

The Star of Zion

THE OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL ZION CHURCH

NUMBER TWENTY-FOUR

CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA THURSDAY, JUNE 16, 1921.

VOLUME FORTY-FIVE

A. M. E. Zion In Los Angeles.

REV. H. B. GANTT, A PROGRESSIVE PASTOR

By Mr. Edward Lyons.

The Zion church should be appreciated not only by its members but by every Negro of Los Angeles, for indeed, Rev. Mr. Gantt is making it the people's church, and they are in everything for the advancement of the race and the Kingdom of God. Among the many things that the trustees of the church throw its doors open to are as follows: The Eastside Mother's Club was given the use of the church for Mr. Lewis Mitchell, that wonderful Jew, who believes and preaches the Fatherhood of God and brotherhood of Man. Second, the N. A. A. C. P. (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People), has its board meetings regularly each month in the pastor's study, and very often the auditorium is open to its monthly meeting.

They unveiled their charter at the A. M. E. Zion Church and the service was impressive, and will ever be remembered.

The Legion boys' drill, 30 and 40 strong, every Thursday evening in the basement, learning how to hold their shoulders erect and how to carry themselves in general, and Rev. Mr. Gantt always has a committee on hand to serve a hot luncheon for the boys and the choir of his church as that is their practice night, and everything and everybody is going to Zion now.

Why? Because they have every whit a gentleman in Rev. H. B. Gantt, the pastor, who knows just how to treat everybody, and the trustees cannot be surpassed anywhere. Mr. E. R. Swain, the chairman of the board, is a business man of no mean ability, is also the president of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. He is the only colored man holding a position of the kind in Los Angeles, or in California, for that matter, in the U. S. Customs.

Mr. Beverly Fields is the treasurer of the church and is loved by everybody for his integrity and honesty. Mr. Horace F. Wheaton is secretary of the board, a young man who holds a position as clerk in the city post office. He is an excellent violinist and is one of the musicians in the choir of the church. Prof. W. M. Bynum another trustee is the chorister of the church, and he is the leading chorister in the city. Mr. J. H. Majors, a mechanic and contractor, another quiet, unassuming but forceful character in the church; not only is he trustee, but a fine bass singer, and last but not least is Mr. S. M. Maddox, one of the most useful and most pleasant men in the church.

And the usher board and steward board and all are so courteous and kind, you just delight in worshipping in Zion.

And, then too, it is a beautiful church for colored folks, and we get an interesting, impressive, helpful sermon every time we go to Zion. No foolishness, but real worship. Let us remember friends, that this beautiful church belongs to us as a race and not as a denomination.

Brother E. R. Swain is president of our Benevolent Society, and whenever a member of the society is sick we don't have any red tape, but give each sick member \$2.00 a week and \$1.50 at death.

Our church is well organized and

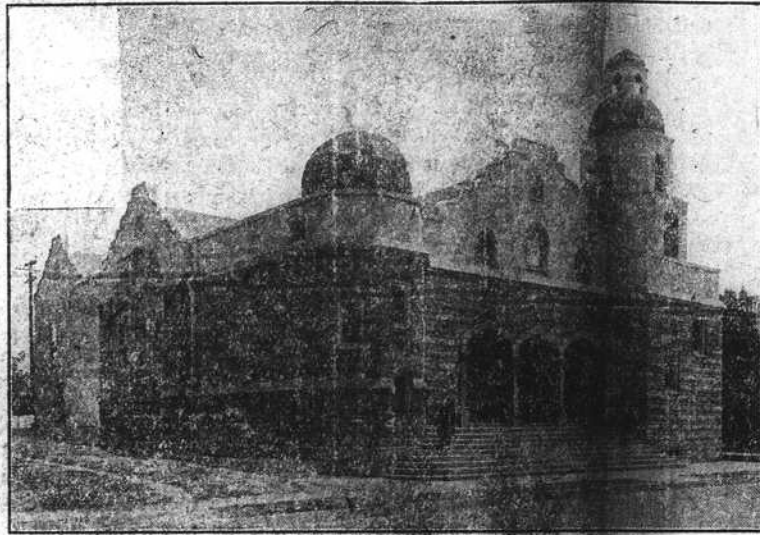
is determined to make a success. Everybody is in harmony. No friction in our church.

