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The Star of Zion.

ORGAN OF THE AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL ZION CHURCH IN AMERICA.

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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.

BISHOP HOOD'S ADDRESS

[FOR THE STAR OF ZION.]

Mr. Editor:

During the five weeks I have been travelling through the East Alabama Conference, I have visited nearly all the circuits in the following counties, viz: Montgomery, Lowens, Wilcox, Butler, Crenshaw, Macon, Russell and Lee. I have preached thirty-two sermons, and delivered thirty-six lectures to churches and Sabbath schools. I am happy to see some improvement in the work since last year. I have hope for a much better financial exhibit. Many of our people through the section over which I have travelled; are making a good living. They have procured a considerable quantity of stock and farming utensils. I have travelled the whole distance of 365 miles in buggies belonging to our people. I have been upon a horse, or mule back only once, and that for less than a mile. Sometimes I had a splendid turn out. A brother brought me from Shiloh to Opelika, over a hilly road with his mule, making six miles in forty-five minutes. In fact they own as fine stock as the country affords. I found occasionally, in the country, not far from town, considerable refinement—ladies neatly dressed, and genteel young men. The old habit of all sleeping in one room, which is largely the result of the degrading effect of slavery, and which is not wholly confined to the colored people, is beginning to yield to the force of better influences, which result from freedom, intellectual development, and gospel light. The Sabbath schools are accomplishing splendid results in these country churches. Returning to the subject of material improvement, it is pleasing to note that many of our people are not satisfied with only fine horses, mules, wagons, and buggies, with a dozen fine hogs, or a large flock of turkeys, but a considerable number are purchasing and farming their own lands. One place in Montgomery county, I travelled for three miles over one tract, belonging to colored people. Much of it was under cultivation, and the balance finely timbered. And this valuable timber and fertile soil is not more than from two to five miles from the present terminus of a narrow gauge railroad leading out from Montgomery. In another county I passed over a tract of more than a thousand acres, belonging to two men, and I have seen many similar tracts belonging to our people. As Dr. Haygood remarks, those who pass through the towns and villages, and attempt to write us up from their hasty and partial observation, come very short of giving a true picture. In fact their statements for the purpose of conveying an idea of the condition of our people, are not worth the paper they

are written upon. To learn the condition of the colored people in the South, you must take the same steps you would have to take to learn the condition of white people. You must go, among them, eat and sleep with them, and thus study their habits, see what they have, and how they live. None of those who have attempted to write us up have done this, and hence they know but little about us. Unfortunately many of our churches are built on land to which we have no title. Experience, the severe teacher, is learning our people the folly of this. Men have permitted them to build on land for which they gave no deed, they have died, and the church has been taken for a dwelling house. It is well that they are learning the folly of their course beginning to build fine churches. When a new and substantial building takes the place of the shanty in which they are now worshipping, it will be built upon land for which they have a deed. And they have been fooled so much that they won't commence to build or improve in any way, until the deed is recorded. Such I have found to be the sentiment in many places.—

There has been a considerable number of deeds obtained, and buildings erected during this year, and the work will have to be continued for a number of years before the churches are all comfortably housed. At Pine Apple, my first appointment, I found Elder Lawhorn, struggling with difficulties, but making head way. At this point the white people gave me the most cordial greeting that I have met at any point on the route. They invited me to preach at their church, but an engagement for the night, fifteen miles from there, forbade my accepting the invitation. The white Methodists, in most places that I have been, have evidenced their interest in the religious development of our people.

