



EDITORIAL



Notes and Comments

COLLIER'S WEEKLY is starting up another one of its investigations. One may question the thoroughness of the investigations made by this journal from time to time, but there is no disputing that it has the capacity to focus the public mind for a time upon them. It has great capacity as an agitator, and seems to fancy taking a tip at the churches occasionally. Its last move is displayed under the head line: "Collier's and the Preachers." He proposes to take up some half dozen divines and show what the church is, or is not doing, as a vital force in present day life. Wonderfully easy, isn't it?

If THE COLLEGES are any criterion as to whom the Democrats will nominate in June for President of the United States, it would seem that Woodrow Wilson will be the man. Trinity College and the University in this State have held moot conventions, and both declared for the New Jersey Governor. Whether the real convention will follow their example or not, this seems to us no bad movement on the part of the colleges. Such work will have its influence to bring the life of the institution into touch with the practical life of the age in which we live, and will acquaint the students with the conditions that they will have to face when they leave those college halls.

A COMMISSION ON INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS is contemplated by a bill that has recently been introduced into the Congress of the United States. If this bill should become a law, it will be its duty to make careful and accurate investigations into the conditions that exist between employers and employees in the principal industries of the United States, and especially in those which are carried on in corporate forms; into the effects of industrial conditions upon public welfare and in the rights and powers of the community to deal therewith, and to make other investigations along similar lines. Whether this bill becomes a law or not, there is one thing that has become clear. The line of distinction between a man's private affairs and the affairs of the public is becoming more and more obliterated. Especially is this true with reference to corporations. As our life is becoming more complex, and the influence of every man's activity is being more largely felt upon the life of others, the personal activities of men are becoming more a matter of public concern. The old divine law is pressing itself upon us in this age: "No man liveth unto himself."

IN THE MIDST OF THIS GROWING COMPLEXITY of life, what part shall the church take in public affairs? We have had a very distinct theory in this country—that of separation of church and state. In one point of view this theory has been worked to an extreme; in another it has served a wholesome purpose. Civic unrighteousness has oftentimes flaunted itself in the face of the public, and said to the church, "Hands off." We have been told that we had nothing to do with political affairs, and that ministers must be satisfied simply "to preach the gospel." Public corruption has secured for itself many a lengthened lease on life through that sort of manipulation of this American doctrine. While we must stand solidly against any church assuming to itself political authority, or laying its hand upon the machinery of government to foster denominational or sectarian interests, it would be fatal to hush the voice of the church in its demands for civic virtue and in its insistence upon righteousness in all the political activities of our national life. And in these questions with which statesmen are beginning to

wrestle—questions which are born in the conditions of our industrial life, the proper relations between capital and labor, and the many social questions that are crying to heaven for an answer—the voice of the church will have to be heard, as she gives expression to the eternal principles of right, if their proper solution is ever found.

THE EDITOR'S RAMBLES.

ONE OF THE bravest company of Methodists we know of anywhere is the Central Church congregation of Raleigh. They have a heroic history. Through many conflicts, they have never faltered by the way; and they never looked forward to the future with a better courage or a stronger faith than they do today. And they have a strong and clear-visioned leader in Brother Wilcox. He is the kind of a man that grows on you. He does not plan for today only—he wishes to see the results of his labors sweeping down through the coming years. And in this he is wise. He is constantly endeavoring to get his people thoroughly rooted and grounded in the truth. He is preaching on the fundamental themes. He is unfolding to his hearers the great doctrines about which all Biblical truth revolves, and he is leading them to see it from the broad Methodist standpoint.

It was our pleasure to occupy his pulpit at the morning hour on Sunday, March 10. It was a good day, and a large congregation filled the main auditorium of the church. The pastor preached his own five minutes sermon to the children, as it is his habit to do every Sunday. And he has a pretty good sized bunch of them to talk to. This gives him an opportunity that we fear most of our pastors are losing entirely—that of speaking to the children. We enjoyed hearing him, and then we enjoyed speaking to the adult congregation a little later. They gave us perfect attention, so that if they were not profited by the service, it was not their fault. We always feel at home with them, and trust we may have the privilege of talking to them again in the not distant future.

