

# The Star of Zion.

ORGAN OF THE AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL ZION CHURCH IN AMERICA.

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## ABOLITION AND NULLIFICATION.

BY REV. J. H. ANDERSON.

### EDITOR STAR OF ZION:

My interest in the action of the Philadelphia & Baltimore conference, in discontinuing presiding elders, has been greatly deepened by the response of Bishop Hood.

I could scarcely expect such pleasing words of praise, much less the condescension to reply to my article, which, in consequence thereof, induces me to think that it had some appreciative learning.

Now for the argument. To do away with any permanent court of appeal is a direct violation of constitutional authority, otherwise termed "organic law." Our discipline provides four—three permanent and one conditionally. The court of appeal effected by the action of the Philadelphia & Baltimore conference, is the district conference, over which the presiding elder only is the legal president, and to which local elders and deacons only are allowed an appeal. It is not a permanent court of appeal. Local elders and deacons have the advantage of two courts of appeal—the district conference and the annual conference. (page 112), and why are they allowed this advantage over other appellants? I answer, because in view of the absence of presiding elders, there would be no district conference, and the general conference, therefore, recognizing the possible absence of these functionaries would not subject this class of membership to an uncertainty in their privileges.

To discontinue the district conference still leaves a court of appeal (the annual conference), for local elders and deacons. But when district conferences are instituted by virtue of the appointment of presiding elders, has the annual conference who does the appointing, the right to succeed to his former action?—that is, to cease appointing presiding elders? We answer, yes; because the discipline plainly says, "The Bishop and Annual conference shall appoint presiding elders when, in their judgment, it is necessary for the efficiency of the work." (page 53.)

The Philadelphia and Baltimore conference, after due trial, saw that it was not necessary for the efficiency of the work, and therefore did not appoint any presiding elders.

The Annual conference, in view of the above quotation, has the right to appoint as an initiatory measure, and cease to appoint when a test has revealed its inexpediency.

She is to exercise her "judgment" in the case. There is a deeper significance in this quotation than the mere "how to appoint presiding elders." It tells us also when to appoint them, when it is necessary, and this word "necessary," applies when the system is in operation as well as when it is not. If she fails to appoint after having operated the system, it is but the exercise of her "judgment," not multiplication, disloyalty, nor disestablishment. To disestablish, the system must be removed, not presiding elders. There is a nice distinction here. The system is one thing, and the presiding elder another. By the action of the conference, the system remains in statu quo, but inoperative, and its operation is left to the judgment of the Annual conference. What does the "organic law" expressly prohibit? I answer, the doing away with quarterly, Annual and General conferences.

Does it also prohibit the doing away

with the District conference? Not in the same manner, since the Quarterly, Annual, and General conferences are permanent institutions, subject to no discretionary conditions, (the judgment of the Annual conference,) cannot in the light of reason, be regarded a permanent institution, and is therefore liable to exist or not exist, just as the Annual conference may determine. The fate of the District conference in any case, depends upon the action of the Annual conference. If there be any assumption over the "organic law" the General Conference has done it, since the Philadelphia and Baltimore conference has only exercised the prerogatives and privileges allowed by the General Conference. The "organic law" says, "you shall not do away ac," the general conference says, you may exercise your judgment in the premises; and yet here is no legislative antagonism—the underlying idea of the constitutional law has been grasped and utilized in our general conference legislation; for in the absence of a district conference (as in our case), the laymen, officials, ministers in local and full orders, have a court of appeal. Can Bishop Hood dispute this? Then in what sense has the privilege of appeal of any class of members been destroyed or abridged by the annual conference action? and if all, from the few to the highest functionary, Bishops only excepted, in this district, have a court of appeal, how the name of common reason, can the terms of the "organic law," be nullified, or disestablishment be effected?

Inasmuch, therefore as no one is debarred the privilege of appeal, the question is narrowed down to this:—have the annual conferences the right to discontinue the use of presiding elders? We are confident from the construction of the law that they have.

