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EDITORIAL.

LET US BE JUST.

Some time ago we sent out to the preachers and a large number of laymen of the North Carolina Conference a request for an expression of views on certain questions that are likely to come up for consideration at the approaching General Conference. One of the questions to which an answer was requested is this: "Should the Publishing House money be returned to the United States Senate?" We have received a large number of replies to this question, and the other questions asked, and they will appear in the RALEIGH CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE of April 30. Whatever this issue, which will be a General Conference number, may lack, it will not lack a full, free, honest expression of opinion on the part of our preachers and laymen on some of the questions to be considered at Dallas by the law-making body of our Church. We had intended to withhold any editorial opinion touching any of these questions until a later period, but we have considered it proper to write a few words concerning the attitude of the Senate to the question of the Publishing House money. The brethren who have sent in replies are divided on this question. Quite a number have expressed themselves as opposed to the return of the money or any part of it. These brethren have given their opinion honestly. On this point we have at this juncture nothing to say. It appears, however, that some of these brethren couple with their opinion an emphatic indignant condemnation of the Senate. The idea seems to be that the Senate practically admits that, in making the Publishing House appropriation, it paid only a just and legal claim, and that in making a fuss over it afterward it only stultified and incriminated itself. This idea seems to be general.

But the idea is erroneous as we see it, and we have studied the question closely. The condemnation of the Senate of the United States is neither just, nor necessary to the vindication of the Book Agents, the Book Committee, or the Church at large. Hence we suggest that the following facts should be borne in mind:

(1) The Senate claimed that in passing the bill it was moved only by the consideration that the claim was made by trustees for the benefit of beneficiaries; that the bill was not passed on the grounds of legal demand, but on the grounds of mere grace and expediency.

(2) That such being the case, the Senate had the same right to protect the beneficiaries from excessive charges as have the courts of the land when cases are tried in which estates of infants and trust funds are involved.

(3) The Senate voted for the bill on the supposition that only a small fee was paid by the Book Agents. Public and private statements to this effect were made by Senators who were working for the passage of the bill. The disclosure of the fact that as much as 35 per cent was made placed these Senators in an embarrassing attitude, and an investigation was needed on this score if on no other.

(4) The investigating Committee went out of its way, it seems to us, to emphasize the patent truth that the

M. E. Church, South, is free from all blame in the matter, and appeared more than willing to set the Church right in the minds of the public. Whatever may be the grievances of the Church in the matter this expression of the Committee under the peculiar circumstances was no less than magnanimous.

So we maintain that it is possible to settle this vexed matter without abusing the Senate, which deserves no abuse. The problem is to be worked out among ourselves as a Church. If there is any blame to be found, it must be found among us.

THE PROBLEM OF WORLDLINESS.

The question of worldly amusements, in other words, "worldliness", has given Methodists much trouble. Our pastors agree that there is nothing else which gives them so much serious concern as the disposition of our young people to run after those pleasures which are forbidden in the Word of God and by the General Rules of our Church.

This fact, in our opinion, is not due to a too stringent interpretation of the divine injunctions. It is not due to any peculiarity of our young people expressed in a greater fondness than the young people of other churches for worldly amusements. All young people are alike in their likes and dislikes. Neither is it due to the fact that we have such a large number of young people in our Church.

A partial explanation may be found in the following considerations: The majority of Methodists from the beginning have been composed of those in the lowlier, but not less worthy, walks of life. Methodism has always prided itself on its mission to the poor. It has done this so insistently and positively that we are sometimes inclined to believe that the effect has been to repel the rich and high. Until a few decades ago the poverty idea largely affected the gifts of the Church. Read "Post Oak Circuit" in order to come in contact with the truth of this statement. "You are poor, therefore a penny a member" is a doctrine which for a century drank up the life-blood of Methodism's generosity, and the traces can yet be seen, we are sorry to say. But the fact is, the Methodist Church is not rich, and makes no special claim to social prestige, though many Methodists are well off in this world's goods, and are in the highest and most cultured circles of life.