GREAT PROGRESS OF THE LOS ANGELES CHURCH.

By Mrs. Maggie Banks Hood.

"Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning," and "the darkest hour is just before the dawn."

Along in the spring and summer of 1920 our sky was black with the



A. M. E. ZION CHURCH AT LOS ANGELES CALIFORNIA

thunder clouds of discouragement; the storm of unfriendly sentiment and dissension burst upon us in solemn and awful fury. Zion was dashed about here and there by the winds of adversity and no shelter seemed nigh. We almost but not quite de-

N. J., and sent him to take charge of the Los Angeles church made vacant by the resignation of the Rev. J. E. McCorkle.

Rev. Gantt took charge on the 22nd of August and since that time Zion has taken on a new impetus and has gone forward by leaps and bounds, encouraged and helped by his most amiable and friendly wife.

Not every man would have taken hold of the situation as Rev. Gantt has done. Not every one would have been willing to make the sacrifice

necessary in the charge here. And it was a sacrifice. He had other churches offered him, bigger churches, bigger salary and nearer home. This church was torn almost loose from its members, and whoever came must face the most difficult prob-



REV. H. B. GANTT, PASTOR OF THE FIRST A. M. E. Z. CHURCH

spaired. Our enemies—and alas! they are not all outsiders—hoped we would be dashed to pieces on the shoals, but there were some loyal, God-fearing earnest hearts in our little band and they sought the Throne, "every day, every hour," that God would send someone to the rescue.

Our prayers were answered and on the 22nd day of August 1920, there was sent to us a man of God, full of zeal and of the Spirit of the Christ, he serves. Bishop L. W. Kyles, that peerless prelate, saw our needs and searched the country until he found the man for the place—"the square peg for the square hole." He found that man in the person of Rev. H. B. Gantt, M. A., in Atlantic City,

lem. A house divided against itself. On these grounds, he could have preferred some other field, but he said to Bishop Kyles, "I'll go," and he came. There can be no doubt of the progress of the church when we learn that during 21 Sundays of his itinerancy there have been added to the church 100 souls, or more than four a Sunday, 56 converts, and the people are being brought into harmonious relations one with the other. Each member is made to feel that to build up the House of God he must be a strong link uniting and welding the whole together. Rev. Gantt has a large vision and has the capacity, the power to impregnate the church with that vision, thus bringing to real fruition. He

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THE NEED OF A NEW AND BETTER SYSTEM IN THE CHURCH TO-DAY

By Rev. W. L. Hamblin, D. D.

I want to call attention to a few observations touching certain regulations in the system of our Church which we are bound to admit are not only injurious, but greatly impeding the progress of the Church. We must, first of all, appreciate the fact that we are living in a new and progressive age. This is truly a new day when everything is stripped of loose and time worn, take-for-granted methods. We are living in a day when the mind of the people is prone to suspicion. Really it is an evil thinking day, and the Church if it would keep time with this age that is now upon us must adopt a system that offers the least possible opportunity for one to think evil. That is to say, everything should be done in such a business like way that those of us who are inclined to think evil would have little ground for such thought.

We must admit that the system of our Church is so loose and time worn that the whole Church is subject to criticism. The business system in vogue for handling the finances of the Church is insufficient to protect those who handle money in this day of evil minded people. Personally, I believe all of those who handle the Church's money are honest, but with the present system, I can't prove to the many who will ask me why. For instance, the financial headquarters do not know how much money a conference raised, and the conference does not know how much was reported to headquarters. Bad system.

