



EDITORIAL



AN EXPLANATION.

A number of our customers who ordered Testaments for our soldiers recently had to wait a considerable time before their orders could be filled. Increasing sales of these books had exhausted our supply; and, when we ordered a new supply, the publishers were likewise out of stock. The unusual sale of these books has made it impossible for the publishers to keep up with the demand. We now have a new supply on hand and orders will be filled immediately direct from this office while the supply lasts.

Notes and Comments

Praise for Dr. Parker. Referring to Dr. Parker's declination to accept the office of Bishop tendered him by our late General Conference, The North Western Christian Advocate has the following to say:

"Will his example inspire others to do likewise? It is feared not. Excellence in the special work in which a man is engaged when the 'call' comes seems at times to be forgotten, and more than one great preacher, secretary, or editor has been spoiled to make a fair Bishop. The very spirit manifested by Dr. Parker would seem to disprove his self-estimate and establish his claim to election. But he is his own judge. His declination created a profound impression and will stamp him as a great man—greater in the eyes of the Church than when they cast their ballots for his elevation."

It is not likely that the example of Dr. Parker in this matter will ever secure any large following. Few men are sufficiently great not to be lured by the greatness of title and position.

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Food Regulations Become More Stringent. The country has reached a crisis particularly in the sugar situation. The State Food Administration was holding protracted and important conferences last week in Raleigh and we learn that for the purpose of conserving sugar the soft drink business will shortly be suspended. Our people need to realize more and more that we must follow the lead of these men who are giving their time to the work of so distributing the available food supply as to conserve the best interests of the country. These men know what food stocks are available and the quantities of each that are consumed by our people under normal conditions. It becomes necessary for them to limit the amount of certain foods that may be used in order that the supply shall not become exhausted and leave our soldiers and our Allies without proper food. Our attitude toward this administration must be one of willing obedience.

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A Great Meeting of Methodists. Few meetings are ever held that rise in magnitude to the level of the one held by the Methodist Episcopal Church at Columbus, Ohio, on June 19th. They came together for the consideration of a big program, and one that touches the whole of American Methodism. It called for the presence of all the District Superintendents, the Presiding Elders as we know them, all the Bishops of the Church, all secretaries and editors, besides as many pastors and laymen as they could prevail upon to attend. They hoped to get together representatives from every part of the entire country so that in their planning the great forward Missionary Movement to celebrate the

Centennial of American Methodist Missions, they could have the viewpoint of all sections of the country, and the judgment of men of all localities. We are having a somewhat similar meeting at Lake Junaluska this week and with the same end in view. This is the most gigantic forward movement Methodism in this country has ever undertaken.

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Reports From the War Fronts for the past week are more favorable to the cause of the Allies. It is true that these lulls in the fighting have come at almost regular intervals since the spring drive began in March, but it also seems to us that the successive drives on the Western Front have been weakening rather than growing stronger. This was particularly true in the last drive, at least so far as the ability of the enemy to bend back our lines is concerned. We are warned that another drive may be expected soon, and, of course, there must be no relaxation in the preparedness of our forces for any offensive that may be hurled against them; but at the same time it seems hopeful to us that the snap and power of the enemy offensive is not showing itself to be so strong as it was. The comparative failure of the offensive on the Italian front can hardly fail to have its effect also on the Western. Upon the whole it seems to us at this writing that there is good ground for encouragement and perseverance in the tremendous task that is still doubtless before us.

