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HE KNOWETH BEST.

What if the way seems long and weary
Thy tired feet are forced to tread?
Some day thou shalt look back with wonder
And say, "My steps were gently led,
The way was short."

What if the rough stones wound the sorely,
And to thy pathway terrors lead?
Turf soft and green thou wilt find only,
When thou hast reached thy journey's end
Where thou shalt rest.

What if thou see'st more of shadow
About thy path than sunshine's light?
The days that are but gray and cloudy,
End sometimes with a radiance bright.
At sunset time.

What if the work be very heavy
Thou dost now with many fears?
When all thy work slips from thy fingers,
Thine own shall say with falling tears,
They were brave hands.

What if the things thou most desirest
Are given to those who prize them not?
Perhaps some day thou shalt see clearly
That they would not have blessed thy lot.
He knoweth best.

What if thou fain wouldst shift the burden
In sorrow thou hast born so long?
Before thee lies the crystal pavement,
There shalt thou cast it with a song.
Thou canst but wait.

What if the blessings of God's favor
Seems held from thee thy work to crown?
Some day thou shalt see that His mercy
Did forever and aye shine down
On thy faint heart.

—H. S., in Ledger.

CORRESPONDENCE.

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

PHILADELPHIA AND BALTIMORE CONFERENCE.

The 57th annual session of the Philadelphia and Baltimore Conference of the A. M. E. Zion Church in America convened in Galbraith Church, sixth street bet. L and M, Wednesday April 15th, 1885 and adjourned Monday April 20th at 9 p. m. Bishop J. W. Hood of North Carolina, associated by Bishop J. J. Moore, D D of York Pa., presided over this august body of distinguished ministers. At the opening of conference Bishop Hood read the 48th Psalm and 12th chapter of Mark. Rev. N. Stubbs lined the 70th hymn, after which he addressed the throne of grace. While a hymn was being sung, a general hand-shaking and congratulations in the good old Methodist fashion were exchanged. N. J. Green and J. W. Smith were elected secretaries; Prof. Wm Howard Day, city reporter; Gen. T. Morris Chester, Stenographer; Logan Johnson, statistical secretary; M. M. Bell compiler of the minutes. The bar of the conference was laid off and J. W. Fairfax and G. W. Talbert were elected marshals. The roll of conference was called and most of the brethren were present and answered to their names.

The Bishop read his episcopal address at 3 p. m. It was able and instructive, and that portion relative to Cleveland's election was wired by the associated press to the length and breadth of this land and appeared in hundreds of newspapers. A great deal of important business was transacted every day after the minutes of the previous session were read and approved. Several brethren who were absent the first day of the conference, but came in the second day, were called up to render a reasonable excuse or pay the fine of one dollar. Of course it is no trouble to get an excuse for if you are caught up unaware and have no excuse, Satan will quickly find you one. The origin of excuses commenced away back in Eden; but

where these brethren got their excuses from is a conundrum. Some were reasonable and some were not. After being excused, Bishop said: "Brethren, I hope you will not do so again. The conference is disposed to take your excuses in good faith. You miss something by not being here and we miss your presence and co-operation. Be punctual next time."

Revs. N. J. Green and J. W. Smith offered the following preamble and resolutions which were adopted:

WHEREAS, It was decided by the General conference held in New York May 1884, to create no more bishops at that time, and after due consideration we find that the present number is insufficient for the task, and

Resolved, That this annual conference proceed to elect from the list of prominent and oldest elders a certain number to superintend the work of this conference district.

Resolved, That the presiding elders shall be paid by each church according to its ability; the presiding elders to have the privilege of making such arrangements with the district conference as will secure this pay; however, his salary shall not exceed seven hundred dollars, traveling expense not included, to be divided in proportion to membership, between the churches of the district.

Resolved, That the presiding bishop nominate and the conference elect.

When these resolutions were offered popular manifestations of approval or disapproval held full sway for over thirty minutes.