But there is nothing in this to cause our young people to run inordinately after the "god of this world." No, the misfortune is that there is in other Churches another class of young people who are supposed to represent the very highest in social culture, and our young people, under the stress and impulsion due to every transitional life, covet these banned pleasures not so much as pleasures but as stepping stones to what are considered true social heights. We have no objections to Lent, but do you know that we have young Methodists who are so swayed by this peculiar tendency to reach after so-called social advantage that they do not hesitate to break the rules of their Church except during Lent? They will dance in June, but not during Lent. Lent is supposed to be the property in fee simple of those who represent the highest social culture of the land.

What Methodists need most, with the exception of the best type of good old Holy Ghost religion, is a spirit of stronger self-appreciation, more sturdy independence, a more definite consciousness that Methodism shows today strength sufficient to sway not only spiritual, but mental and social, life. When we reach this point, the Church will have less difficulty in keeping our young people from the dwarfing, devitalizing embrace of worldliness. In the meantime, it behooves Methodism to hold on to the "old landmarks," and have the determination to make no compromise whatever with the world. This is our safety.

MEASURING SUCCESS.

It is difficult for Methodists to make secondary the idea of financial profit in the expectations connected with Church institutions. The tendency is to measure the success of certain institutions by the standard of dollars and cents. This tendency is partly due to an oversight of the fact that the Church as a business factor cannot possess the same constituency as can the secular world. It is a sad thought that Church enterprises can appeal to the public only through the channels of quasi charity. Hence the enterprises of the Church have lacked the solid bases of secular enterprises. This may be providential, inasmuch as it will tend to fix the mind and heart of the Church on the higher end—that of giving out spiritual profit and not taking in commercial gains.

In this connection, it may be proper to state that there is somewhat of unreasonableness in the claim that the Publishing House is not declaring any dividends. Dr. Hoss in the last Nashville pertinently says: "Mr. Wesley was prompt to avail himself of all the help within his reach, and he early saw that he could largely increase the scope, and quality of his influence by laying hold of the printing press. Let it be distinctly affirmed in the outset that he did not expect to make money. His sole purpose was to diffuse sound religious knowledge."

It behooves every enterprise of the Church which deals with dollars and cents, to use only the best business methods and to strive for the largest spiritual, and intellectual and secular profit. But let it be remembered that spiritual and intellectual profits are paramount, and that as long as such are reaped, no Church enterprise can be a failure.

DEATH OF DR. TALMAGE.

He was born in Bound Brook, N. Y., January 7, 1832, and died in Washington, D. C., April 12, 1902. The cities, Philadelphia and Brooklyn, were his principal fields of activity. In the former, he served eight years as pastor of the Second Reformed Dutch Church; in the latter, he lived most of his after life. A few years ago after burning, for the second time, of the Tabernacle in Brooklyn, he moved to Washington, D. C.

That Dr. Talmage was one of the most widely known of American clergymen, cannot be denied. His sermons were read weekly all over the civilized world. The announcement that Talmage would preach at any place was the signal for the gathering of an immense audience. It is well

remembered by many what an occasion his presence made Trinity Commencement in 1876. His sermon and address on this occasion created an epoch in the history of the college.

His preaching was peculiarly sensational. He chose strange texts and adopted strange methods of delivery and sermonizing. He was dramatic to the highest degree. As a word-painter he has never been excelled. It is a dangerous thing for any preacher to twine the smallest garland of flowers around a column of truth, be it never so massive. This, we presume is on the same principle, as that no man who expects to be great can afford to be a wit. But Mr. Talmage used the flowers where there was no column of thought to be adorned. He eschewed argument and seemed to glory in it. The fact that in spite of this he caught and kept the popular ear all over the world proved his genius.

It was easy for him to enthuse a congregation. He was a failure in organizing a church and in developing and directing its energies. The inner life of Brooklyn Tabernacle lacked virility and aggressiveness. No Church which neglects to exercise the missionary spirit can expect to retain long its power.

Yet, Dr. Talmage has been a great power in the world. Optimistic in the extreme, he has made life sunnier for thousands. A fragrance will linger around his memory. A good man, he has gone to receive the good man's reward.