Another; when the men pay for the various Church periodicals, it is so easy to make mistakes in making new lists. Names will naturally be omitted, and with no receipts given at conference, I have no way of proving that I paid and the publishers have no right to publish if they did not receive my subscription.—Bad system.

And further, a system where ever man pays himself is bad, though he may be ever so honest, he has no way to prove it.

The Bishops' receipt is anti-bellum. No progressive denomination is handling it today. We ought to raise our General Claims, report it monthly and not have the Bishop running round trying to collect his salary.

Most any Church now has a better system of paying the pastor than we have for our Bishops. No pastor collects from the class leaders, but he has a steward who assembles all the money for pastor's support, and then takes his receipt for it.

All is a growing experience with me, and I know it is true with others that our people are loyal and law-abiding, and they will yield to written law. But we have no written law today, for the few disciplines you find annoying us are out of date, and any discipline dating further back than 1920, is out of date, for the most part. And what we have is too indefinite and time worn.

The Church is too big now and the age too enlightened and progressive for any one man to write all the law for it. The spirit and vision and need of the Church must be centered here by men representing every angle of it.

We ought to get out our disciplines at any cost and sacrifice. Why not take Ter-centenary money and get them out. I am not kicking nor grumbling, for I am a worker and

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The Christian Substitute for Force.

Spiritual forces form the foundations upon which our institutions rest. Great social structures, like the family, church, and state are sustained by the power of faith, loyalty, justice and love.

It is not only of the kingdom of Heaven that is "within" men, but also the empires of the earth. When loyalty to the Czar died out of the hearts of the Russian people, Nicholas found himself a helpless man in the midst of his vast estates and former armies. Napoleon could conquer Europe after he got an army of soldiers, willing to die, if need be, for France and the emperor; but Napoleon did not get the "grand army" by the might of his fists. He won them by championing their cause, by dazzling their imaginations, and winning their hearts.

Physical force alone is inadequate to preserve our institutions. Its use is unnecessary and usually harmful. Once men believed that Christian faith could only be preserved in the last resort by violence. The dungeon, rack and stake were used to protect the faith and preserve the church. Today in America the church still survives and flourishes without reliance on force. There probably was never an age when Christian belief was so wide-spread and vital. Likewise the family has survived, held together by affection, although we no longer force unwilling women into the marriage bond, and the rod is little used on the child. When will the state be wise enough to disarm its most dangerous foes by treating them with justice and love, without the threat of armaments?

Altruism is as ancient in the history of even prehuman life as selfishness. Kropotkin has shown in his "Mutual Aid" that the popular misconception of the doctrine of the survival of the fittest is far from scientific. It does not mean the survival of the most selfish or most brutal or even the strongest physically. God is not always on the side of the heaviest battalions. We have learned to train men to courses of conduct within limited areas controlled by altruistic motives.

Parents give themselves for their children; patriots die for their country. Tradition, history, literature, monuments, public ceremonies and celebrations glorify the deed, praise the heroism, and perpetuate the motive. A similar all-pervasive education enjoining the practice of universal brotherhood, calling out in us and trusting in others a code of unselfish honor in all personal and international relations would produce a Christian universalism as reliable as the basis of social institutions as is nationalistic patriotism; and as far above it, as modern patriotism is above the tribal clannishness of ancient Scotland or Israel.

Women and children who form the great bulk of human society are, from the point of view of physical force for its protection, quite helpless. Yet women and children are quite safe in any society, where the appeal of their winsomeness and need is sufficient to beget in the hearts of men respect, chivalry, or pity. It is only in war time, when force is invoked for their ostensible protection, when women and children suffer wholesale violence, when the force fails, as it did in Belgium and France.

We should equip ourselves as a nation to deal with the problems of international relations not by the use or threat of force, but by the agencies of helpfulness and good-will. We ought to have a Secretary of Peace in the cabinet to direct such work as the sanitation of Havana, Vera Cruz, and Panama, the Panama Canal, and

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