that which is needless, yes, for that which is hurtful, and therefore sinful. I have before this, referred to the useless, filthy, obnoxious, hateful, undignified, unreasonable, unnatural and ungodly habit of chewing, snuffing or smoking tobacco, and am happy to know that some have repented of the evil; experienced a change of heart, and have chosen the better way. I hope others will soon follow. I have much hope for the man who has the

[To be continued.]

A SKETCH OF JOSEPH CALLAN'S LIFE.

SUMMERFIELD, A.L.A., October 25, 1884.

Mr. Editor: Please permit a sketch of Brother Joseph Callan's life through the columns of the STAR: This noble worker of Zion's breathed his last on October 15th. He was a man who acted in such away that he won the respect of all who knew him, and they had long since learned to love, cherish and honor him before his death. He was a pious and manly old man who had always been so from his youth. It was natural with him. I say this without contradiction, because I have been with him for eighteen months, and on the day of his death he was just as I found him. I found him a member of the church and class leader. The church said that he had been for fourteen years what I had

found the fourteen months. I have had long conversations with him and he always had a word to cherish. He has often remarked in speaking of his class and duties that he tried to teach his members their whole duties and responsibilities in the church of God the way they should go to reach eternal ages. He was a loving husband, father and grandfather, leader and member of the church.

Then wake Stirrings of deep divinity within, and Like the flickerings of a smouldering flame, Yearnings of a hereafter.

Thou it was, When the world's din for passion's voice was still, Calling thy wanderer home." There repose deep in the human spirit the idea of the perfect.

And; "We speak of the realms of the bliss,"

Of that country so bright and so fair, And oft are its glories confessed, But what must it be to be there!

We speak of its pathways of gold, Of its walks decked with jewels so rare, Of its wonders and pleasures untold, But what must it be to be there!

We speak of freedom of sin, From sorrow, temptation and care; From trials without and within— But what must it be to be there!

We speak of service of love, Of robes which the glorified wear, Of the church of the first born above, But what must it be to be there!

Do thou, Lord, 'midst sorrow and wo, Still for heaven my spirit prepare; And shortly I also shall know And what it is to be there.

When the inhabitants of that lovely and peaceful land shall come, we shall meet Brother Callan in the band, so console yourselves, relatives and class mates, if we be faithful until death, we shall meet him on the banks of sweet deliverance, where parting will be no more.

S. C. SAUNDERS, pastor.

NOTICE! NOTICE!!

To the Ministers and Delegates of the North Carolina Conference. Dear Brethren.—Our next annual session will be held in Newbern, N. C. and will convene on the 4th Wednesday (26th day) of November, 1884, at 10 A. M. Rt. Rev. Thomas H. Lomax, will preside. I have secured the following reduced rates on the following railroads, respectively: Richmond and Danville railroad, North Carolina division, from Hillsboro and all intermediate stations to Goldsboro. Tickets will be on sale for two days only—namely, November 25th and 26th—good to return for ten days.

Raleigh and A. A. Line Railroad, Carolina Central, Raleigh and Gaston, respectively. Tickets will be granted at three cents per mile each way—good from November 24th until December 4th, 1884.

Wilmington and Weldon, Special rates. No cheaper than the regular rates. Atlantic and N. C. Terms not yet received.

I will write or telegraph you at Goldsboro in due time. Yours in Gospel service. A. B. SMYER, Secretary N. C. Conference.