Johnston County is one of the rich counties of the State. It is rich in material resources. A part of the abundant cotton crop of last year is still in the patch, and it is not because her people are not industrious either. The evidences of thrift and of material prosperity are on every hand. And they are equally progressive in every other department of life.

We are always glad to go to Smithfield. We have been there upon a number of occasions, and they always have the happy faculty of making you feel welcome. We have a noble set of Methodist laymen there, and they rally to their pastor and hold up his hands in the work of the church. We looked in on them last Sunday. It was interesting to see that Sunday-school. The church is absolutely over run with it. There is a small house in the yard where the primary department in three divisions holds forth, and the Baracas have had to set them up a tent on the other side. What is left of the Sunday-school fills the main auditorium of the church. Here are facts enough to convince any one that the great need of our people at Smithfield is a new and modern church building. The work of the Lord is being seriously handicapped for the lack of it. Unfortunately they have been unable so far to secure a lot upon which they can all unite as the proper site for a new church. This is a question which it seems to us they must settle in the near future. It is to be hoped that the best possible location will be secured, and this noble band of Christian men and women give themselves to the work of providing a suitable building for their growing Sunday-school and congregation.

The Advocate is in high favor with those people. Brother Barnes, the pastor, had pretty well completed his canvass of the membership for renewals and new subscriptions, and handed us quite a nice list as the exhibit given in another column will show. They believe in standing by the institutions of the church, and they recognize the Advocate as one of them.

One of the finest men anywhere is T. R. Hood, of Smithfield. He belongs to a great family. They take to the drug business as naturally as a duck to the water, but happy is the town that has such men in the drug business. They will not become centres of evil while they are in charge, as they so often do when the wrong man is conducting them. Brother Hood belongs to the company whom Paul describes: "Diligent in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." We lodged in his home in Smithfield, and no man could find a better one. We regretted that Sister Hood was unwell, but she has one daughter still in the home who knows how to grace any occasion with ease and becoming dignity.

In the afternoon we made our way to Selma. We will not undertake a description of the road over which, or through which, we went. It is one of those nice graded roads, to, but they had not counted on such a winter. It will be all right in a short while now, but it seemed at times that we would not get through it Sunday. However, thanks to a good driver and a faithful horse, the trip was made. Selma has a beautiful new church. It is a good house to speak in, and at the appointed hour we found ourselves face to face with another audience who looked up at us as if they were accustomed to get something worth listening to. And during the next morning we heard echoes of the sermon that Pastor Daniel had preached at the 11 o'clock hour. He had evidently been storming the fort, and he had scattered the enemy. Forthwith every fellow was turning it over to his neighbor. We lodged in the parsonage and found it a pleasant place to dwell. The Methodist preacher's wife no doubt has to make many a sacrifice and deny herself many of the luxuries of life; but we doubt if you can find a happier class of women anywhere. At least, if they are not happy, they have a wonderful art of concealing it; and the one in the Selma parsonage seems no exception to the rule. And she knows how to make her guests feel at ease, which is a great art.

We must not close these rambling notes without a mention of Brother Puckett. We visited him on Saturday evening, and found him weak in the flesh, but still strong in the faith. He asked us to give his love to all the brethren, and tell them that he was just waiting. He is living close to heaven in the spirit. No man among us is more loved of his brethren, and no man among us has lived a truer life for our common Lord. We pray that he may be conscious of the constant presence of the Christ during these days of suffering. We have not said all that we would, but our space is full.

From the report in the Scottish Chief, we gather that Maxton has been blessed with a gracious revival. Of Rev. A. L. Stanford, a member of the W. N. C. Conference, this paper says: "Mr. Stanford was here just one week, and yet in that short time he won the esteem and love of all our people. He is a cultured, polished Christian gentleman of deep consecration. In his life and preaching he magnifies the gospel. One is immediately impressed with the fact that he is on the King's business. He preaches the old fundamental truths of the gospel in such a beautiful and attractive way that they grip the heart and quicken the conscience."