The Bishop nominates or appoints when he deems it prudent; he is not compelled to do either, nor is the conference compelled to elect. To this Bishop Hood must assent.

So the action of our conference was purely legal. We have what is technically termed, presiding elders, appointed by the Bishop, but they are presiding elders which do not preside. A presiding elder necessitates a district conference, otherwise they exist merely in name. We are by no means opposed to the presiding elder system. Were I in the New England conference I should be as strong the other way. There it is needed, and in the "fulness of time" it will be needed here. Modesty and proper respect forbid my further antagonizing the opinion of my worthy and able Bishop, unless he make a request.

### NOTICE!

MR. EDITOR: Permit me to say to the Annual Conference, Sunday Schools and churches to hurry up with the centennial donation and save the banner. Send all moneys to Rev. I. C. CLINTON, Lancaster, S. C. Box 143, Lancaster, July 8, '87.

### NOTICE!

The Semi-Annual Session of the Board of Bishops will convene in Chattanooga, Tenn., on Wednesday, September 28th, 1887, at 12 m. By order of the chairman, S. T. JONES, D. D. C. R. HARRIS, Secretary.

## A VOICE FROM THE EAST—THE PLACE OF LIGHT.

BY REV. G. H. WASHINGTON, P. E., NEW ENGLAND DISTRICT.

MR. EDITOR:—Much has been said for and against the Presiding Elder System. I desire to pen a few practical thoughts in favor of the system, and my experience of its workings for the last fifty two years, up to the present. Fifty two years ago, Zion Connection had but two Annual Conferences, namely, New York and Philadelphia Conferences, and in those two, there were but very few stations, but chiefly circuits, and as there were but a few elders, they acted in the capacity of Presiding Elders, holding charges of stations, having two and three men under them as licentiates traveling preachers, and they doing that part of the work that could not be done by those preachers, and they receiving for their labor from one hundred to one hundred and fifty dollars per year—and at the highest not over two hundred and fifty, and their licentiates not exceeding seventy five dollars a year, and often less and working at their trades and business during the week, and traveling and preaching Sundays, to make our beloved Zion what it is to-day. Your writer joined the Annual Conference that was organized in Baltimore, 1841 under the administration of Rev. Jacob J. Moore, the lamented Rt. Rev. Christopher C. Rush presiding. I think there is but one minister now living, beside myself, who was in the organization of that conference, and that is Rt. Rev. J. J. Moore, D. D. I at that time was a licentiate traveling preacher, and I superintended the building of the Spring street chapel under the Presiding Elder system. Rev. Jacob J. Moore as my Presiding Elder which church is now held by the Bethel Connection. In 1846 I left the South for my liberty; two years after I became a member of the New England Annual Conference the first year after its organization. At the time the name of the circuits was changed to mission fields, as we had begun to form mission societies in their fields, but practically they were under the presiding elder system and the first year I was sent out on a mission field, as was also Rev. John F. Lloyd, and the lamented Rev. James Simmons was stationed at Bridgeport, who was our presiding elder. Since that time I have filled every station in this District, and served three years as presiding elder in British North America, on a mission field of one thousand miles, having two men under me as licentiates viz: Jos. G. Smith and Thomas Davis. I succeeded in organizing for or five societies, and to day they are in a flourishing condition under the A. M. E. Bethel church that has the Nova Scotia societies in their church since then. Your many readers will note that I claim that the entire South that is now in Zion Connection has been brought in through the labors of the Elders sent out under the Presiding Elder's system, during the late rebellion namely: Bishop J. W. Hood, D. D. one of our present Bishops, Rev. David Hill, Rev. John Williams, and last the lamented Rev. J. J. Clinton, D. D. These men, with many others, acted in the capacity of Presiding Elders in the establishing and organizing of societies and forming churches, over which our beloved Zion to day is rejoicing. Now brethren, if we wish to