Elder Cowles said, he had always been opposed to the presiding elder system, but looking at the subject and our circumstances he had somewhat recanted. If we can get the right kind of men to fill the office, and if the P. E. will attend to that part of the work, and that alone, it would be a good thing, and there would be no conflict. But a presiding elder is apt to assume the duties of a pastor. In the church there is always some one who does not like the pastor nor his administration, and if a presiding elder is not of the right stripe, there is sure to be trouble. Some presiding elders go among the pastor's members and are in sympathy with them against the pastor. Now if we can find men who will devote themselves to the work, and not improperly interfere with the pastor, great good will result from the adoption of this system; but if we are to have a class of men who will make it unpleasant for the pastor, I shall fight against it every time.

M. H. Ross spoke against the system. He thought there would be contention between the pastor and the P. E. about his pay. He said while he did not favor it, yet he would abide by whatever the conference pass.

Elder Green said if he was to consider his own feelings, he would be opposed to it; but the resolution is brought forward in the best interests of the church. He referred to the sad disasters which have been occurring for years, especially in this conference by not having presiding elders. He referred to the churches which have suffered and to some which have been lost and how the people have been scattered by bad pastors when the bishop is far away, and all for the want of spiritual care and general oversight. He also referred to the church at Laurel, Md., which has been suffering the past year. Bishop Hood at the last conference appointed Rev. W. R. Davis, a transferee from

the Alabama conference, to that church, and he refused to go, simply because it was not the largest church in the conference. We hope the pastors and members of Zion will steer clear of this fellow, for he is jumping from church to church, looking for the best appointments. Elder Green thought if the brethren would leave themselves out of the question, and keep out of the way of presiding elders that there would be no trouble.

J. P. Thompson said, if the pastors would do their duty the presiding elders would have no trouble. No office can be filled successfully if the principle is not in the man. If he does not possess it, this conference can not put it in him. My experience is, the system has been tried successfully even in the smallest conference. New Jersey, for instance, has prospered under it. The brethren there love the presiding elders and the presiding elders love the pastors. The presiding elder is governed by the law. He must know the law if he would succeed, and if he does not the law will know him. If he fails to do the right thing in my charge I will handle him with the law. It is his duty to come and hold the quarterly conference and meeting, and get his money, and after that, to make for the next point, but not to linger back and hunt up among members, news about the pastor.

Bishop Hood said, he had decided not to urge the presiding elder system in this conference until the brethren felt the necessity of it. He was glad this conference was seeing their mistake in not having presiding elders. No Methodist church is complete unless it has the presiding eldership. The importance of this office is becoming more fully realized. We have elders presiding over deacons in most of our charges, but the elder cannot discharge his duty to the work presided over without neglecting his own charge. The objection to the system is, that it is too expensive, two men to pay; but we have the same thing in all but a few churches, and the exceptions are those which are the best able to support it. The only men who seem to oppose the system are those in the largest churches. They are willing for the presiding elder to go out in the country places and hold his meetings, willing for him to go where the deacons are, but when it comes to the fat charges, then there is grumbling and dissatisfaction. Is this right?

After several other able speeches the system was adopted by two-thirds of conference. The conference was divided into two districts, viz: Baltimore district, Prof. W. H. Day, P. E.; Philadelphia district, Rev. M. M. Bell P. E.

We are well pleased with our presiding elders, for they are men who stand high in the church and state. M. M. Bell is truly a pious man and Prof. Wm. H. Day is known throughout the country as an orator second to none of color. He is at home in the pulpit on the conference floor or on the stump. President Cleveland received the conference on Friday at the White House and Prof. Day delivered the address which was telegraphed all over the country. Next day several leading white men and one of the Professors of Howard University came to conference to grasp the hand of Prof. Day and congratulate him upon his able oratorical effort; and they said in open conference that they did not know of any minister, white or colored in the United States who could have made a better address.

