

# The Star of Zion

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## LIGHT AT EVENING TIME

By E. R. Dille

There is one port toward which all of us are sailing, though comparatively few reach it, and that is the port of old age. One-half the human race die in infancy and of the remainder another half die before the age of fifty.

Now we all have a right to old age. We are deprived of it, some by ignorance, some by inherited weakness, some by their own indiscretions or sins, some by overwork or the casualties of life, and in the last few years millions have been robbed of it by war and the famine and misery which war produces.

But on the other hand the achievements of medical and sanitary science and the better observance of the laws of health are working together in times of peace for the prolongation of life. In fifty years the expectation of human life has increased from 33 to 55 years, and the time is not far away when three score and ten will be the rule and not the exception.

Old age is not necessarily nor normally to be associated with infirmity or decrepitude. As O. W. Holmes said, "To be seventy years young, is some times more cheerful and hopeful than to be forty years old." Old age is often a matter of the hardening of the spiritual rather than of the physical arteries. It is not, a matter of the almanac but of the heart; it is not measured by what is behind us but by what is within us. Some people grow old prematurely, while others like Moses, Caleb, and Joshua, John Wesley and Wm. E. Gladstone pass four-score and their bow still abides in strength. Bishop Warren at 80 was as sprightly in mind and body as some men at 50.

In the late Dr. William Osler's valedictory address at Johns Hopkins, he expressed his belief in the comparative uselessness of middle-aged men and jocularly said that they ought to be chloroformed though he himself worked on till long past middle age.

He afterward declared that that famous utterance was only an after-dinner joke, and that what he seriously said was that most of the effective work of the world is done between the ages of 25 and 40 years. But my friend Dr. Earl Barnes, Chancellor of the University of New York, shows that 64 per cent of the greatest things of history were done by men beyond their fiftieth year.

Why, Milton produced Paradise Lost after 50, and Franklin began his scientific studies after he had passed the same dead line; at 60 Thomas Chalmers was the glorious field marshal of the Free Church of Scotland; John Wesley at 80 was still preaching and holding a steady hand on the helm of Methodism; Gladstone was premier of the British Empire at 85, and Clemenceau, the old tiger of France, is past 80. Longfellow at four-score wrote to his classmates at Bowdoin on the fiftieth anniversary of their graduation.

"Too late at 80? Nothing is too late, till the tired heart shall cease to palpitate.

Chaucer at Woodstock, with the nightingales, at 60 wrote the Canterbury Tales. Goethe at Weimar, toiling to the last, completed Faust when eight years were past. There are indeed exceptions, but they show how the Gulf Stream of our youth may flow into the Arctic region of our lives.

"For age is opportunity no less than youth, though in another dress And as the evening twilight fades away The sky is filled with stars invisible by day."

At 23 it is half-past seven of our working day of life; at 60 it is 1:30 in the afternoon, but there may be a long time between that and twilight, and one can do much in the evening if there is moonlight or a long after-

glow. As Dickens said, "Father Time is not a hard parent, for though he carries for none of his children, he lays his hand gently on those who treat him well;" and Tennyson, "God lays His hand upon the heart of one of his children, as a harper lays his hand upon his harp, not smiting it, but gently to soften its vibrating." The good gray head is like the snow peak that first catches the morning light, because it is nearest Heaven, and every wrinkle upon the venerable brow is but a notch in the calendar of a well-spent life!

Old age is a scriptural blessing. Of the wicked, God says that "he shall not live out half his days," but of the righteous "with long life will I satisfy him." Of the heavenly wisdom it is said, "In her right hand are length of days." The Christian virtues all tend to longevity and an approving conscience and the peace of God in the heart are better elixirs of youth than any that Koch or Pasteur ever invented.

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## UNCHAIN THE OTHER HAND

By Bishop W. J. Walls, D. D.

I am far from being an agitator, but certain tendencies in our group force me to the line of contention, and upon one of these matters, I insist upon a hearing now.

The bishops and general officers decided at Norfolk, in August, to take the Bishops' Meeting to California. This was concluded after it was remonstrated that the Council should go to Philadelphia, because it would meet during the Sesqui-Centennial Exposition there. Those of us who were favoring California for the Council consented to an exchange with those who favored Philadelphia upon their consent that we go on to California in the early Spring with the Bishops' Meeting.

We had not more than left the seat of the Council before Star-articles began to agitate against the Pacific Coast meeting. Then an attempt was made to assemble the Bishops for attention to various matters, among them being "to decide definitely the place of the Bishops' meeting."

The place of the Bishops' meeting is definitely decided. Wherefore this vacillation about it?