condemn men placed in the position of Presiding Elder, not qualified for the office, say so, but don't let us condemn a system that has done so much for our beloved Zion. Now a few words in reference to the necessary qualifications to fill the office. It should be a man having the love of the connection at heart, willing to make sacrifices in pecuniary matters in order to build up the west; places in Zion, and not look for the precious dollars but for the welfare of souls. He ought to be thoroughly acquainted with our church economy, and the Discipline of the same. He should seek to gain the love of his brethren, and give proper notice to them of the time to hold his quarterly conference, and to be punctual himself, and preside over his brothers in love as a father, and not as a tyrant; and should there be any misunderstanding between him and any of his brethren, not to let that misunderstanding appear in the quarterly conference, but settle it between themselves some where else. I think if this course were pursued there would be no objections offered by any one to the Presiding Elders system. Now let me give you the practical working of the system in this District for the last three years. The Presiding elder and his men are one in love, one in practice and one for the advancement of the District. Three years ago I was given the oversight of the following charges as P. E.,—Boston, Providence, Worcester, Attleboro, Middletown, New Haven, Bridgeport and Waterbury Mission, Cambridgeport mission, Derby mission, Norwich Mission, and Great Barrington Mission. Since that time these missions have become stations, having fine chapels built in which to worship, and ministers stationed there, and the new missions added are as follows: Meriden, Taunton, Danbury, South Providence, Windsor, Hadenville and Hamden mission, all brought in under the Presiding Elder system. The first year the presiding elder's salary was \$33 but he worked up an interest among the people and his salary was increased to \$400.00, and this year it is increased to \$535.00, and so we believe, in working up the system gradually. We gave you the round sum that has been raised this conference year for building chapels and paying debts on churches which is \$7,771.

### VIRGINIA NOTES

Our church and property at this point redeemed through the faithfulness and energy of Rev. Mack Lyne, pastor of the Berkley circuit, our large frame church that was built by Rev. D. W. Bove, but not paid for; for which cause the church was sold and got into the hands of others. Deacon Synear was appointed to this circuit two years ago, and he being determined to have a church in Berkley, bought a site and was about to build, when the owners of the former church negotiated with brother Mack, and sold him the church upon the most reasonable terms, the first payment having been made and satisfactory arrangements made for the balance. Rev. Mack has met with grand success this year; he recently held a two weeks protracted meeting, 19 were converted, 15 joined the church. During nearly every night of the meeting this large church was crowded—between 300 and 400 were in attendance. On Sunday afternoon and night of September 5th, at which time we held the third quarterly meeting, the church was so crowded that there

was not standing room. There were several converts; the outlook for Zion in Berkley is bright for the future. Deacon Lyne is a good manager; for which the members are well satisfied. This point from our observation is very important in the interest of our church. Too much praise can not be given in honor of the noble Christian way in which deacon Mack has conducted the affairs in Berkley in the interest of the connection. Would to heaven we could say the same of the entire district.

Respectfully yours,  
J. MOH. FARLEY.

### SOUTH CAROLINA NOTES.

BY REV. G. W. CLINTON.

I herewith send you a copy of the minutes of our Sunday School Convention. I wish you to please insert the following notice in the STAR.