Bishops Foster, D D and E. G. Andrew D D and Dr. Edwards of the M.

church and Bishops Ward and Wayman of the A. M. E. church were introduced and made speeches. Prominent members from all of the churches in the city visited the conference. Thanks to God, the ministers and bishops are realizing that denominational titles are of little importance for in heaven they are unknown.

The characters of brethren examined and passed. Four candidates were admitted after preaching ten minutes sermons. Francis H. Norton and William Spencer were ordained deacons and T. H. Scott, elder. W. R. Davis was dropped. The lay delegates rendered their reports and fraternal greetings were received from Rev. G. W. Clinton of S. C., G. W. Alstork of Ala. and F. K. Bird of Mass. Rev. Jacob Thomas, agent of Zion's Book concern was here and made a verbal report which caused a heated discussion. He was requested to make a full report of the book concern and have it printed and scattered in each annual conference and he would sell the stock as fast again.

The several committees reported and they were adopted. Rev. J. S. Cowles has been transferred to the N. Y. conference. He has done the best work of any minister in this conference. The conference and church are grieved to part with him. It is thought that one of New York's great theologians will be transferred to fill Rev. Cowles' church. Rev. J. P. Thompson was elected conference steward in place of Rev. J. S. Cowles. Death has taken away Rev. J. H. Anderson since last conference. Nearly all of the preachers have been sent back to their charges. Our next conference will meet in Harrisburg, Pa., the third Wednesday in May 1886, at 2 o'clock p. m., Bishop Hood presiding. Bishop Hood rendered a very important decision upon "apostolic benediction."

J. W. SMITH, Reporter.

AN ADDRESS

BY REV. W. J. MOORE P. E.

Delivered before the quarterly conference of the Raleigh District, held in York's Temple, Greenville N. C., April 12th 1885.

Dear Brethren:

It has pleased our heavenly Father to permit us to meet again, the second time this year, in quarterly conference to do business for God. We should be thankful that the Lord has been so good and kind to spare our lives, and has blessed us with the privilege we now enjoy, while many have been removed from our midst by that messenger of death, who will soon call us all to rest or to woe for eternity.

This brings before our mind the beloved and faithful Elder Amos York, the designer and erector of this beautiful church known as York's Temple. Elder York was one of the eleven who met in Andrews Chapel, twenty years ago last December, and organized what is now known as the North Carolina Conference of the A. M. E. Zion Church, from which three other conferences have been organized namely: the Virginia, South Carolina and Central North Carolina conference.

The eleven who composed the first conference were: Bishop J. J. Clinton, presiding; elder: Jas. W. Hood and John Williams. The number received at the conference were: E. H. Hill, Ellis Lavender, H. W. Jones, Amos York, Joseph Green, Sampson Copper, David Gray and W. J. Moore. Of this number only five live today; viz: Bishop Hood, Elders Hill, Green Gray and Moore, the latter being elected

secretary of that conference. The first of the founders called from labor to reward was Elder Sampson Copper; next Ellis Lavender; then followed H. W. Jones; then Bishop Clinton; and the last of all to join the happy and glorious company around our Father's throne was Elder York, who departed this life February 25th 1885.

Elder York was a faithful minister of the gospel, a true lover of Zion's connection, a great builder and worker. Wherever he was sent by conference from year to year, it was his delight to build up the cause of Christ. He was a great circulator of the periodicals of our church. He was well advanced in age, and was one of the few aged men who kept up with the times.

Elder York attended four sessions of the General Conference and every session of the North Carolina Conference from its organization to the last session which met in Newberne, Nov. 26, 1884. He was a good governor and financier in the great work in which he was engaged. He was very industrious, and managed to accumulate some valuable property in Newberne N. C., where he left all, and has gone to live with saints, angels and God forever.

