

THE HOLCOMB MEETINGS

FORGET THE THINGS BEHIND.

Rev. Walt Holcomb Begins a Protracted Meeting at the Tryon Street Methodist Church—Paul Was the Biggest Man of the Immediate Followers of Christ—He Saw Something Wrong About Himself that no One Else Had Seen—The Preacher Thinks a Fall Out of Tom Dixon For Writing "The One Woman"—Interesting Sermons.

Yesterday morning marked the beginning of a series of protracted services in Tryon Street Methodist church. As has been announced from time to time for several weeks this protracted meeting is to be conducted by Rev. Walt Holcomb, an evangelist who has met with much success in meetings of this kind in a large number of places in various States of the Union.

Before Mr. Holcomb began preaching yesterday the pastor of the church, Rev. H. K. Boyer, made several announcements with regard to the services. Among other things he said that a service would be held every morning at 10:30 and every evening at 7:45, and he urged every one to be prompt in attendance at the services. In speaking of Mr. Holcomb he said that he gave him great pleasure to introduce him and to have him conduct the meeting. He said that he had known Mr. Holcomb for twenty years, and that he knew him to be a high-toned gentleman and Christian, and a preacher who would preach a clean, pure gospel. He asked

one remains a straggler until religion gets to be the first and the one thing in life. A straggler is like a ship without a compass, and a straggler is like a ship with a compass. "Paul forgot the things that were behind. We are prone to remember the things that we should forget and to forget the things that we should remember. "Sometimes ago I was talking on a street in Nashville to a man and I was praising Teddy. I believe I was the first preacher in the South to boost Theodore Roosevelt, for I have been for him from first to last. I was telling this gentleman many of the good things Teddy had done for the country, and was thinking the man would soon come around to my opinion, when he said: 'Well, you have told me a good many things I never knew about him before, for about all I did know was that he ate with a negro.' "This is often the case with all of us; we remember one thing that we ought to forget, and forget many things that we ought to remember. That man I was talking to about the President had remembered that he took lunch with Booker Washington, but had forgotten the many good things he had done for the country. "In the Christian life there are many things we ought to forget. One thing we ought to forget is our failure. "When I was a young boy about my only fault was profanity, and when I became converted I promised God I never would swear again, and I felt that I never would; but the very next

morning while going to the spring I stumbled my toe and dropped the bucket I was carrying for water, and as soon as this happened I swore the worst that I ever had. Suppose when I met with that failure that I had given up and never had tried again to overcome that fault, but had remembered only my failure, where would I have been to-day? "Yes, we must forget our failures if we win in the Christian life. I have a profound sympathy for the man who fails in his effort to overcome his faults. "When you rise above failure you are on the ground of victory. "Tom Dixon I don't like much. He said in Atlanta the other day that he would be willing to go to hell if he could be successful in writing a certain book he wanted to write. I don't know but what he will get scorching for having written "The One Woman." He said one thing, however, that I like. He said: 'Take away my coat and I will get another that is better; take my shoes from my feet and I will get me a better pair; deprive me of my reputation, and I will establish a better one, and throw me into bankruptcy and I will get more money. I like the spirit of the man who never countenances failure. "Another thing we must forget in the race of the Christian life is sorrow. There is a living sorrow and a dead sorrow, and many a person has been knocked out of the race by remembering sorrow. "The great effort of God is to get you and me to heaven, and I don't know how much failure and sorrow it will take to get us there. It may be the worst is behind us. It may be that we are already able to say with Bradbury: "My latest sun is sinking fast, My race is nearly run, My strongest trials now are past, My triumph is begun." "Let us get in the race to win, and by the help of God have the victory."

Edwin R. Smoot.

ed the people not to think too much about the appearance of Mr. Holcomb and Mr. Edwin R. Smoot, his singer, but to enter into the meeting with the right spirit, and work for the salvation of souls.

Before announcing his text Mr. Holcomb said that he was glad to be in Charlotte to hold a meeting, and that he was glad, too, that Mr. Boyer had asked the people not to think too much about the appearance of the preacher. He said when he was conducting a certain meeting in Kentucky and disappointment was expressed regarding his looks that he told the people that they must be looking for beef instead of brains, as they said they expected to see a much larger man. He said he told them what he would say here, if they would give him the people to preach to he would give them something to think about in what he would say each day and night.