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The Season of District Conferences is now on in full blast. The dates for them are so crowded that it will be impossible for the editor to get to many of them. It is hoped, however, that the interest of the Advocate will not be overlooked at any of them. The Advocate Purchase Stock has been paid in full by only two districts, while two others of the districts have made no report at all. It would be well for the Presiding Elders to arrange to have all this money collected by their District Conferences. This would increase by that much the dividend that will be due for our worn-out preachers at the coming session of our Conference. They are losing the interest of this money until it is paid into the hands of the Treasurer, Mr. Jos. G. Brown, of Raleigh. Then the campaign for new subscriptions and renewals has not been so earnestly waged this year as last. A much smaller number of charges has secured their apportionment of new subscribers and many have omitted the matter entirely. At this time the lack of this income is straining the financial resources of the Advocate to do business as they have not been strained in recent years. Subscription money, therefore, that the preacher can collect and carry to the District Conference, or send direct to the Advocate office, will be especially helpful at this time. At those Conferences to which the editor will not be able to go, he hopes to have some person there who will represent the interests of the paper. Immediate attention to this matter on the part of the preachers and people will be greatly appreciated.

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A Warning Note Sounded. The religious press of the Methodist Episcopal Church is carrying a report from Dr. Edgar Blake, Corresponding Secretary of their Board of Sunday-schools, that may well give us all pause. The following figures are given: "The returns from twenty-six Spring Conferences show a loss of 37,400 in Sunday-school membership, 30,952 in average attendance, 11,525 in conversions, and 10,064 in accessions to the Church." Dr. Blake goes on to estimate the total losses for the year, if this per-

centage continues through all the year. These are the places as follows: In membership, 125,000, in average attendance, 100,000, in conversions nearly 50,000, and in accessions to the Church nearly 40,000. Doubtless many who were in the Sunday-schools last year are now in France, or in the training camps; but this cannot account for nearly all this loss. We shall all have this problem to face. The shock of this great war upon the religious life of our country is bound to be felt. The Church must come to her knees in a deeper consecration. There is no other way to meet it. It is useless to discuss plans and methods. The wisdom of the world is not going to solve this problem. We must fall back upon God with a fuller abandon, a complete surrender of ourselves to Him. In the spirit of prayer and a life of consecration is found the power which the Church needs to meet this crucial hour in the life of the world; and, if the Church fails at this point, there is nothing that can hold up the world's life and carry it to higher levels.

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The Bible at Columbia College. Columbia College is a branch of Columbia University, which claims to be the largest university in the world; and by a recent action of the Faculty, it has been decided to accept a knowledge of the Bible as one unit in the requirements for admission. The knowledge of the Bible required is defined as follows: a. The epic narrative of the Old Testament; a knowledge of the chief characters and incidents presented in Genesis, Exodus, Numbers, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1st and 2nd Samuel, 1st and 2nd Kings, and Daniel. b. The memorizing of some of the more notable passages of Biblical prose and poetry. c. Hebrew history from the Egyptian period to the destruction of the Jewish commonwealth in 70 A. D.; development of the life and institutions of the Hebrew people with some consideration of their contributions to human culture. d. Early Christian biography; the life of Jesus and His early followers; the parables of Jesus; the life of Paul. e. Introductions to the English Bible; how the Bible and its separate books came to be and how they have come down to the present time." Of course, the viewpoint of these requirements is purely academic, and the religious value of such knowledge may be problematic; but, if the study of the Bible to get this information is done from the right viewpoint, its value will be great.

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A Brave, True Step. The congregation and Sunday-school of Roanoke Rapids Baptist Church, according to a report in the secular press, adopted the following: "If there be any officer, teacher, choir member or leader who will not desist from dancing, he is respectfully requested to resign his position in the Church." It is stated that this was passed "practically unanimously." There has never been a real question as to the attitude of the Baptist Church, or of the Methodist Church, on this question. Whatever else we may differ about, here is one point on which these two Churches have always agreed in theory. The sad part of it is that neither of us has lived up to it in practice, and there is not the shadow of a doubt in our mind but that the Church generally has lost tremendously in spiritual power and influence by holding in its membership without reproof those who indulge in this practice. We had gone far enough down the road of dalliance and compromise on this question, but we fear that this war is taking us farther still. Dances given complimentary to soldiers and for the benefit of the Red Cross, and