While Brother York was frugal, he was patriotic and very liberal to his church when ever called upon. In connection with the crowning labors of his life, we see as a monument to his name, this church, for which he sacrificed time and money to carry it on this far, and it would be a disgrace upon you as officers and members of this church, if you fail to complete it. Elder York's chief desire of things on earth was to finish this church and the last conversation we had three months ago, was about completing this church. O, how it makes me rejoice today when I think of our pleasant and co-laborers in the vineyard of the Lord, who are laboring and striving to bring souls out of darkness into the glorious light of Christ.

The last work I did for him was a great pleasure to me. When at our last quarterly meeting, I was enabled to raise for him sixteen dollars, and advised him to go home under a doctor where his family could attend him. We have heard his voice often in conference, and his fatherly advice has been gladly received; but we will see him no more nor hear his voice, until we meet on the shining shore above, where sickness, sorrow, pain and death are felt and feared no more.

Brother York, through crosses and trials has finished his course and completed his race, obtained the prize, now rests with Jesus and left us as laborers and soldiers to continue working for the Lord, until we too, are called one after another to heaven, where we will all meet and have eternity to tell the story of our earthly conflicts and find the joy and society of the Lord with those who have gone before us.

Now brothers, as I have presided over this church the past four years and a half, and have addressed you eighteen times on the importance of your duties as officers of your church, and having brought the claims of the connection before you at each quarterly conference, I will not dwell on these matters at this time.

I have called your attention to the importance of collecting the general fund, of being subscribers to the Star of Zion, our church organ, and of patronizing our own book room, and by this time I am satisfied you have learned your lesson well. Allow me to say

that since I was with you last, it has been my privilege to visit Zion Wesley College and see the workings of that noble institution. It is an honor to our whole connection and should be the pride of the Negro race.

I'll not attempt to describe the working of our colleague for I am not able if I had time. I will say to you, it is a living reality, and as much as I have said in time past. Respecting the general fund, I have a greater knowledge of it being raised than ever before. While at Zion Wesley College, I felt it I had the money, I would give ten thousand dollars to that great work, as it fills my heart with joy when I think of Zion's onward march.

In conclusion I will say, this seems to be a lucky church after all: for when that faithful worker J. N. Rasmery was removed from here, you were blessed with having the earnest and faithful labors of our deceased father, Elder York. You now have another untiring worker, and an able minister of the gospel, in the person of Elder F. B. House. I have known Elder House a long time, and can freely say if you will co-operate with him and follow, he will lead you on successfully. Elder House and I have labored together a long time, and it is a pleasure to me to think of the past, and I pray that our future sojourn together may be as pleasant as the past.

May the blessings of the great head of the church preside over our deliberations and may we all, when done meeting on earth, meet in heaven is my prayer.

P. S.—By reference to the history of our connection, I find Rev. A. M. Ferree was also one of the founders who afterwards became one of the founders of the Virginia Conference. This makes the number twelve instead of eleven.

After the close of Elder Moore's address, Elder F. B. House rose and moved a vote of thanks to Elder Moore, for his very interesting address, then offered the following resolutions:

WHEREAS—It has pleased Almighty God in His eternal wisdom to remove from our midst that faithful and noble father, Elder Amos York, from labor to reward, be it

Resolved, That we deeply deplore the loss of one so fervent, so devout and self sacrificing to the cause of the Redeemer's Kingdom.

Resolved, That we commend to the Christian church and ministry the life and conduct of this noble and pure messenger of salvation, as worthy to serve as a guide and example by which we can shape our own christian character;

Resolved, That we extend to the bereaved family of the deceased Elder our sincerest sympathy in their bereavement and that we truly hope the Shepherd of souls may guide them safe through the uneven journey of this life and at last bring them to glory and to God.

Resolved, That these resolutions be printed and copies of them sent to the family of the deceased and published in the "Star of Zion," our Church organ.

NOTICE.

The Annual Conference Stewards will please take notice that they are to forward all general funds in their hands on the Second Wednesday in each month to Rev. C. R. Hagan, General Steward, Salisbury, N. C.