Bishop Andrews, in an address made in Baltimore a few days ago, argued that the theory of evolution is possible, stating that God might have adopted this method of divine unfoldment, adding here and there a great stroke—a mighty miracle. Dr. Buckley says, "Such a doctrine of evolution is compatible with the orthodox theory." But there is a wide gap between this doctrine of evolution and that taught by the majority of scientists. They appear to be desirous of eliminating God altogether.

New Literature.

HELL IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY. By Mrs. Sarah Hinton Johnson. J. W. Burke & Co., Macon, Ga.

In this volume, Mrs. Johnson, the daughter of a Methodist minister, utters the protest of an increasingly large number of Christians against the orthodox idea of Hell. Although Mrs. Johnson professes not to be in thorough sympathy with the "Higher Critics," yet she repeatedly falls back for support upon the results of liberal investigation. She does not attempt to do away with any Hell at all, but revolts, with all her soul, against the teaching that the wicked must suffer eternally. To refute all the Scriptures which seem to hold out such a prospect, she quotes Christ's words: "Broad is the way that leadeth to destruction," and, "Fear him rather who hath power to destroy both soul and body in Hell," from which she concludes that the wicked are finally destroyed. There is unmistakable sincerity in every chapter of Mrs. Johnson's book, and she says nothing but what she has found to be good and true for herself. But she has failed to convince the public that all her views are sound.

X-RAYS FROM GOD'S WORD. Bible Readings by Emma and Nina Tucker. Foote and Davies Co., Atlanta, Georgia. Price \$1.

This book, written by two intellectually and spiritually cultured sisters, does what it claims to do—gives a series of practical, stimulating Bible readings. The subjects treated cover every topic that comes within the range of pastoral and pulpit demands. Dr. W. R. Lambuth, Missionary Secretary, says in the Introduction: "I heartily commend this manual to those who feel the Word burning in their bones as a fire. I urge it upon those who would wield it as a hammer, who would feed the hungry with its bread, or carry water to the thirsty from its fountains, who would put to flight the powers of darkness with the sword of the Spirit, or throw its searchlight along the dark and rugged pathway of light."

MOUNDS, MONUMENTS, AND INSCRIPTIONS. By Mark B. Chapman, D. D. Publishing House M. E. Church, South. Price \$1.25

Ordinarily, the above title would not suggest anything fresh and inspiring. While the reading public are inclined to ascribe adequate importance to the subject of archæology, yet there is lacking anything like a thirst for information on such a subject. But we can conscientiously say that in "Mounds, Monuments, and Inscriptions", Dr. Chapman has given us a book which in a simple, fascinating style, gives that information which instructs and inspires. No one can read the book without adding largely not only to his fund of Biblical knowledge but to his stock of faith. The author begins at the beginning, throwing light on Genesis, and reveals facts which are intimately connected with Palestine in the time of Christ and the early Christian Church.

THE STORY OF CREATION. By Rev. G. C. Andrews. Vindicator Publishing House, Greenville, Ga.

In this book the author gives his account of Creation from the standpoint of the Biblical scholar and a lay scientist. A wonderful familiarity with the Bible is shown,—and an unconcealed contempt for science. Those readers who will not be impressed with the author's knowledge of biology and geology will be instructed in certain practical phases of thought, and will be at the same time amused at the flashes of humor which occur on almost every page. We are not sure but that the author has come nearer the truth in certain particulars than have the men with telescopes, microscopes, and scalpels. The book is written in a simple and somewhat loose style. Our conviction is that the time spent in reading its contents will be far from wasted.

EARLY CONVERSION. By Rev. E. Payson Hammond, M. A. J. S. Ogilvie Publishing Company, New York. Price 25 cents.

It is dedicated to the pastors, Christian parents, Sunday school teachers, and leaders of juvenile societies in Great Britain and America, who believe in early conversion. This fact shows a phase of thought which has been for sometime attracting the attention of evangelical workers in nearly every Christian Church. "Early Conversion" shows how children and young people can be led to Christ and prepared for Church membership. There are many illustrations of a practical value. We commend this little volume to our pastors, Sunday school superintendents, and teachers, and all others who have in charge the spiritual development of the young.