Revs. William Eastly, of the Hopewell circuit, M. Jackson, of the Little Zion circuit, A. Gregory, of the Bragg Hill circuit, and G. W. Higgins, of the Oak Grove circuit, are all doing tolerably well. At Weeping Mary church I did not find the preacher at his post. I visited two of his churches, but have not met him yet. After a drive of twenty-five miles, in the rain, I reached the little village of Athens, a little while before night, a stranger, and not a mortal being in the place who I had ever met before, except the brother who had driven with me there. The rain was falling fast, and the mud deep and sticky. We drove through the village before we found a stable for the mule, and shelter for buggy and baggage. Leaving these to the care of a good brother—a member of the Primitive Baptist church, who was the only colored man who owned property in the village. We struck out through the rain and mud to find shelter for ourselves, or rather to find our own people, for the Baptist brother would have done the best he could for us. Fortunately, a trustee, who lives three miles from the village, on his own plantation, heard of our inquiring the way, and jumped upon his mule and galloped after us, met us ploughing our way through the muddy streets, and took us to a place prepared for us. The news of our arrival spread, and notwithstanding the rain, there was quite a little congregation out. As my next appointment was not till the next night, and only six miles away, I consented to preach again the next day at 11 o'clock, at which time I had a good congregation. The preacher in charge of this church, last year, reported that he could not raise a cent of general fund

but on this occasion they raised \$2.50 more than the assessment without the pastor to help raise it. The good trustee who had looked after us so carefully, started the collection with one dollar, and the good lady, our hostess, followed with another dollar, and so did another sister. As I had not seen anything of this kind before, I made a note of it, and told them that I was going to put their names down on a roll of honor and publish them in the minutes. These three members of Weeping Mary church, are the first to my knowledge who have ever paid a dollar on general fund at one time. If we had a thousand of such members we should soon be relieved from our present painful embarrassment, and there would be a prospect of the Bishop getting something over \$400 a year salary. And our teachers would have a prospect of something more than \$250. Mentioning this fact as I have, has induced others to add their names to the roll of honor.

The following is the roll of honor thus far:

Weeping Church—Mr. Chas. Steel, \$1; Mrs. A. Bonner, \$1; Mrs. L. Norman, \$1.

Pleasant Hill Church—Mr. P. Harold, \$1; C. Rutledge, \$2; C. Jackson, \$1; Wm. Bell, \$1.

Not Members of Church—William Freeman, \$1; Robert Ford, \$1.

Clinton Chapel, Montgomery—Rev. Samuel Trimble \$1; E. Cook, \$1.50; James Hale, \$1.50.

At Auburn—Miss Anna Adams and Miss Caroline Adams.

Rev. Israel Furby, at Ada circuit, has had rather a rough time, and like some of his people, is glad that his year is most out. He hopes that the Bishop will send a preacher to this place who the people will like better than they do him, and that he will be sent to a people that he will like better than he does some of these. This is the Methodist preachers' advantage, he can have a change.

Deacon A. Watkins, at Stone's Turn Out, has put up the best built church that I have seen in the country, and is doing well in every way.

Deacon H. Tally, at Mount Maria, has sealed his church, and has his congregation nicely in hand.

Rev. Nelson McCree, contrary to Methodist usage, has held his present charge at Benton for about ten years. And also contrary to usage has continued to do well, notwithstanding this departure from the rule, and is still the first choice of the congregation.— He is a striking example of what a good, earnest, faithful, upright minister can accomplish. He is a standing rebuke to the shiftless, worthless class of preachers who can do nothing, unless there is a church built and congregation already gathered—and then are god for nothing but to lord it over God's heritage. When he went to Benton he did not find a Methodist in the place, and there were those who were ready to smile derisively at his folly in hoping to establish a church there. But he went to work and continued to work, and the result is, that while the church which held sway in that town when he commenced, has not more than ten members, (four of whom were converted at a recent protracted meeting of his), he has over 40 members, and an increasing congregation. Our own hymn book is used in the church, his people are supplied with disciplines, and the STAR OF ZION is taken and read, and the prospect is that the full amount of general fund will be raised from this circuit, which includes a church three miles

from the town. I know of no one who has done better than Elder McCree— few have done so well. He is a plain quiet man, with limited education, but fully devoted to God and his work, and loves his Zion. A few more men with this single devotedness to the cause of Zion is all that is needed to make this desert blossom as a rose.—

Deacon Brown, at Hairville, is doing tolerably well.