Brother ministers and Sunday school superintendents of the South Carolina conference: It affords me pleasure to inform you that our Convention minutes have been published in neat pamphlet form. Besides the daily proceedings they contain the excellent essays and addresses delivered before the convention, the Constitution of the convention and the constitution of the Home Mission Board. The minutes contain 83 pages of matter, worth 50 cents to any true member and lover of the A. M. E. Zion church. The cost of publishing the minutes is \$29.00. The convention placed only \$6.10 in our hands, and we have only received 40 cts. since. The whole responsibility is resting upon the president. We have paid all of the bill, but \$14.00 and we hope that the ministers will come to the rescue. Brethren, I have paid \$27.50 of my individual money on our conference minutes this year, and \$11.00 on the Sunday School convention minutes. Will you not come to the rescue and help me in this time of need? If you will send in the money required I will forward you the minutes. You need the minutes for your Sunday schools, and the Constitution of the Home Mission Board for your own guidance. There never was a time when Home Mission funds were more needed. Elder Hinton will need \$300 the 1st day of Oct, to make the final payment on his lot. He needs money now very badly. The work in Columbia is prospering beyond our most sanguine expectation. Elder Hinton has received into Zion connection a good frame church with the pastor and forty members, five miles south of Columbia. His mission in the city has grown so fast that he has been compelled to arrange to add ten ft more to the chapel which was 30 ft long when erected. Come to the rescue every lover of Zion, north, east, south and west. Unless we raise \$300.00 by the 1st of Oct, we may lose our all in Columbia. Let each minister raise the \$5.00 asked for, and our friends abroad do what ever they will. Send all money to Rev. I. C. Clinton, box 143, Lancaster S. C. Send for minutes, of Rev. G. W. Clinton, box 83 Union, S. C.

A rising Zion star eclipsed by death Rev. Z. W. Cloud, one of our most promising, intelligent and progressive young men fell asleep in death at 4 o'clock pm Sunday, Sept. 4th 1887. He died in the full triumph of Christian faith. He leaves a circuit which he had labored arduously to upbuild against adverse circumstances, and a beloved wife and three dear children. You shall hear more of him later.

Elder Blake has repaired his church in handsome style, for the ensuing Annual conference which is to convene on the 3rd instead of the 2nd Wednesday in November.

Rev. T. P. R. Moore closed a very successful campmeeting a few days ago; several persons were happily converted, five being promising young men of Cedar Grove church.

Our summer revival closed last week adding 50 persons to our church, 21 of whom have made profession of religion during the meetings.

Mrs. Amanda Ingram, mother of student, J. I. Ingram departed this life a few days ago. She was the able leader of the Auxiliary Ladies Home and Foreign Missionary society at Mt. Zion church.

### NOTICE.

The Goldsboro A. M. E. Zion district conference and Sunday School convention will assemble in the beautiful thriving town of Greenville, N. C., on the 25th day of October, 1887, and continue in session three days. The first two days will be devoted to the business of the conference and the third day to the Sunday School convention. Rev. A. F. Moore and his members asked for the conference to meet with them; secondly a majority of the ministers favor meeting at Greenville; thirdly, there has been no connectional gathering of any kind there for years.

Ministers will come prepared to make settlement for the minutes, also remember the assessments made by the annual conference for the churches at Raleigh, and at Kittrell. Why not let this be the banner district in all things? for the joy of Zion is our strength.

Rt. Rev. Bishop J. P. Thompson, Hon. John C. Dancy, and others are expected to be present and take part in our deliberations.

Yours for prompt meeting at ten o'clock a m.

J. H. MATTOCKS.

P. S.: If the water happens to be low at Wilson, N. C., go to Greenville by conveyance the dirt road. All along a local elders, deacons and preachers, or members of the district conference, also Superintendents of Sunday Schools.

J. H. MATTOCKS, P. E.

### THE WORK IN FLORIDA.

BY S. I. MC DONALD.

MR. EDITOR: Please allow me space in our STAR to say that Florida is not dead. We are living and living for Zion. Having just returned from district conference, I will say that the outlook for Zion is grand. We had our district conference 150 miles east of this place at Cottondale. That is a fine country. Farmers make plenty of cotton, corn and vegetables of all kinds. The pastor is doing a good work; Rev. W. A. Beine has put up a common church and is now getting ready to build another. Sister Mollie L. Goodwin a worthy member of our church has donated the ground and as much timber as will be needed. Would to God that we had a few more such sisters. I am doing very well in the city. There is a good deal of sickness at this time. We had a pleasant time and the presiding elder made some strong remarks on the necessity of raising the General fund. We are going to raise more general funds this year than any other conference according to size. I can give you some news from Florida often if you will accept it.