We make no charge, but it appears as if some who did not want to do a big thing for Zion, but preferred to look after themselves first began the propaganda that the great A. M. E. Zion Church is too poor to hold an official meeting across the Rockies. Invidious comparison was expressed in the paper between Zion's and Bethel's ability to finance its officers on a long distance trip. This is a sad procedure for a Church that operates among the same people, has a history older, has sent its representatives to every world gathering and held forth in every way as the leading denominations have done a century and nearly three decades.

I deprecate that we have just now learned that Zion is the weak sister among race churches, so weak that we must destroy and defer our collective decisions made in deliberation, and these insinuations made by some of our own officers and representatives who were present and expressed no opposition in the meeting when the decision was made.

This has aroused suspicion and resentment from the people on the Western Coast. They believe that they are being unfriendly treated. They cross the continent to attend meetings East and pay their fares without asking it of the General Church. They do not see the fairness in General Officers and leaders who have the heart of the Church and its departments to support them,

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## WALKING ABOUT ZION

Bishop J. S. Caldwell, D. D.

Editor of Star of Zion:

Under the question "Who is Who in Philadelphia," as it relates to religious denominations, I desire to make a statement about our Zion for the enlightenment of any or all who may be concerned.

The city of Philadelphia, nestled on the banks of the Schuylkill and Delaware Rivers, is a happy mean between the North and the South. Its winters are not too long and cold nor its summers too warm to deter our people's coming in great numbers. The situation of Philadelphia has made it a very prolific field for Christian denominations to work in, hence the competition for preeminence has been sharp through all the years, and is no less so now.

Zion Church, as a denomination, made its appearance here something like three-quarters of a century ago. For the first 40 years, its growth was slow, only one church building and congregation during that stretch of years. This was perhaps due to the fact that our churchmen did not concentrate or center any of its activities or agents in or upon this city. In 1900 coming out of the General Conference at Washington, D. C., three General Officers took up residence in Philadelphia, namely, W. H. Coffey, Church Extension Secretary, G. L. Blackwell, Missionary and General Secretary, and J. S. Caldwell, General Steward or Financial Secretary. In 1902, these three General Officers applied to the Board of Bishops for permission to purchase a Connectional building in which to house the departments which we severally represented. The request was granted, which marked the first step in a Connectional extension program in this city.

In 1904, the General Conference accepted the property and made it the Financial Headquarters of the denomination.

The second effort in the interest of our denomination was made in 1908, when the General Conference was in session in Philadelphia. There may be those still living who will recall that an appeal was made by this writer on a certain day on behalf of a church which Dr. Coffey, then Church Extension Secretary was making an effort to purchase. Sixteen hundred (\$1,600.00) dollars was the answer, which was turned over to Dr. Coffey, who announced there and then that in the afternoon of the following Sunday this church would be opened and dedicated, which was done. This church proving to be too small, negotiations for a larger and better building were begun in 1909.

Our third effort was made in 1910, when the property at 19th and Catharine Streets was taken over at a cost of sixty-six thousand (\$66,000.00) dollars, including legal services, conveyancing and back series of building and loan. For two years, the local congregation and the several conferences throughout the Church contributed a sufficient amount to hold the property until the General Conference met in 1912 at Charlotte, N. C., and made an annual allowance of four thousand (\$4,000.00) dollars to supplement the efforts of the local congregation to the end that this property might not be lost to Zion. This appropriation has run for twelve years, amounting to about \$42,240, interest and building and loan charges for the period amounting approximately to five thousand, seven hundred (\$5,700.00) dollars, which is not included in the amount above stated as applied on the principal. During this same period, the local congregation contributed toward the principal debt ten thousand, five hundred (\$10,500.00) dollars, or a total

amount paid on the property of approximately fifty two thousand, seven hundred and forty (\$52,740.00) dollars.

The church property at 15th and Christian streets was purchased for about twenty-two thousand (\$22,000.) dollars, in 1922, in which we have an equity of about twelve thousand (\$12,000.00) dollars.

We own a church property at 18th and Dickinson streets for which we paid four thousand (\$4,000.00) dollars. We have an equity in this property of about two thousand five hundred (\$2,500.00) dollars.

We own another church property at 19th and League streets, for which we paid two thousand five hundred (\$2,500.00) dollars. We have an equity of one thousand dollars in this property.

At 57th and Ludlow streets we own church property for which we paid fourteen thousand, five hundred (\$14,500.00) dollars. We have an equity a little over five thousand (\$5,000.00) dollars.

Our congregation at 10th and Girard Avenue is worshipping in a rented building.