Deacon Hale, who has been but a short while at Brazle Springs, has captured his people, and they are enthusiastic for his return.

Clinton Chapel, of which Rev. C. C. Petty (our general secretary) has had charge for three years past, is in better condition than it has been for years. At no time has this most efficient pastor enjoyed the confidence and esteem of his congregation to a large degree, than he does now, at the close of three years' faithful service. Elder Petty by his spotless life and character, has made a record which will tell for our church and ministry.

Rev. C. W. Cooper, of the Warrior Stand circuit, has built two churches, and is preparing to erect another. He is a man of energy, piety, and good common sense, and he has had more than ordinary educational advantages, which he has improved. His work is doing well.

Rev. Wm. Brewer, of the Hurtzborough circuit, reminds, one of the old fashioned, solid Christian ministers. Everybody respects him because he is worthy of respect. His circuit is doing well.

Deacon Mahomory, of the Uchee circuit, is another man who has been a long time in one place and still holds his belt.

Deacon Price, of the Maryin circuit, all things considered, is doing fairly well.

The Shiloh and St. James Circuits, in which there are some very excellent people, have not enjoyed the desired peace, harmony, nor prosperity. Their pastors, at present, are loaded with the blame. Whether rightfully or wrongfully, it may not be fair to express an opinion.

Rev. John Alstock, of Opelika, I may say without hesitation, is a coming man. For his years in the ministry, he has no equal in this conference. He pays church debts, builds up his church, and meets the connectional demands. Some men want to be excused for their negligence in one direction, on the ground that they have done well in another. When asked why they have not collected the general fund, or Presiding Elder's salary, they point to some improvement they have made on the church. They might be answered in the language of the matchless speaker: "This ought ye to have done, and not left the other undone." The course pursued by Brother Alstock and the results, fully illustrate the wisdom of this maxim. The indications are that he will get the general fund from every member able to pay it. None are exempt except such as a committee have declared unable to pay. And yet, rigid as he is, his congregation have unanimously petitioned for his return for the third year. The trouble with some men is that they are overreaching, and even tyrannical, where they ought to be weak, and where they ought to be strong. A man who is intelligent, smooth and polite in his manners, soft and pleasing in speech, bold in piety, and upright in character, can afford to be rigid, while a man who is loose in his habits, too shiftless to improve his talents, uncertain in moral character, and untruth in numbers, is com-

elled to plead the peoples' poverty in order to keep in with them. And after all they finally go back on him, because he is unworthy of confidence.

Rev. E. S. Peterson, at this place, has done well, has greatly improved the church in every way, except that he has been a little slow on the general fund question. Not having been duly impressed with its importance, he has not made as much effort as he might have done, but being a progressive man and wanting to stand in the first rank, he will attend to this matter hereafter.

Presiding Elders Strong, Fannin, Thomas and Shuford, are working hard and faithfully. Elder Hannan has been too feeble to do much.

More later. S. W. Hood, Auburn, Ala. Nov. 18th, 1884.

SABBATH AT NEW MCBRIDE.

The day began with rain, which cleared off in the afternoon. People from all parts of the neighborhood, Norfolk and Elizabeth City, N. C., were in attendance at conference, and during Sabbath crowded the church. (Our white friends attended also.)—

Rev. J. R. Johnson preached a soul stirring sermon from the text, "Sir, thou knowest, and he said unto me, These are they which out of great tribulation, &c.

He appealed in strong language to the brethren and people to be faithful in the discharge of their Christian duties; to see to it that their robes were washed, and kept washed and made white by the blood of the lamb, and 'though he lived in the North, when the trumpet sounds, Zion trumpeters and the blood washed away would both meet in heaven to help crown Jesus, Lord of all, Elder Johnson's sermon carried joy to every heart, at the close of which a collection of \$21.10 was carried for the benefit of the conference.

