



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

Uncle Sam's Saturday Service League. In order to help relieve the shortage of labor on the farms, Jno. D. Wray, Farm Makers' Club Agent for the Extension Service, located at the A. and T. College, Greensboro, is organizing a new club among the Negroes with the above title. L. E. Hall, Negro District Agent in Farm Demonstration work, is assisting in the organization of this club. The plan is to enroll Negroes over ten years of age who will pledge themselves to work on Saturday afternoons. Those who take this pledge to continue until November 30, 1918, are given a button with a silver field and gold letters; if they will continue till November 30, 1919, they are given a button with a gold field and silver letters. Wray estimates that by getting 5,000,000 Negroes in the State to sign this pledge, the movement will contribute 250,000 days, or 685 years of work each week.

A Correction.—Ordinarily a typographical error is merely an eye-sore—particularly such to the editor who deplores them more than anyone else. The reader can generally get the meaning intended despite them. But in our attempt last week to quote a very short comment of the New York Christian Advocate on the action of our General Conference concerning Unification, there was the change of two words that almost destroyed, if it did not reverse, the whole meaning. As the comment was brief, we correct it by repeating it as it should have been. After quoting the official action of our Conference, the Advocate said: "When read in connection with the debate, it must be confessed that the situation is less hopeful than was expected. By re-affirming its action of 1914, the Southern body seems to give notice that Unification depends upon some disposition of the Negro membership of the Methodist Episcopal Church which shall exclude that group from membership in the re-organized Church."

The Call for Chaplains to enter the service continues to come, and will necessarily continue to come so long as we continue to swell the ranks of our army and navy. This cannot be stopped until the conclusion of the great war in which we are engaged. Only recently a call was issued for sixty more from our Church. How many of these have been secured to date we are not informed, but the work is moving on. As our young men are being called to the front, our Church must follow them with our chaplains, with our prayers and with the assurance that we are standing back of them as they battle, and perchance die, for the things we hold most dear. This is a tremendous call to our strong young men in the ministry. It is an

open door of opportunity for service that must be entered. We shall miss them sorely in manning the field for service to those who must remain in the walks of civil life, but the need for this service is imperative, and our Church will not fail, and must not fail, to do its full share of this work.

Side-stepping National War-time Prohibition. This may be putting it a little strongly, but the substitute for the Jones Amendment, adopted by the Committee on Agriculture to be reported to the Senate as a rider to the Food Stimulation and Appropriation Bill, is very little better. It would stop the manufacture of beer in ninety days after the passage of the act. This is the best part of it. The provision against the sale of distilled spirits would not go into effect till June 30, 1919, the manufacture of wine would not be prohibited until that time, and its sale would not be interfered with at all. The manufacture of wine and the sale of distilled spirits for export purposes would still be permissible. It is too wet a dry measure to suit us. Congress is now pressing for a month's recess, and this matter may go over; or, if it is acted upon at this time, the friends of real prohibition in the Senate and in the Conference Committee of the two houses, before which it would have to go, may be able to improve it. Things are transpiring rapidly at Washington now, and the friends of prohibition will have to watch the daily press to keep up with the situation. In the meantime keep up the fight directly for complete and immediate war-time prohibition.

A Call to Prayer. That is a wise thing Governor Bickett has done in calling the people to prayer. There is nothing we need to do more, and it is a hopeful indication that it is coming to a larger place in the thought and life of our people. Our Chief Executive has spoken wisely, and we herewith append his words with the earnest prayer that they may be heeded by all our people:

"God of our fathers be the God
Of their succeeding race."

The people of North Carolina believe in God, in His mercy, and in His might. So believing it behooves us to pray that our daily offerings of blood and treasure may be acceptable in His sight, and that He may use them to establish perfect justice and perpetual peace among all the children of men.

To this end I earnestly request all Christian ministers to have the bells of their several Churches rung for two minutes every evening at 7 o'clock from Sunday, June 30th, 1918, until the end of this war. At the ringing of the Church bells I earnestly beseech every person in the State, the citizens and also the stranger within our gates, to bow their heads in fervent prayer to the God of battles, to give our forces on land and sea wisdom of foresight, courage, fortitude and make them more than conquerors of the powers of evil arrayed against them.

He Lays Bare the Heart of the Situation. In a recent issue of the New Orleans Christian Advocate is published an open letter to the preachers and people of the Conference to which he has been assigned. It is a letter of simple directness written in his best style, that exposes in plainest language the most essential truths of our holy religion and sets forth the proper work of the Church in the light of present-day conditions. We wish that we had the space to give the whole communication to our readers. It is good to the use of edifying. But since we cannot give it all now, we cull from it the fol-

lowing significant paragraph: "Many various projects for the promotion of religion and religious activities have been invented by busy men, some sincere, but, I fear, some not sincere, and they would turn our attention to their schemes. Trained leadership, large material resources, acquisition of human wisdom, new forms of worship, larger equipments, and many other like things are proposed as the vital needs of the Church for its work and success. Let us not be carried away by these cunningly devised schemes of men. The Holy Ghost is the solitary administrator in the Church of God, and no human invention can take the place of holiness of heart and life among the people of God. I do not undervalue the incidental things; neither do I overvalue them. They have their worth as incidental matters, and as such deserve just appreciation; but an unholy Church—a Church that is not established in a personal and experimental knowledge of God's saving grace—has no power and can have no power. There are no grounds to believe that an unconverted Church has any commission to preach the gospel at home or abroad."

Do We Need a New Religion?

We may expect many wild and extravagant things to be said under the stress of the turbulent times through which we are passing, but this fact only emphasizes the necessity for clearness of vision and for holding with unyielding tenacity to the fundamental things. It is natural now to talk of the new world-order that is to be after the war, and it is equally natural for religious people to be concerned about the effect these revolutionary changes will have upon the Church. The peril is that in our semi-blindness we will fancy that the future success of the Church will be dependent upon the wisdom with which she accommodates her forms to the changing order.

In a recent issue of one of the leading religious periodicals of this country we note a criticism of the Church from this viewpoint. It was quoted by the editor, and with seeming editorial approval. The criticism was by a minister now engaged in war Y. M. C. A. work. With evident disparagement of the work of the Church, as being out of joint with the times, he said: "When I listened for a while Sunday morning to the theologizing on the incarnation by the rector of the Church of the British embassy, I could not escape the feeling burned into me from my contact with the most primitive of our civilized men that it was all woefully remote from life."

Now we hold no brief for this British rector. It is altogether possible to "theologize" in a dull and prosy way. Such discussions may be made even "woefully remote from life." But we do not undertake to say that the truth of the incarnation is not "remote from life," and the presentation of this subject from the pulpit is not necessarily dull "theologizing." On the contrary, it is one of the very vital truths of Christianity. It lies at the basis of our holy religion; and, were this fact not a truth, the minister referred to would not be in France, and neither the Church nor the Y. M. C. A. would have any existence. It is perhaps unfortunate that not all men can escape being prosaic at times, even when discussing a great theme; but it is more unfortunate still that men who wear the livery of the Church should so criticize its work as to disparage its most fundamental truths.

The same writer continues: "A multitude of