Wesley church, located at 15th and Lombard streets, is engaged in building a new edifice at a cost of more than two hundred thousand (\$200,000.00) dollars. They had seventy thousand dollars (\$70,000.00) in hand when they began building, and think by the time it is completed they will have paid in something (Continued on Page 5)

## ACTIONS DIVINELY CONSIDERED AND WEIGHED

By E. George Biddle, D. D.

"Talk no more so exceeding proudly; Let not arrogance come out of your mouth; For Jehovah is a God of knowledge, and by His actions are weighed." I Samuel 2:3.

That our ACTIONS ARE WEIGHED in Divine scales should not only claim our casual attention, but should command our most earnest thought. We sing: "And must I be to judgment brought, And answer in that day for every vain and idle thought, And every word I say?" If we believe what we sing, we should act accordingly. When we remember that our God is greater than man, and that science has demonstrated that even rays of light may be weighed, and that the invisible electron can be weighed and measured, we should "stand in awe" in the presence of the Divine Weigher of our "actions." How "arrogant" man naturally is; how "proudly" he talks, even in the presence of Him "who weighs the mountains in scales and the hills in a balance," apparently forgetting that He has said to wayward men, "Thou art weighed in the balance, and found wanting."

This song of Hannah's (I Samuel 2:1-10) might well be called the Old Testament Magnificat. It is Hebrew poetry, not prose like the other part of the 1st Book of Samuel, but a wonderfully beautiful song of praise. As the song reminds us, we should remember that our every act is weighed by the Almighty God, though possibly unnoticed by, or unknown by our fellow men. They are not only known, but weighed and measured by Jehovah, even the "seed thoughts" we sow, we shall reap, for though we are "saved" our "actions" will "weigh" over there, this is clearly taught in I Corinthians 3:12-15. (Read it.) It is a sad statement; "suffer loss" though saved. Every minute act will tell in eternity. For our God reads our thoughts, possibly before we think them.

Prof. Harrow, in an illuminating book entitled: "Newton to Einstein," says "Matter is made of atoms, of a size so small that 300 million of them could be placed alongside of (Continued to Page Five)

## THE METHODIST MACHINE

We do not call it a machine in a bad sense. The Methodist Machine that has made appointments these many years has proven itself the best Church machine yet designed to carry the gospel to the people. It can and does give every church a pastor and every pastor a church. Not that every church has an ideal pastor nor every pastor an ideal church. For as long as churches are human and preachers human some folks somewhere will fall below the ideal. Nor do we mean this machine cannot be somewhat improved in some matters. It is hardly to be expected that any system that suited a hundred years ago could continue without changing itself to meet the changing needs of a changing world. So if any Methodist rises up and proposes some changes in the machine do not count him a heretic. He may love the Church as much as those who believe in remaining in all things like the fathers a century ago.

The Methodist system differed from others in that the preachers like soldiers placed themselves in the hands of commanders and went wherever they were ordered. Likewise the churches placed themselves in the same place. It was, supposed that those in charge after prayer and counsel made the appointments without any outside interference. The preachers and the people for a time took it so. But as the years went by a man out in Texas started a rumor that there was a suspicion that some butchers and bakers and candlestick makers were quietly giving the Lord and the cabinet the benefit of their expert wisdom and mildly suggesting the preachers they wanted. There are some now who even think that many of the strong churches know who they want and go forth to get what and whom they do want as well as to turn elsewhere, those they do not want.

Let us not get alarmed over this. In this democratic age there is no use to blame the laymen for wanting to have a part in selecting the pastors who are to serve their churches. They think they must be looked to for the money and they think they know the condition under which they work. Therefore they think they know the kind of man that would suit them and they think they have a right to help select him. Not that they do always know, for they have been known to make bigger mistakes than the elders make. If some laymen are not better judges of real estate than they are of preachers they better not go to Florida. But just the same, we concede to them the right to have a voice in selecting their pastors—provided—mind you—PROVIDED—

Provided that after trying honestly to get the man they think suited to them and failing to do so they remain loyal Methodists to the system under which we work and stand by the man who is sent to them. If another man goes as a dark horse you should not make him a goat. He had nothing to do with going and perhaps did not want you any more than you wanted him.

Provided also that this privilege does not breed in the churches bosses who rise up to speak for the whole church when the church knows nothing about it at all. The greatest danger of our Methodism comes right here. We cannot afford to have bosses in high life or low. Any sort of a machine can be used to the hurt of people and no church machine is more subject to abuse than the Methodist machine in the hands of bosses!

Having said this much for the laymen, to whom we owe so much in the Church, a word should be said for the pastor. If the layman is to be consulted why not give the preacher the same privilege? If we are to ask Col. Grimes whom he would like to have

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