3 O'CLOCK, AFTERNOON.

Bishop S. T. Jones took for his text the 48th Psalm, 12th, 13th and 14th verses. The Bishop in strong logical language showed from these verses the protecting power of God over his church, and that the church had nothing to fear who reign and rule in this world, while the followers of Jesus were safe in him by regeneration and adoption. He invited all to walk about Zion, and go around about her, tell the towers thereof, &c. This sermon was one of Bishop Jones' grand productions. White and colored enjoyed its sublime teachings. At the close another collection was lifted.

7:30 P. M.—NIGHT SERVICE.

Rev. J. H. Manly announced for his text, Isaiah 35-10: "And the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion, &c." Rev. Manly handled his text with great ability.— He showed God's dealings with his ancient church, and the present church, and the great joy that was manifested in ancient times among the good and holy ones, in keeping God's law, and the joy they had in returning to Zion; comparing the same to the joy that the true worshippers will enjoy in serving faithfully Zion's God. Rev. Manly's sermon was highly appreciated. This closed the day's service at New Bride's church, Camden, N. C.

Bed room curtains for the winter are made very full and heavy, without being looped back. Crimson cotton plush is used for them and is really pretty and warm as well as cheap.

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COMMUNICATION.

DECLAMATION OF THE PULPIT.

The dignity and sanity of the place, and the importance of the subject, requires the preacher to exert the utmost powers of his voice to produce a pronunciation that is perfectly distinct and harmonious, and that he observe a deportment and action which is expressive and graceful. The preacher should not roar like a common crier, and rend the air with a voice like thunder, for such kind of declamation is not only without meaning and without persuasion, but highly incongruous with the meek and gentle spirit of the gospel. He should likewise take particular care to avoid a monotony; his voice should rise from the beginning, as it were by degrees, and its greatest strength should be exerted in the application. Each inflection of the voice should be adapted to the phrases and to the meaning of the words, and remarkable expression should have its peculiar inflections, the doctrines requires a plain uniform tone of voice.

God's word demands a greater force than its promises and rewards, but the latter should not be pronounced in the soft tone of a flute nor the farmer with the loud sound of a trumpet. The voice should still retain its natural tone in all its various inflections.— Happy is that preacher who has a voice that is at once strong, flexible and harmonious on a r of complacency and benevolence, as well as devotion should be constantly visible in the countenance of the preacher, but every appearance of affectation must be carefully avoided, for nothing is so disgusting to an audience as even the semblance of dissimulation, eyes constantly rolling turned towards heaven, and streaming with tears, rather denotes a hypocrite than a man, possessed of real spirit of religion, and feels the true import of what he preaches. An air of affected devotion infallibly destroys the efficiency of all that the preacher can say, however just and important and just it may be.

A. W. ALLISON.

FROM FRANKLIN.

FRANKLIN, PA., }
November 13, 1884. }

Mr. Editor:

I write you a few lines to give you an account of the prosperity of our church in this place. It has been closed for the past three weeks, but was formally reopened on Sunday November 9th. We feel very proud of our success. Our church has been painted new, part furniture, new carpet, making a grand finish to the whole that is both agreeable to the eye and comfort to the body. Our prospects for the future are bright. We have had some increase in the church, and the spiritual indications are good. Elder Madden, of Pittsburgh, officiated during the day. His text for the first discourse was from the 9th chapter of Isaiah and 6th verse. It was both logical and spiritual. We feel to be under many obligations to him for the services rendered. It made our grand rally a success, both spiritually and financially. We feel encouraged to continue and trust in the Lord.

Yours for God and Zion.

J. E. LITTLE,
Pastor A. M. E. Zion church.

Silver finger bowls are now in fashion. They are only used at small dinner parties, and are presented on tiny silver trays.