Large congregations heard Mr. Holcomb yesterday, the church being filled both morning and evening. He spoke earnestly, and many were the favorable comments regarding the preacher and his sermons as the congregations left the church.

A large platform for the chorus choir has been erected. Mr. Smoot, the leader of the singing, has a clear, strong voice, and his solos were much enjoyed, especially "He Lifted Me," which he sang yesterday morning. Mr. Holcomb announced as his text these words: "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended, but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, and press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Phil. 3:13-14.

He said: "I want to know how you folks here in Charlotte are getting along. Physically you look just about like other folks. Intellectually, you are just about on the plane of other cities. Financially you are not quite it. Socially you are in the swim; but spiritually you seem to be poorly. Now I am not interested in your material welfare. I am glad you are getting along as well as you are, but what I am interested in especially is your spiritual welfare.

"This is a day of races in Nashville, Memphis, New Orleans and other cities. The people who are interested in such things are getting ready for the spring races, and they are putting their time and energy into them; and in some instances they are costing even the lives of those men. I like that spirit in people who are interested in such things, and I only wish that we all took as great an interest in the race of the Christian life.

"The Bible does not tell us of the failures of others in order to encourage us in our own failures. And yet we often hear men who are failures in the Christian life try to justify themselves by saying such things as these: 'Paul made mistakes, and you surely don't expect me to be better than he was.' 'Peter told a lie, and I don't claim to be stronger than Peter.' This last is one of the favorite excuses of a Methodist who is about 'petered out' spiritually.

"Paul was the biggest man of all the immediate followers of Christ, and yet he saw something wrong about himself which no one else saw, and the same thing is true of each one of us. We all know of something that is wrong in our lives that no one else knows of but God, and not until we acknowledge this and get it right can we get our lives right. "Paul recognized his failing, and he went a step farther—he forgot the things that were behind and pressed forward to the mark of his high calling. "In the Christian life every one is a straggler or a struggler, and every

THE NIGHT SERVICE.

His Subject: "What is a Purpose?"

—Was His Subject—The Subject of the Meeting Sermon—"This One Thing I Do." The Text. Last night Rev. Walt Holcomb preached on the subject of "What is a purpose?" and his text was, "This one thing I do," found in Phil. 3:14. Viewing the large congregation present and the many strange faces that would be strange in any church, except at a meeting conducted by an evangelist, some one remarked that some of them had in all probability not been seen in a church since the last meeting held by an evangelist in Tryon Street, which was several years ago, and that one form of good to be secured from a meeting conducted by an evangelist, in addition to the larger good, was to get these people to come to church; for there are people in every town who rarely ever hear a sermon by a pastor will come in large numbers to hear those of an evangelist. And the same is true of singers. In a meeting conducted by an evangelist there are people who will enter heartily into the singing, who never are seen to move their lips in song in an ordinary service. Last night it seemed for a while that it would be difficult to fill the seats in the chorus choir, but Mr. Smoot, the leader, told the congregation that before the week had passed it would be very easy to do. He said further that the singers might as well make up their minds to like him; that they would have to like him, whether they wanted to or not; and that he was not nearly so bad a fellow as he looked. After these remarks the

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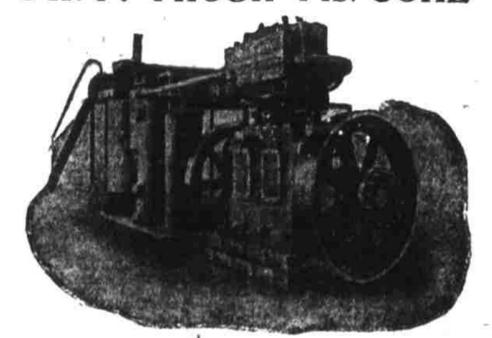
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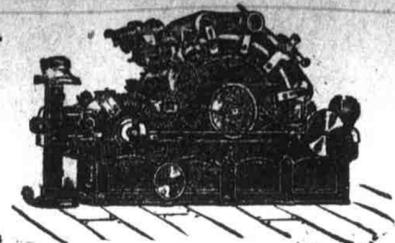
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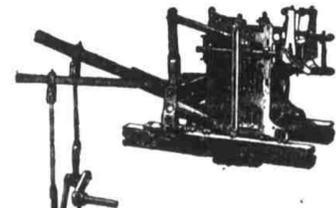
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